

**UNEXPECTED EVENTS & BRAND LOYALTY  
THE CASE OF CRUSADERS RUGBY CLUB**

by

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## Abstract

Prompted by the Christchurch mosque massacres of March 2019, considerable concern was expressed by society around the world, and New Zealand in particular, about anything that might provoke further attacks on Muslims. Consequently, the branding of the Crusaders rugby club in Christchurch came under scrutiny - and became the topic of this research. The research questions were: which brand elements of a sports team would have the greatest impact on attitude to that brand and consequently the brand loyalty; and how will time and an unexpected event change attitudes to a brand, especially the influence of brand elements? Although indications are that sports related brand elements should influence brand attitude and in turn positively influence brand loyalty, this has never been researched against the backdrop of an unexpected event.

Adopting a post-positivist approach, a quantitative study was undertaken to answer the research questions. An anonymous online survey yielded 361 usable responses, of which 103 were from Crusaders fans. The analysis was conducted as two studies: (1) the whole participant group and (2) only the Crusaders fans. Study one provided demographic data and consumer views on sports brand elements influencing brand attitudes, either side of an unexpected event. For study two, factor analysis and structural equation modelling provided an indication of the hypothesized relationships between certain brand elements (name, logo, characters, pageantry) and past success on attitude to the brand and thence to brand loyalty.

Findings indicate that before such an event, only name and characters exerted a positive influence on attitude towards the brand, whereas after the event, name, characters, logo and past success all exerted an influence on attitude. In neither situation did pageantry exert a significant influence on brand attitude. In both situations, attitude influenced brand loyalty positively.

This study seeks to contribute empirical evidence for academics and practitioners alike, that supports the identification of relevant brand elements influencing brand attitudes and brand loyalty, in a sports setting. Since loyalty is longitudinal in nature, further unique temporally orientated insights into potential societal attitude shifts, are also contributed.

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## 1.0 Introduction

On 15 March 2019 in Christchurch, New Zealand, a gunman entered two mosques in succession and in total killed 51 people and maimed many more. The nation and the world were aghast and horrified by the massacres. Naturally, a great focus fell on compassion towards Muslims, and any aspects of the New Zealand society which could cause offence to that community or which could incite violence against them were soundly examined and often condemned. The Crusaders rugby club came under strong scrutiny – not only because they are based in Christchurch but also because of their various brand elements. With their name, logo and pageantry harking back to the Crusades of old, during which many Muslims were slain, many questioned the appropriateness of these brand elements and the consequent negative impact they might have on the Crusaders brand.

This brought into question the whole notion of sports branding and the effect of a crisis on that branding. It also raised the question of the effect of that crisis over time.

The Crusaders (Crusaders Rugby franchise) is the pre-eminent rugby team of New Zealand. Frequent winners of the Super Rugby challenge between the regional clubs of New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, Argentina and Japan in the 25 years of Super Rugby, they have won 11 titles, been finalists 16 times and semi-finalists 20 times (Crusaders, 2020). The Crusaders have yielded many All Black (New Zealand) rugby players and captains.

New Zealand's All Blacks brand has been conservatively valued up to US\$220 million, placing them in the same league as the Boston Red Sox and Juventus. In New Zealand, it is argued that the consumption of rugby is a religious experience. Further, fans believe rugby to be the religion of New Zealand (Davis & McGinnis, 2016).

The global sports market was worth US\$471 billion in 2018 (Statista, 2020). Contributing to this market, in 2016-2017 the Australian sports industry provided AU\$14.4 billion to their GDP (0.8%) (Australian Government, 2020). By contrast (according to a 2015 report), the economic value of the sport and recreation sector in New Zealand was estimated at NZ\$4.9 billion per annum, which equated to a much bigger 2.3% GDP contribution (Sport NZ, 2019).

The premise of operating a sports team as a brand has become a principal paradigm in the sports industry (Biscia, Ross, Yoshida, Correia, Rosado, & Maroco, 2015). The sport product is unique. It is defined as “any form of physical activity that pits one’s talents against an opponents” (Brooks, 1994; Gladden & Funk, 2002). The performance of the brand varies from week to week and is difficult to control (Gladden et al., 2002).

A loyal sports fan can enrich the brand equity of a team. Brand equity can signify the total value of a brand as a separate asset, provide a description of the beliefs customers have about the brand and measures a customer’s attachment to the brand (Feldwick, 1996). Since fans are an important part of the sports team branding process, it is essential for practitioners to better understand their fans (Kaynak, Erdener, Salman, & Tatoglu, 2008). Additionally, growing commercialisation and professionalisation of team-sport clubs and leagues are driving the need for these sports fan insights.

To gain these insights, it is therefore not surprising that loyalty measurement has been championed by practitioners and academics alike (de Chernatony, Harris, & Christodoulides, 2004a). In a sports setting, developing fan loyalty is seen as an example of building brand equity (Gladden, Milne, & Sutton, 1998; Gladden & Funk, 2001, 2002; Kaynak et al, 2008). Subsequently, a number of studies have examined loyalty in a sports environment (Kaynak et al, 2008) and its contribution to building brand equity.

Perhaps the answer for measurement was recognised by Shimp (2007) and Liu, Li, Mizerski, & Soh (2012) when they argued for brand attitude as a key component for valuing a brand’s equity. In support of these various arguments, the variables that moderate the effects of attitudes and intentions on behaviour call for further investigation (Agarwal & Malhotra, 2005).

The amount of equity that a branded organisation holds is not static in nature (Keller, 2013). In addition, brand elements, such as name, logo, characters, jingles (in the sports environment) and even past success have not been well explored empirically or theoretically (Keller & Lehmann, 2006; Round & Roper, 2017). Their prominence and role changes over a period of time. Similarly, although some research has analysed sports consumer experiences in a variety of areas (Gladden & Milne, 1999; Ross, 2006; Funk, Beaton, &

Alexandris, 2012; Petrick, Bennett, & Tsuji, 2013), there has been limited research into spectator constructs focusing on stadium entertainment and rituals exists in academic literature. It is thus important that the dynamic nature of branding concepts is acknowledged, conceptualised and studied (Round & Roper, 2015). Such dynamism can be significantly prompted by a crisis.

A crisis is an unexpected and abrupt event that threatens both a brand's financial and reputational assets (Hegner, Beldad, & Kamphuis op Heghuis, 2014). Often rebranding ensues after a crisis. However, any re-branding initiatives undertaken by an organisation is a perilous journey that can significantly impact brand loyalty and brand equity. Therefore, it is important to understand the background factors influencing an individuals' beliefs and evaluation (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010; Taylor, Ishida, & Donovan, 2016) before such steps are actioned.

The predominant practice of single point in time studies, providing empirical evidence of the psychological processes to develop consumer loyalty, has been largely ignored (Taylor, et al., 2016). Moreover, longitudinal studies are almost completely absent in sports marketing literature (Funk, 2017). Multiple time periods to examine the evolutionary process are important in future research (Brodie, Whittome, & Brush, 2009). Despite these arguments for more temporal analysis in academic research, there do not appear to be any studies that have linked the impact of time and an unexpected event.

## **1.1 Research Questions**

These academic observations provide the foundation for the following main research questions:

- a) Which brand elements of a sports team would have the greatest impact on attitude to that brand and consequently brand loyalty?
- b) How will time and an unexpected event change attitudes to a brand, especially in terms of the influence of brand elements?

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

Given the impact of an unexpected external event, the research objectives were to determine:

- 1) What the effect of brand name on brand attitude is
- 2) What the effect of brand logo on brand attitude is.
- 3) What the effect of pageantry on brand attitude is.
- 4) What the effect of characters on brand attitude is
- 5) What the effect of past success on brand attitude is.
- 6) What the effect of brand attitude on brand loyalty is.
- 7) To explore the difference in all of the above between the time
  - Before an unexpected external event, and
  - After an unexpected external event

## **1.3 Research Aims**

Although indications are that sports related brand elements should influence brand attitude and in turn positively influence brand loyalty, this has never been researched against the backdrop of an unexpected event.

Using the Super Rugby sports competition setting and uniquely moderated by an unexpected event, this research aims to test the constructs and pathways between brand name, brand logo, event pageantry, sports team character factors and their respective influence on both brand attitudes and brand loyalty.

This study seeks to contribute empirical evidence for academics and practitioners alike, that supports the identification of relevant brand elements influencing brand attitudes and brand loyalty, in a sports setting. Since loyalty is longitudinal in nature (Heere & Dickson, 2008) further unique temporal orientated assessments (to identify potential societal attitude shifts and trends), are also contributed.

## **1.4 Research Methodology**

A review of extant literature was undertaken. This provided a direction for the identification of the research questions and formulation of the research hypotheses.

Development of the conceptual model followed. The aim of the methodology was to test the conceptual model using an instrument that would measure the brand elements, brand attitude and brand loyalty constructs in the research, their relationships, their validity and relative importance.

A quantitative approach was used for testing and validating two models. These two models would straddle an unexpected event to collect data from two time periods in a single study with the same participants. Data were collected by an online anonymous survey instrument which employed a snowball sampling distribution technique.

## **1.5 Contribution to academic literature**

From an academic perspective, it was envisaged that a number of areas would benefit from this research.

The main academic contribution would be that this research offered insights into brand attitude, brand loyalty and brand equity measurement in not only sports related research but wider brand management study.

The influence of various brand elements on brand attitude and subsequent brand loyalty would have been tested and substantiated, which would be assumed to be positive and significant.

The research would have resulted in the development of two higher level models measuring the impact of time (in a single study) by straddling an unexpected event. These models would also have been tested against the criteria of reliability and validity.

Finally, the lack of temporal research has been a matter of concern to researchers across a variety of disciplines. This study aimed to address this concern and contribute to the body of knowledge in this regard.

## **1.6 Contribution to practitioner literature**

From a practitioner perspective the research would have addressed the impact of specific brand elements on brand attitude in a sports environment.

This study would have demonstrated how an unexpected shocking event can influence changes in consumer attitude and behaviours.

Furthermore, sports related organisations would have been equipped with an instrument with which to measure sports brand elements having the greatest impact on brand attitude and subsequent sports brand loyalty. As a result, the sports industry should be able to acquire some insights into what aspects they should be focusing on in order to improve sports fan loyalty. This would impact on strategic planning, implementation and evaluation of their current and future commercial activities.

## **1.7 Thesis outline**

### **Chapter 2.0: Literature Review**

The literature review covers the evolution of the concepts of brand equity, brand loyalty, brand attitude, brand elements, unexpected events and temporal analysis. Consideration is given to the variables of brand name, brand logo, pre-game pageantry, team characters, past success, brand attitude and brand loyalty.

### **Chapter 3.0: Theoretical background, Research Questions and Research Objectives**

The preceding literature review presents researchers with unanswered questions. Subsequently, the main queries of interest are identified and inform the ensuing research questions and research objections presented in this chapter. The theoretical lenses which informed this research are also expanded upon.

## **Chapter 4.0: The Conceptual Model and Research Hypotheses**

This chapter covers the creation of the conceptual model which is based on the literature review. Consideration is given to the various factors of the model and how best to measure them. Some further considerations are introduced and finally the model plus the research hypotheses are presented.

## **Chapter 5.0: Research Design and Methodology**

Methodology for testing the conceptual model is illustrated in terms of the research paradigm. Quantitative assessment is introduced along with a means of testing and validating the model. The data collection methods and analysis are covered. This chapter focuses more on the underlying theory of the study, where the next chapters focus on the practical execution of the enquiry design.

### **Chapter 5.2 | 5.3: Survey Instrument development and data collection**

This chapter describes the development and testing of the online survey questionnaire, the data collection procedures and the preparation of the data for analysis.

## **Chapter 6.0: Data Analysis**

The analysis of the online survey data is divided into two studies. Study one includes the whole participant group. Study two includes Crusader fans only. Study one provided demographic data and consumer views on sports brand elements influencing brand attitudes, either side of an unexpected event. For study two, factor analysis and structural equation modelling was undertaken to determine the validity and reliability of the research model.

## **Chapter 7.0: Discussion and Interpretation of Research Findings**

This chapter discusses the findings of the research in terms of the research hypotheses and research objectives. It also seeks to highlight prominent links between the literature review and two studies.

**Chapter 8.0 | 9.0: Limitations and directions for future research, conclusion contributions of the research.**

Finally, the conclusion provides an overview of what the research as achieved, in terms of answering the research questions. Limitations of the research are noted and directions are given for areas of future research.



## **2.0 Literature Review**

If one looks at professional sports, week to week success is inherently unpredictable. Despite the desire by loyal fans and management to win every game, short term approaches (based on winning alone) do not guarantee steady and long-term revenue flows. Therefore, a broader, long-term focus is warranted (Kaynak et al., 2008).

To augment long term brand management strategies, loyalty is a core component of a firm's brand equity. The positive influence of loyal customers provides an opportunity for revenue premiums, a barrier to entry and time to respond to a competitor's innovations. Loyalty is of such importance that other measures, such as perceived quality and associations (including brand elements like name, logo, rituals and traditions), are often evaluated based on their ability to influence it (Aaker, 1996b).

The following subsections explore the relevant factors that can affect, or be affected by, brand loyalty, especially in a sports environment.

### **2.1 Brand Equity**

Because strong brand equity is recognised as a valuable asset to an organisation (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000) and brand loyalty is the essence of a brand's equity (Aaker, 1991) it is important to appreciate the value loyalty creates for an entity (Aaker, 1996b).

To understand the composition of a brand's value, empirical studies illustrate that high brand equity is the culmination of positive customer loyalty, high quality brand perception and strong brand associations (Yoo et al., 2000). Further, brand equity is characterised by negative or positive associations with a brand attribute, like the brand name or logo (Aaker, 1991; 1996b). Building on this concept, Keller (2003) categorises these types of brand associations as product-related and non-product related attributes and includes attitudes as an additional measurement component. In sum, it is the consistent (behavioural related) purchases mixed with a favorable attitude (Wilkie, 1994) towards these brand attributes that forms brand loyalty.

## 2.2 Brand Loyalty

Consumer loyalty has been the most frequently cited consumer-based criterion for evaluating brand success (de Chernatony, Dall Olmo Riley, & Harris, 1998). Extant literature describes loyalty in many ways. As far back as the early 1970's, brand loyalty was expressed by a set of six collective conditions. These conditions include, the (1) biased, (2) behavioural response, (3) expressed over time, (4) by some decision-making unit, (5) with respect to one or more alternative brands and (6) is a function of psychological processes (Jacoby and Kyner, 1973). As well as being recognised as a significant element in supporting sales flow, market share and stable demand over time (Aaker, 1991; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Iglesias, Singh, & Batista-Foguet, 2011; Pauwels-Delassus & Descotes, 2013) loyalty has been further described as something that customers may exhibit to services, brands, product categories, stores and activities (Uncles, Dowling, & Hammond, 2003). Ultimate customer loyalty is a function of personal fortitude, social bonding, perceived product superiority and their synergetic consequence (Oliver, 1997). A more precise description purports that brand loyalty is a deeply held commitment by customers, to rebuy a preferred product/service consistently in the future. This results in repetitive same brand purchasing, despite situational influence and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour (Oliver, 1999).

While some authors emphasise brand loyalty as consistent purchase and favourable attitude towards a particular brand, others argue a position leaning more towards behaviour than to attitude (Kaynak et al., 2008). Purporting a more balanced approach, true loyalty involves both an attitudinal and a behavioural disposition toward a product/service (Petrick et al., 2013).

To address these varying points of view, three categories for measuring loyalty have been identified: attitudinal, behavioural and a fusion of both (Jacoby, Chestnut, & Fisher, 1978). Accordingly, behavioural loyalty is essential but not enough for brand resonance to occur (Kaynak et al., 2008). While exact definitions for brand loyalty remain elusive, many empirical research examples (Kim, Morris, & Swait, 2008; Maderer & Holbrügge, 2019; Singh, Iglesias, & Batista-Foguet, 2012; Taylor, et al., 2016) still follow Day's (1969) original observation that loyalty be evaluated by both behavioural and attitudinal criteria.

### **2.2.1 Attitudinal Loyalty**

Attitude is the predisposition of the consumer to evaluate some symbol or object or aspect of their world in a favourable or unfavourable manner (Katz, 1960). It is also a general evaluation of people, advertisements, objects or issues (Ajzen, 2001; Solomon, Russell-Bennett, & Previte, 2019). More recently, Fishbein et al. (2010) have affirmed that attitude is a person's disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to a psychological object, or as a summary evaluation.

In 1961, Fishbein proposed his theory for the relationships between beliefs about an object and the attitude toward that object. Further, this theory argues that (1) a person holds many positive or negative beliefs about any given object, values, goals and attributes; (2) a mediating evaluative response i.e. attitude is associated with each related object; (3) these evaluative responses summate; (4) the summated responses are associated with the attitude object and hence (5) in the future, the attitude object will prompt this aggregated evaluative response, producing the attitude (Fishbein, 1963). In the wake of this theory and motivated by a desire to study the relationship between both the attitude and resulting behaviour, the multi-attribute model for attitude measurement was first developed by Fishbein in 1967 (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Fishbein's behaviour intentions or extended model is an adaption of Dulany's theory of propositional control and instrumentality (Dulany, 1968; Fishbein, 1967; Ryan & Bonfield, 1975). The model proposes a causal flow among three cognitive variables – beliefs, evaluations or attitudes and intentions. Behavioural intentions are an indication of the effort a person is willing to exert in order to perform the behaviour. A basic premise of Fishbein's attitude model is that beliefs cause attitude.

Brand attitude can be defined as an individual's overall evaluation of a brand (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). An attitude towards a brand depends on a consumer's own perceptions of a brand and is a reliable predictor of consumer's behaviour toward brands (Liu et al., 2012; Shimp, 2007). Brand attitudes are significant because they often form the basis for consumer behaviour (Bettman, 1986). Brand attitude is also strongly associated with brand loyalty and purchase intentions (Chaudhuri et al., 2001; He, Chen, & Alden, 2016; Keller, 2003).

Further constructive views on attitudes suggest individuals are evaluating objects by ‘on the spot’ decisions. This implies that attitudes are temporary and depend on the situation. Moreover, these temporary evaluations that are formed are based upon a blend of stored representations of information and attitude objects (Taylor, et al., 2016). Importantly, these temporal attitudes provide researchers with a useful measurement tool for analysing an organisations brand elements; antecedents of brand loyalty.

As consumers may stay committed to a brand for a lengthy time, it is important to consider those individuals having favorable attitudes towards the brand (Baldinger & Rubinson, 1996). Further, the attitudinal element of brand loyalty is a tendency for a customer to exhibit a similar attitude continuously over time, in situations a person has encountered before (Reynolds, Darden, & Martin, 1974). In support, attitudinal loyalty is a consumer’s predisposition towards a brand as a function of psychological processes, which includes attitudinal preference and commitment towards the brand (Jacoby et al., 1978). To achieve greater loyalty, a deeper attitudinal attachment is required (Keller, 2003).

Abstracting loyalty in terms of attitudes provides a means to understand the psychological processes responsible for variations in team related attitudes. Consequently, resistant attitudes and subsequent behaviour can be possible causal indicators of loyalty and viewed as possible determinants of team loyalty. Persistence, resistance, impact on cognition and congruence of an attitude with behaviour may unite or detach with one another resulting in an overall level of loyalty (Funk, Haugtvedt, & Howard, 2000a).

### **2.2.2 Attitudinal and Behavioural Loyalty**

Backing these composite loyalty measuring tools, previous research has shown that individuals’ support for a particular sports team could be strong regardless of actual attendance (Murrell & Dietz, 1992). Therefore, genuine loyalty exists only when the customer regularly purchases the service/product and displays a strong, positive attitude towards a brand (Day, 1969).

Importantly, sports fans who espouse their loyalty towards a team have an attitude bias that is both persistent over time and resistant to change. Further, attitude strength or degrees of personal commitment towards a sports team are effective guides to behaviour (Mahony,

Madrigal, & Howard, 1999). However, the relationship between these behaviours and attitudes in the sport locale can be complicated (Kaynak et al, 2008).

Contributing to these complications, loyalty is longitudinal in nature (Heere et al., 2008). It is also a relationship between a consumer's relative attitude and repeat purchase. Therefore, the strength of this relationship can be mediated by situational factors and social norms over time (Dick & Basu, 1994). Consumers become loyal by progressing from a cognitive to an affective and finally to a conative phase (Oliver, 1999). Conative, affective and cognitive antecedents of relative attitude contribute to customer loyalty, together with perceptual, motivational and behavioural consequences (Dick et al., 1994).

To help with this, a number of studies stemming from Aaker's (1996a) and Keller's (2003) brand equity models have examined the concept of loyalty in a sports setting (Kaynak et al, 2008). In professional sports, (Gladden et al., 1998) conceptualised their own sports related brand equity model. Likewise, Gladden et al. (2001; 2002) and Kaynak et al. (2008), developed their own antecedents for measuring fan loyalty.

Fan loyalty to a team, was observed as the most important factor in determining a spectator's desire (behavioural intention) to attend live sporting events (Wakefield & Sloan, 1995). This loyalty is positively influenced by brand attitude. Both product related attributes (success, star players, head coach) and non-product related brand attributes such as tradition or logo, can all have an impact on attitudes and behaviour (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer, & Exler, 2008). Supported by Jacoby et al.'s (1978) earlier argument, the blending of behavioural and attitudinal information into a composite loyalty measure suggests congruence exists between attitudes and behaviour (Kraus, 1995).

As previously discussed, Wilkie's (1994) definition of brand loyalty suggests that customers are loyal when both behaviour and attitude are favorable. Sports team loyalty involves a person forming a psychological connection to a team. This, results in enduring and consistent attitudes and behaviours towards a team (Funk & James, 2001). From a temporal perspective, team loyalty is defined as an enduring allegiance to a particular team (Wakefield et al., 1995).

The importance of a stable fan base as an imperative driver of a team's competitive advantage is also recognised and summarised as follows: "First, brand loyalty ensures a more stable following even when the core product's performance falters (i.e. team losses). Second, brand loyalty creates opportunities for product extensions beyond the core product" (Bauer et al., 2008; Gladden et al., 2001).

In previous research, behavioural loyalty was measured through the propensity to purchase team merchandise, game attendance and the number of years as a fan. However, more recent studies in professional sports have added the frequency of following a particular team through various media platforms and participation relating to the team, as loyalty predictors (Kaynak et al., 2008).

Behavioural loyalty represents past behaviour, as well as behavioural intentions (Bauer et al., 2008). By transferring the loyalty concept to fan behaviour, the following activities constitute past loyal behaviour in the team sport context: attending the favorite club's games live in the stadium, watching the favorite club's games on television, consuming other club-related media, purchasing club merchandise, wearing the colors or logo of the favorite club, and trying to convince others that the favorite club should be supported (Bauer et al., 2008; Funk & Pastore, 2000b; Gladden et al., 2001; Mahony et al., 1999; Shank & Beasley, 1998; Trail, Fink, & Anderson, 2003).

In summary, Funk et al. (2001) purport that team loyalty pertaining to sport involves an individual to form a psychological connection to a team which results in enduring and consistent attitudes and behaviours towards a team. Adaptation of this assessment would encourage studies that explore the determinants of attitude formation from loyal team fans (Kaynak et al., 2008). In addition, temporal research is needed to truly explore the dynamics of loyalty (Bauer et al., 2008).

Loyal sports fans are individuals who will remain with the team over an extended period of time. The repeat patronage, (an indicator of behavioural consistency), that depicts loyalty, is a significant financial ambition for many sports franchises, and yet true loyalty needs to be considered as more than simply the inertia of engaging in team-related behaviours (James, Kolbe, & Trail, 2002).

Branding plays an important role by influencing fan preferences and by differentiating it from competitor club and alternative leisure activities. Further concept development and operationalisation of brand loyalty in team sport is explored in Bauer et al.'s (2008) empirical study of fan behaviour. Drawing on Keller's (1993) conceptualisation of consumer-based brand equity, Gladden et al.'s (2001) research tool provides researchers with a model to gain sports fan insights, by measuring thirteen significant brand loyalty predictors. These included success, star player, head coach, management, logo design, stadium, product delivery, tradition, escape, fan identification, peer group acceptance, nostalgia and pride in place.

Further, to overcome perceived brand measurement limitations researchers refined and modified their sports measurement model by classifying items into benefits, attributes and attitudes. Additional respective modifications to the classification scheme were made by defining star player, success, team members, head coach and team performance as product-related attributes (Bauer et al., 2008).

On the other hand, non-product related attributes are external aspects of the core product and influence perceptions (not performance) of the team brand. These include logo, club colours, club culture, values, club history and tradition, fans, sponsor and regional provenance (Bauer et al., 2008).

### **2.3 Brand Elements**

Due to the growing awareness that brands are one of the most valuable intangible assets that firms have, branding has emerged as a top management priority (Keller et al., 2006).

Brand elements are trade-markable devices that differentiate and identify brands.

These include brand names, logos, symbols, URL's, characters, slogans, spokespersons, jingles, packages and signage (Kotler, & Keller, 2015).

Brands offer consumers instant identification, promising reliable, consistent standards of quality, size, taste or even psychological satisfaction. Brands are also assembled on differences in images, meanings and associations (Kaynak et al., 2008).

While extant literature reveals various perspectives on the types of brand associations Keller (1993) proposes that there are three kinds of associations. These include attitudes, benefits and attributes. Attributes are typically the descriptive features of a particular brand, which typifies as a means of symbolising what a consumer receives when consuming the product. Further, attributes can be divided into two groups namely non-product related and product related.

Product-related attributes are the elements that are necessary for performing the service/product function that the individuals seek. In terms of team sports, product-related attributes represent those factors that add to the performance of a sports team. Contributing performance factors may include success, star players and head coach (Gladden et al., 2002).

Non-product-related attributes are categorised as external elements of the services/products that relate to its consumption, although they do not affect the performance of the service/product. Four main types of non-product-related attributes exist. These include brand personality, user, usage imagery (where and in what types of situations the product or service is used) and feelings and experiences (Kaynak et al., 2008; Keller, 2003).

In the sports setting, the non-product related attributes can be interpreted as tradition, stadium, product delivery and logo design. The process of generating brand associations and logos plays an important part for spectators watching a game (product delivery). Where fans can be entertained, this can spark the motivation for sport support (Kaynak et al., 2008).

For assets or liabilities to stimulate brand equity, they must be linked to the name and symbol of the brand. If there is a change these brand elements, this may affect a firm's assets and liabilities (Aaker, 1996b).

Keller et al., (2006) argue little academic research attention has been given to brand elements outside the brand name category.



### 2.3.1 Brand Name

A name is a simple thing, it is a label. However, names are seldom neutral. They may be labels, but they are also evaluations, evaluations from instinct and intuition, not from logical analysis. Two opposing principles for brand nomenclature exist: firstly, the Joyce principle where brand names depend on phonetic symbolism to communicate an idea and secondly the Juliet principle (shaped by Shakespeare's "What's in a name?" quote) in which a name is justified by its traditional association. A word can also have a symbolic function arising from the associations it produces in the minds of consumers (Collins, 1977).

Of all the marketing variables, it is the brand name, which receives the most attention by consumers (de Chernatony & McDonald, 2004b). For many organisations the brand name and what it represents are its most important asset (Aaker, 1991). Further, brand names are considered the most central of all brand elements and one of the many antecedents influencing brand attitude (Keller, 2003).

A brand name enables an individual to identify the respective brand, reinforces the brand personality and is evidence that the producer accepts responsibility for the quality of it. The brand name is an unchangeable part of the marketing mix purported Collins (1977).

Contrary to Collins (1977) argument that the brand name is an unchangeable part of the marketing mix, Holt, (2002), Holt, Quelch, & Taylor (2004), Round et al. (2017) acknowledge (and provide examples) of societal attitude shifts that change the course of branding decisions.

Resulting from both societal and sponsorship pressure (Adweek, 2020) on 03 July 2020, NFL's Washington Redskins franchise announced the retirement of the Redskins name and logo (Appendix 3). By contrast, on 02 October, 2001, two years after taking ownership of the NFL franchise, Daniel Snyder stated "we are never going to change the name of the Washington Redskins" (USA Today, 2013). Having resisted for nearly two decades and facing financial threats from stadium sponsor FedEx and Nike's withdrawal of Redskins merchandise from its online store, Snyder changed his stance. The Redskins name lasted a total of 87 years and now it has been retired (Stuff, 2020c).

Similarly, facing societal pressure after the 15 March 2019 Christchurch Islamic mosque attacks, a New Zealand Super Rugby team were also asked to consider the appropriateness of their team name and logo, which originates from historic religious conflicts between Muslims and Christians (Troughton, 2019; Wall, 2019). Subsequently, the Christchurch based Crusaders Super Rugby franchise reconsidered their brand elements including name, logo and pre-game pageantry. This review was initially supported by NZR's CEO Steve Tew's declaration that keeping the Crusaders branding was "untenable" (ODT, 2019; RNZ, 2019). To date, the Crusaders name has been retained, the logo changed and pre-game pageantry modified to distance themselves from the battle horses, swords and medieval knights parades of old (Stuff, 2019).

Like both the aforementioned sports teams, an organisation's name and logo represent the articulation of a company's uniqueness in the mind-set of the stakeholders, and an identity that is distinct from its rivals. In addition, the corporate name is a key and important aspect that influences the perception or value of a company's logo (Foroudi, Melewar, & Gupta, 2014).

### **2.3.2 Brand Logo**

A logo is defined as a graphic representation or image that triggers memory associations of the target brand. The importance of a visually strong logo is recognised by Peters (1999) "Humans think visually". A picture is really worth a million words. Great brands have readily identifiable icons – just ask Nike or Apple - strong simple images that connect with customers" (Walsh, Page Winterich, & Mittal, 2010).

Updating a logo is easier than updating the brand name (Müller, Kocher, & Crettaz, 2013). A good logo contributes to building a good brand equity (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012; Kim & Lim, 2019).

Reference to the word logo can describe a variety of graphic and typeface elements (Henderson & Cote, 1998). A bite-bitten apple for Apple, a swoosh shape for Nike, and a yellow capitalized 'M' for McDonald's. These are a few examples of well-known logos, with or without their name, to identify itself or their products' (Henderson et al., 1998; Kim et al., 2019).

Organisations spend remarkable amounts of time and money to have effective logos. For example, Accenture spent US\$100 million in 2000, and BP spent US\$211 million in 2008 (Kim et al., 2019). Although PepsiCo took five months to redesign their logo and spent US\$1 million in 2008 (Zmuda, 2008), replacing old logos on all the trucks, vending machines, stadium signage and point of sale materials around the globe amounted to several hundred million dollars (Peterson, Alshebil, & Bishop, 2015).

With such huge financial investments at stake, companies are warned that they should conduct careful research and thorough analyses to align logos with their strategic directions (Kim et al., 2019). Any periodical logo redesign undertaken should be aligned with rapidly changing market conditions. Revolutionary (versus evolutionary) logo design is preferred when firms change their strategies significantly or when organisations choose to revamp their image by dispelling negative consumer perception (Airey, 2009).

Although past empirical research investigating logo changes has been scant (Peterson et al, 2015) the focus on the logo element of branding research has been increasing (Kim et al., 2019).

### **2.3.3 Pageantry**

Pageantry and ritual have been mainstays of urban culture since the Middle Ages (Roberts, 2017).

Numerous descriptions for pageantry exist. It can be described as a spectacular display or ceremony (Anderson, 2007) a splendid display; gorgeous, colourful, or spectacular show, pomp or pageants or tableaux collectively; the public performance or display of these (OED, 2020).

The term ritual refers to a type of expressive, symbolic activity constructed of multiple behaviours that occur in a fixed episodic sequence and that tend to be repeated over time. Ritual behaviour is dramatically scripted and acted out and is performed with formality, seriousness, and inner intensity (Rook, 1985).

The combination of having a winning team and loyal fans can result in higher attendance at games. However, professional sports team administrators recognise the importance of promoting the stadium experience as more than just the game (Wakefield et al., 1995).

Attraction to sport is partly attributable to an entertainment (Sloan, 1979). While one can acknowledge that team performance is difficult to control, a spectators experience in the stadium environment, can be impacted (Brooks, 1994). Marching bands, stadium music, tailgating (entertainment outside of the stadium before the game) and other traditional activities may all serve to enhance the overall spectator stadium (Gladden et al., 1998).

The New Zealand All Blacks haka, 'Kapa O Pango,' is performed at the beginning of every Rugby Union game played. It is the pre-game ritual for the players, the opposition and fans. Similar to a national anthem, the haka creates a strong patriotic feeling and cultural uniqueness for fans and players alike (Murray, 2000; Davis et al., 2016). Despite rugby being in a non-religious domain, this ritualistic "pilgrimage" represents a profound and sacred meaning for New Zealanders (Davis et al., 2016).

Rituals can help link ordinary games to those special ones, and a team's ordinary seasons to more extraordinary ones. Rituals can bring emotions tied to past game experiences to bear on current ones. For many teams/events, the rituals associated with the service offering are some of the most distinctive brand associations. Ohio State University's "Dotting of the i", Texas A&M University's standing as "The 12th Man", "My Old Kentucky Home" sung at the Kentucky Derby; Florida State University's hurling of a flaming lance at midfield; and the practice by Wrigley Field bleacher fans of throwing opponents' home run balls back onto the field are examples of these such rituals. Importantly, these traditions serve to provide a measure of added value to the spectator, and offering a differentiation from competing offerings (Underwood, Bond, & Bauer, 2001).

These aforementioned sports team rituals provide opportunities for organisations to create unique and differentiating stadium experiences for consumers. Although research by Gladden et al., (1999), Ross, (2006); Funk et al. (2012); Petrick et al. (2013) analyses the sports consumer experience in a variety of areas, limited spectator constructs and analysis focusing on stadium entertainment and rituals exists in academic literature.

### **2.3.4 Characters**

There is evidence that popular sports team characters, such as head coaches and high level players can improve a club's image, which may lead to a higher brand profiles and increased revenue streams (Kerr & Gladden, 2008; Maderer et al., 2019).

#### **2.3.4.1 Head Coach**

A coach with a proven track record can instantly enhance the brand equity of a sports team through stakeholder expectations of success. Other areas of influence a head coach can improve brand equity could be the frequency with which the team wins (Gladden et al., 1998).

Further, a positive relationship between team merchandise sales and the head coach was noted in research by Gladden et al. (2001).

#### **2.3.4.2 Star Player**

Like other sporting codes around the globe, New Zealand rugby has its star players. In New Zealand's dominant rugby sports environment, star players like Richie McCaw and Dan Carter are perceived like rock stars (Davis et al., 2016).

A sports team that is successful in recruiting a star player, or a player that generates astonishing statistics, acquires immediate media exposure. The exploits of a star player increase ticket sales, enhance the atmosphere at matches and increase merchandise sales (Farrell, 1984; Gladden, et al., 1998).

The support of fans is not limited to their favourite club. Fans may not only be committed to one or more clubs, but also to particular players. This becomes visible when star players change clubs (Maderer et al., 2019) (e.g. Dan Carter's 2020 move from the Crusaders to the Blues and Beauden Barrett's 2020 move from the Hurricanes to the Blues Super Rugby franchise also (Stuff, 2020a).

The presence of star players may have an important impact on the loyal fan. Interestingly, the highly mobile nature of today's professional athlete (like Dan Carter and Beauden

Barrett) may in-fact decrease their importance to the committed team fan (Kaynak et al., 2008).

## **2.4 Past Success**

Alignment between business operations and business objectives will be stronger if there is evidence of past project success (Reich & Benbasat, 2000).

In a professional sports era, winning may contribute to brand equity by increasing ticket sales, merchandise sales, enhancing the atmosphere at games, attracting extensive media exposure and attracting corporate sponsorship. Unfortunately, team success is one of the hardest antecedents to control (Gladden et al., 1998).

Fans of teams with extensive successful histories (e.g., Montreal Canadians, New York Yankees and Notre Dame football) incorporate great moments and memories into their sense of team and their sense of self. Team/league history and tradition as one of four key drivers of fan loyalty, growth and continuity (Passikoff, 1997; Underwood et al., 2001).

Despite results showing the success of the team not being a significant predictor of brand loyalty (Gladden et al., 1999; Gladden et al., 2001), further research has been encouraged to understand whether team success is in-fact a team loyalty predictor (Kaynak et al., 2008).

Fans will avoid projecting an association with an unsuccessful team when their in-group status is perceived as having negative consequences (Snyder, Lassegard, & Ford, 1986; Wann, Hamlet, Wilson, & Hodges, 1995).

## 2.5 Temporal Elements

The importance and role of brand elements change over time (Round et al., 2015). Moreover, the amount of equity that a branded organisation holds is not static in nature (Keller, 2013). It is important that this dynamic nature of branding concepts over time is acknowledged, conceptualised and studied (Round et al., 2015).

Customer value creation is a dynamic process. Therefore the importance and magnitude of the drivers within the customer value–loyalty process are likely to change over time (Parasuraman, 1997). The notion of time consisting, not of sixty minutes in the hour, but of an alternative time archetype consisting of the past, the present or the future is introduced as a more useful approach to temporal theoretical development. This is supported by further assertion that the way time is experienced, can be subjective and that temporal orientation varies person to person (Round et al., 2017).

Multiple time periods to examine the evolutionary process are important in future research (Brodie et al., 2009). These authors also argue the evolution of loyalty intentions research by Johnson, Herrmann, and Huber (2006) may provide a useful starting point for this type of investigation.

Seeking to address some of the temporal research inadequacies, analytical tools to help identify brands and markets vulnerable to “earthquake-like punctuation events” have been proposed (Hamlin, Bishop, & Mather, 2015). Their two New Zealand case studies were goods-based examples. For future research these academics recommended developing a statistical test that incorporates consumer attitude and behavioural intent metrics, that are linked with actual purchasing behaviours. However, the opportunity for temporal analysis was unfulfilled. In support, longitudinal research can be difficult to resource (Round et al., 2017).

Brands need to change dynamically over time in line with societal changes (Holt, 2002, Holt et al., 2004). However, the dominant consumer-based paradigm has led to a static conceptualisation of the brand (Round et al., 2017).

Contributing to this inertia, individuals enjoy the status quo. Confronted with new options, decision makers often settle with the status quo (Russell & Levy, 2012).

Despite this argument, the customer value creation is a dynamic process. Individual's attitudes represent temporary evaluations that are constructed using a combination of a person's stored representations of attitude objects and concurrent information (Van Kleef, Van Den Berg, & Heerdink, 2015). Therefore, research using multiple time periods to examine the evolutionary process of the customer value-loyalty process have been recommended (Brodie et al., 2009).

However, temporal empirical research is challenging in nature and in terms of funding, people and time and thus research can be difficult (Hassett & Paavilainen-Mantymaki, 2013; Round et al., 2017). Despite this argument, tools to help identify brands and markets vulnerable to "earthquake-like punctuation events" have been attempted. Two New Zealand case studies were based on product-based examples and measured attitudes on one side of the "punctuation" events only (Hamlin et al., 2015).

The predominant practice of single point in time studies, providing empirical evidence of the psychological processes to develop consumer loyalty, has been largely ignored (Taylor, et al., 2016). Moreover, longitudinal studies are almost completely absent in sports marketing literature (Funk, 2017). To support this research gap, variables that moderate the effects of attitudes and behavioural intentions need to be investigated (Agarwal et al., 2005).

Drawing on brand equity models (Gladden et al., 1998; Kaynak et al., 2008) and temporal analysis recommendations (Bauer et al., 2008), the framework proposed in the authors study articulates a temporal relationship between both product and non-product brand attributes, respective attitudes and consequential brand loyalty within the context of professional sports.



## 2.6 Unexpected Events

Over time, brands are susceptible to various forms of unexpected events or crises, regardless of whether a brand's conscious deviation from socially acceptable practices or forces and unexpected events beyond the brand's control prompt a crisis. Unexpected crises can have negative ramifications for the brands' consumer relationships and financial assets (Hegner et al., 2014).

A crisis is a "low-probability, high impact event that threatens the viability of the organisation and is characterised by ambiguity of cause, effect and means of resolution, as well as by a belief that decisions must be made swiftly" (Pearson & Clair, 1998).

The specific name of a branded entity is important to some customers on an ongoing basis. Numerous examples show us it is not an inconsequential element, that can be meddled with. For example, Snickers was renamed from Marathon and was still discussed unfavourably in the media (Round et al., 2015) and Royal Mail to Consignia (and back again) at substantial financial expense (Independent, 2002).

Although not a name change, Google decided to change its logo in 2015. Three weeks later, this change did meet any resistance from Google users. However, when the change is radical, customers' reactions can be very negative. In 2010, The GAP company had to go back on its logo change, just seven days after its launch, because of customers' negatives reactions. After Starbucks and Apple changed their logos, they too encountered many negative reactions (Grobert, Cuny, & Fornerino, 2016).

The dominant consumer-based brand paradigm has led to a static conceptualisation of the brand (Holt, 2002; Holt et al., 2004). Moreover, the emphasis on consistency is seen as the "Achilles heel" of the dominant consumer-based branding paradigm (Heding, Knudtzen, & Bjerre, 2009). A brand needs to change dynamically over time in line with societal changes. To support this assertion, much of the value of the brand is regarded as resident within its historical narrative, which changes over time (Lundqvist, Liljander, Gummerus, & van Riel, 2013; Round et al., 2017).

Despite the concentration of scholarly research on emotion-focused coping among sports fans, there have been instances where fans use problem-focused coping in addition to emotion-focused coping, effectively ignoring authority. In 2016, University of North Dakota fans continued to chant “Sioux!” at ice hockey games following the controversial renaming of the University of North Dakota Fighting Sioux to the Fighting Hawks. Fans rejected the university’s actions to eliminate mention of the Sioux and carried on the tradition themselves. These examples are important to understand, not only because they threaten the fans’ identity, but also the image of the team and related stakeholders (Delia, 2019).

Accordingly, social identity is susceptible to identity threat. When identity is threatened, people often engage in coping, defined by Snyder and Dinoff (1999) as, “a response aimed at diminishing the physical, emotional, and psychological burden that is linked to stressful life events and daily hassles”. People engage in emotion-focused or problem-focused coping in response to identity threat (Delia, 2019).

In another North American example and as far back as 2003, the choice to “dehumanize” Native American people through continued use of Native American themed sports team names and mascots (like the Redskins, Braves, Chiefs, Indians and Blackhawks) matters, (Siegel, 2003). Furthermore, Siegel (2003) challenged Major Leagues Baseball (MLB), National Football Leagues (NFL) and their team owners to turn rebranding exercises into complete marketing promotional and merchandising triumphs that celebrate a society free of racial, religious or ethnic stigmas.

In an interesting turn of events, after Washington Redskins owner Daniel Snyder declared “we will never change the name. It’s that simple. Never. You can use caps” (USA Today, 2013; Merskin, 2014) on 13 July 2020, the NFL franchise announced the “retirement” of the Redskins name and logo (Appendix 3). This announcement came soon after three separate letters signed by 87 investment firms and shareholders (worth a collective US\$620 billion) asked Nike, Fedex and PepsiCo to terminate their sponsorship relationships with the NFL Washington Redskins unless the team agrees to change its name (Adweek, 2020).

After Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin was unexpectedly murdered by an assassin with a handgun in 1995, the NBA’s Bullets name change (to Wizards) is one such triumph and an

exemplar of dynamic corporate re-branding in line with desired societal changes (Siegel, 2003). On the other hand, research warns us that changes to a brand name can threaten the survival of a societal group (Round et al., 2017).

Following George Floyd's unexpected death in the USA (BBC, 2020) and the subsequent Black Lives Matter movement (Stuff, 2020b) companies around the world are re-evaluating their products and branding. These include Mars Inc. owned Uncle Bens brand (Reuters, 2020a) and even PepsiCo Inc's 130 year-old brand logo for their Aunt Gemima products (Reuters, 2020b).

Joining these corporate branding reviews, a long list of companies around the globe are beginning to reassess their historic support of cultural appropriation and links to negative branding stereotypes. Mondelez owned Pascall Eskimo lollies (candy), Dreyer/Froneri owned Tip Top Eskimo Pie ice-cream products (Stuff, 2020d), Geechie Boy Mill, B&G Foods Cream of Wheat hot cereal (Stuff, 2020d), Coachella Valley High school in California (Aljazeera, 2014), and Australian based Allens "Chicos" and "Red Skins" candy brands (Stuff, 2020d) are all examples of those organisations reviewing their current brand offerings.

Plenty more examples of culture-based names for sporting teams exist around the world. These include the Chicago Black Hawks, Alcorn state University Braves, Central Michigan University Chippewas, Catawba College Indians, Florida State University Seminoles, Midwestern State University Indians, University of Utah Utes, Indian University-Pennsylvania Indians, Carthage College Redmen, Bradley University Braves, Arkansas State University Indians, Chowan College Braves, University of Illinois Champaign Illini, University of Louisiana-Monroe Indians, McMurry University Indians, Mississippi College Choctaws, Newberry College Indians, Cleveland Indians and the South-eastern Oklahoma State University Savages (Merskin, 2014), Vikings, Saracens (Saracens R.C., 2020) and Crusaders.

Unexpectedly, on Friday 15 March 2019, a gunman entered two Islamic mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. He shot 91 people, killing 51 and wounding 40 (MOH, 2019). Subsequently, the Christchurch based Crusaders Super Rugby franchise reconsidered its name and imagery following criticism of its branding (associated with historic religious conflicts between Christians and Muslims) (Troughton, 2019; RNZ, 2019). This was further supported by NZR CEO Steve Tew's stance that keeping the Crusaders branding was "untenable" (RNZ, 2019, ODT, 2019). Diving into the argument were thirty-eight thousand loyal fans fending off a potential Crusaders name change (Change.org, 2019).

Recognising the depths of fan loyalty from just one (of four) Crusader territories, Hamish Riach, CEO of Canterbury Rugby Union stated "one of the key factors that separates Canterbury rugby from the rest, is the nature of its support base and the depth of the passion our fans display. The legend of the 'one-eyed' Cantabrian has been well earned over many years" (CRSC, 2019).

These examples are important to understand, not only because they threaten the fans' identity, but also the image of the team and related stakeholders (Delia, 2019). If brand love is linked to higher levels of brand loyalty and positive word of mouth (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006), then Crusaders branding changes (RNZ, 2019) are important to consider. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to empirically research attitudes towards the Crusaders branding, their antecedents and influence on brand loyalty, before and after the unexpected 15 March 2019 Christchurch Islamic mosque attacks.

In summary, there are brand elements (in the sports environment) that have not been well explored empirically or theoretically (Round et al., 2017). A review of the extant literature reveals that attitudes to brand elements/attributes can be key antecedents affecting brand loyalty and subsequent brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). In the past, attitudes have been assumed to be lasting evaluations, enduring over time. However recent studies have questioned this viewpoint (Solomon et al, 2019). To support this, there is broad agreement that the amount of equity that a branded entity holds is not static in nature (Keller, 2013). Therefore, time is an implicit relevant variable when considering fluctuations to organisation's brand equity (Russell et al., 2012). Despite this observation, the temporal dimensions of brand equity have rarely been the focus of branding theory or literature (Round et al., 2017) and therefore presents an academic research gap.

Supporting the temporal aspect, social identity theory (SIT) purports that social structures change over time due to cultural, economic and historical circumstances, making them contextual and fluid (Abrams, 1999; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The premise that a group's defining elements are vulnerable to change, highlights the significance (for the researcher) to undertake attitudinal studies using a social identity theoretical lens (Hogg et al., 1988).

Further, in order to understand a consumer's attitude towards an attitude object, the Fishbein multi-attribute model relies on assessing the beliefs a consumer has about several attributes of the object and the importance of those beliefs (Solomon et al, 2019). The successor to the Fishbein model is the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) which includes several important additions, namely subjective norms, normative beliefs and behavioural intentions (Fishbein et al., 1975).

## **2.7 Research Approach**

Following the review of extant literature, this study sought to develop an empirical understanding of the brand elements most affecting attitudes towards brand loyalty, in a sports setting. To extract evidence of any attitudinal shifts, supplementary insights are sought through temporal orientated enquiry.

In order to address unanswered questions more precisely, the following research aims, questions and research objectives were formulated.

### **2.7.1 Research Aims:**

Given an unexpected event, to understand the views of those interested in a certain sport regarding the brand elements and attributes, and their impact on brand loyalty towards a certain club related to the event.

In this instance, the sport is rugby, the club is the Crusaders, and the event is the Christchurch mosque attacks in 2019.

### **2.7.2 Research Question:**

- a) Which brand elements of a sports team would have the greatest impact on attitude to that brand.
- b) How will time and unexpected events change attitude to a brand, especially in terms of the influence of brand elements.

### **2.7.3 Research Objectives:**

Given the impact of an unexpected external event, to determine:

- 1) What the effect of brand name on brand attitude is
- 2) What the effect of brand logo on brand attitude is.
- 3) What the effect of pageantry on brand attitude is.
- 4) What the effect of characters on brand attitude is
- 5) What the effect of past success on brand attitude is.
- 6) What the effect of brand attitude on brand loyalty is.
- 7) To explore the difference in all of the above between the time
  - Before an unexpected external event, and
  - After an unexpected external event

### **3.0 Theoretical Background**

Spectator sports provide a rare sense of community in a rapidly disconnecting society, providing a collective identity, common symbols and reasons for solidarity (Underwood et al., 2001). Motivated by theoretical and empirical deficiencies in their previous sport spectator consumption research scholars argued future research should find a more rigorous theoretical base for a sports related consumption model (Trail, Anderson, & Fink, 2005).

Encompassing these notions of identity and reasoning within the group environment of spectator sport, two theories emerge; namely social identity theory (SIT) and the theory of reasoned action (TRA).

#### **3.1 Social Identity Theory**

Social identity theory (SIT) is a social psychological theory of group processes, intergroup relations and the social self (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). Many studies have used SIT to show how sports teams can provide consumers with a sense of in-group identity (Branscombe & Wann, 1991; Trail, Anderson, & Fink, 2000, 1993; Funk & James, 2004).

Social Identity is defined as “that part of the individuals’ self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance of that membership (Tajfel, 1981; 1982).

Social identification appears to derive from the concept of group identification (Tolman, 1943; Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Originally social identity theory (SIT) was primarily a theory of conflict and co-operation between groups (Tajfel et al., 1979; Hogg, Abrams, & Brewer, 2017).

SIT is intended to be a social psychological theory of intergroup relations, group processes, and the social self. It was developed principally on social factors in perception and on cognitive and social belief aspects of racism, prejudice and discrimination and then fully formulated in collaboration with John Turner and others between the mid 70’s and 80’s (Ashforth et al., 1989; Hogg et al., 1995).

SIT places emphasis on intergroup relations. It is able to describe how a person's position in the social world affects social behaviour (Hogg et al., 1995).

Social identity advocates treat group identification as an aspirational process. An individual will join groups that they perceive to be consonant with (Tajfel, 1969), or an extension of, their self-definition (Tajfel et al., 1979; Lock & Heere, 2017).

The basic idea is that a social category like one's nationality or sports team affiliation (to which a person feels they belong to), provides a self-definition and self-concept. Individuals employ a repertoire of discrete category memberships. Each membership is represented as a social identity that both prescribes and describes a person's attributes as a member of that group. Namely, how one should feel, think and behave. Since these social identities have self-evaluative consequences, group members are motivated to adopt behavioural strategies for achieving out-group/in- group comparisons that favour their respective in group and of course, the self (Hogg et al., 1995).

SIT shows that people see themselves and others as members of specific social groups. These social labels influence emotions and cognitions strongly. Social identification processes are extremely malleable. These can be influenced by personal and contextual variables (Antonetti & Maklan, 2018).

Importantly, within the context of sports, fans differ from spectators by the formation of inferred alliances, whereby fans regard themselves as members of a group (Underwood et al, 2001).

Motives for fan behaviour are considered to exist due to person's social and psychological needs (Trail, et al., 2000). These motives affect sport consumption (Trail, et al., 2003) as well as loyalty (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). A consumer's perception of the psychological significance and value they attach to a sport or a sport team has been shown to be positively correlated to loyalty (Funk et al., 2000b; Petrick et al., 2013).

By extension, the formation of a sport identity occurs through internalisation, a process by which individuals integrate a sport team into self, resulting in the team becoming an integral part of a person's self-identity (Funk et al., 2004).



Moreover, research with sport consumers has used SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1985) to illustrate how teams can provide people with a sense of belonging that fosters an in-group identity (Branscombe et al., 1991; Trail et al., 2000; Wann & Branscombe, 1990, 1993; Funk et al., 2004).

Spectator sports provide an increasingly rare sense of community in today's rapidly disconnecting society, a collective identity, providing common symbols and a reason for solidarity (Lever 1983; Sutton, McDonald, & Milne, 1997). Only under occasional circumstances do products (like Harley Davidson) generate levels of social identification similar to those often associated with sports. Sports fans derive a sense of identity from their affiliation with a team (Wann et al., 1993; Underwood et al., 2001).

A study identified four characteristics of the sports environment that promotes social identity. These included history and tradition, group experience, the role of the physical facility and ritual (Underwood et al, 2001).

Ritualistic activities performed by fans and team officials can foster fan identification. Pre-game activities are ripe for establishing such rituals. These activities provide a degree of added value to the individual, differentiating the event from competing offerings. Further, heightened identification with a market offering should yield increased levels of loyalty to the brand (Underwood et al, 2001).

SIT acknowledges that social structures change due to cultural, economic and historical circumstances, making them contextual and fluid (Abrams, 1999; Hogg et al., 1988; Tajfel et al., 1979). When a social identity is unfavourable, people will endeavour to make an in-group positive by re-evaluating the identity to rediscover or find new meaning, or leave the group if possible (Tajfel, 1974). The premise that groups' defining elements are vulnerable to change, highlights the significance in examining social identity (Hogg et al., 1988) for temporally orientated research.

Distinguishing the in-group from related outgroups and acknowledging group membership contributes to a person's self-image. Individuals develop positive social identity from recognising favourable comparisons between an outgroup and an in-group (Tajfel, 1974).

Team identification involves a cognitive realisation of a connection to a team. In turn, this influences a person's sense of self, and a vested interest in a team's status, all of which has a degree of emotional value to the person. Therefore, team identification is aligned with social identity theory (SIT) (Lock et al., 2017) theorising that people (such as sports fans) derive a greater sense of self from the perceived value, awareness and emotional significance of belonging to a group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The psychological benefits of identifying with a group such as a sports team, also creates a sense of belonging. This often translates into positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes for sport entities (James et al., 2002; Lock et al., 2017; Delia, 2019) therefore providing the bond between SIT and the theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Ajzen, 1991, 2001; Fishbein et al., 1975; Ajzen et al., 1980).

### **3.2 Theory of Reasoned Action**

The original 1961 Fishbein paper identified a consumer's belief about the attributes of an object (Fishbein, 1963). By identifying these specific beliefs, measurements can be extracted to predict consumer attitudes towards a brand or product (Fishbein et al, 1975).

To help uncover these beliefs, a product or service is composed of multiple attributes. In the consumers mind, some of these attributes can be more important than others. The Fishbein multi-attribute model assumes that an individual's attitude towards an attitude object will depend on the beliefs they have about several attributes of the object and the importance of these beliefs (Fishbein, 1967).

Although multi-attribute models have been used extensively by consumer researchers, it has been argued that comprehension of a consumer's attitude towards a product or service and their behaviour towards them was not necessarily a good predictor of actual behaviour (Wicker, 1969).

By contrast, behavioural intention is viewed as the most predictable of behaviours (Fishbein et al., 1975). Behavioural intentions are an indication of the effort a person is willing to exert in order to perform a certain behaviour. Behavioural intentions are impacted by subjective

norms, attitudes and perceived behavioural control. Attitude towards a behaviour is a person's individual level of favourability towards a particular behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

Subsequently, in order to improve its predictive behaviour ability, Fishbein's (1963) expectancy-value model was extended (Fishbein, 1967; Fishbein et al, 2010). Fishbein et al. (1975) proposed that intentions are 1) the antecedents of behaviour, 2) are a function of attitude towards the behaviour and the aggregate of normative beliefs, weighted by an individual's motivation to comply (Fishbein et al, 2010). Following this extension, the updated version became known as the theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Ajzen et al., 1980; Fishbein et al. 2010).

The TRA has been criticised for its assumption that people necessarily engage in elaborate cognition prior to behaving (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). However, researchers subsequently note that this criticism is misguided. In support, a subsequent clarification makes clear that the TRA does not assume that people scrutinise the determinants of their behaviour prior to every behavioural act (Ajzen et al., 1980). Rather, individuals are presumed to form their attitudes while simply pondering their subjective norms and attitudes (Taylor, et al., 2016).

Underpinned by a combined base of SIT and TRA theories, these paradigms provide suitable lenses to examine sports consumer attitudes and behaviour in this study.

In summary, a review of extant literature has presented various research gaps. Therefore, this sports spectator targeted research will explore the relative importance of five brand elements identified as key antecedents to Super Rugby sports brand attitudes. The subsequent impact of these sports brand attitudes on sports brand loyalty is also required for its contribution to overall brand equity. Further, the unique moderation of an unexpected event, tests the impact of time on the antecedents influencing sports brand attitudes, in a single study. These research gaps therefore present an opportunity to frame research questions and research objectives for which this empirical study will attempt to answer.

## 4.0 Research Model and Hypotheses

As the targeted group includes sport spectators, the conceptual model (Figure 1) integrates brand equity frameworks favoured by Aaker (1991, 1996b), Keller (1993) and attitudinal research on the sport spectator by Gladden et al. (2001, 2002). Complimenting these studies, this research is intended to provide a unique layer of temporal attitudinal consumer analysis either side of recent unexpected events in New Zealand. Broadening branding research by Round and Roper (2012) and Round et al. (2017), the temporal measurement differentiates our study from previous academic papers in the sports consumer, crisis management and brand equity fields of academic analysis.

The social–psychological perspective remains the dominant perspective to explain a range of behaviours and attitudes of sport. A number of constructs provide measurement frameworks to examine the relationship between consumer motives and sport consumption related activities (Funk et al, 2012). To understand shifting consumer attitudes and subsequent behaviour as a result of unexpected events, the theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Ajzen, 1991, 2001; Fishbein et al., 1975; Ajzen et al., 1980) underpins the authors empirical research.

Four characteristics of the sports environment promote social identity. Therefore, perceived threats to sports spectators group experience, role of the physical facility, history and rituals (Underwood, et al., 2001) can be explored through a social identity theory (SIT) lens (Tajfel, 1982, Lock et al., 2017). As the proposed sample included members of a group, social identity theory from Tajfel et al. (1979) is also applied. By studying the sport-related social identities of these spectators, the consideration that these identities are susceptible to change over time can be explored (Delia, 2019).

In order to examine the link between brand elements (in a sports setting) and attitude to brand, the author adapts the model proposed by Gladden et al. (2002) which incorporates brand equity conceptualisations from Keller (1993) and Aaker (1991). By measuring sport spectators temporal attitudes towards the selected brand elements, the antecedents influencing brand loyalty and subsequent behavioural intentions can be analysed.

Three unique aspects of the proposed model differentiate the authors research from previous studies. Firstly, the Crusaders three main brand elements (that separate them from their competitors) have been selected. These non-product related attributes include brand name, brand logo and a new addition of stadium pageantry (Bauer et al., 2008). Like the Olympic games pageantry, the unique inclusion of pageantry in this analysis is due to the Crusaders notable pre-game stadium rituals and entertainment. Prior to 15 March 2019, pre-game parades of horses, medieval knights, swords, castles and a stirring “Conquest of Paradise” anthem by Chariots of Fire movie composer, Vangelis were common and unique Crusaders rituals. Secondly, since the inception of the Super Rugby (known also as Super 12 and Super 14) competition in 1996, the Crusaders have been the most successful franchise, winning eleven titles over the past twenty-five years. This winning history has therefore highlighted the profiles of both coaches and players associated with this unprecedented team success. Consequently, product related attributes including characters (players, coaches) and past success complete the fourth and fifth antecedents for their influence on spectator brand attitudes. Thirdly, an unexpected event provides a unique temporal reference point to explore any brand attitude changes before and after the Christchurch Islamic mosque attacks on 15 March 2019, in a single empirical study.

This study is the first to examine empirically, how three brand elements (name, logo and pageantry) together with (product attributes) characters and success, impact brand attitude and subsequent brand loyalty before and after a significant unexpected event.

This focus on attitudes, perceptions and behaviour towards the brand elements in a sport brand equity framework, supports the future research direction and structural equation modelling proposed by Ross (2006) on brand loyalty.

The model treats both the product and non-product attributes of the five individual brand elements, as separate constructs. However, when estimating the model, it is assumed they are partially correlated. Therefore, convergent validity is also tested. It is important to acknowledge the presence of brand attitude antecedents (other than the five selected) that could be used to influence a sport spectator’s brand attitudes. These items were excluded for reasons of parsimony. While this study hypothesises the influence of pageantry, from those consumers able to physically experience a Crusaders home game, in a study setting where there is video access to pre-game entertainment, the research audience may be broadened.

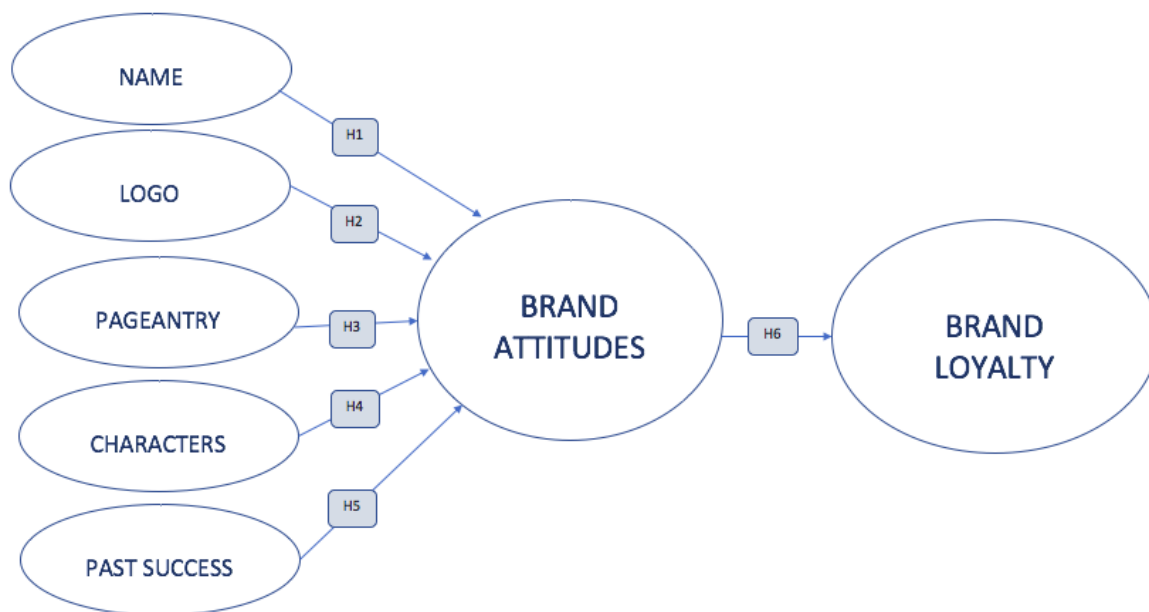


Figure 1: Conceptual model

#### 4.1 Hypotheses

Of all the marketing variables, it is the brand name, which receives the most attention by consumers (de Chernatony & McDonald, 2006). For many businesses the brand name and what it represents are its most important asset (Aaker, 1991). Brand names can be considered the most central of all brand elements and one of the many antecedents influencing brand attitude (Keller, 2003). Therefore the author proposes that:

***H1: The brand name will have a positive impact on brand attitude.***

Logos are key organisational assets that companies spend significant amounts of money and time promoting (Henderson et al., 1998). Rebranding can be a perilous strategy causing serious damage to brand equity and brand loyalty (Müller et al., 2013). The features of a logo are entrenched in the symbol that represents the business and expand upon the customers' perception of the company (Foroudi, Melewar, & Gupta, 2017).

Highly committed, brand loyal customers tend to evaluate freshly designed logos less favourably. A positive brand attitude can be weakened by a redesigned logo, on account of

its unfamiliarity (Kim et al., 2019; Walsh et al, 2010). In addition, customers' perception of a company logo leads to their perceptions of an organisation. However, a badly designed logo can be positively evaluated when customers positively favour the organisation (Kim et al., 2019).

Non-product related brand attributes have a particularly large impact on attitudes (Bauer et al., 2008). On the basis of the foregoing evidence, the author hypothesises that:

***H2: The brand logo will have a positive impact on brand attitude.***

An indicator of community is the manifestation of shared traditions and rituals. They propagate a community's shared consciousness, history and culture. Rituals "serve to contain the drift of meanings. They are conventions that set up visible public definitions" and social solidarity (Muniz Jr. & O'Guinn, 2001).

Research exploring the various facets of sports fan experience, is limited. In support, identifying spectator attributions of meaning to a sport event experience, (Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2010) and improved evaluative measures of customer loyalty in the event industry is needed (Petrick et al., 2013).

Accordingly, if brand analysis focused only on the brand name, an incomplete picture could be obtained (Aaker, 1996a). By channelling social identity theory, four characteristics of the sports environment can be attributed to a social identity influence. These include the group experience, history and tradition, the role of the physical facility and ritual (Underwood et al., 2001). Despite this premise, no prior empirical research has examined the influence and effect of ritualistic pre-game pageantry, on a sports fan's brand attitude. This supports the third hypothesis:

***H3: Pre-game pageantry will have a positive impact on brand attitude.***

A star player is defined as the presence of a player that is outstanding (Gladden et al., 2001). Given the amount of sport promotion that revolves around an athlete and in particular, star

athletes, one might expect there to be a positive relationship between star players and team loyalty (Gladden et al., 2001).

The presence of a head coach that has a track record for success and/or possess significant charisma, is also a significant branding dimension (Gladden et al., 2001). A coach with a proven track record can instantly enhance the brand equity of a sports team through stakeholder expectations of success. Other areas of influence a head coach can improve brand equity could be the frequency with which the team wins (Gladden, et al., 1998).

The presence of star players (Fisher & Wakefield, 1998; Gotthelf, 1999; King, 1998) and the head coach (Gladden et al., 1998) are identified as product-related attributes influencing brand attitudes to a team. To explore these antecedents of brand attitude towards a sports team, the author therefore proposes:

***H4: Team characters will have a positive impact on brand attitude.***

Only under rare circumstances do services or goods (e.g. Harley Davidson) generate levels of social identification similar to those associated with sports (Underwood et al. 2001). Sports fans derive a sense of identity and strength from their affiliation with a sports team (Wann et al., 1993). Fans often see the product, in this case team, as an extension of themselves, making team success synonymous to personal (Schafer, 1969; Cialdini, Borden, Thome, Walker, Freeman, & Sloan, 1976).

In addition, strong alignment between organisational goals, future planning, internal communication processes and past project success were found to influence both short term and long term alignment objectives (Reich et al., 2000), supporting:

***H5: Past team success will have a positive impact on brand attitude.***

Talking negatively about a club may decrease a fan's attitudinal loyalty, resulting in their attitude to depend more on the team performance or even switching their support to another club (Maderer et al., 2019). Supporting this, a positive relationship between attitude and loyalty towards a brand has been established (Starr & Rubinson, 1978).



Researchers view loyalty toward a brand as an outcome of effectively managing knowledge about a brand's attitude toward the brand (Keller, 1993). Therefore, the buyer's attitude toward a brand contributes to brand loyalty (Faircloth, Capella, & Alford, 2001; Liu et al., 2012).

***H6: Positive brand attitude will have a positive impact on brand loyalty.***

## 5.0 Method

### 5.1 Philosophy

A paradigm encompasses two dimensions, firstly philosophical; basic beliefs and assumptions about the world and secondly technical; the methods and techniques adopted when conducting research. From the three main sciences; natural, human and social, the latter two tend to be informed by the post-positivist paradigm. Paradigm's are accompanied with assumptions about reality, knowledge, logic and values. Post-positivist research 'is grounded on the centrality of meaning and language to human affairs'. This research type examines how phenomena are understood by the relevant actors and how values and understandings unfold (Sharp, McDonald, Sim, Knamiller, Sefton, & Wong, 2011).

Although researchers argue about the qualitative/quantitative traditions in both positivist and post-positivist research methodology, a post-positivist approach constitutes the overall conceptual foundation for the research model in this study. Support for this approach is the collection of data in participant's natural settings, recording of theoretical notes, seeking patterns and commonalities, revealing beliefs, placing experiences into words, frameworks to interpret results and that the reader can audit events (McGregor & Murnane, 2010).

Post-positivist methodology has been adopted for this research. Accordingly, the research question is stated, a hypotheses and model are established, the research is developed, data collected, analysed and subsequently verified whether the hypotheses are supported or not (Gliner, Morgan, & Leech, 2000). A quantitative research method with an online anonymous survey as the data collection instrument was applied. Quantitative research methods usually involve a great number of respondents. These methods are intended to produce findings which are generalisable to the target population (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). In order to explore participant experiences, values and beliefs, an optional comments section was provided in the survey for further qualitative analysis.

In line with the authors research objectives, this study was conducted to achieve two objectives:

- 1) To ascertain the temporal effects of unexpected events on brand loyalty.
- 2) To ascertain any relevant impact of brand elements (including both product and non-product attributes) on brand attitude and subsequent brand loyalty.

In the same study, the researcher used these two parts as a backdrop to understand brand loyalty antecedents for two groups with knowledge of unexpected Christchurch events. This analysis was further separated into Study 1; general sample (including Crusaders supporters) and Study 2; those who acknowledged themselves as Crusaders supporters (for structural equation modelling analysis).

## **5.2 Instrument Development**

The questionnaire was constructed based upon a review of extant literature. The questionnaire contained items relating to antecedents of brand attitudes and their subsequent influence on a sports spectator's brand loyalty. While multiple scales have been developed to measure these constructs, relevant items (Appendix 1) were chosen that were deemed to best capture each construct, specifically relating to the Crusaders team "product" and event "packaging". The items were adapted where necessary. All items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Likert-type scales are often used in quantitative questionnaires. These scales are considered suitable for behaviour related research. Although, Likert scales with a 7-point scale are used in this study, Likert scales were designed to be composed of five equal intervals with a neutral midpoint (Hinkin, 1998). However, a 7-point scale is in line with other sports related research (Gladden et al., 2002; Ross, 2008; Maderer et al., 2019; Bauer et al., 2008; Biscaia, Ross, Yoshida, Correia, Rosado, & Marôco, 2016).

Two filtering questions were asked at the start of the online survey. The first question established whether potential participants followed rugby. If they indicated a 'no' response, then they were redirected to a question about any knowledge of the Crusaders Super Rugby franchise. A further 'no' response thanked them for their time and excluded them from the

rest of the survey. For the other participants, they were able to continue with further rugby viewing habits, attitudinal and demographic questions.

To understand normative beliefs and subjective norms, further questions asked if a participant had ever played rugby and how/who participants watched rugby games with.

Age, gender, area of domicile, and club loyalty were ascertained, and since the unexpected Christchurch mosque attacks were carried out in faith based (Islamic) locations and the Crusaders name has historical (Christian) religious links, participants were asked about their own religious affiliations and country of origin.

To test temporal attitude changes, the time of the existence of the attitude to each brand name, brand logo and pageantry item was delineated. Each question opened with “today” or “at the start of 2019, before the Christchurch events occurred”. This approach was developed to ascertain and compare time-relevant attitudes. In order to eliminate researcher bias, reference to the “Christchurch event” was a deliberately unbiased, non-leading description of the 15 March 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks.

Brand attitude was subjected to the influence of five dimensions including name, logo, pageantry, characters and success. Subsequently, brand attitude was then analysed for its effect on brand loyalty.

Multi-item scales were used to measure all the model constructs, apart from brand attitude. The respective items and their sources are listed in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

To operationalise brand attitude, a single-item measure was used. The use of single-item measures is justified on the grounds of parsimony. Based on both Rossiter’s (2002) and de Chernatony et al’s, (2004a) studies and although academically contentious, the use of a single-item measure, only where the construct is doubly (object & attribute) concrete, is supported by Bergkvist and Rossiter (2007).

A four-item affective brand loyalty measure in keeping with scales adapted from Bauer et al. (2008), Wakefield et al., (1995) and Gladden et al. (2001) was used. To ascertain future behavioural intention one additional behaviour related loyalty question was asked. This was

adapted from sports related research by Gladden et al., 2001; Funk et al. (2004) and Bauer et al. (2008).

Save brand attitude, the research model provided a multi-item scale and framework to measure a brand equity related construct in a sports setting. Each dimension was measured by three or four items. Altogether, the final instrument consisted of 20 items. The operationalisation of the constructs is shown in Appendix 2.

Finally, the questionnaire provided opportunity for individual comments on and aspect of the Crusaders branding.

### **5.3 Data Collection**

Data were collected via a voluntary anonymous online, self-administered questionnaire (Appendix 1). The questionnaire was distributed through a variety of email and social media platforms using a snowball sampling technique, designed to limit researcher survey population bias. The sampling consisted of the researcher asking personal contacts across a variety of social media platforms to recruit further potential participants from their respective networks (Hegner, Fenko, & Teravest, 2017). These contacts were often through the administrators of New Zealand Rugby (NZR), New Zealand rugby clubs, rugby unions, dedicated rugby fan groups, stadiums, sport broadcasters, Sport NZ, rugby players, NZ university academics, Master Builders, and South, Mid and North Canterbury Federated Farmers.

A general announcement invited potential participants to click on a Qualtrics survey link, leading to the approximate 10-minute survey, containing twenty-six short questions. This method was seen as advantageous as the internet allows efficient access to a broad New Zealand wide population who could complete the questions leisurely (Richard & Meuli, 2013).

To engage as many participants as possible, the survey was launched after the main New Zealand summer holiday period in 2020 and deliberately closed (out of respect for victim's families) before the one-year anniversary of the Christchurch mosque attacks.

Despite the efficiency of social media distribution of surveys, a typical disadvantage is that the diffusion of the survey instrument is hard for the researcher to control (Maderer et al., 2019).

As an incentive, respondents could enter a draw (at the conclusion of the online survey) for a \$200 Prezzy gift card and indicate whether they wished to receive a summary of the final report. To ensure high quality responses, each returned questionnaire was screened for formal and content consistency. Formal consistency required that most of the questionnaire was completed. Content consistency required that there was some variation in responses. (ie. all items were not rated using precisely the same value). In total 416 surveys were collected. Non-valid questionnaires were discarded resulting in 361 valid questionnaires.

## 6.0 Findings and Analysis

The research aimed to assess the general rugby fan view of certain brand elements both before and after the Christchurch event. However, only the brand loyalty of Crusaders fans would have been impacted by the event. Consequently, only Crusaders fans responded to questions pertaining to the hypotheses. The findings are thus reported as two studies: (1) that of the general fans' views of the brand elements both before and after the event; and (2) the impact of the brand elements on Crusaders fans' brand loyalty before and after the event.

### 6.1 Study 1

Because of the researcher's country of domicile, and the fact that the event had occurred in New Zealand, the majority of the sample were also domiciled in New Zealand.

Of the 361 usable surveys presented for analysis, there was a reasonably equal gender split. (M: 42.9%; F: 51.5%). Of the overall sample, 36% were within the 45-54 age range, with other age groupings (either side of the preceding result), equally distributed (Figure 2).

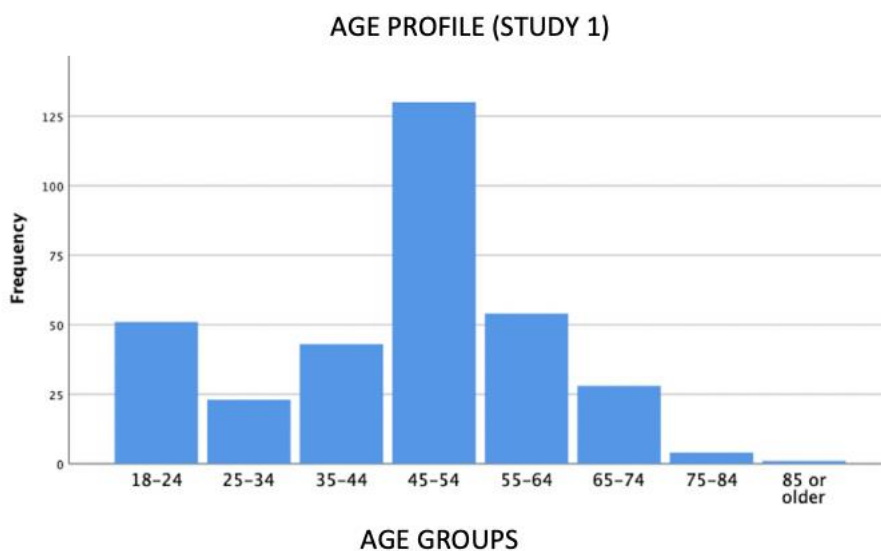


Figure 2: Survey participant age range

Since the researcher’s region of domicile is within the Hurricanes franchise (Super Rugby) territory, this had an impact on the 45.4% contribution of Hurricanes fans, informing the results (Figure 3). Crusaders fans represented 27% of the general survey sample.

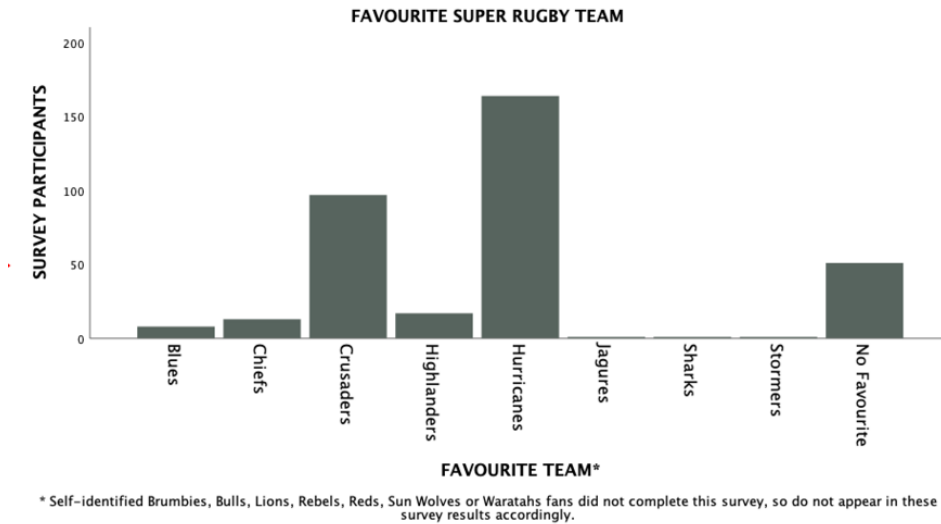


Figure 3: Favourite super rugby team

Of 339 participants answering the religious affiliation question, 40.1% were Christian, 29.8% Agnostic, 1.8% Muslim, 1.2% Buddhist, 0.6% Jewish, and 12.4% preferred not to say. Those dominating the ‘other’ category described themselves as Atheists (Figure 4).

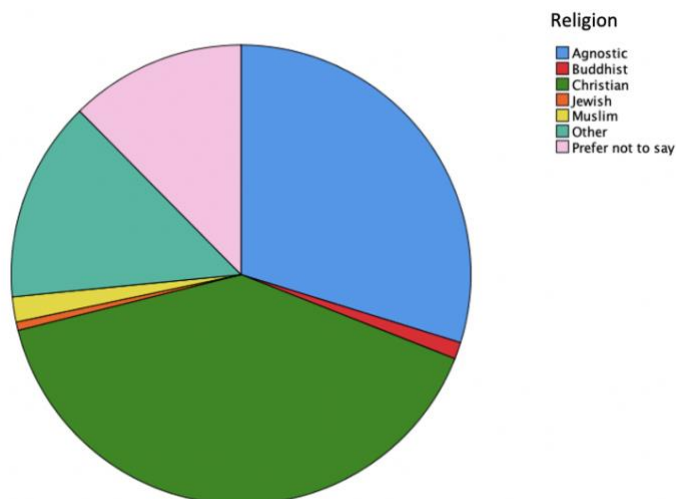


Figure 4: Religious affiliation



Of 238 surveys nominating their country of birth, 84.9% were born in New Zealand, 8% born in the United Kingdom and 1.7% in Australia. The rest came from many different parts of the world.

Nearly 50% of the 291 respondents, had supported their favourite team for over 20 years of the Super Rugby competition. By contrast, only 6% had supported their favourite team for 5 years or less (Figure 5).

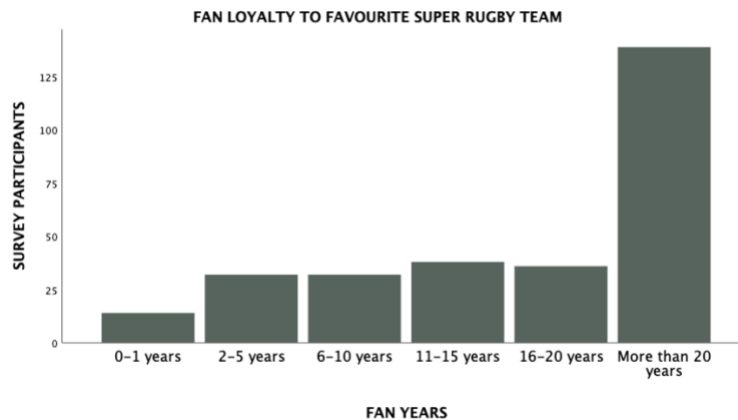


Figure 5: Fan time scale

From a general group of 292 participants, 19.5% cited a combination of TV/in-person/newspaper viewing habits, 30.1% watched rugby on TV and in person, 25.7% watched rugby on TV only. Only 0.3% viewed the newspaper only for their rugby updates. The 'other' rugby consumption category (2.1%) was dominated by both audio and visual digital-platforms (Table 1).

Table 1 Super Rugby viewing habits

	TV	NP	IP	O	TV/NP	TV/IP	TV/O	TV/NP/IP/O	TV/NP/IP	TV/IP/O	IPO	TV/NP/O
How watch rugby (Q1.1) %	25.7	0.3	1.4	2.1	4.5	30.1	5.5	4.5	19.5	5.1	0.7	0.7
<i>N</i> = 292												
TV = Television												
NP = Newspaper												
IP = In Person												
O = Other												

	1M	1W	2W	O
Frequency watching rugby on TV (Q1.2/Q1.4) %	22.7	27.0	27.0	23.4
<i>N</i> = 278				
1M = Once a month				
1W = Once a week				
2W = Twice a week				
O = Other				

	FR	FA	AL	FR/FA	FR/AL	FR/FA/AL	FA/AL
Who watch rugby with TV* (Q1.3) %	14.4	35.3	17.6	18.0	2.2	8.6	4.0
Who watch rugby with IP** (Q1.5) %	36.9	19.3	5.7	31.8	2.8	3.4	
* <i>N</i> = 278							
** <i>N</i> = 176							

TV = Television  
 IP = In Person  
 FR = Friends  
 FA = Family  
 AL = Alone  
 FR/FA = Friends/Family  
 FR/AL = Friends/Alone  
 FR/FA/AL = Friends/Family/Alone  
 FA/AL = Family/Alone

There were 278 participants who indicated an even distribution of rugby viewing frequency. ‘Once’ and ‘twice a week’ (27% respectively) categories were slightly ahead of ‘once a month’ (22.7%) and the ‘other’ (23.4%) category. The ‘other’ spectator category greatly varied from every single Super Rugby game, watching the All Blacks games only to every four years (for World Cup NZ games) (Table 1).

Just under half of the general sample indicated that they attended rugby games in person. Of these participants 35.6% attended a game once a month, followed by 18.1% attending once a week and 6.8% in attendance twice per week. Of the ‘other’ (39.5%) category, 1-2 times per year was the most frequent response (Table 1).

Just under half of those surveyed (in the general group) indicated with whom they watched rugby. The most dominant category was with friends (36.9%), followed closely by both friends and family (31.8%). Less so was watching with family (19.3%) and those watching rugby by themselves was 5.7% of the sample (Table 1).

Of 292 replies from the overall sample, 41.8% had played rugby in the past. 5.8% of participants were currently playing rugby and 52.4% had never played rugby (Figure 6).

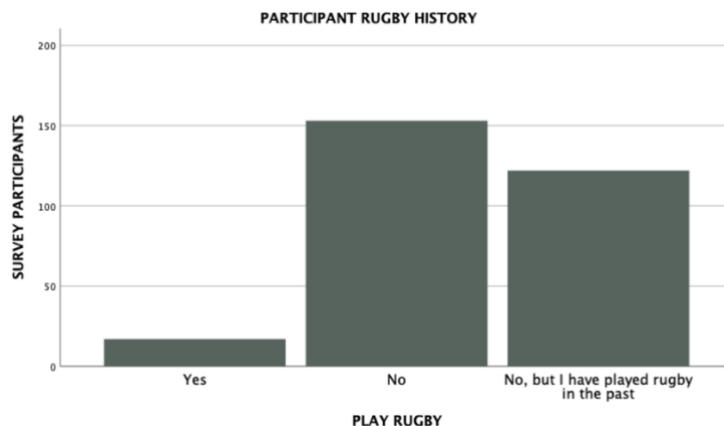


Figure 6: Survey participant rugby playing history

Two thirds of the group agreed that at the start of 2019, prior to the Christchurch mosque attacks, they had found the Crusader’s brand name likeable, appropriate and acceptable. This compares to the start of 2020 where just over half of the same general group felt the same way (Figure 7).

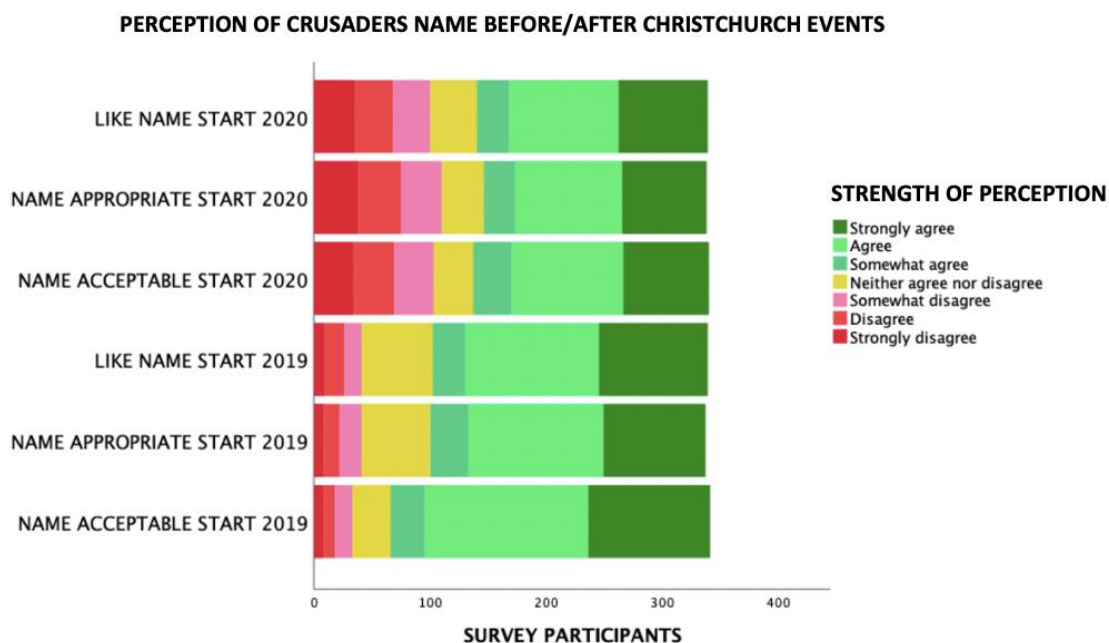


Figure 7: Temporal name items (study 1)

While assessing the attitudinal shifts for the Crusaders brand logo, one needs to be aware that the Crusaders logo was changed after the Christchurch mosque attacks. One therefore needs to be mindful that the results reflect this change. Although overall attitudes to the old logo were only just slightly more positive than non-committal or negative at the start of 2019, quite a marked more negative/indecisive attitudinal change for the new logo at the start of 2020, is evident (Figure 8).

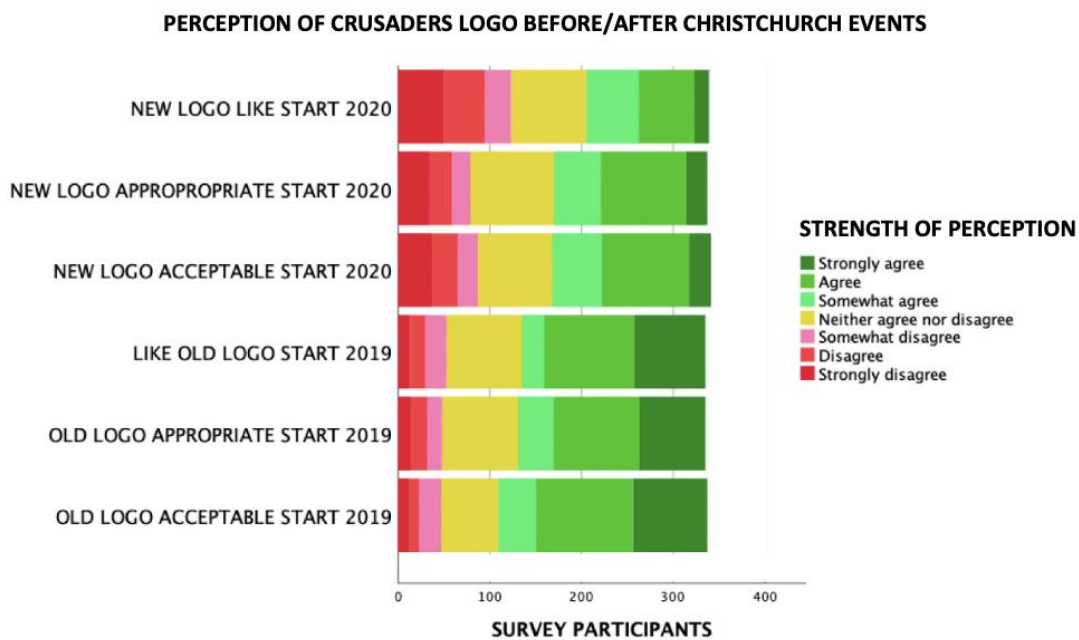


Figure 8: Temporal logo items (study 1)

Well over half of the general group in study 1 disagreed with any potential Crusaders name change (Figure 9). However, there was a more even split between those that agreed or disagreed with changing the Crusaders logo (Figure 10). There was a similarly balanced view on whether the Crusaders should have changed their pre-game pageantry (Figure 11). It is interesting to compare this result with the stronger disagreement to change the pre-game pageantry reported by Crusaders fans (Figure 15). N.B. Figure 11 includes data from both studies. Since the Crusaders pre-game pageantry is mainly encountered live at the Crusaders home games, the opportunity for non-Crusaders fans to experience pre-game pageantry was

anticipated to be limited. Therefore, the two temporal pageantry questions were restricted to Crusaders fans only. The general question pertaining to individual views on whether the Crusaders pageantry should have been changed, reflects the views of the general group in study 1.

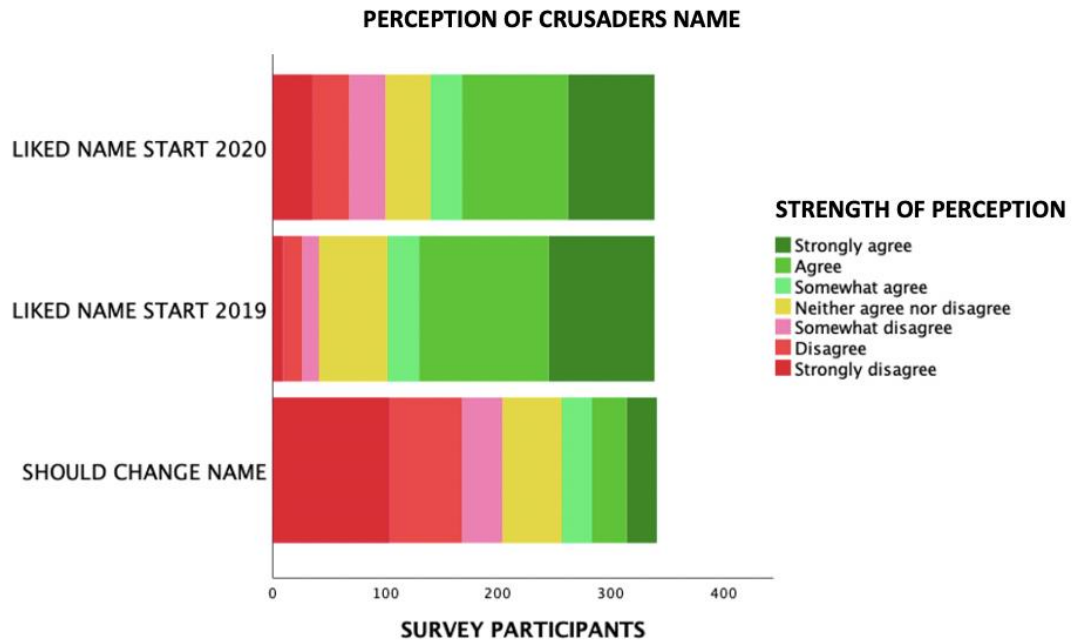


Figure 9: Likeability of name (study 1)

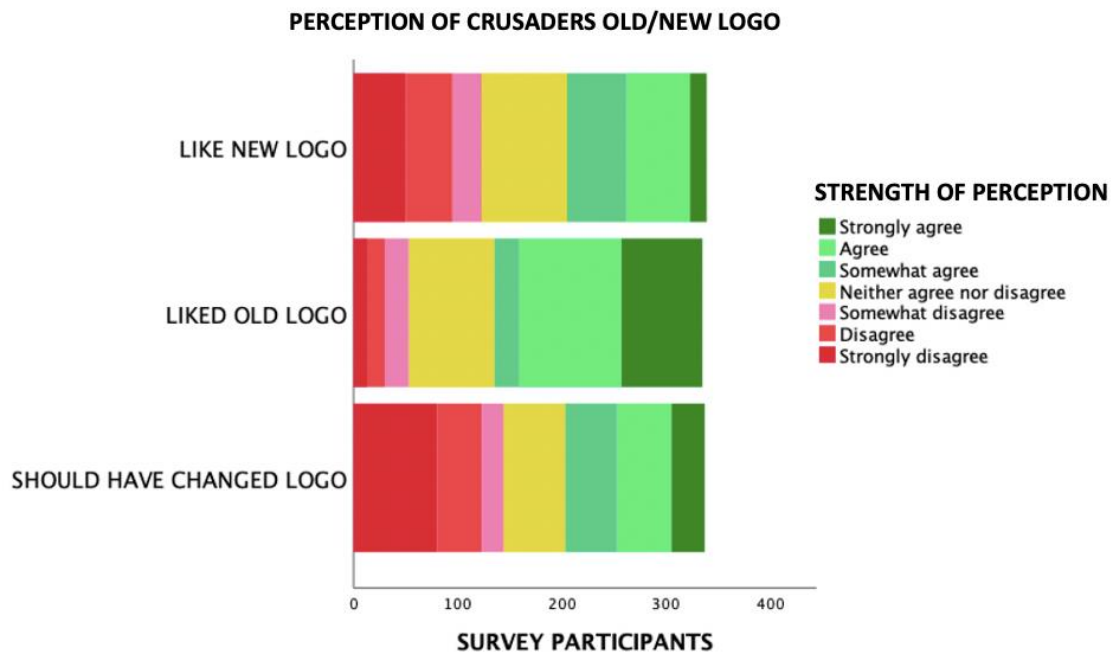


Figure 10: Likeability of logo (study 1)

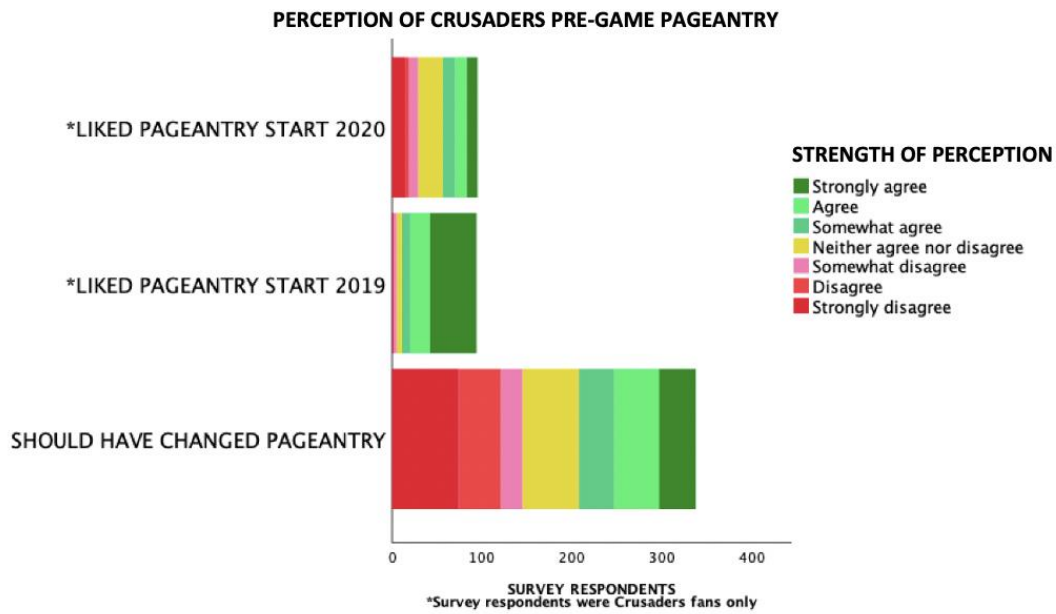


Figure 11: Likeability of pageantry (study 1/study 2)

Past success was also measured for its contribution to overall brand attitude by the general sample (without the temporal aspect). Approximately 290 participants answered three past success related questions. Where winning and reaching the finals each year are important to more than half the survey group, 63.4% of participants argued past success does not influence their respective team support (Figure 12).

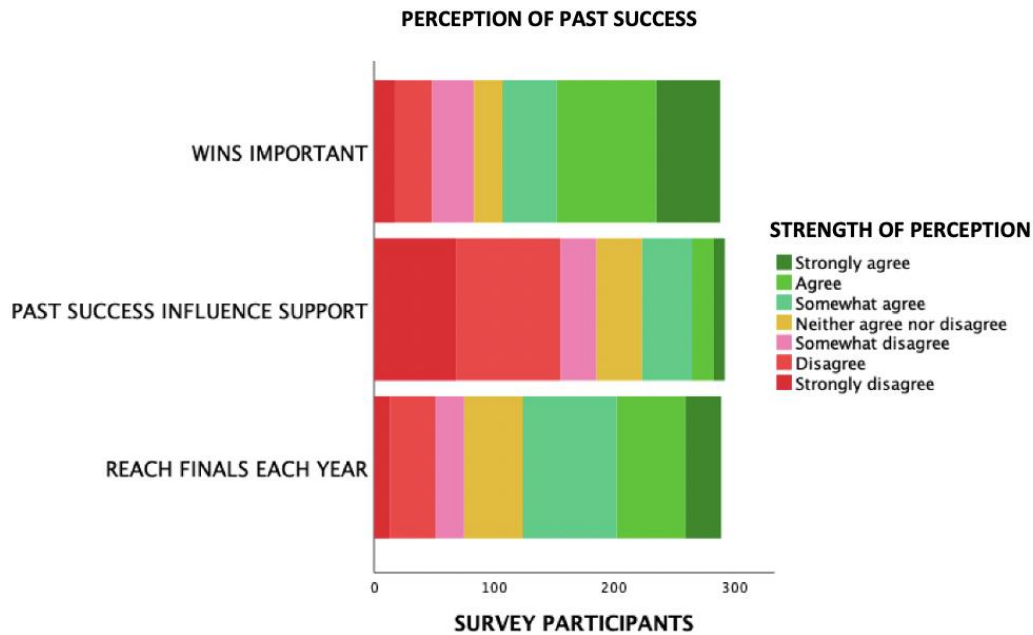


Figure 12: Past success items (study 1)

Prior to the unexpected Christchurch mosque attacks, most of the general sample (including Crusaders supporters) did not agree with changing the Crusaders name, logo and pageantry (Figure 13). However, immediately after the unexpected Christchurch mosque attacks over half of the general group agreed that changes to Crusader brand elements (name, logo and pageantry) should be made. When Crusaders fans were excluded from the general sample, similar attitudinal trends were observed (Figure 14).

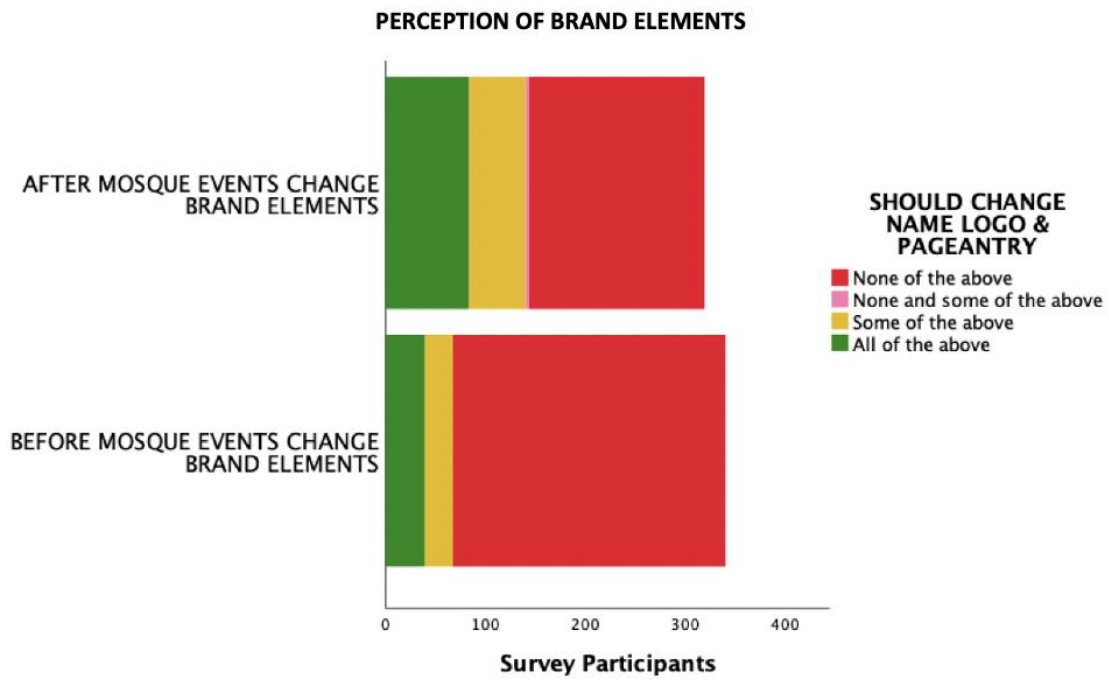


Figure 13: Change brand elements temporal analysis (study 1)

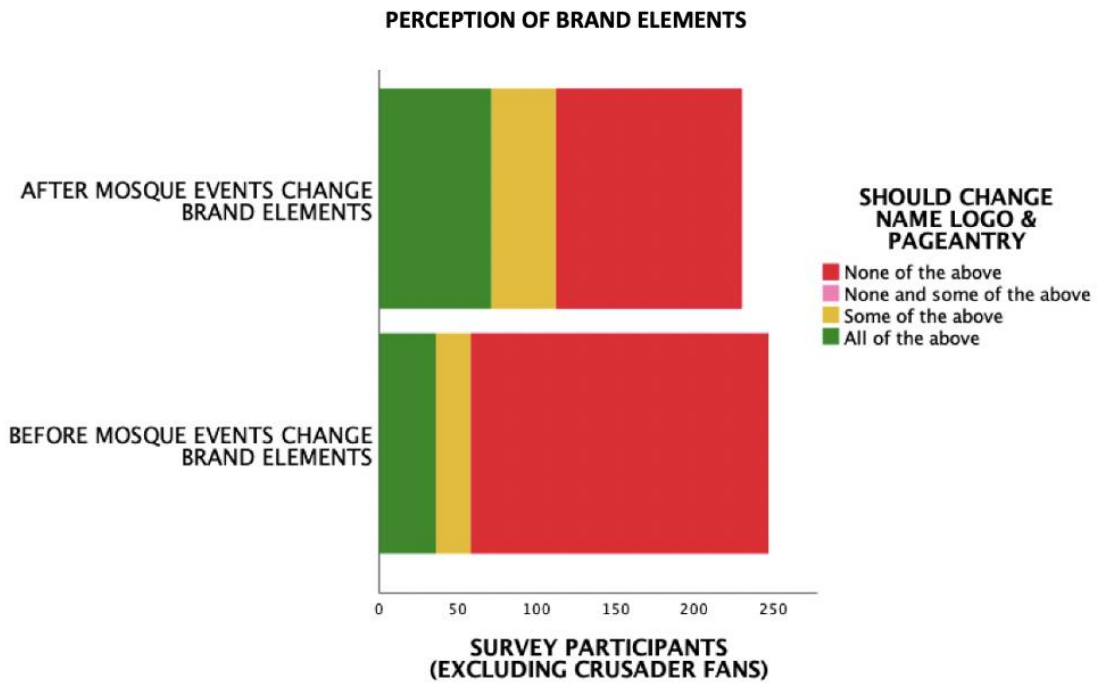


Figure 14: Change brand elements temporal analysis (excl. Crusaders fans)



Among the Crusaders fans, there was a considerable shift in attitudes towards the Crusaders pageantry from their fans. At the start of 2019, the majority of the sample agreed that the Crusaders pre-game pageantry was appropriate, likeable and acceptable. However, less than half the sample felt the same way at the start of 2020. Despite these results, over half the Crusaders fan sample disagreed with changing the pageantry (Figure 15).

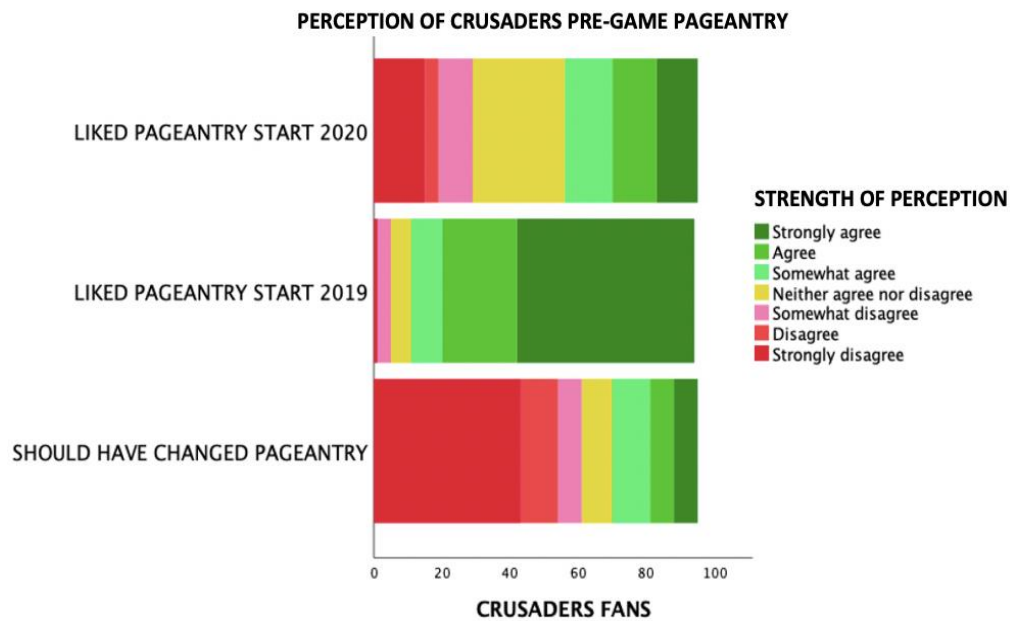


Figure 15: Temporal pageantry items (study 2)

Without the temporal aspect, Crusaders fans' views on Crusaders characters was also assessed. The results showed us that liking the team coach was (approximately) half as important as either watching star players or team heroes enhance the fan experience (Figure 16).

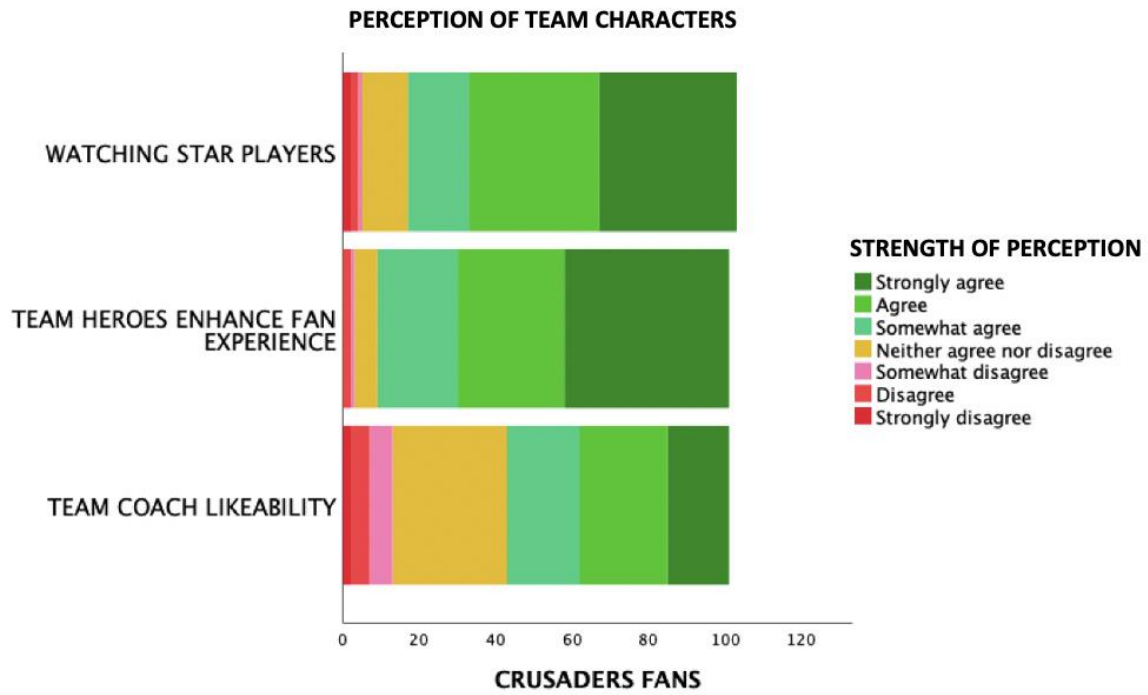


Figure 16: Character items (study 2)

All brand loyalty items were dominated by agreeable views from the general sample (Figure 17). However, the public defence of one’s team, even if it caused controversy, was the least agreeable brand loyalty aspect of all

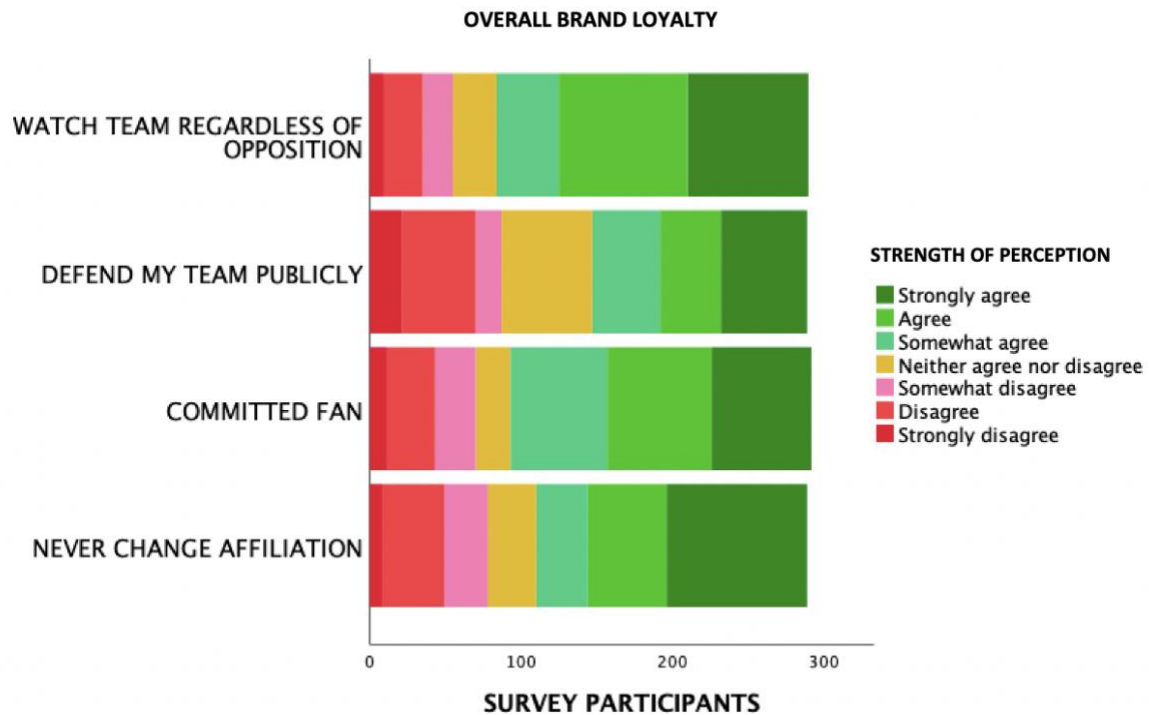


Figure 17: Brand loyalty items (study 1)

### 6.1.1 Qualitative Analysis

The final opportunity for participants to provide unaided comments drew many responses. These were analysed using a thematic approach. This was done independently by two researchers and their extent of agreement in interpretation was checked using an interrater approach.

Many of the branding comments were focused on either the Crusaders logo or name, followed by only a few comments on pageantry.

Two thirds of the comments pertaining to the logo were mostly negative about the changes, followed in number by positive comments about the use of Māori culture and the departure from violence themed symbols.

*“Love that they have taken the opportunity to authentically review their brand. Embracing a Māori view and using te reo and Māori symbolism is very appropriate. The new messaging is much more about teamwork than winning.”*

A handful of participants commented on the logo but had an indistinguishable viewpoint on its change.

The negative comments (about the logo) were heavily centred around the icon/symbol itself, followed by culture and then provenance. Positive logo comments were weighted firstly towards culture and then symbols. In many instances, culture and symbolism were mentioned in the same statement. Other negative sub-categories included design shape and colours.

*“For a start we refer to Canterbury as the RED and BLACKS, so they got that back to front and the penis looking logo means nothing to a crusading rugby team that goes into battle for its fans and its regions on the rugby stage.”*

With reference to design shape, participants questioned the horizontal orientation of the logo used with the brand name (Figure 18). Regarding colours, the order of Canterbury’s traditional “red and black” heritage was noted more than once. The Māori language tagline (mā pango mā whero) reverses the order of this important colour tradition and affectionate team reference (Figure 18).



Figure 18: Crusaders horizontal and vertical logos (source: Crusaders website screenshot)

Regarding the Crusaders name, comments reflected an equal split between positive and negative viewpoints, with a few more extra statements opining their neutral stance. Those participants with a negative viewpoint on the name were more inclined to be discussing themes of appropriateness, which was often linked to history, followed by culture. Those with a neutral stance talked mainly of history first and then culture.

*“Crusaders has a positive connotation. It is also the name and brand fans identify with and it was a strong symbol after the earthquakes. It shouldn't change.”*

There were just a handful of participants who took the time to discuss pageantry. Of those it was an even split across neutral, positive and negative viewpoints that discussed historic, entertainment and shared experience themes.

For the Crusaders brand overall, the clear majority of comments were negatively centred, firstly around logo and name design, connected closely with retaining the status quo (Figure 19), e.g.

*“The sword and Crusaders need to come back. The Chiefs and Highlanders equally could be thought to have persecuted minorities and therefore also unacceptable under this change for the Crusaders. The new logo is just wrong it looks out of place too. The majority of local people involved in the tragedy did not see a reason to change. Many were fans.”*

then culture sensitivity, and lastly by history/provenance. Smaller, but noteworthy discussion topics included religious history and ignorance of history.



Figure 19: Crusaders previous logo

## 6.2 Study 2

With regard to the study of only the Crusaders fans and their brand loyalty, it should be noted that two models were tested: one relating to Crusaders fans' attitudes prior to the Christchurch event; and one relating to their attitudes a year after the event.

Firstly, a factor analysis using SPSS v24 was conducted. This provided an opportunity to test for common method bias, construct validity and reliability (Podsakoff, Mckenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). With regard to both models, no one factor accounted for a disproportionately large percentage of the common variance in the data. The anonymity of survey participants helped minimise any bias (Hovav & D'Arcy, 2012). In each case, both before and after the event, all items loaded strongly onto their constructs (Tables 2 and 3), save two items for the past success construct (PSuc5.1 and PSuc5.2). Therefore these two items were consequently excluded from the SEM final analysis.

Table 2 Item loadings before the event

	Attitude	Brand loyalty	Characters	Logo	Name	Pageantry	Past success
Att9	1.000						
BLogo14.1				0.820			
BLogo14.2				0.955			
BLogo14.3				0.949			
BName10.1					0.836		
BName10.2					0.968		
BName10.3					0.962		
BPag16.1						0.986	
BPag16.2						0.975	
BPag16.3						0.985	
Charact17.1			0.899				
Charact17.3			0.620				
Charact17.2			0.854				
Loyal6.1		0.810					
Loyal6.2		0.816					
Loyal6.3		0.790					
Loyal6.4		0.845					
PSuc5.3							1.000

Table 3 Item loadings after the event

	Attitude	Brand loyalty	Characters	Logo	Name	Pageantry	Past success
<b>Att9</b>	1.000						
<b>Charact17.1</b>			0.899				
<b>Charact17.3</b>			0.620				
<b>Charact17.2</b>			0.854				
<b>Loyal6.1</b>		0.810					
<b>Loyal6.2</b>		0.816					
<b>Loyal6.3</b>		0.790					
<b>Loyal6.4</b>		0.845					
<b>PSuc5.3</b>							1.000
<b>TLogo13.1</b>				0.966			
<b>TLogo13.2</b>				0.927			
<b>TLogo13.3</b>				0.972			
<b>TName11.1</b>					0.949		
<b>TName11.2</b>					0.970		
<b>TName11.3</b>					0.969		
<b>TPag15.1</b>						0.669	
<b>TPag15.2</b>						0.967	
<b>TPag15.3</b>						0.949	

Secondly, structural equation modelling (SEM) using SmartPLS 3 (Ringle et al. 2017) was conducted. SEM is a multivariate statistical analysis method that includes both multiple regression and factor analysis. By using SEM researchers can estimate any causal relationships between variables (Hair et al, 1998). SEM uses models to analyse relationships among variables to quantify whether hypotheses specified by researchers are supported (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). This allows the researcher to both confront and combine theory with data (Fornell, 1982). Further, SEM has become a quasi-standard in management and marketing research when analysing cause-effect relations between latent constructs (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011; Ashman & Patterson, 2015).



An advantage SEM has over other data analysis techniques is that SEM allows several relationships to be measured at once (Hair et al, 1998). Consequently, the measurement validity is enriched. In addition, SEM examines the structural model and measurement model concurrently. Two SEM techniques have been broadly adopted: partial least squares (PLS) and maximum likelihood covariance analysis (Gefen Karahanna, & Straub, 2003). The former PLS analysis was used because it is appropriate for a complex structural model with several constructs (Hair et al. 2011) and is also suited to causal-predictive modelling. PLS can be utilised to analyse both small sample sizes (Chin, 1998) and be applied to complex models, with a great number of constructs (Urbach & Ahleman, 2010).

Commonly, PLS analysis requires two stages; namely the analysis of the structural (inner) model and measurement of the (outer) model. The measurement model is validated in terms of item outer loadings, composite reliability, discriminant validity and convergent validity of factors (Chin, 1998). For the structural model, relationships between independent and dependent variables were examined.

Convergent validity offers an indication of the extent to which multiple measures of a construct are in agreement (Bagozzi, 1992). Firstly, it was assessed according to the loadings of construct items. As reflective factors were used in the model, for these factors to display convergent and discriminant validity, item loadings required a minimum threshold of 0.6 onto the relevant factor (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013). The higher the absolute loading value, the higher the correlation between the factor and the item (Hair et al, 1998). For both models (before and after the event), most of the items exceeded (0.7) which is a good indication of reliability. Of seven factors, in each case, low loadings resulted in necessary deletions for the following: PSuc5.1 (past success item) and PSuc5.2 (past success item) (Tables 2 and 3). To demonstrate reliability, the composite reliability should exceed 0.7. For both cases, this benchmark of 0.7 was exceeded (Tables 4 and 5). In PLS analysis, convergent validity is also assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (Hair et al, 1998). The AVE should be 0.7 or greater (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally, 1978). For both models there was sufficient evidence to confirm convergent validity as the estimation of AVE for each construct was close to or greater than 0.7 (Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4 Descriptive statistics, composite reliability, square roots of the AVE's inter-construct correlations – before the event

Table 4. Descriptive statistics, composite reliability, square roots of the AVE's inter-construct correlations (BEFORE model)

Construct	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	CR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Attitude			1.000	<i>1.000</i>						
Brand Loyalty	9.865	*0.000	0.888	0.669	<i>0.665</i>					
Characters	2.956	*0.003	0.839	0.494	0.441	<i>0.641</i>				
Logo	0.783	0.434	0.935	0.534	0.519	0.390	<i>0.828</i>			
Name	3.059	*0.002	0.946	0.595	0.526	0.403	0.827	<i>0.854</i>		
Pageantry	0.757	0.450	0.988	0.380	0.439	0.397	0.648	0.616	<i>0.964</i>	
Past Success	1.091	0.276	1.000	0.363	0.476	0.302	0.327	0.376	0.224	<i>1.000</i>

The italic numbers (3df) along the diagonal line represent the average variance-extracted estimates (AVEs). Below the diagonal line are correlations between constructs. 1 = Attitude, 2 = Brand Loyalty, 3 = Characters, 4 = Logo, 5 = Name, 6 = Pageantry, 7 = Past Success

\**p* < 0.01

Table 5 Descriptive statistics, composite reliability, square roots of the AVE's inter-construct correlations – after the event

Table 5. Descriptive statistics, composite reliability, square roots of the AVE's inter-construct correlations (AFTER model)

Construct	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	CR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Attitude			1.000	<i>1.000</i>						
Brand Loyalty	10.417	*0.000	0.888	0.669	<i>0.665</i>					
Characters	3.773	*0.000	0.839	0.494	0.441	<i>0.641</i>				
Logo	2.410	**0.016	0.969	-0.051	-0.187	-0.129	<i>0.912</i>			
Name	2.320	**0.021	0.974	0.366	0.483	0.241	-0.040	<i>0.927</i>		
Pageantry	1.212	0.226	0.903	-0.051	-0.083	-0.133	0.601	0.070	<i>0.761</i>	
Past Success	2.053	**0.041	1.000	0.363	0.476	0.302	0.064	0.206	0.088	<i>1.000</i>

The italic numbers (3df) along the diagonal line represent the average variance-extracted estimates (AVEs). Below the diagonal line are correlations between constructs. 1 = Attitude, 2 = Brand Loyalty, 3 = Characters, 4 = Logo, 5 = Name, 6 = Pageantry, 7 = Past Success

\**p* < 0.01

\*\**p* < 0.05

Discriminant Validity was assessed by examining the square root of the average variance extracted for each construct and verifying that it was greater than the correlations of the construct with any other construct (Siponen, Mahmood, & Pahnla, 2014). For both cases, the square roots of all the AVEs were greater than the correlations with other constructs, thereby demonstrating discriminant validity for both the models (Tables 4 and 5).

The structural model is assessed by examining its predictive ability. The  $R^2$  is used to examine the explanatory effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable (Chin, 1998), as well as the strength of the construct paths and their significance. The path co-

efficient offers an indication of the path strength. The minimum acceptable level for an individual  $R^2$  should be greater than 0.10 (Hair et al., 2013).

The following figures and their respective text report on the testing of the two models.

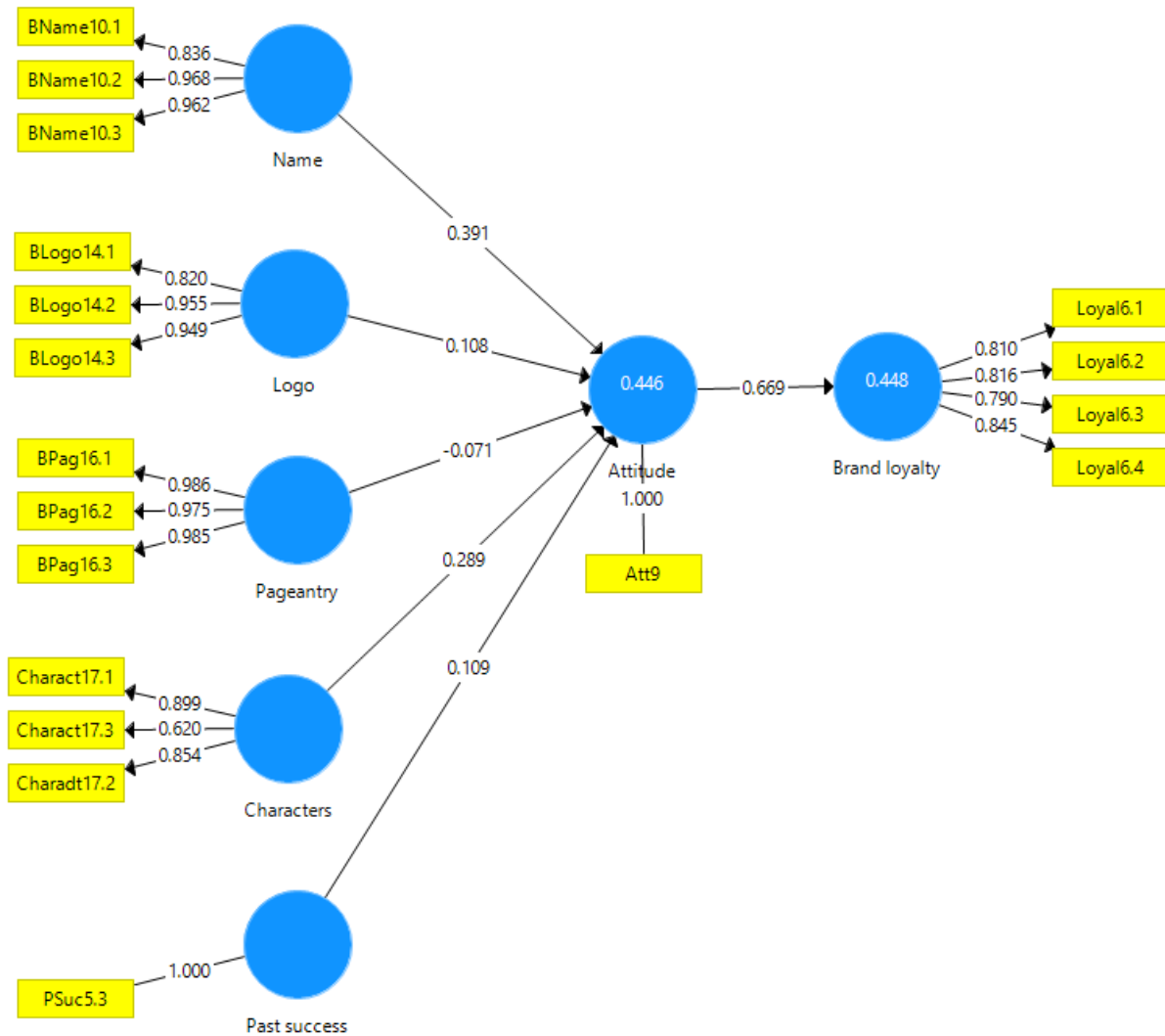


Figure 20. Views on brand elements, brand attitude and brand loyalty before the Christchurch event

As can be seen in Figure 20, the explained variance in brand attitude was 0.446, indicating that over 44.6% of the variance in that dependent variable was attributable the five

independent variables (brand name, brand logo, pageantry, characters and past success). This indicates sufficient predictive ability of the first part of the model.

In turn, the  $R^2$  in brand loyalty was 0.448, indicating nearly half of the variance in this dependent variable was attributable to brand attitude. Like the results for brand attitude, this also indicates sufficient predictive ability of the model.

The strength and significance of the paths between the constructs was determined by means of a bootstrapping procedure (Hair et al. 2013). This procedure was employed to assess the significance of the paths between each construct. The individual paths from brand name (0.391), brand logo (0.108), characters (0.289) and past success (0.109) to brand attitude were positive and substantive. However, the pageantry (-0.071) pathway was a weak and negative antecedent to brand attitude. Of the brand attitude antecedents, brand name and characters were statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$ . The pathway strength from brand attitude to brand loyalty was positive, strong (0.669) and statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$ . In summary, only Hypotheses H3 was therefore not supported. However, the paths from brand name to brand attitude, brand logo to brand attitude, characters to brand attitude, past success to brand attitude and brand attitude to brand loyalty were all substantive and significant at either  $p < 0.01$  or  $p < 0.05$  respectively. Therefore, H1, H2, H4, H5 and H6 were supported.

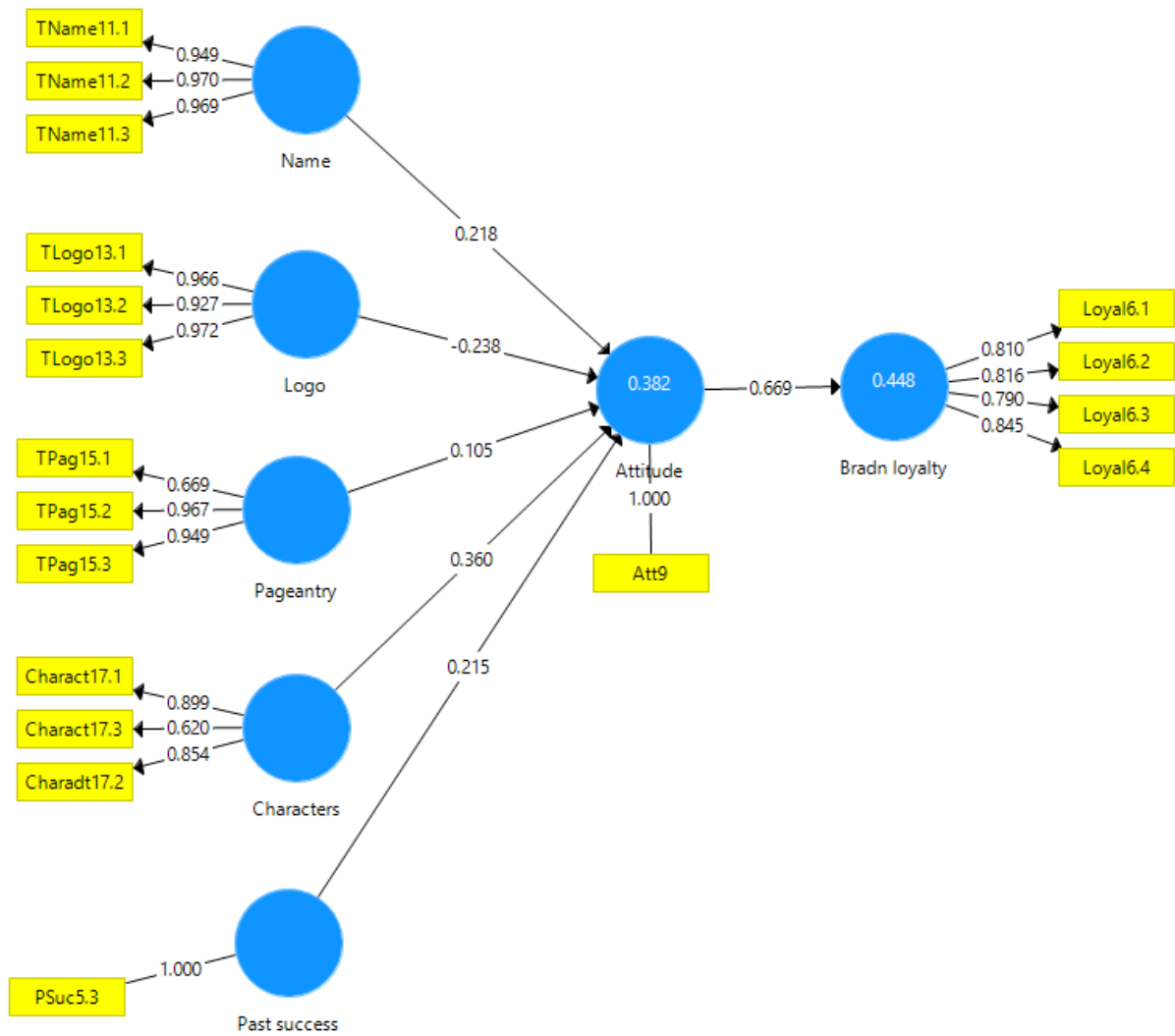


Figure 21. Views on brand elements, brand attitude and brand loyalty one year after the Christchurch event

As can be seen in Figure 21, the explained variance in brand attitude was 0.382, indicating that over 38.2% of the variance in that dependent variable was attributable the five independent variables. This indicates sufficient predictive ability of the first part of the model.

In turn, the  $R^2$  in brand loyalty was 0.448, indicating nearly half of the variance in this dependent variable was attributable to brand attitude. Like the results for brand attitude, this also indicates sufficient predictive ability of the model.

The individual paths from brand name (0.218), brand logo (-0.238), pageantry (0.105), characters (0.360) and past success (0.215) to brand attitude were positive and substantive. However, the logo pathway was a negative, yet substantive antecedent to brand attitude. Of the brand attitude antecedents, brand name and characters were statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$ . the pathway strength from brand attitude to brand loyalty was positive, strong (0.668) and statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$ . In summary, Hypotheses H3 was not supported. However, the paths from brand name to brand attitude, characters to brand attitude and brand attitude to brand loyalty were all substantive and significant at  $p < 0.01$ . respectively. Therefore, H1, H2, H4, H5 and H6 were supported.

## 7.0 Discussion

This study determines the significant role positive brand attitudes have on brand loyalty and by extension, brand equity. The modelling in study two straddles an unexpected event in Christchurch on 15 March 2019. In both time periods (before the event and almost one year after the unexpected event) empirical results confirm that brand loyalty in both before and after models were strongly influenced by positive brand attitude (0.669) in both instances, supporting the work of other researchers (Kaynak, et al., 2008; Bauer et al., 2008).

The brand attitude antecedents used in this study were a mixture of existing, adapted and new constructs, advancing the modelling of sports orientated brand equity analysis. Evidence of both non-product and product related attributes contributing to these constructs, varied in strength and importance depending on the time period either side of the unexpected event. Importantly, the time tracked data either side of the Christchurch mosque attacks, shows uniquely, how time can affect the antecedents of brand attitude, in an efficient and cost effective single study.

Specific to the Crusaders team in the Super Rugby sports setting, key non-product and product related brand elements were identified. Depending on the time period either side of the Christchurch mosque attacks in 2019, varying brand elements were identified as being significant influencers for Crusader fan's brand attitudes and subsequent brand loyalty. By examining the branding relationships through varying time periods, this study provides empirically based temporal research that others have sought (Round et al., 2015, Bauer et al., 2008; Funk, 2017; Ross, 2006; Agarwal et al., 2005).

Contributing to overall brand attitude for Crusaders fans, brand name, brand logo, pre-game pageantry, characters and past success were purposed as either non-product and product antecedents. Although all these brand elements resulted in strong pathways to brand attitude, only brand name and characters had statistically significant findings before the Christchurch mosque attacks. In the same model, pageantry, past success and logo were not seen as statistically significant contributors to overall brand attitude. These results (in the before model) are consistent with logo research by Müller et al., (2013) specifically arguing the brand logo does not show a significant effect on brand attitude.

Interestingly, on the other hand, the after model in study 2, resulted in more substantive and statistically significant pathways influencing brand attitudes than the before model. These significant pathways included brand name, brand logo, characters and past success, but excluded pageantry. This therefore suggests after the uncertainty of an unexpected event, holding control of a broader range of brand elements is even more important to brand loyal individuals.

It is also important to understand that customer's generally prefer no changes to logos, but can tolerate small changes. Strongly committed customers tend to view changes negatively, while weakly committed customers view them more positively. More detailed academic research investigating logo re-design has specifically targeted design shape (Walsh et al., 2010; Peterson et al., 2015). Our qualitative analysis identified shape orientated comments about the Crusaders logo re-design. More negative feedback ranged from the retention of fighting and weapon themed imagery to phallic symbolisation of horizontally positioned Crusaders logo and wording. Positive comments reflected the use of Māori culture and language in the design. These findings suggest that a) a thorough analysis of design interpretations, across all stakeholders is prudent, before publicly launching new designs and b) vertical positioning of the Crusader logo and wording may be more acceptable in future advertising.

Like Apple's failure to launch its new logo (Walsh et al., 2010), an organisation who fails to explicitly announce a logo change can prompt negative response because the new logo surprises and disappoints customers (Grobert et al., 2016). This is supported by the study's qualitative analysis where participants commented on the re-ordering of the "Red and Blacks"; a historic term of endearment for the Canterbury and Crusaders rugby teams. The Crusaders "catch-phrase" in Te Reo (Māori language) Mā Pango Mā Whero translates as black and red in the new logo's tagline. In addition, the new Māori inspired "tohu" symbol (a stylised letter c, representing the natural landscape stretching from the top of the Southern Alps to the depths of the 'moana' - sea) has the black at the top and red at the bottom of the logo. This re-ordering of colour inspired rhetoric, has clearly upset some loyal Crusader fans. This suggests that in order to avoid customer disappointments and costly design retractions, focus groups containing highly loyal customers be commissioned for a "soft launch" before the expense of a public launch. This has the benefit of uncovering any possible mistakes,



misinterpretations, avoids loyal customer surprises and alleviates online brand hate (Hegner, Fetscherin, & van Delzen, 2017). Above all it provides a chance to procure peer group 'cheerleaders', before practitioners launch any re-branded initiatives.

As a highly loyal group, Crusaders fans have a tendency to adopt more negative attitudes to logo change, as supported by Müller et al. (2013) and reported in this study. By contrast it is also possible that a poorly designed logo can be positively evaluated when customers are extremely fond of the organisation (Kim et al., 2019). These two opposing points of view firmly suggest that where highly loyal customers (like Crusader's fans) are involved, these brand loyal supporters should be directly involved in any development phases of proposed logo changes. In a highly digitally connected world, adoption of this process by practitioners may have the advantage of mitigating a barrage of negative commentary (across a plethora of social media channels), by a group's most loyal consumers.

It is worth considering consumer views of the unchanged Crusader's corporate name, may be a key factor that influences the perception or value of the new Crusaders logo (Foroudi et al., 2014). In addition, because logos are constantly evolving (e.g. Apple, Google and PepsiCo), regular adjustments by global brands, may suggest a basis for general logo change acceptance. However, the difference in consumer acceptance (for logo changes) between commercial titans and the Crusaders franchise may also be explained by the evolutionary logo redesign versus the more revolutionary logo design adopted by the Crusaders franchise. Revolutionary logo redesign is preferred when organisations (like the Crusaders example) revamp their corporate image by dispelling any negative customer perception (Airey, 2009; Kim et al., 2019).

Although introduced in this study as a unique Crusaders pre-game experience (and non-product attribute), Crusaders pre-game pageantry was observed to have a relatively weaker (and statistically non-significant) relationship with brand attitude for Crusaders fans in both the before and after models of study 1 (-0.071, 0.105 respectively). Supporting this, very few survey participants chose to discuss any experience with Crusaders pageantry specifically.

With the proliferation of sports viewing platforms offering fans personalised digital experiences, drop in stadium crowd numbers (Deloitte, 2019) and more recent pandemic related nervousness about close stadium seating (Deloitte, 2020), pre-game pageantry may be

less important (than other touchpoints and customer experiences) at live sporting events (Funk, 2017).

These pageantry observations may suggest that a re-focus on digital touchpoints and platforms to entertain fans, may be advantageous. Service-dominant logic highlights the importance of touchpoints since customer experience (CX) is co-created through interactions with service touchpoints (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Funk, 2017). Further encouragement for this approach guides the development of interactions that deliver extraordinary fan experiences (Bauer et al., 2008). Much like the example of the All Blacks pre-match haka, and in line with research by Underwood, et al. (2001), brand managers can successfully use rituals as a tool only if they create habitual, meaningful symbolic behaviours that provide fans with a strong sense of continuity. On the other hand it may just be team loyalty, not pre-game entertainment that determines spectators' desire to be at the stadium after-all (Wakefield et al., 1995).

It is interesting to note that fans may not only be committed to a club but also to particular players. Success like the Crusaders have had over the past 25 years of the Super Rugby competition has established a tradition of producing star players (e.g. Richie McCaw, Dan Carter, Kieran Read) and prominent coaches (Todd Blackadder, Robbie Deans, Steve Hansen Scott Robertson) just like Gladden et al. (1998) predict.

Although study 1 and study 2 argue a positive and significant influence of star players and team heroes on brand attitudes for Crusaders fans, it would be interesting to view the arrival of star players in other less successful environments. Past All Black Dan Carter and current All Black Beauden Barrett both signed to the Auckland Blues in 2020, after many successful years with the Crusaders and Hurricanes respectively. Despite Kaynak et al. (2008) findings to the contrary, this research provides evidence that the presence of star players are effective in enhancing brand attitudes towards brand loyalty. Although untested in this study, a team's title record could be a possible moderator with the characters construct.

Success in team sport can be unpredictable and one of the hardest antecedents to control. However, success can be considered an important aspect in the process of branding (Kaynak et al, 2008).

As a result of unsatisfactory confirmatory factor analysis, two of three original past success items were discarded from the past success construct. The final SEM construct is consistent with previous research on competitive success, where the researchers surmise that other contextual factors such as club history, tradition, other fans and stadium atmosphere may be of greater relevance to fans (Bauer et al., 2008). As further support for the past success item retained in the study 2 models researchers argue loyal team fans do not desert the team despite its win-loss history (Wakefield et al., 1995).

Despite the Crusaders having an unprecedented 11 Super Rugby title wins, the before model of study 2, identified past success as a non-significant influence on brand attitude for Crusaders fans. However, past success (0.109) was a stronger contributor than pageantry (-0.071) and brand logo (0.108) to overall brand attitude.

By contrast, the after model details a strong and significant pathway (0.215) for past success to influence brand attitude. Perhaps the key to understand the shift in past success significance (between the two time periods) can be answered by SIT.

SIT determines that sports fans derive a sense of identity from the affiliation with a team (Wann et al., 1993). SIT argues that people see themselves as members of specific social groups and that these social labels strongly influence emotions and cognition (Antoneti & Maklan, 2018). Further, spectator sports provide a rare sense of community, a collective identity, a reason for solidarity and common symbols (Underwood et al., 2001). The findings between the two time periods provide an argument supporting a common symbol of past success provides Crusaders fans with a resilience tool and sense of new found comfort, in uncertain times.

In periods of threat to a community and motivated by a sense of moral responsibility to its individual members, the production of collective action can be evident (Muniz Jr. et al., 2001). Underpinned by SIT, retaliation towards a possible Crusaders name change was somewhat inevitable by loyal fans. To thwart a potential Crusaders name change, this premise was manifested by a loyal Crusaders fan who initiated an online petition. To date, this petition has received over thirty eight thousand online signatures in support of keeping the Crusaders name (Change.org, 2020).

Similarly, we saw identity threat applied to the University of North Dakota's ice hockey team continuing to chant the traditional "Sioux" when the team were renamed as the Fighting Hawks (Borzi, 2016). The unchanged "Sioux" chanting and Crusaders online petition are two good examples where individuals engage in problem-focused coping, in response to their social identities being threatened. These behaviours are important for practitioner's to understand and anticipate, not only because these actions threaten the fans identities, but also threaten the image of a sports team and their stakeholders alike (Delia, 2019).

This result from both models suggest that despite a long history of successful Super Rugby campaigns, Crusaders fans will 'stay the course' and not let any competitive upsets unduly influence their attitudes and subsequent team loyalties. In fact, this study provides practitioners with evidence to support the growing importance of past success as an important source of strength in the face of adversity.

The corporate name represents a steadfast uniqueness in the mindset of stakeholders and an identity that is distinct from its competitors (Foroudi et al., 2014). Two opposing researchers argue firstly that the brand name is an unchangeable part of the marketing mix (Collins, 1977). On the other hand, any changes to corporate names should clearly and publicly communicate how the new entity is different from the old and the steps that an organisation has taken to improve quality and performance (Foroudi, et al., 2014).

The results in the before model of study 2 show that the Crusaders brand name was the strongest (and statistically significant) influence on Crusaders fan's brand attitude. After the Christchurch mosque attacks it was interesting to observe that the contribution of characters influencing brand attitude then became the most dominant and significant antecedent, replacing the Crusaders brand name in the top position. This result supports future marketing initiatives (targeting Crusaders fans) that elevate star players, team heroes and coaching staff profiles over the brand name. Perhaps this direction is supported by the high profile of celebratory impromptu break-dancing by coaching staff and the Crusaders long history of contributing both coaches and star players to successful All Blacks sides.

Despite 2019 New Zealand Rugby CEO (also ex Canterbury Rugby Football Union and Crusaders rugby franchise CEO) Steve Tew declaring that the Crusaders branding was "untenable" following the Christchurch Islamic mosque attacks and NZR's undertaking of its

own primary research, the Crusaders name has remained. In support, scholars argue that loss of loyalty and trust is the most frequent negative consequence of any brand name change (Pauwels-Delassus et al., 2013).

The power of other people influencing behaviour is apparent in the theory of reasoned action (TRA). TRA is one of the most widely used and popular attitude-based models to predict behaviour. Factors influencing the TRA model include subjective norms. These are the social pressures to have an attitude or perform a behaviour. Interestingly, what individuals think others would like them to do, can be more essential than a person's own preferences.

It's not just individuals who can influence subjective norms. Stakeholders can also influence behaviour that ultimately alters the course of branding decisions, after unexpected events. For example, after steadfastly repelling calls to drop the NFL Redskins name for almost twenty years, the Redskins name was withdrawn from use, on 03 July 2020. This followed a wave of racial awareness and subsequent global protests on social injustices, after the unexpected death of George Floyd. Dozens of investment entities collaborated to put pressure on key and highly visible Redskins sponsorship partners (like Nike and Fedex) to drop their association with the Redskins name, which Native Americans (and others) find racially offensive. Subsequently, after a history of eighty seven years, the withdrawal of the Redskins name came quickly after key sponsorship partners threatened to pull their multi-million dollar sponsorship deals if the Redskins name was retained. From a practical point of view, this suggests that regular values discussions would be a prudent brand health check, alignment and crisis management strategy for an organisation and their respective stakeholders to adopt, especially after unexpected events.

By channelling subjective norms, team loyalty can be derived not only from historical team performance, characters, enduring involvement, but also the influence of family and peers over time. Evidence of possible normative influence in study one was observed. Most participants signalled that they watched rugby games with friends and family, either live at stadiums or on television.

These sports consumption trends are important for broadcasters and advertisers to note, particularly in unexpected global health crises. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, sports teams are playing in unprecedented spectator-less stadia all around the world in 2020. Thus, the

reach across digital viewing platforms, combined with an understanding of who and how many are in each home audience, will be not only necessary but critical for the survival of professional sports, in all corners of the globe.

Finally, customer value creation is a dynamic process. The size and importance of the drivers within the customer value-loyalty process are likely to change over time, as this study demonstrates. This temporal orientated research has answered a) academic calls for multiple time periods to examine the both the psychological and evolutionary customer loyalty processes and b) the researcher's own brand loyalty enquiry.

## **8.0 Limitations and Future Research**

### **8.1 Limitations**

Since the timing of the survey was inside the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the 15 March 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks, it was decided that the reach into the Muslim community would be purposefully limited. This deliberate approach was out of respect for the grieving Muslim community and families affected by this tragedy. In addition, since the authors place of residence was outside the Crusaders territories and a snowball sampling technique was employed, the recruitment of a greater number of Crusaders fans for this study was constrained.

### **8.2 Future Research**

As this unexpected tragedy targeted faith based followers, in their place of worship and the sports team name presented in this study has faith based origins, there is no denying the underlying connection to religion. Although the timing was not appropriate for understanding Muslim community attitudes to the brand elements in this study, there may be a time in the future that these views can be fully explored, alongside the views of other faith based denominations.

The SEM analysis in this study focused on brand elements affecting Crusaders fans. Future studies with fans of other teams may provide enriched branding insights and new perspectives.

The NFL Redskins case has highlighted the power of sponsorship partnerships and values alignment after unexpected events. This therefore, suggests a research participant recruitment strategy that includes the opinions of stakeholders, separate to sports fan views.

The notion of time impacting attitudes was a deliberate moderator in this study. Therefore it would be interesting to schedule another assessment of Crusader fan views in one year, with a larger number of participants.

## 9.0 Conclusion

Crises can have negative consequences for a brand's customer relationships and financial assets. As we have seen with the 2019 Christchurch mosque tragedy and ensuing Crusaders branding predicament, brands are susceptible to various kinds of crises, which may be well beyond an organisation's anticipation or control.

When these unexpected brand crises occur, without sound knowledge on customer and stakeholder motivations, subsequent re-branding initiatives can be a perilous journey, causing serious damage to brand loyalty and brand equity, if brand attitude antecedents are not fully explored or understood.

Moderated by the timing of an unexpected event, this dual method (quantitative and qualitative) study, set out to test the pathways between sports brand elements, (specifically brand logo, event pageantry, sports team characters, past success) and their collective influence on brand attitudes and brand loyalty. In sum, SEM analysis indicated the brand name and characters were influential on brand attitude before the unexpected event, while after the event, all brand elements were important to Crusaders fans, apart from pageantry. Underpinning this research, the motivation for this outcome can be answered by social identity theory. The study takes note of the increase in brand elements, their significance and collective importance when the groups individual and collective identity is threatened after an unexpected event.

There is no surprise that these fans serve as a crucial means for building brand equity. The empirical research presented in this study confirms that customer brand attitudes have a significant, strong and positive relationship with brand loyalty, irrespective of an unexpected event. Importantly, brand loyalty is often at the core of an organisations brand equity.

Therefore, in order to react appropriately after unexpected events, it is essential that organisations understand fluctuating customer and stakeholder attitudes to a variety of relevant brand elements. Moreover, by adopting the temporal research tools presented in this



study, the ensuing knowledge provides organisations and practitioners alike with instruments to test brand attitudes and analyse subsequent trends. Importantly, knowledge of these trends helps develop effective activities, to build both customer brand loyalty and successive brand equity. This research also makes a significant academic contribution for gaps in temporal research methodology.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### SURVEY QUESTIONS & SOURCES

##### THE INFLUENCE OF UNEXPECTED EVENTS ON BRAND LOYALTY

QUESTION	SOURCE
<p><b>Q1.0 Do you watch or follow rugby?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q1.0</b> <i>Qualifier.</i></p>
<p><b>Q1.1 How do you watch or follow rugby?</b> (<i>multiple answers permitted</i>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TV</li> <li>● Newspaper</li> <li>● In person (at rugby games)</li> <li>● Other (open text box)</li> </ul> <p><b>Q1.2</b> When I watch rugby on the TV, I watch it ... Once a month, once a week, twice a week, other</p> <p><b>Q1.3</b> When I watch rugby on the TV, I usually watch it With friends, with family, alone</p> <p><b>Q1.4</b> I watch rugby in person Once a month, once a week, twice a week, other</p> <p><b>Q1.5</b> I usually watch rugby in person With friends, with family, alone</p>	<p><b>Q1.1</b> <i>Adapted: Funk &amp; James, 2004. Adapted: Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer &amp; Exler, 2008.</i></p> <p><b>Q1.2</b> <i>Adapted: Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer &amp; Exler, 2008.</i></p> <p><b>Q1.3.</b> <i>Adapted: Funk &amp; James, 2004.</i></p> <p><b>Q1.4</b> <i>Adapted: Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer &amp; Exler, 2008.</i></p> <p><b>Q1.5</b> <i>Adapted: Funk &amp; James, 2004</i></p>
<p><b>Q1.6 Do you play rugby?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No, but I have played rugby in the past</li> <li>● No</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q1.6</b> <i>New.</i></p>
<p><b>Q2. I have heard of the Crusaders Rugby team</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● No</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q2.</b> <i>Qualifier.</i></p>

<p><b>Q3. My favourite 2019 Rugby sports team in the Super Rugby competition is</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Blues</li> <li>● Brumbies</li> <li>● Bulls</li> <li>● Chiefs</li> <li>● Crusaders</li> <li>● Highlanders</li> <li>● Hurricanes</li> <li>● Jaguares</li> <li>● Lions</li> <li>● Rebels</li> <li>● Reds</li> <li>● Sharks</li> <li>● Stormers</li> <li>● Sun Wolves</li> <li>● Waratahs</li> <li>● No favourite</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q3. <i>New.</i></b></p>
<p><b>Q4. I have been a (<i>choice from Q3</i>) supporter for ...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 0-1 year</li> <li>● 2-5 years</li> <li>● 6-10 years</li> <li>● 11-15 years</li> <li>● 16-20 years</li> <li>● More than 20 years</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q4. <i>New.</i></b></p>
<p><b>Q5. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.</b></p> <p><b>Q5.1</b> Past Super Rugby <b>successes</b> influence my decision to support the (FAV TEAM).</p> <p><b>Q5.2</b> I do not care whether the (FAV TEAM) <b>win or lose.</b> (<i>reverse coded in final analysis</i>)</p> <p><b>Q5.3</b> It is very important to me that the (FAV TEAM) reach the <b>finals</b> each year.</p>	<p><b>Q5.1 <i>Adapted:</i></b> Cialdini, Borden, Thome, Walker, Freeman &amp; Sloan, 1976. <i>Adapted:</i> Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer &amp; Exler, 2008.</p> <p><b>Q5.2 <i>Adapted:</i></b> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2002. <i>Adapted:</i> Wakefield &amp; Sloan, 1995.</p> <p><b>Q5.3 <i>Adapted:</i></b> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2002.</p>

<p><b>Q6.</b> Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.</p> <p><b>Q6.1</b> I consider myself a <b>committed fan</b> of the (FAV TEAM).</p> <p><b>Q6.2</b> I could never change my <b>affiliation</b> from (FAV TEAM) to another professional team.</p> <p><b>Q6.3</b> I would watch (FAV TEAM) regardless of which team they were <b>playing against</b> at the time.</p> <p><b>Q6.4</b> I would be willing to <b>defend</b> (FAV TEAM) publicly, even if it caused controversy.</p>	<p><b>Q6.1</b> Adapted: Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer &amp; Exler, 2008. Adapted: Wakefield &amp; Sloan, 1995.</p> <p><b>Q6.2</b> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2001; Adapted: Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer &amp; Exler, 2008.</p> <p><b>Q6.3</b> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2001.</p> <p><b>Q6.4</b> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2001 Adapted: Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer &amp; Exler, 2008.</p>
<p><b>Q7. I watch or follow the (FAV TEAM) because my friends &amp;/or family do.</b></p>	<p><b>Q7.</b> Adapted: Gladden &amp; Funk, 2002. Adapted: Gladden &amp; Funk, 2001. Adapted: Underwood, Bond &amp; Baer, 2001.</p>
<p><b>Q8. I intend to go to a (FAV TEAM) home game this 2020 season</b></p>	<p><b>Q8.</b> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2001. Adapted: Funk &amp; Pastore, 2000. Adapted: Funk &amp; Pastore, 2000. Adapted: Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer &amp; Exler, 2008. Adapted: Wakefield &amp; Sloan, 1995.</p>
<p><b>Q9. I really LIKE the Crusaders rugby team</b></p>	<p><b>Q9.</b> Adapted: Foroudi, Melewar, Gupta, 2014. Adapted: Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer &amp; Exler, 2008. Adapted: de Chernatony, Harris, Christodoulides, 2004a.</p>
<p>A number of events have occurred in the first half of 2019 that could have impacted your perceptions of the Crusaders NAME</p> <p><b>Q10.</b> At the START OF 2019, <b>BEFORE</b> the Christchurch events occurred</p> <p><b>Q10.1</b> I thought the Crusaders NAME was acceptable.</p>	<p><b>Q10.1/11.1</b> Adapted: Gurhan-Canli, &amp; Maheswaran, D., 2000. Adapted: Desai &amp; Keller, 2002.</p> <p><b>Q10.2/Q11.2</b> Adapted: Biscaia, Ross, Yoshida, Correia, Rosado &amp; Maroco,</p>

<p><b>Q10.2</b> I liked the Crusaders NAME.</p> <p><b>Q10.3</b> I thought the Crusaders NAME was appropriate.</p> <p><b>Q11.</b> TODAY,</p> <p><b>Q11.1</b> I think the Crusaders NAME is acceptable.</p> <p><b>Q11.2</b> I like the Crusaders NAME.</p> <p><b>Q11.3</b> I think the Crusaders NAME is appropriate.</p>	<p>2016. <i>Adapted:</i> Foroudi, Melewar &amp; Gupta, 2014.</p> <p><b>Q10.3/11.3</b> <i>Adapted:</i> Foroudi, Melewar &amp; Gupta, 2014. <i>Adapted:</i> Desai &amp; Keller, 2002.</p>
<p><b>Q12.</b> Please tick the boxes that apply to you (<i>multiple answers permitted</i>).</p> <p><b>My previous answer (about the Crusaders NAME today) was most influenced by ....</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nothing in particular</li> <li>● My friends</li> <li>● My family</li> <li>● The media</li> <li>● Christchurch events</li> <li>● Other (plus text box to elaborate)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q12.</b> <i>New.</i></p>
<p>A number of events have occurred in the first half of 2019 that could have impacted your perceptions of the <b>Crusaders LOGO</b>.</p> <p><b>Q13.</b> TODAY,</p> <p>Q13.1 I think the Crusaders LOGO is acceptable.</p> <p>Q13.2 I like the Crusaders LOGO.</p> <p>Q13.3. I think the Crusaders LOGO is appropriate.</p> <p><b>Q14.</b> <i>At the start of 2019, BEFORE the Christchurch events occurred</i></p> <p>Q14.1 I thought the Crusaders LOGO was acceptable.</p> <p>Q14.2. I liked the Crusaders LOGO.</p> <p>Q14.3. I thought the Crusaders LOGO was appropriate.</p>	<p><b>Q13.1/14.1</b> <i>Adapted:</i> Gurhan-Canli &amp; Maheswaran, 2000.</p> <p><b>Q13.2/Q14.2</b> <i>Adapted:</i> Biscaia, Ross, Yoshida, Correia, Rosado &amp; Maroco, 2016. <i>Adapted:</i> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2001. <i>Adapted:</i> Kraus &amp; Gierl, 2017.</p> <p><b>Q13.3/14.3</b> <i>Adapted:</i> Foroudi, Melewar &amp; Gupta, 2014.</p>

<p>A number of events have occurred in the first half of 2019 that could have impacted your perceptions of the Crusaders PRE-GAME PAGEENTRY (incl. flags, horses, swords, armoured knights, castles, anthem song).</p> <p><b>Q15. TODAY,</b></p> <p><b>Q15.1</b> I think the Crusaders pre-game PAGEENTRY is acceptable.</p> <p><b>Q15.2</b> I like the Crusaders pre-game PAGEENTRY.</p> <p><b>Q15.3</b> I think the Crusaders pre-game PAGEENTRY is appropriate.</p> <p><b>Q16.</b> <i>At the start of 2019, <b>BEFORE</b> the Christchurch events occurred</i></p> <p><b>Q16.1</b> I thought the Crusaders pre-game PAGEENTRY was acceptable.</p> <p><b>Q16.2</b> I liked the pre-game PAGEENTRY.</p> <p><b>Q16.3</b> I thought the Crusaders pre-game PAGEENTRY was appropriate.</p>	<p><b>CRUSADERS FANS ONLY</b></p> <p><b>Q15.1/16.1</b> <i>Adapted:</i> Gurhan-Canli &amp; Maheswaran, 2000. <i>Adapted:</i> LaTour, Snipes &amp; Bliss, 1996.</p> <p><b>Q15.2/16.2</b> <i>Authors own.</i></p> <p><b>Q15.3/16.3.</b> <i>Adapted</i> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2001. <i>Adapted:</i> Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal &amp; Voss, 2002.</p>
<p><b>Q17.</b> <i>Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.</i></p> <p><b>Q17.1</b> Crusaders <b>hero's</b> (eg Richie McCaw, Dan Carters, Todd Blackadder &amp; Scott Robertson) enhance my experience of being a Crusaders fan</p> <p><b>Q17.2</b> The Crusaders has <b>star players</b> that I like to watch.</p> <p><b>Q17.3</b> It is important that I like the Crusaders <b>Head Coach.</b></p>	<p><b>CRUSADERS FANS ONLY</b></p> <p><b>Q17.1</b> <i>Authors own.</i></p> <p><b>Q17.2</b> <i>Adapted:</i> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2002.</p> <p><b>Q17.3</b> <i>Adapted:</i> Gladden &amp; Funk, 2002.</p>
<p><b>Q18.</b> <i>Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.</i></p> <p><b>Q18.1</b> I think the Crusaders should <b>change their NAME</b></p> <p><b>Q18.2</b> I think the Crusaders should <b>change their LOGO</b></p>	<p><b>Q18.</b> <i>Adapted:</i> He, Chen &amp; Alden, 2016; Round &amp; Roper, 2017.</p>

<p><b>Q18.3</b> I think the Crusaders should <b>change their pre-game PAGEANTRY</b> (incl. flags, horses, swords, armoured knights, castles, anthem song)</p>	
<p><b>Q19.</b> Please tick the boxes that apply to you (<i>multiple answers permitted</i>).</p> <p>Immediately <b>AFTER</b> the Christchurch mosque events I would have thought that the Crusaders <b>should change their NAME, LOGO &amp; PAGEANTRY.</b></p> <p><b>Q19</b> All of the above (1)  <b>Q19</b> None of the above (2)  <b>Q19</b> Some of the above (3) <i>plus string</i></p>	<p><b>Q19.</b> <i>Adapted:</i> He, Chen &amp; Alden, 2016; Round &amp; Roper, 2017.</p>
<p><b>Q20.</b> Please tick the boxes that apply to you (<i>multiple answers permitted</i>).</p> <p><b>BEFORE</b> the Christchurch mosque events I would have thought that the Crusaders <b>should change their NAME, LOGO &amp; PAGEANTRY:</b></p> <p><b>Q20</b> All of the above (1)  <b>Q20</b> None of the above (2)  <b>Q20</b> Some of the above (3) <i>plus string</i></p>	<p><b>Q20.</b> <i>Adapted:</i> He, Chen &amp; Alden, 2016; Round &amp; Roper, 2017.</p>
<p><b>Q21.</b> Are there elements of the Crusaders name and/or branding you would like to <b>comment</b> on? All answers are completely anonymous.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes (<i>continue to Open text box</i>)</li> <li>● No</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q21.</b> <i>New.</i></p>
<p><b>Q22.</b> What is your gender?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Male</li> <li>● Female</li> <li>● Other</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q22.</b> <i>Demographic.</i></p>

<p><b>Q23. What is your religious affiliation?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Agnostic</li> <li>● Buddhist</li> <li>● Christian</li> <li>● Hindu</li> <li>● Jewish</li> <li>● Muslim</li> <li>● Other</li> <li>● I'd prefer not to say</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q23. Demographic.</b></p>
<p><b>Q24. Which city/region to do you live in?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Buller, Canterbury, Mid-Canterbury, South Canterbury, Tasman and West Coast</li> <li>● Rest of New Zealand</li> <li>● Other</li> <li>● I'd prefer not to say</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q24. Demographic.</b></p>
<p><b>Q25. Please select your age group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Under 18</li> <li>● 18-24</li> <li>● 25-34</li> <li>● 35-44</li> <li>● 45-54</li> <li>● 55-64</li> <li>● 65-74</li> <li>● 75-84</li> <li>● 85 or older</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q25. Demographic.</b></p>
<p><b>Q26. Which country were you born in?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● (Countries scrolling text box)</li> <li>● I'd prefer not to say</li> </ul>	<p><b>Q26. Demographic.</b></p>



## Appendix 2

### Survey Question, Source & SEM Code

Question	Source	SEM Code
1.0	<i>Qualifier (watch/follow rugby)</i>	
1.1	Adpated: Funk & James, 2004; Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer & Exler, 2008	
1.2	Adapted: Bauer et al, 2008;	
1.3	Adapted: Funk et al., 2004	
1.4	Adapted: Bauer et al., 2008	
1.5	Adapted: Funk et al., 2004	
1.6	<i>Authors own (play rugby)</i>	
2.0	<i>Qualifier (heard of Crusaders)</i>	
3.0	<i>Authors own (favourite Super Rugby team)</i>	
4.0	<i>Authors own (supporter years)</i>	
5.1	Adapted: Cialdini, Borden, Thome, Walker, Freeman & Sloan, 1976; Bauer et al., 2008	PSuc5.1
5.2	Adapted: Gladden & Funk, 2002; Wakefield & Sloan, 1995	PSuc5.2
5.3	Adapted: Gladden et al., 2002	PSuc5.3
6.1	Adapted: Bauer et al., 2008; Wakefield et al, 1995	Loyal6.1
6.2	Gladden & Funk, 2001; Adapted: Bauer et al., 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2001	Loyal6.2
6.3	Gladden et al., 2001	Loyal6.3
6.4	Gladden et al., 2001; Adapted: Bauer et al., 2008	Loyal6.4
7.0	Adapted: Gladden et al., 2002; Gladden et al., 2001; Underwood, Bond & Baer, 2001	
8.0	Gladden et al., 2001; Adapted: Funk & Pastore, 2000; Bauer et al., 2008; Wakefield et al., 1995	
9.0	Adapted: Foroudi, Melewar & Gupta, 2014; Bauer et al., 2008; de Chernatony, Harris & Christodoulides, 2004	Attitude
10.1	Adapted: Gurhan-Canli & Maheswaran, 2000; Desai & Keller, 2002	BName10.1
10.2	Adapted: Biscaia, Ross, Yoshida, Correia, Rosado & Maroco, 2016; Foroudi et al., 2014	BName10.2
10.3	Adapted: Foroudi et al., 2014; Desai et al., 2002	BName10.3
11.1	Adapted: Gurhan-Canli et al, 2000; Desai et al., 2002	
11.2	Adapted: Biscaia et al., 2016; Foroudi et al., 2014	
11.3	Adapted: Foroudi et al., 2014; Desai et al., 2002	
12.0	<i>Authors own (name influence)</i>	
13.1	Adapted: Gurhan-Canli et al., 2000	
13.2	Adapted: Biscaia et al., 2016; Gladden et al., 2001; Kraus & Gierl, 2017	
13.3	Adapted: Foroudi et al., 2014	
14.1	Adapted: Gurhan-Canli et al., 2000	BLogo14.1
14.2	Adapted: Biscaia et al., 2016; Gladden et al., 2001; Kraus et al., 2017	BLogo14.2
14.3	Adapted: Foroudi et al., 2014	BLogo14.3
15.1	Adapted: Gurhan-Canli et al., 2000; Latour, Snipes & Bliss, 1996	TPag15.1
15.2	Authors own (pageantry)	TPag15.2
15.3	Adapted: Gladden et al, 2001; Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal & Voss, 2002	TPag15.3
16.1	Adapted: Gurhan-Canli et al., 2000; Latour et al., 1996	
16.2	<i>Authors own (pageantry)</i>	
16.3	Adapted: Gladden et al, 2001; Baker et al., 2002	
17.1	<i>Authors own (Crusaders hero's)</i>	Charact17.1
17.2	Adapted: Gladden et al, 2002	Charact17.2
17.3	Adapted: Gladden et al., 2002	Charact17.3
18.1	Adpated: Round & Roper, 2017; He, Chen & Alden, 2016	
18.2	Adapted: Round et al., 2017; He et al., 2016	
18.3	Adapted: Round et al., 2017; He et al., 2016	
19.0	Adapted: Round et al., 2017; He et al., 2016	
20.0	Adapted: Round et al., 2017; He et al., 2016	
21.0	<i>Authors own (branding comments)</i>	
22.0	<i>Demographic (gender)</i>	
23.0	<i>Demographic (religious affiliation)</i>	
24.0	<i>Demographic (region)</i>	
25.0	<i>Demographic (age)</i>	
26.0	<i>Demographic (country born)</i>	

PSuc5.1 Omitted from final SEM analysis

PSuc5.2 Omitted from final SEM analysis

## Appendix 3

Monday, Jul 13, 2020 09:00 AM



# Statement From The Washington Redskins Football Team

On July 3rd, we announced the commencement of a thorough review of the team's name. That review has begun in earnest. As part of this process, we want to keep our sponsors, fans and community apprised of our thinking as we go forward.

Today, we are announcing we will be retiring the Redskins name and logo upon completion of this review.

Dan Snyder and Coach Rivera are working closely to develop a new name and design approach that will enhance the standing of our proud, tradition rich franchise and inspire our sponsors, fans and community for the next 100 years.

Source: Washington (ex Redskins) NFL website screenshot 13 July 2020