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**RICARDO MANUEL  
DE MARIZ ROZEIRA  
DE ALMEIDA  
CAYOLLA**

**BRAND SACRIFICE:  
WHEN CONSUMERS ARE DEEPLY COMMITTED TO A  
BRAND.**

**SACRIFÍCIO PELA MARCA:  
QUANDO OS CONSUMIDORES ESTÃO  
PROFUNDAMENTE  
COMPROMETIDOS COM UMA MARCA.**



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Tese apresentada à Universidade de Aveiro para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Doutor em Marketing e Estratégia, realizada sob a orientação científica da Doutora Sandra Maria Correia Loureiro, Professora auxiliar do Departamento de Marketing, Operações e Gestão Geral do Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE-IUL).

Este trabalho é dedicado a todos aqueles que sempre acreditaram em mim.

o júri

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**palavras-chave**

Sacrifício pela Marca, fãs de futebol, Teoria Fundamentada, FC Porto, Relacionamento do Consumidor com a Marca

**resumo**

Esta investigação foi levada a cabo com a motivação de contribuir para a compreensão do conceito de sacrifício associado ao marketing e à relação entre a marca e o consumidor.

Basicamente, o que queremos saber é: 1) no geral, o que é que leva uma pessoa a sacrificar-se por uma marca?; 2) no específico, o que leva um adepto do FC Porto a sacrificar-se pelo seu clube?

Assim, definimos três áreas distintas: o futebol enquanto contexto de pesquisa; o Consumer Brand Relationship (CBR) enquanto o consumidor e o clube como marca e os relacionamentos que resultam; e o sacrifício, pouco estudado na literatura enquanto relacionamento indivíduo/marca.

No que diz respeito ao CBR pouco tinha sido escrito sobre o sacrifício por uma marca; quanto à área da psicologia, no que diz respeito ao sacrifício os estudos existentes têm a ver, essencialmente, com o relacionamento entre duas pessoas, normalmente relacionamentos amorosos.

Para lograr tal intento foi selecionado um sector de atividade onde a ligação à marca tende a ser forte, isto é, o futebol. Assim, é fundamental ter em consideração a personalidade do consumidor numa indústria que é uma das com maior e mais rápido crescimento e onde o adepto (consumidor) tem especial importância dado ser principal fonte de receita, mas onde o desconhecimento sobre o mesmo é grande.

Nesta investigação utilizamos a Grounded Theory. Pretendemos assim contribuir para a construção de uma teoria onde há pouco conhecimento, pois o CBR, no que respeita ao relacionamento entre um indivíduo e uma marca, no que ao sacrifício diz respeito, tem muito por desbravar, estando a seleção da metodologia em linha com os objetivos que orientam a pesquisa e usada de forma transversal.

Realizamos cinco estudos que não são mais que um primeiro passo no sentido de entender o que leva um consumidor a sacrificar-se por uma marca, estabelecendo relacionamentos com a mesma. Procuramos ir mais além do Investment Model (IM), pois trata-se de melhor compreender o relacionamento de uma pessoa com uma marca e não de uma pessoa com outra pessoa.

Utilizamos o Atlas Ti e o NVivo mas, independentemente de toda a ajuda que os programas de computador possam prestar nada substitui o ser humano na direção e orientação a dar à pesquisa.

Como conclusões: 1) é todo um conjunto de factores muito diversos, desde factores estruturantes (pessoal, familiar, social), relativos à marca e à vivência, onde a confiança e o significado da marca são cruciais; 2) para além dos aspetos globais do sacrifício por uma marca, é o facto de ser uma opção por uma forma de vida, que exige ser vivida e experienciada, com consequências assumidas, onde a irracionalidade está presente e é aceite naturalmente.

Esta investigação é a primeira tentativa de definir o que é que quer dizer sacrifício, o que significa a palavra sacrifício para um consumidor/adepto, descobrindo "theory from data".

**keywords**

Brand sacrifice, football fans, Grounded Theory, FC Porto, Consumer Brand Relationship

**abstract**

This research was carried out with the aim of contributing to understanding of the concept of sacrifice associated with marketing and the relationship between brand and consumer.

Fundamentally, what we want to know is: 1) in general, what leads someone to make sacrifices for a brand?; 2) specifically, what leads a fan of FC Porto to make sacrifices for his club?

Therefore, three distinct areas were defined: football as the research context; Consumer Brand Relationship (CBR) with the consumer and the club as the brand and the resulting relationships; and sacrifice, little studied in the literature as an individual/brand relationship.

Concerning CBR, little had been written about sacrifice for a brand; in the area of psychology, regarding sacrifice, existing studies focus essentially on the relationship between two people, usually in a loving relationship.

To achieve this aim, a sector of activity was chosen where the connection with the brand tends to be strong, i.e., football. It is therefore fundamental to consider the personality of the consumer in an industry which is one of those with the greatest and fastest growth and where the supporter (consumer) is especially important due to being the main source of income, but about whom there is a great lack of knowledge.

This research uses Grounded Theory, the intention being to contribute to constructing theory where there is little knowledge, as CBR, concerning sacrifice in the relationship between an individual and a brand, is in need of greater clarification, the methodology selected being in line with the objectives guiding the research and used transversally.

Five studies were carried out, being no more than a first step towards understanding what leads a consumer to make sacrifices for a brand, forming relationships with it. We attempt to go beyond the Investment Model (IM), as the aim is better understanding of the relationship between a person and a brand, rather than between one person and another.

We use Atlas Ti and NVivo but, despite all the help computer programs are able to provide, nothing replaces the human being in directing and orienting the research.

As conclusions: 1) it is a whole set of very diverse factors including structuring factors (personal, family, social), related to the brand and experiences where trust in the brand and its meaning are crucial; 2) besides the global aspects of sacrifice for a brand, it is the fact of being an option for a way of life, which needs to be gone through and experienced with due consequences, where irrationality is present and naturally accepted.

This research is the first attempt to define what sacrifice means, what the word sacrifice means for a consumer/fan, discovering "theory from data".

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# **Introduction**

## **Introduction**

This research was carried out with the motivation of contributing to understanding of the concept of sacrifice associated with marketing and the relationship between brand and consumer, the methodology chosen being in line with the objectives guiding the research (Corbin & Strauss, 1998; Goulding, 2002) and used transversally (Gephart, 2004).

The main goal of the study is to find out why consumers make sacrifices for a brand (in this specific case, fans of FC Porto make sacrifices for their club), and there are three distinct areas: football as the context of research; Consumer Brand Relationship (CBR) concerning the consumer and the club as a brand and the resulting relationships; and the sacrifice, little studied in the literature as an individual/brand relationship.

The five studies are a first step towards understanding what leads a consumer to make sacrifices for a brand and form a relationship with it. We seek to go beyond the Investment Model (IM) of Rusbult (1980), as the aim is better understanding of the relationship between a person and a brand and not between one person and another.

Limiting as much as possible what a given consumer/fan understands as making a sacrifice for a brand, this research is the first attempt to define what sacrifice means, what the word sacrifice means for a consumer/fan, discovering “theory from data” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 1).

## **The gap**

In the course of the research, we came to realize that overall concerning CBR, little had been written on sacrifice for a brand; in psychology, sacrifice has essentially to do with the relationship between two people (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997), and this is usually a loving relationship.

To achieve this goal, a sector of activity was chosen where the connection with the brand tends to be strong, i.e., football. It is therefore fundamental to consider the consumer's personality (Matzler, Pichler, & Hemetsberger, 2007) in an industry which is one of the largest and fastest growing, and where the fan (consumer) is especially important through being the main source of income, but where knowledge of him is very scarce (DeSarbo & Madrigal, 2011).

Therefore, in this study intending to find out why a consumer makes sacrifices for a brand, we use Grounded Theory, according to Goulding (2002), as:

- . we want to contribute to constructing a theory where knowledge is lacking, as in CBR, where in relation to an individual's relationship with a brand, much remains to be clarified as regards sacrifice;
- . we use a holistic, global and complex methodology incorporating a varied range of sources (interviews, observations, memos), to study the phenomenon in question;
- . we use a methodology that allows us to apply a great number of theories transversal to various subjects in order to analyze and explain the data which will stimulate the theory.

### **Research question**

Healy and Perry (2000, p. 118) state that “the aim of much marketing research is to describe and explain complex, social science phenomena”.

Basically, what we want to know is:

- . in general, what leads someone to make sacrifices for a brand?
- . specifically, what leads a fan of FC Porto to make sacrifices for his club?

In our case, Grounded Theory “is especially appropriate in new topic areas (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 532). We never start out from a “blank slate” (Kahlke, 2014, p. 39). In each study, we had clear objectives, an essential condition for its success, as argued by Eisenhardt (1989, p. 536).

That is, we always try to adapt our criteria to the needs arising, as in Corbin and Strauss (1990, p. 418) when suggesting “the basic argument that we propose is that the criteria should be adapted to fit the procedures of the method”, towards better understanding and subsequently being able to explain that knowledge and the procedures used (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

For Study 1 we have two objectives:

Firstly, begin to understand the phenomenon of brand sacrifice in the specific case of football fans;

Secondly, screen the fans.

In Study 2 the objectives are:

Firstly, search for a different perspective;

Secondly, form a global idea about football and fans.

In Study 3, the objectives proposed are:

Firstly, narrow Brand Sacrifice to fans from one club (FC Porto);

Secondly, in the whole country.

In Study 4, the qualitative focus group technique is used with three aims:

Firstly, validate the four themes established in Study 3;

Secondly, try to understand the differences in fans’ behaviour according to their place of residence;

Thirdly, elaborate a directory for the final list of fans to be interviewed.

Finally, in Study 5, the in-depth interview is used with two aims:

Firstly, a deep understanding of the meaning of sacrifice for a fan;

Secondly, building a grid of passive and active sacrifice.

## **Grounded Theory**

Grounded Theory is a systematic methodology which, through data analysis, promotes the discovery of theory (Martin & Turner, 1986). It is a more appropriate methodology if the aim is to understand the process by which those involved construct meanings and symbolism through a personal and subjective experience (Suddaby, 2006). We use Grounded Theory as this serves our purpose: to create theory where there is little knowledge in the above-mentioned areas. In the words of Goulding (1999, p. 867): “Grounded Theory is used to generate theory where little is already known” and “what is important in Grounded Theory is that the conceptual categories, after the data analysis process, are well rooted in the data and derive from the original research question.” (Suddaby, 2006, p. 638).

## **Data**

Despite all the help that computer programs can provide, nothing replaces the human being in directing and orienting research. “Qualitative software programs can be useful in organizing and coding data, but they are no substitute for the interpretation of data.” (Suddaby, 2006, p. 638).

Firstly, each transcribed interview was read and anything we found interesting was underlined. We then defined categories and gave each one a colour. As we read, we referred to what we had noted down in the memos and cross-checked our notes against the transcription and memory of the facts. Next, each interview was summarized, according to the categories. Only after these steps did we turn to computer programs. In Study 1 we used Atlas Ti. In the others we used NVivo, always with external advice.

## **Thesis structure and organization**

The thesis is structured in five sections: introduction, theoretical framework, methodology, findings and conclusions.

The introduction presents the subject, refers to the gap in the literature, explains the research question and respective objectives, briefly presents the methodology used, focuses on the importance of data processing and ends with a short reference to how the thesis is structured with a final figure showing its overall structure.

The theoretical framework is formed of the marketing concept (marketing concept, definition, evolution and marketing today), brand concept (importance of the brand, definitions, relationships, promises, brand values and reasons for existing relationships), the consumer-brand relationship (definition, aim, main constructs, major models, the choice of Investment Model (IM), deep relationship commitment (IM objectives, roots, components; Willingness To Sacrifice (WTS) definition, importance, components; sacrifice, its definition and importance, types and motives for sacrifice and our definition of sacrifice for this research; devotion and fanaticism ending the section) and football context: tribes and deep relationships (definition and characterization of tribes and brand communities, our definition of tribes for the research, sports marketing analysis, sport fans typology and importance, and fan definition for the research).

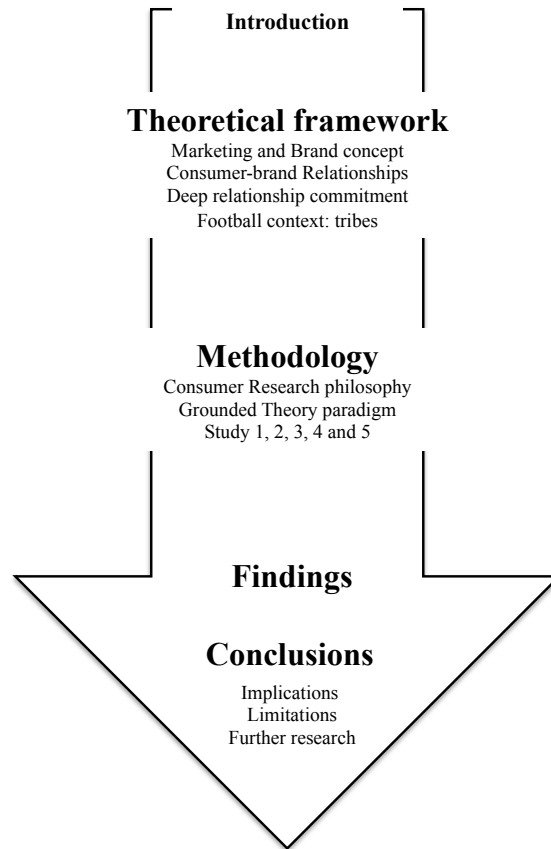
The methodology focuses on the characteristics of the different methodologies, dealing in detail with grounded theory methodology and specifying its process, culminating in a very detailed explanation of each study, providing explanatory figures and detailed tables of all the studies made.

In the findings, recourse to a model of systematic presentation aims to make explicit what each study brings to the research, duly supported by the interviewees' quotes.

Finally, the conclusions summarize the studies made, presenting a deeper explanation of them, followed by a brief reflection and response to the research question, ending with the methodological limitations, theoretical and managerial implications and suggestions for further research.

An overall structure of the thesis follows (fig. 01).

**Fig. 01. Overall structure of the thesis.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

# **Theoretical framework**

## **1 - Marketing Concept: Emergence and Evolution**

This chapter will deal with the concept of marketing. We justify using the definition of the American Marketing Association (AMA) and present its evolution with respective criticisms and new definitions, reinforcing the importance of the marketing definition. We also approach the evolution of the marketing concept, from its roots, as a social process, its nature, extent of coverage and new possibilities, stressing the importance of AMA's new definition of marketing, ending with a reflection on what marketing is today.

### **1.1 - Evolution of the American Marketing Association's (AMA) marketing definition**

“Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” (*AMA, Approved July 2013*).

Globally, the definition of “marketing” used in several academic and professional contexts (books, marketing professionals and taught in universities) is the responsibility of the American Marketing Association – AMA (Keefe, 2004). Since the original definition in 1935 by the National Association of Marketing Teachers, the AMA's predecessor, endorsed by AMA in 1948 and confirmed in 1960 where marketing is “the performance of business activities that direct[s] the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer or user” (American Marketing Association, 1960), that AMA definition has always been “under fire”. In this case too much “emphasis on the flow of products to end consumers” (Zinkhan & Williams, 2007, p. 285).

In 1985, the AMA's definition was “marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals.” This definition endured nineteen years, until 2004. As Robert Lusch said “everybody agreed we need to change” (Keefe, 2004, p. 17), and despite the CEO of AMA at the time, Dennis Dunlap, knowing that a definition is “something that should last a while, it is important to be revisited maybe every five years” (Keefe, 2004, p. 18), the definition stood for almost two decades. In 2004

AMA defined marketing as an “organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders.” If in the definition of 1985, the focus is placed on marketing having the function to satisfy individual and organizational objectives, 19 years later that definition focuses on the organization and forgets the individual, being too much centered on marketing management, and interestingly the word exchange is absent from the definition (Sheth & Uslay, 2007).

In 2007, three years after the last definition (a very short period of time if we take the past into account), a new definition of marketing emerges: “Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” The definition of 2007 is ratified in July 2013. This definition is more in line with the scope of marketing, as for Gundlach and Wilkie (2009, p. 263) “the role and responsibility of marketing is to provide value broadly”. Hult, Mena, Ferrell and Ferrell (2011) argue that in this definition the term “society at large” is too broad and even if maintaining a perspective oriented to the market, forgets a whole set of “actors” such as the local community, various interest groups, the mass media, associations and even competitors. For Sheth and Uslay (2007), this definition maintains the perspective of stakeholders and does not limit the scope of marketing to organizations, where the term marketing does not mean only managing clients/consumers, therefore keeping the traditional view (the exchange paradigm) but also incorporating the creation of value (a new paradigm), which means we can never forget that “exchange is a central concept in marketing, and it may well serve as the foundation for that elusive general theory of marketing” (Bagozzi, 1975, p. 39; Zinkhan & Williams, 2007, p. 286).

**The importance of the definition of marketing.** In a dynamic field of knowledge with epistemological roots in a diverse set of fields, the definition of an academic subject, such as marketing, is relevant in forming its borders. For Zinkhan and Williams (2007), more than a question of practical or symbolic implications for practitioners (requiring qualifications, skills and training), or on the academic side (as a tool helping to legitimize

the community in question with regard to other communities, allows distinguishing one discipline from another and outlining the boundaries of research limited to the area in question as well as helping to identify the questions to ask in advancing the discipline), a definition provides, in a wider field, the possibility of influencing policy issues, popular perception and long-term orientations in trade.

## **1.2 - Evolution of the marketing concept**

The evolution of the efficiency of supply chain channels was the marketing focus in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Webster Jr, 1992). Even so, it is believed that marketing as an academic field emerged in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Alderson, 1958; Robert Bartels, 1974). One of the most influential schools of thought in marketing, marketing management, begins to develop mainly in the late 40s, coinciding with the period of systematization of sales. Based on economic principles and concepts, where social and psychological variables had little influence, this school recognized the interdependent relationship between sellers and buyers, to the detriment of suppliers in the field of transactions.

**Roots.** In the 50s, three different areas are identified in research into consumer behaviour: the first concerns psychological, emotional and irrational aspects that determine consumer behaviour, the second is social determinants and thirdly decisions arising from family structure, with particular relevance to the first area. However, from the end of that decade, some authors begin to question what they call the short-term view, i.e., the mere pursuit of production efficiencies should be replaced by a sense of satisfaction and greater attention to consumers' needs and desires. This is the "marketing myopia" mentioned by Levitt (1960), which reaffirms the importance of the customer and not the product as the "driver", based on "self-deception" in a cycle of compound growth based on population expansion, lack of competitive products by competitors, the evangelization of mass production supported by a lower unit cost and, finally, too much attention to production allied to science to reduce production costs. The fundamental principle of the marketing concept arises, based on a business philosophy supported by a global effort with the emergence of

the consumer in establishing the company, where customer satisfaction is a means to achieve the end - profits - in the long term.

With the term market segmentation, Smith (1956) also contributed to the undeniable advancement of theory in marketing, with Alderson (1958) defining marketing as the exchange between consumer groups and production groups. Borden (1964) introduced a mixed marketing process that integrates various functions to be developed simultaneously, a thesis popularized by McCarthy (1960) with the “4 Ps”: price, placement, promotion and product.

**Marketing as a social process.** In the 1960s marketing is defined for the first time as a social process, as mentioned by Bartels et al. (1965) in an article by the Marketing Staff of Ohio State University, marketing being “the process in a society by which the demand structure for economic goods and services is anticipated or enlarged and satisfied through the conception, promotion, exchange, and physical distribution of such goods and services” (Bartels et al., 1965, p. 43). The school of consumer behaviour gains special relevance in the 60s and 70s looking to explain the relationship between customers and the market. This school aimed to understand the attitudes, beliefs and intentions of consumers in order to explain their behaviours. These different theoretical perspectives defended by either marketing management or consumer behaviour researchers led to new debate, in particular with regard to the nature and scope of marketing.

**Nature and scope of marketing.** Kotler and Levy (1969b) suggest that marketing is an activity intrinsic to society and should be applied beyond the area of business, that is, to non-profit organizations. In fact, these authors were the first to refer to non-commercial organizations, such as museums, State schools and charities as having products and consumers and the need to use marketing tools to create, promote and achieve their goals as organizations. In turn, Lazer (1969) refers to the need for rapprochement between social needs and marketing. Nevertheless, this thought is not shared by all marketing authors, as highlighted by Luck (1969), saying that marketing should be limited to the business process, limited to business transactions, that is, the transactional market. In contrast, Kotler and Levy, (1969a) point out that the essential issue of marketing lies in the general

idea of exchanging rather than the thesis of a transactional market. Subsequently, Kotler (1972) mentions a generic marketing concept, widening the range to a whole set of members and customers in the marketing community; stakeholders. Carman (1973) and Bartels and Luck (1974) forecast an identity crisis in marketing, given the “semantic jungle” that prevents traders from thinking clearly about marketing, referring to the disadvantages of extending the concept. The confusion is great with Bartels proposing that marketing should reappear with a new name and Luck challenged the president of AMA to give a precise definition of marketing, thus running the risk of becoming marketing professionals and constraining the development of their profession, considering such semantic confusion (Hunt, 1976).

The extent of the concept may be seen not only as a new opportunity for the academic field of marketing, but also in the light of a whole set of social and political events of the moment, as well as new business opportunities and access to new areas that were previously not welcome in the traditional paradigm of marketing. Cochoy (1999) states that not only a broadening of the concept emerges dealing with the application of marketing to non-profit (social marketing) organizations, but also the emergence of more pure research on the effects and outcomes of marketing (macro-marketing), which after successive developments provided the basis for structuring the macromarketing school. According to Hunt (1977), the macromarketing school aims to study marketing systems, their impact and respective consequences on society and vice versa.

Therefore, in 1985, the AMA was forced to change the setting that persisted for fifty years, trying to integrate the three strands of previous decades: the marketing concept of the 50’s, where the satisfaction of individual and organizational goals has special importance, the marketing management of the 60’s (marketing mix), and expanded marketing of the 70’s (where marketing ideas join goods and services with special emphasis on the goal of the organization, which need not necessarily be economic) (Cochoy (1999). For Grönroos (1989), this new definition of AMA somewhat alters the old one - except for promoting implementation (placed at the same level as planning ) - and he proposes a Nordic Marketing definition: “marketing is to establish, develop and commercialise long-term

customer-relationships, so that the objectives of the parties involved are met. This is done by a mutual exchange and keeping of promises” (Grönroos, 1989, p. 57). Thus, a new paradigm emerges: relationship marketing (Coviello, Brodie, & Munro, 1997).

**Marketing today.** Currently, more and more authors defend the idea that marketing is undergoing a new process of theory change, moving from an approach focused on transaction to one focused on building customer relationships. There is an evolution of marketing thought and practice: from marketing whose core mission is to bring things to the market, to marketing that aims to identify customers and make marketing for them - market(ing) to, for a final stage whose main task of marketing is to collaborate with consumers to co-create value - market(ing) with (Lusch, 2007).

Irrespective of the marketing studies in different schools of thought, it is important to recognize that in each period of history, the concept and practice of marketing have evolved, with different nuances, in response to the specific characteristics of each era. Understanding this process helps to forecast the future of marketing and the influence of marketing thought in related disciplines, even knowing that marketing is rooted in human behaviour and therefore characterized as being “mutable, unpredictable, and reactive” (Zinkham and Hirschheim (1992) cited in Sheth & Sisodia, 1999) but assuming that “exchange is a central concept in marketing, and it may well serve the foundation for that elusive general theory of marketing” (Bagozzi, 1975, p. 39; Zinkhan & Williams, 2007, p. 286).

Given the above, we understand the importance of the relationships among stakeholders as a core element in marketing conceptualization. Therefore, knowing how to establish and maintain relationships between brands and consumers is essential in marketing. The next chapters deal with brand conceptualization and present the origins and main models of the consumer-brand relationship.

## **2 - Brand Concept: Meaning and Value**

This chapter is devoted to the brand concept. The importance of the brand, what goes on in consumers' heads, the importance of the experience and brand reality will be dealt with in brief. In more detail, we will approach brand definitions, from a historical perspective of the definition according to management or from the consumers' perspective and the importance of creating relationships, as well as the brand's promise and signs. Contextualizing, we will approach brand values, their components, the three facets characterizing them, ending with the real reason for the existence of relationships between brands and consumers.

Early discussions on branding emerge in the United States at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. For instance, Copeland (1923) states that buyers will be reluctant to purchase a product if there is no recognizable brand name from a reputable manufacturer. Later, Gardner and Levy (1955) claim that a brand is embedded within a complex symbolism that represents a variety of attributes and ideas, and brand names are thus more than labels distinguishing products and allowing consumers to tell them apart in the context of complex buying situations. Gardner and Levy (1955) also mention that a brand comprises sets of ideas, feelings and attitudes that the consumer has about an organization or a product. Based on this, consumers make choices through one or several elements of these sets that they find most appropriate.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century ended with two main approaches to the brand concept: product plus and holistic (Ambler & Styles, 1997). The first approach views a brand as an extra component added to a product (it serves to identify the product). The holistic approach refers to the group of attributes (tangible/intangible, rational or emotional) that act to enhance consumer satisfaction. In the 21st Century, brands have been regarded as a highly contextualized entity open to diverse contemporary approaches and understandings and consequently to a never-ending process of theoretical development (Gabbott & Jevons, 2009). Therefore, it is highly unlikely that we can conglomerate all a brand's characteristics in a single, consensual and widely accepted definition. Gabbott and Jevons (2009) state there will never be a unifying definition, only a constantly evolving series of contexts, features and

circumstances. Even so, we can find four main perspectives of the brand before presenting the most commonly used definitions: (i) brand importance, (ii) consumers' mind, (iii) importance of experience, and (iv) brand reality.

(i) *Brand importance*

If, from the marketing point of view, quality is personal and subjective and the result of perceptions (Brito, 2010), it is important to create an awareness of the brand for marketing communications to be able to create in the consumer the ability to recognize it and associate not only information but also emotions that distinguish one brand from another (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). The importance of branding is great from the moment we recognize its enormous weight in the relational sense in how to transmit values and establish trust between the brand and the consumer, and also in an economic sense regarding increased sales and conquering new markets.

(ii) *Consumers' mind*

“In consumer marketing, brands often provide the primary points of differentiation between competitive offerings, and as such they can be critical to the success of companies” (Wood, 2000, p. 662). This distinction is absolutely imperative for the brand to present itself as an intangible asset, that is, something with no physical existence, and ultimately, something that lies in consumers' minds (Keller, 2003), the brand depending on its existence in the customer's mind (Grönroos, 2000).

(iii) *Importance of experience*

The experience then becomes something essential, in the sense that brands reflect the customers' complete experience with products (Keller & Lehmann, 2006), and so the strength of a brand is important, in the sense that strong brands connect a product or service to consumers' emotions that exist in the collective imagination (Kotler & Keller, 2006).

(iv) *Brand reality*

This reality becomes synonymous with a social construct that encompasses all existing relationships and interactions (goods or services with the provider; buyer with the supplier) and cannot therefore be analysed through isolated actions (either through products or services), because it is not the product itself that forms reality, but rather what consumers

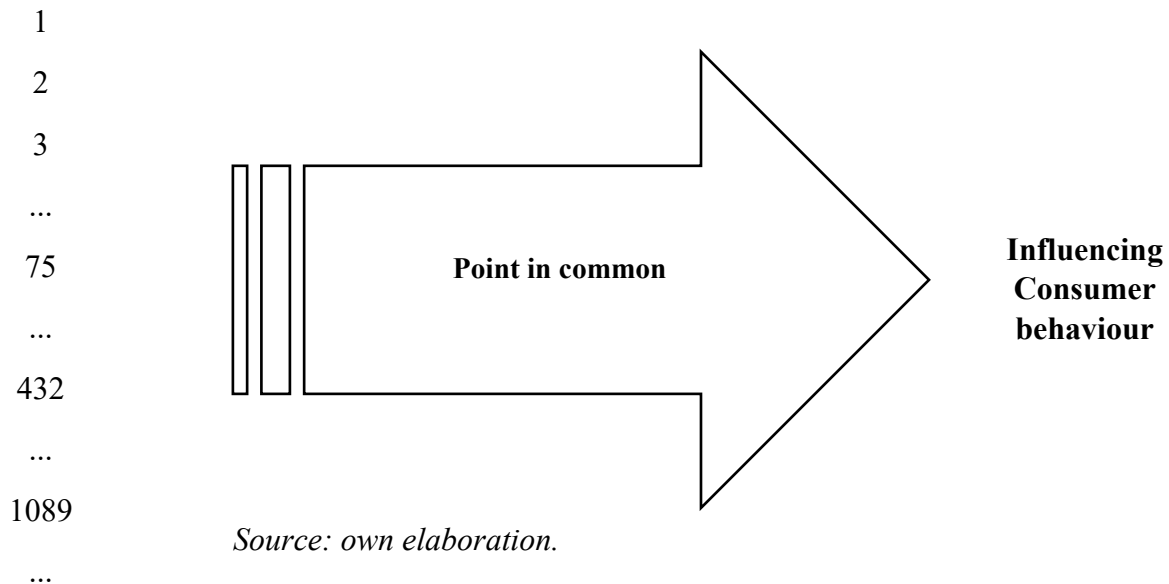
observe, think and feel (Gummesson, 2003). In this relationship between the brand and the consumer, the brand concept is always an image (Grönroos, 2000), and that image must include four characteristics : an essence, an identity, a personality and a positioning, forming the brand's DNA (Kapferer, 1992).

## 2.1 - Brand definitions

There are countless definitions of brand, all of them with one point in common: influencing consumer behaviour (fig. 02), if possible consistently and over time (Dean, 1966). A brand may be defined from the consumer's perspective and/or from the brand owner's perspective (Wood, 2000, p. 664). A synthesis of the evolution of the definition of brand over time (according to the managerial and consumer perspective) is shown in figures 03 and 04 respectively.

**Fig. 02. Point in common of brand definitions.**

### Brand definitions



**Fig. 03. Definitions of Brand according to the Managerial perspective.**

	<b>Aaker</b>	<b>Kotler and Keller</b>	<b>AMA</b>
	Suggests that a strong brand generates higher cash flow and higher financial margins not only due to easier access to distribution channels, but also because of the use of marketing campaigns and their ratios in the extension lines.	Inform not only the legal aspect but also the fact that brands have the power to be able to influence the consumer. The brand can be transacted and provide security and guarantees not only of stability but also of future revenues.	“A name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers. The legal term for a brand is trademark. A brand may identify one item, a family of items, or all items of that seller. If used for the firm as a whole, the preferred term is trade name.”
	<b>1991</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>1960</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>2008</b>	
<b>AMA</b>	<b>Shocker, Srivastava, and Ruekert</b>	<b>Kapferer</b>	
“A name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.” Too product oriented and exaggerated focus on the visual differences but a definition widely used even though in a sometimes slightly altered form (Aaker, 1991; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).	Refers to the importance that marketing programs have regarding reliability, security and quality perceived by customers through the products. Through these attributes of experience signalling the intangible qualities of the brand, brands are, after all, symbols that consumers, over time, learned the code to.	The power of the brand comes from the amount of people who share the idea of brand, being that power being greater, the greater the number of people involved. At the same time a brand is something that is desirable and exclusive and lying and is embodied not only in products but also in places or services and experiences.	

Source: own elaboration based on the following authors –AMA (1960), Kotler and Armstrong(2010), Aaker (1991), Shocker, Srivastava, and Ruekert (1994), Kotler and Keller (2006), Kapferer (2008) and AMA (2009).

**Fig. 04. Definitions of Brand according to a Consumer perspective.**

<b>Giraud</b>	<b>Aaker</b>	<b>Feldwick</b>	<b>Chernatony</b>
Concerns not only the maximum expansion of the brand with regard to consumers with the guarantee of maximum satisfaction coupled with the need or desire and the fact that the brand is a sign that promotes the distinction and renown of those who consume it, differentiating them.	The strategic importance of brand personality that helps the consumer in his final decision based on the perception of what the brand is the contribution that it makes for him to feel different, effectively communicating with the consumer.	It is not possible to quantify the path between the brand description, brand strength until the final design is reached, that is, the brand value. In this case the brand is an elaborate puzzle of perceptions in the mind of consumers.	If a brand adds value, the importance of experience (as unique and personal time) must be founded on a promise (later fulfilled) composed of a set of brand values.
<b>1965</b>	<b>1996a</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>1956</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Boulding</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Davis</b>	<b>Keller</b>
Through his system not only wants to point out flaws in the various theoretical models as well as point out directions and ways to improve them to benefit the consumer.	Refers to the importance that marketing programs have and there is a gap between the marketing done by the brand and the knowledge that consumers have of this same brand.	The three components that make up the brand is what is being sold, what it does and what it is, assuming the brand as a set of promises that must be fruitful, consistent and generate a set of expectations.	The importance of the sympathy for the brand in the consumer's mind. The period prior to purchase of the product or service act may be influenced by the knowledge and the sympathy of the consumer towards the brand, and this knowledge is in the mind of the consumer.

Source: own elaboration based on the following authors – Boulding (1956), Giraud (1965), Keller (1993), Aaker (1996a), Davis (2000), Feldwick (2002), Keller (2003), Chernatony (2009).

Considering the managerial perspective (fig. 03) we emphasize the AMA (2009) definition because of its greater scope, contrasting markedly with the 1960 definition; in the consumer perspective (fig. 04) we emphasize the perspective of de Chernatony's (2009) definition, not only because of the values of the brand but also the promise fulfilled by adding value in the form of the unique and personal experience .

Whether from a managerial or consumer perspective, a brand must be able to create relationships, generate expectations and stand out among the competition. The brand being the result of a process where the brand and the consumer interact, the relationship is formed through the experiences and emotions of both: a consumer and a brand. Marketers have the job of creating contexts that help the development of the brand in consumers' minds (Grönroos, 2000).

When the consumer does not see more than the visible part of the brand – meaning the advertising and the final price in comparison to other similar products or brands (Kapferer & Laurent, 1989), the brand is no more than an organization's promise to try to give the goods or service a predictable performance (Kotler & Keller, 2006).

Essential for identification and recognition of distinctive brand features (such as identity, warranty service and safety, as well as socio-psychological customization), a brand's signs have a key role in creating a strong brand and generating value (Aaker, 1996a). In services, brands are even more important to allow increased confidence in intangible assets. Therefore, in an organization whose purpose is to sell services, a brand should try to reduce this intangibility as much as possible.

## 2.2 - Brand values

Another concept closely connected to the brand is the brand value and its components and facets, as well as the relationships created between the brand and the consumer. It is not insignificant to consider that it is the marketing effect that makes a customer compare a product or service with another branded or unbranded one, and it is this awareness that makes him understand and behave in favour of the brand (Keller, 1993). It is through a set of behaviours by various players (customers, distributors and suppliers) that it is possible to achieve a higher volume of sales or margins through the brand name as well as a stronger position and greater differential advantage, considering the important role played by memory in the centrality and primacy of the consumer and the brand value of the asset itself (Srivastava & Shocker, 1991).

It is necessary to contextualize the brand value. The 80s witnessed the phenomenon of large discrepancies between the brand value of companies' shares and their actual book value, which originated a growing awareness of the importance of brand image and its associated monetary value (Aaker, 1991).

**Brand value: components.** The overall concept of brand value is mainly composed of the four components of brand loyalty, the fame that conveys its quality and the inherent brand associations (Aaker, 1996a). If the builders of the brand are the customers (Brito, 2010) then the whole concept of brand equity and its four components, dimensions or sources of value (Aaker, 1996a) are predominant in the notion of brand value. Consumer behaviour is a good indicator of consumers' perceptions of the brand and of the meaning they give to the brand in their life, a space where memory plays an important role (Keller, 1993).

The notion of value is related to the assets and liabilities attached to the name and symbols the brand may have and thus increases or decreases the value of its associated goods and services. The brand represents a value in a bidirectional way: for consumers who use it but also for companies that produce or sell. The brand's positive associations (symbolisms), awareness, perceived quality and loyalty constitute the four core components of a brand

and are responsible for the value it has acquired, both for the company and for the consumer. If for companies, loyalty, competitive advantage, the extent of tag lines and the effectiveness of marketing programmes are aspects to highlight, what matters to consumers is ultimate satisfaction, based on trust and facilitated decision-making (Aaker, 1991, 1996a).

Regarding brand value, we can mention three facets: (i) characteristics, (ii) dimensions and (iii) dichotomy.

*(i) Characteristics*

The brand also creates consumer value by providing a number of different benefits, such as lowering the risk of the consumer who purchases the product, ensuring a level of performance, encouraging recognition, enabling identification and in differentiation in the value to the consumer who uses or consumes (Aaker, 1996a, 1996b). Brands can provide value for consumers by facilitating decision-making (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973), reducing search costs (Jacoby, Szybillo, & Busato-Schach, 1977), reducing the risks inherent to product acquisition (Murphy, 1998) and by providing emotional, hedonic and symbolic benefits (Srinivasan, 1987).

*(ii) Dimensions*

The brand-consumer relationship is described by Keller (2003) as a relationship built up over time where the intrinsic value of the brand is consolidated through the fame and associations involved. This follows on to the brand's success and its value as an asset, with special focus on brand awareness and image (Keller, 2003). This relational engagement between brand and consumer is characterized in two dimensions: intensity and activity. The intensity is characterized by the Grounded Theory of involvement and sense of community, i.e., how the consumer is loyal towards the brand. Activity means not only the frequency of purchasing the product or service but also the interest of shares that are not directly related to purchase and consumption in particular, for example, the presence in actions sponsored by the brand (Keller, 2003).

(iii) *Dichotomy*

This mutual relationship represents a dichotomy between functional and emotional aspects, because when choosing a brand, the consumer makes an evaluation from both a functional and emotional point of view (Chernatony, 2002). For Barnes (2003), it is in the interplay of these two parts - functional and emotional - that the consumer expresses an individual level either with the company or with the brand. The functional aspect is reflected in convenience, affordability, product quality, price and other technical components, while the emotional component includes not only the consumer's relationship with the company but also with its employees (the example of child labour used by Nike). Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy and Pervan (2011) distinguish between functional and symbolic brands taking into account two dimensions: the level of involvement and cognitive-emotional nature. If the level of involvement with brands is minor, a functional relationship with the brand prevailing over the cognitive aspect and at a level of rationality, the level of involvement is greater in symbolic brands where emotionality is inherently more present. We can never forget the familiar relationship the brand wants to maintain or create with consumers as well as the ethics the organization has, or should have, in its performance as an actor in a global society (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007).

At the core of Fournier's (1998) work, we find relationships between consumers/customers and brands. The relationship goes far beyond a functional utilitarian question, or a merely symbolic one as a generator of emotions and feelings. The reasons why consumers establish relationships with brands (or their image) are related to the meaning they have acquired in their lives and what brands add to it.

### **3 - Consumer-Brand Relationship**

We begin this chapter by dealing with Consumer-Brand Relationship (CBR) and the aim of CBR studies, referring to the basis of CBR. We will present the main constructs of CBR, the constructs involving CBR and also the major CBR models. Finally, we will discuss the most representative model of CBR and why we choose the Investment Model (IM).

Consumer-brand relationship (CBR) “itself suggests that there are relationships between consumers and brands” (Breivik & Thorbjørnsen, 2008, p. 443). CBR is a field of research in which several authors have developed a set of theories trying to explain how consumers and brands are related. The central question is why consumers choose one brand or another and why consumers tend to repeat behaviour and purchase a particular brand and avoid others. Therefore, we point out two main assumptions regarding CBR theories and concepts: first, what leads consumers to prefer some brands over others; second, what leads consumers to want to keep a systematic behaviour with brands and to establish a relationship with them.

In fact, CBR studies the process by which a bidirectional relationship is established and maintained between the consumer and the brand, which may involve multiple relationships (Loureiro, 2012), without forgetting that CBR largely depends on consumer perceptions (Breivik & Thorbjørnsen, 2008).

In order to better understand and explain the foundation, main concepts, models and theories, this chapter is organized in three parts: foundation of CBR, main constructs and major models.

### **3.1 - Foundation of CBR**

Since the 1990s, researchers have given CBR greater interest and importance. Due to organizations' interest in knowing more and more about consumer behaviour, marketing base structuring and exchange become not only transactional but also relational (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Although there was already major concern with measuring a range of factors related to the parties involved (consumers, suppliers, manufacturers and employees, as well as customer satisfaction and loyalty (Oliver, 1980, 1999), the existence of two major schools of thought regarding the evaluation of performance or results (Nevin, 1995) were crucial in developing "customer relationship management" and opened the door to a new paradigm of relationship marketing (Loureiro, 2012).

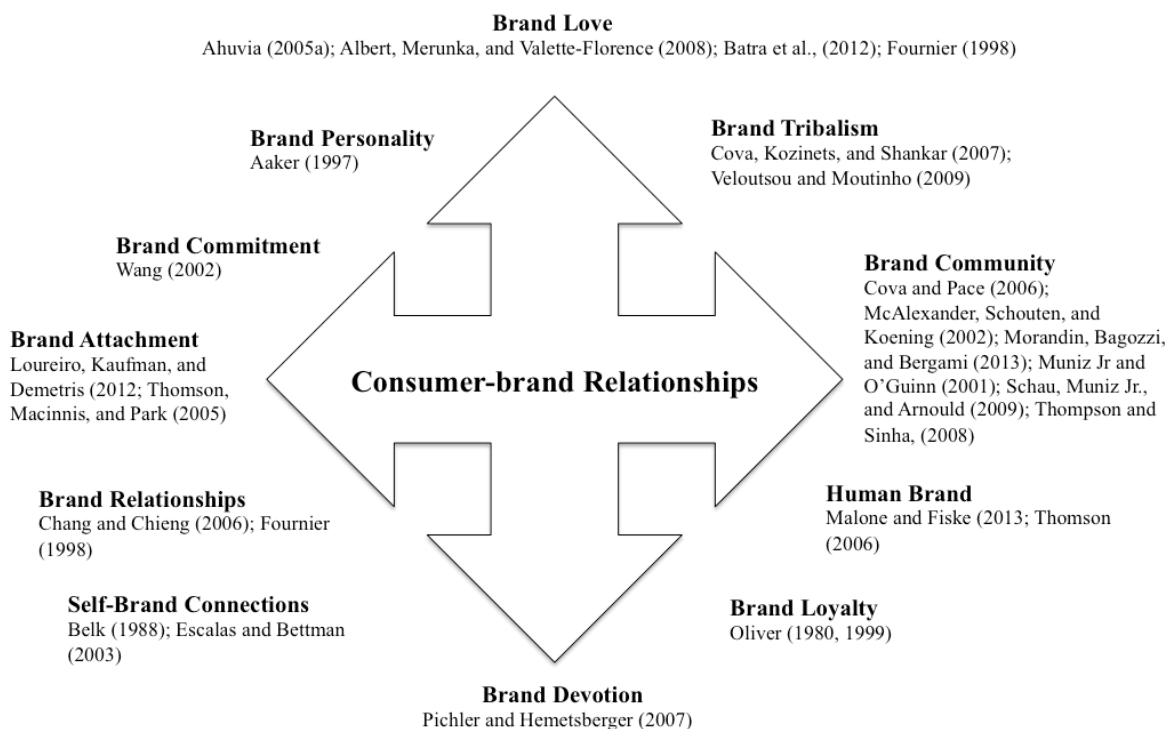
These two schools are: a) the group of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, (1985, 1988), the United States school, with its SERVQUAL and Gap's model to measure the quality perceived by consumers; and b) the group of Grönroos (1990) and Gummesson (1987), the Nordic school, with the Image Model (quality dimension) and the four dimensions of quality (conception, production, delivery and relationship).

The emergence of new constructs (from both the academic and managerial side) and new consumer behaviour led to a quest for knowledge about this relationship, intending to deepen understanding of the relationship between brands and consumers, and vice versa.

### 3.2 - Main constructs in CBR

Various constructs are used in CBR. Brand Love is a concept gaining prominence in marketing and consumer behaviour, although few empirical studies deal with the manifestation of love for a brand. Other constructs are also recurrently quoted (see fig. 05). In marketing, brand love, despite little consensus on what it means to love the brand, is an important topic, being the basic construct on which the whole CBR theory rests (Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012). Several studies focus on different constructs in CBR (see fig. 05).

**Fig. 05. Main constructs employed in CBR.**



*Source: own elaboration based on the following authors – Loureiro, Kaufman and Demetris (2012), Thomson, Macinnis and Park (2005), Wang (2002), Cova and Pace (2006); McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig (2002); Morandin, Bagozzi and Bergami (2013); Muniz Jr. and O'Guinn (2001); Schau, Muniz Jr. and Arnould (2009); Thompson and Sinha, (2008); Pichler and Hemetsberger (2007), Oliver (1980, 1999); Ahuvia (2005a); Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence (2008); Batra et al., (2012); Fournier (1998), Aaker (1997), Chang and Chieng (2006); Fournier (1998), Cova, Kozinets and Shankar (2007); Veloutsou and Moutinho (2009), Malone and Fiske (2013; Thomson (2006); Belk (1988); Escalas and Bettman (2003).*

In the book “Human Brand”, Malone and Fiske (2013) propose that affection and competence are the key to fruitful relationships, not only because people need to belong to something, but because everyone demonstrating these traits maintains relationships more easily as they deserve trust and admiration. The same occurs with brands, the justification for the study by Aaker (1997, p. 347) which characterizes brands according to a “set of human characteristics associated to brands”. Belonging to “informal and loose” tribes (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009, p. 316) or brand communities, however specialized they might be (Muniz Jr & O’Guinn, 2001), is also a factor strengthening relationships.

Brand Commitment depends not only on a positive experience but also on the person’s personality (Wang, 2002), something that Escalas and Bettman (2003 p. 339) refer to as “the extent to which individuals have incorporated a brand into their self-concept”; the importance of reference groups as a source of association with brands and the connection with the individual’s mental representation and his aspirations being central to the relationships. From the consumer experience point of view, Chang and Chieng (2006) refer to Brand Relationships regarding the emotional experience and also how the consumer subsequently reacts to these experiences.

And what is the importance of Brand Loyalty in relationships with the brand? For Oliver (1999), at an initial stage, for there to be loyalty this must begin with satisfaction. When loyalty is achieved, to maintain it, satisfaction is not a *sine qua non* condition, as other factors come into play such as personal determinism or bonds at an institutional or personal level. Brand Attachment concerns a person’s relationship with a specific object (Thomson et al., 2005) and Brand Love is a long-term relationship (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006), making it very difficult to define love, as in the words of Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence (2008, p. 1064) “love appears to represent a complex phenomenon and no single interpersonal theory may claim to capture all the emotions linked to this feeling.”

For Pichler and Hemetsberger (2007), Brand Devotion is characterized by a much more altruistic attitude, by another level of responsibility and much more dedication, being formed of love, close connectedness and a religious form of zeal.

What is transversal to all these constructs is the meaning brands really have for the consumer and how the latter subsequently acts in his various relationships.

### **3.3 - Major CBR models**

Rooted in social psychology regarding interpersonal relationships, Fournier (1998) introduced consumer-brand relationship theory which, from the perspective of consumer behaviour, proves to be a valid theory to help us understand the dynamics of the link between consumption and brand as well as determining the importance of the brand in the consumer's life (Sung & Choi, 2010). Fournier (1998) proposed a theory of the relationship with brands through a personalization of human traits in the brand, work that was the driving force in creating a new field of research: the consumer-brand relationship.

While a brand cannot act and think like a human being, it can have distinctive features created by designers and exists through a bidirectional relationship with the consumer. Supported by the work of Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi (2012), we believe that, for our study, the most important CBR models are those that incorporate love for the brand in the actual construction of consumer identity such as Ahuvia (2005); Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence (2008); Escalas and Bettman, (2005) and Fournier (1998), not taking into consideration those that do not use how consumers relate to brands to build or design their identity, that is, all theories derived from Sternberg (1986).

**The most representative model of CBR.** Considering the models presented and the work of Breivik and Thorbjørnsen (2008), Fournier's (1998) model called Brand Relationship Quality (BRQ) is the most representative: first, it is one of the most frequently applied models in empirical research into relationship brand management; secondly, it was developed specifically to assess the strength of consumer-brand ties; thirdly, it contains

several relationship dimensions that influence relationship stability and durability; fourthly the relationship dimensions are founded on various interpersonal theories originating in Kelley and Thibaut (1978); and finally, love is a central construct.

**The choice of IM.** Based on theories of close relationship but without the concept of love, another important and cited model emerges in CBR, with Relationship Investment (RI) at the core and called the Investment Model (IM). The Investment Model is proposed by Rusbult (1980) and found in social psychology. According to Breivik and Thorbjørnsen (2008), who tested BRQ and RI and compare them “on the basis of the empirical model fit and interpretation” (Breivik & Thorbjørnsen, 2008, p. 443) the two models (BRQ and RI) are:

a) probably the relationship models most frequently applied in the re-concept search study of brand management,

b) both global models, trying to provide an integrated view of the structure of consumer-brand relationships,

c) developed with different aims – the BRQ was developed specifically to assess the strength of consumer-brand ties (Fournier, 1998) and the RI model was originally developed to understand satisfaction and commitment in romantic relationships (Rusbult, 1980) and vary:

1) either in the way they approach the structural model;

2) or in how the metaphorical relationship is transferred to the configuration of the consumer with the brand.

Both originate in theories of interpersonal relationships, i.e., have a similar basis, in that they are derived from social psychology where theories of close relationships are found.

**The advantage of IM over CBR.** Finally, two aspects giving RI an advantage over BRQ are:

- the appearance of its conceptual framework, being clearly aligned with existing models and theories in marketing, where commitment is seen as a construct mediating factors that subsequently influence the final consumer behaviour;

- with respect to the metaphorical transfer, it is structurally based on the same domain and most concepts are well established in the field of marketing.

The findings suggest that the RI model, even modified, offers a straightforward interpretation of consumer-brand relationships varying in intensity (Breivik & Thorbjørnsen, 2008), which agrees with the work of other authors (Sung & Campbell, 2007) by stating that the results of their study provide strong support for the RI model in predicting consumer-brand relationship ties.

Therefore, we chose to work with the IM model, “one of the most frequently cited and applied relationship models in interpersonal relationship research” and a “new, fresh perspective on how consumers relate to brands” (Breivik & Thorbjørnsen, 2008, p. 447).

## **4 - Deep relationship commitment**

This chapter will deal with the Investment Model (IM) in depth: its objectives, origins, its added bonus, its components and how they interact. We characterize commitment, show studies where IM was used, its weaknesses and maintenance behaviours, reinforcing the primary goal of IM. Regarding Willingness to Sacrifice (WTS), we contextualize sacrifice, referring to the definition and importance of the close relationship as well as the importance of the self. We define WTS, its importance, characteristics and components. Concerning sacrifice, we focus on its importance, its motives and aspects (positive and negative) and respective types of sacrifice. We end with the definition of sacrifice after mentioning studies where WTS was applied, respective criticisms and the connection between WTS and marketing. We also speak about devoted consumers, the major research on this topic and the characteristics of devotion. Finally, we refer to fanatical consumers and fan typologies.

### **4.1 - Investment Model**

Rusbult (1980) proposed the Investment Model (IM), a model widely applied in various fields of knowledge, in both interpersonal relationships and non-relational contexts. The IM is theoretically grounded in Interdependence Theory (IT), to examine the processes by which people persist within interpersonal relationships (Le & Agnew, 2003). With its roots in the IT, which theorizes how behaviour and motivation are structured and have a bidirectional relationship (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), the concept of dependence is a major component of the theory (Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult, & Langston, 1998).

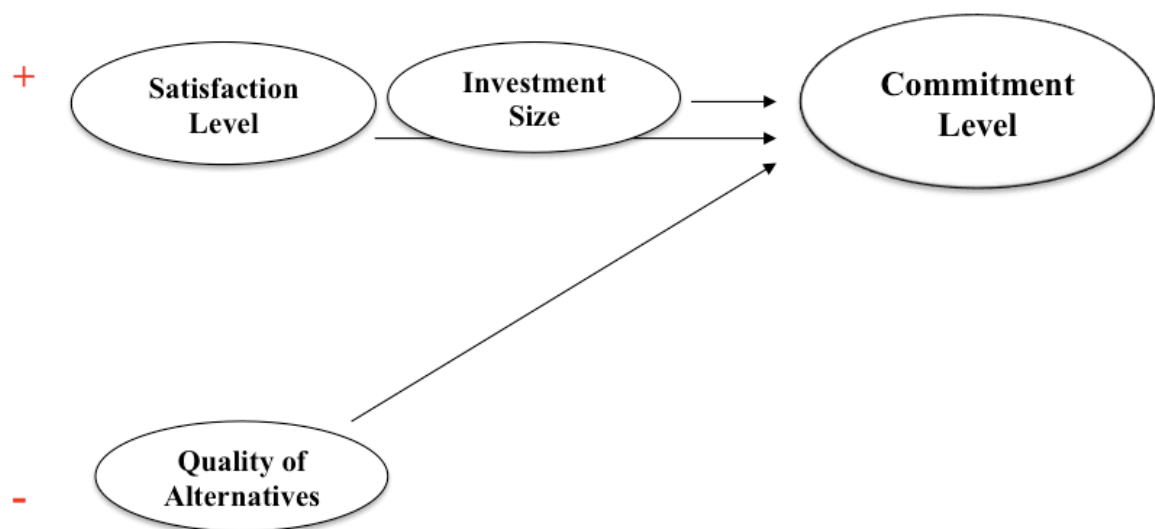
In fact, IT was developed to explain how behaviour and motivation are structured and have a bidirectional relationship (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Therefore, the concept of dependence is a major component in the theory (Agnew et al., 1998). In the context of this theory, the rewards or costs could be physical or only psychological and may exist objectively or merely in the individual's subjective perception (Rusbult, 1980, p. 173).

So the IM aims to examine the processes by which people persist within interpersonal relationships (Le & Agnew, 2003) but not only this (Rusbult & Farrell, 1983; Rusbult, 1980).

**Roots.** According to Rusbult (1980, p. 175) the IM emerged in the 1980s as a new approach to interpersonal relationships, introducing the construct commitment, but its basic concepts are firmly rooted in existing psychological and sociological literature. The outcome value (comparison level) and alternative value are parameters brought directly from the IT (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) but also the studies of Becker (1960), the concept of commitment by Schelling (1956) and extrinsic investments as “side bets” in understanding the importance of commitment, and Blau (2009, p. 79) in the original 1964 edition affirming that “how valuable a woman is as a love object to a man depends to a considerable extent on her apparent popularity with other men” all deal with commitment.

The Investment Model (fig. 06) extends interdependence propositions in two ways: the model identifies a third base of dependence (investment size) and suggest that dependence produces the psychological experience of commitment (Agnew et al., 1998).

**Fig. 06. The Investment Model.**



*Source: Rusbult (1980).*

**Components of the Investment Model.** The IM is composed of:

. satisfaction “the subjective evaluation of the relative positivity or negativity that one experiences in a relationship”;

. quality of alternatives “perceiving that an attractive alternative will provide superior outcomes to the current relationship can lead an individual toward that alternative and away from the current relationship”;

. investment size “those concrete or intangible resources attached to the partnership that would be lost or seriously diminished upon relationship dissolution” (Le & Agnew, 2003, p. 39), that could be “extrinsic (for example, home) or intrinsic (emotional involvement)” (Rusbult, 1980, p. 174);

. and commitment defined by Becker (1960, p. 40) as “the specific mechanism of constraint behaviour through previous side bets”. The first three components (satisfaction, quality of alternatives and investment size) are dependences (structural state), which lead to the fourth, commitment, representing the outcome of the model. Dependence is the descriptive, structural state of a relationship, whereas commitment is the psychological experience of that state (Le & Agnew, 2003, p. 38). In fact, it is the psychological experience of commitment, rather than the structural state of dependence, that is claimed to influence everyday behaviour in relationships (Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult & Langston, 1998).

Dependence was defined by Rusbult and Van Lange (1996, p. 569) as “the degree to which an individual relies on a relationship for the fulfilment of important relationship needs”. Dependence has three major principles: 1) life experiences are interpersonal, so we depend on others and that is how life is; 2) the more dependent a person is, more vulnerability he/she has, so the more he/she can lose; 3) the extreme dependence of one person on another may cause problems or damage (Drigotas, Rusbult, & Verette, 1999).

Commitment varies not only according to the outcomes and alternatives of the relationship but also the amount that someone invests in it (Rusbult, 1980). The greater the satisfaction (some important needs are fulfilled) and the investment size (direct – time, money, or

indirect – children, shared physical things) and the lower the quality of available alternatives (some important needs might not be satisfied without the relationship), the stronger the commitment to the relationship (Rusbult, Martz & Agnew, 1998; Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster & Agnew, 1999).

**Characteristics of commitment.** A strong commitment to a relationship is associated with voluntary continuance of that relationship (Rusbult, 1983). Commitment is composed of three components: the *conative* – an intention to persist; the *cognitive* – a long term orientation, and the *affective* – where we can see a psychological attachment. When one element of the relationship starts to think more in broader terms instead of his own personal interest, that state is called “transformation of motivation” and can be defined as the ability to go beyond self-interest at the moment and have behaviours in broad contexts in time (Drigotas et al., 1999). That is when the commitment level appears.

As Drigotas et al. (1999) clearly states, the level of commitment is: firstly constituted by dependence and the need to persist in the relationship “with particular emphasis on the relation between everyday interpersonal behaviours” (Holmes, 1981, p. 262), secondly, has patterns of reciprocal pro-relationship behaviour “whatever is successful is likely to appear more often in the future” (Axelrod, 1984, p. 169), thirdly, the link between both elements is very important where “motives and emotions are inextricably linked” (Leary, 2007, p. 319), so the link between both partners is very high and the perceived cost of ceding could be nothing (Aron & Aron, 1997), and fourthly, a communal orientation (Clark & Mills, 1979), a collective sense where the respondent to partner’s needs receiving nothing in return is plausible, differentiating the “need for the benefit” (communal) and the “receipt of a benefit” (exchange relationships). If the first three commitment levels are intrinsically linked to the first three commitment components, the fourth is something new, integrating the notion of “we” in a broader collective perspective. Commitment is more than the sum of the parts and it appears as a psychological production of dependence (Drigotas et al., 1999).

**Studies involving IM.** Numerous studies (see Rusbult et al., 1998) have shown the use and robustness of the IM in predicting the end of the relationship or otherwise, partners' perspectives, willingness to sacrifice and the chimera of the superiority of one relationship over others. In addition, the IM has been used in a range of studies on diverse ethnicities (Lin & Rusbult, 1995), heterosexual and homosexual relationships (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986), abusive relationships (Rusbult & Martz, 1995) and friendships (Lin & Rusbult, 1995).

Although the majority of results come from the field of interpersonal relationships, the model has also been applied in non-relational contexts, such as exercise behaviour (Wilson et al., 2004), sport (Carpenter & Scanlan, 1998; Raedeke, 1997), musical activities (Koslowsky & Kluger, 1986), clinical regime (Putnam, Finney, Barkley, & Bonner, 1994), schools (Geyer, Brannon, & Shearon, 1987), job commitment (Rusbult & Farrell, 1983), constructs (Ping, 1997) and similarly in a residential community (Lyons & Lowery, 1989).

Some authors indicate failures or missing points in IM. For instance, Johnson, Caughlin, and Huston (1999) conclude that moral commitment is missing from the Rusbult model, understanding the term as a sense of obligation to the relationship and also Karney and Bradbury (1995) argue that IM does not explain why love disappears in couples that were in love, resulting in less satisfaction and ultimately the relationship breaking down. Nevertheless, Karney and Bradbury (1995) indicate a way to include other perspectives to obtain a broader, deeper and complex understanding of behavioural theories (patterns of interaction in couples), attachment theory (individual differences) and crisis theories (stressful life events).

**Maintenance behaviours.** Commitment is not only important because it is stronger in cases of high satisfaction, poor alternatives and major investments. The importance of commitment is not only as a mediator in relationships but it also acts as a "kind of glue" positively influencing the consistency of relationships (Rusbult et al., 1998; Rusbult, 1980, 1983). Commitment level is associated with pro-relationship maintenance acts such as: a) when a partner has a destructive behaviour the other partner is willing to block negative

situations and try positive actions (Rusbult, Verette, Whitney, Slovik, & Lipkus, 1991); b) not everything is good all the time for both partners, so who is willing to sacrifice what they prefer? (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997); c) inclinations to drive away or derogate, tempting alternative partner behaviours to focus on the partner, throwing away temptations (Johnson & Rusbult, 1989); d) behaviours to keep the relationship in the sphere of illusion (Martz et al., 1998).

Bearing in mind that commitment level is associated with pro-relationship maintenance acts, an immediate consequence is the willingness to sacrifice in order to keep the relationship. Previous studies on willingness to sacrifice are in the field of close relationships (Etcheverry & Le, 2005; Impett, Gable, & Peplau, 2005; Mattingly, 2007; Powell & Vugt, 2003; Van Lange, Agnew, Harinck & Steemers, 1997; Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997). However, it is also found in other fields such as: activity (Mattingly & Clark, 2010), ecological behaviour (Davis, Le, & Coy, 2011) and global warming (O'Connor, Bord, & Fisher, 1998). In the field of marketing, Loureiro, (2011, 2012a) presents the first attempt to study willingness to sacrifice for a brand in the context of consumer-brand relationships.

Nevertheless, this topic is still in the early stage of understanding the meaning of willingness to sacrifice for a brand. Moreover, in this thesis we intend to follow the advice of Rusbult et al., (1998, p. 384) saying we should “move beyond the focus on positivity of affect” to try to understand why and how football fans make sacrifices to follow their club. This and other considerations are presented and discussed in the next section of this chapter.

The primary goal of the IM is to predict the degree of commitment and satisfaction with a variety of forms of ongoing association (e.g., romantic, friendship, business) with wide ranges of duration and involvement (Rusbult, 1980, p. 173), but it is by moving beyond the positivity affect that we can start to understand how and why some relationships persist, extending the interdependence orientation to better understand a variety of central processes in ongoing close relationships (Rusbult et al., 1998, p. 384,385).

## 4.2 - Willingness to sacrifice

The discussion of sacrifice must be introduced cautiously, and here we do not intend to make any accurate or pragmatic definition of sacrifice. Our aim is to apply these ideas in a general theme (brands and relationships with consumers) in a specific context (the football fan), and following the work of Miller (1998), try to make this study more an act of analogy than proper identity. Although we have examples of definitions of sacrifice, rather than defining sacrifice, we want to highlight some aspects of the literature on sacrifice in general, particularly Interdependence Theory (IT) and Willingness To Sacrifice (WTS).

For Bloch (1992), the best equivalent of sacrifice in a society is a different practice from a ritual, such as an initiation in another society. However, for Girard (1977, 2012), there is a logical replacement in sacrifice and sacrificial activity. For this author, sacrifice is at the origin of human culture, being a human issue *par excellence*. Sacrifice appears as a logical replacement, also due to its reversibility and utility, giving rise to the invention of ritual sacrifice in which the importance of not being 100% lucid, the unity of mimicry and the importance of the intensity of desire have a leading role. There is a need for any sacrifice to have a minimum of illusion as the central nucleus of the sacred, with the trend towards increased dosage. Basically, a sacrifice is an abstraction in the sense that an individual wants exclusive possession of the objects in question, which are impossible to share.

Detienne and Vernan (1989) studied earlier the general theories of sacrifice being at all levels deeply rooted in the theory of Christianity, with the sacrifice of Christian divinity as the end point of the process. Overall for the authors, there is no general theory of sacrifice due to entrenched Christianity in vision and in historians and sociologists' way of thinking, as well as the fact these theories are composed of artificial and random elements taken from different societies.

Hubert and Mauss (1964, 2010) claim that sacrifice is an institution, a social phenomenon that requires a society to support it. Sacrifice appears as a construction, as communication between two worlds. Intermediaries are necessary and the oblation is an essential

characteristic of sacrifice, the attribution of something as sacred, where offerings are “sacrifices” that pass from humanity to divinity. The authors divide their work in two aspects: structural aspects and the holistic aspect. Structural in the way the sacrifice scheme is presented: the entrance, the sacrificing, the sacrifice, the place/instruments, the victim, the output, with a periodicity of sacrifice. Holistic due to the difficulty in distinguishing groups defined in the various forms of sacrifice because they are too many and too similar: they all have the same core that gives them unity. They argue the notion of the sacred (holy is forbidden, but social) as well as the relationship between sacred and involved, where the sacrifice arranges objects of devotion and then communicates with them. The purposes of sacrifices are diverse, according to their nature and social function. Any particular rite is always complex in itself because it pursues various purposes, or in order to achieve one, various forces are set in action, with multiple and powerful feelings. The purpose of sacrifice is to affect the sacrificial religious state or the object of sacrifice.

Sacrifice does not have to be understood as something negative or only connected to religious aspects. It can and should be understood from a worldly perspective, as in the simple action of purchasing. In his work on the act of purchasing, Miller (1998), bases himself on the inalienability of something which can only be understood when consumed. His work deals with the purchasing action, including aspects of families in north London (a multi-cultural community) such as love and devotion with special attention paid to the nature of ritual sacrifice. These three aspects (purchases, love/devotion and sacrificial ritual), together create a thread giving integrity to the work with the final objective that the reader can have experiences in common with the people studied for the case, something quite probable considering the diversity of the people consulted.

Impett and Gordon (2008), focusing on the good of others, analyze sacrifice from everyday perspectives. Based on relationships, their work focuses on examples of possible conflict, such as going out on Friday night, doing favours or the perspective of changing the workplace and the consequences these actions will have for the present and future relationship, focusing on the positive aspect of the psychology of sacrifice, underlining that: “Sacrifice is an important and positive tool that people can use to maintain their relationship over time” (p. 94).

**Close relationship definition and importance.** A close relationship is defined not only by the degree of commitment but also by the degree of “immersion” in the way of being and thinking of the other person, which allows great proximity due to the integrating thoughts and behaviours of others in our self (Aron, Aron, Tudor, & Nelson, 1991; Aron & Aron, 1986).

For Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult and Langston (1998), in its genesis, the relationship between two people does not exist as an isolated island in the middle of the ocean. This relationship has to deal with many complex aspects inherent to professional lives, family, friendship or hobbies where neither time nor energy is an unlimited factor. However, Agnew et al. (1998, p. 942) allude that “to the degree that a relationship is an integral component of the self, the relationship should be regarded as central to the overall scope of the life and integral to what makes life important and meaningful.”

**The importance of the self.** Individuals’ motivations are important in determining whether they exhibit pro-social or egoistic behaviour (Mattingly & Clark, 2010). Relationships play a major role in people’s lives, and understanding the individual consequences of a break in a relationship is important (Lewandowski, Aron, Bassis, & Kunak, 2006).

Having confidence in the partner and in the relationship is crucial, and that could be one functional reason in a individual way (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997). The more a relationship is self-expanding, the more the loss of that relationship diminishes the self-concept (Lewandowski et al., 2006). Even in a romantic relationship, the bigger the sacrifice, the less the possibility of carrying it out, considering this will entail a great loss of the self (Mattingly & Clark, 2010).

Relationship dissolutions influence the self-concept and this influence is at least partially dependent on the amount of self-expansion in the relationship prior to dissolution, and some people could depend more on their partners and relationships considering not only how much they can benefit but also the possible loss they may suffer if the relationship breaks down (Lewandowski et al., 2006).

The self-in-relationship is a cognitive interdependence that promotes benign interpretations, solves negative problems and thinks in terms of “we” (Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult, & Langston, 1998). Therefore, “Increasing relationship commitment is accompanied by a restructuring of self-in-relationship mental representations, including tendencies to perceive ourselves less as individuals and more as a part of a pluralistic self-and-partner collective” (Agnew et al., 1998, p. 939).

**WTS definition, importance, aim and roots.** In the context of ongoing, close relationships “WTS is defined as the propensity to forego immediate self-interest to promote the well-being of a partner or relationship” (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997, p. 1374), being associated with greater satisfaction and commitment (Mattingly, 2007) where “individuals sacrifice their desires to ensure that their partner is satisfied and the relationship persists” (Mattingly & Clark, 2010, p. 51).

WTS represents a “key element of relationship maintenance” (Etcheverry & Le, 2005, p. 104) and has “consistently been found to be associated with positive relational outcomes” (Mattingly, 2007, p. 27). For Mattingly and Clark (2010), one of the major goals of WTS is to solve conflicts in the relationship (meaning personal sacrifices). In addition, having a satisfied partner and the relationship continuing (Mattingly, 2007), increasing the partner’s confidence, predicting the future of the relationship and developing harmony between partners (Impett et al., 2005) are also referred to as WTS goals.

Problems in relationships are nothing new (Mattingly, 2007), and as Impett et al., (2005) conclude, the best for one partner may not always coincide with the other partner’s own interests, and vice-versa. For Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster, and Agnew (1999), in a close relationship, the importance of commitment in promoting maintenance acts covers four tendencies: tendencies to drive away alternative partners, tendencies to accommodate rather than retaliate when a partner behaves badly, tendencies to think in term of “we”, “us” and finally, tendencies to forego desired activities for the good of the relationship and the willingness to sacrifice (WTS). Here, we focus our attention on this last aspect.

In IT, the structure of relationships sometimes makes it necessary for individuals to give up their immediate preferences (Impett et al., 2005). In the work of Van Lange, Rusbult, et al. (1997), the authors adopt an analysis of WTS by IT, proposing that situations of conflict of interest are potentially disruptive to the health and vitality of relationships. That is when an interdependence dilemma occurs, which can be defined as an occasion when a partner's preferences do not match one's own (Powell & Vugt, 2003). When this is the case, the individual can make a cost benefit analysis where the distinction between **sacrifice** – referring to behaviour that departs from self-interest, meaning giving up one's own self-interest; and **cost** – referring to a psychological experience where a variety of events can be costly but do not involve acts of sacrifice, only something unpleasant (Van Lange, Rusbult et al., 1997); and that distinction is important (Powell & Vugt, 2003).

In the social psychology literature, “social dilemmas” are when individuals are forced to choose between the option most beneficial to them and the option most beneficial to the dyad or the group involved (Powell & Vugt, 2003). Social dilemmas can also be characterized by individuals who are confronted with the conflict between their own interests versus those of the partner and their collective interests (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997). If the preferences are aligned, they are correspondent. If they are at odds, they are non-correspondent and there is a transformation of motivation (Impett et al., 2005). Under what circumstance is sacrifice called for? Non-correspondence. (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997). So the true test of a relationship appears when circumstances are not so pleasant – when partners encounter dilemmas involving interaction conflicts, incompatible preferences or extra-relationship temptation (Wieselquist et al., 1999).

When partners preferences do not correspond, one or both individuals may find it necessary or desirable to sacrifice their needs for those of their partner (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997), but by focusing on the relationship maintenance mechanism, prior research on IM has devoted little attention to pro-social motivation in close relationships (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997).

**Characteristics of WTS.** Many acts of sacrifice are indeed pro-social (Impett et al., 2005). Any sacrificial action implies a deviation from the initial preference, with room for transformation of motivation, a process that may lead individuals to abandon their immediate self-interest and act based on broader goals (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997).

Accepting that the act of sacrificing something is one way to solve a conflict (which itself is negatively associated with relationship satisfaction) in the sense that it is a behaviour for the maintenance and quality of the relationship (Mattingly & Clark, 2010), sacrifice may represent one concrete mechanism by which committed individuals are able to develop and sustain healthy, ongoing involvements (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997).

Although the sacrifice varies according to its severity (Mattingly & Clark, 2010), its levels change not only the individual propensity to WTS itself but also according to the results obtained as a result of these actions, that is, the frequency and intensity with which partners come into conflict determine the extent to which a relationship requires sacrifice (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997). WTS, like accommodation, are important relational behaviours because of their implications for relationship maintenance (Etcheverry & Le, 2005) and according to Mattingly (2007), WTS has consistently been found to be associated with positive relational outcomes. The higher the WTS the greater the relationship satisfaction, the greater the commitment (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997; Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997; Wieselquist et al., 1999). The less WTS partners have, the more the severity of conflict increases (Agnew et al., 1998).

However, the extent to which commitment guides behaviour will vary depending on how accessible commitment is to that individual, arguing that the more cognitively accessible, the stronger WTS and commitment will be (Etcheverry & Le, 2005). In fact, thinking of the relationship as something plural in the partner as a part of his own being, a great interconnection between the individual and the relationship is an indicator of a strong commitment to it, is something that strengthens the relationship, and in the case of a transgression in the relationship, individuals fulfilling these criteria of commitment will have more WTS than those less committed (Powell & Vugt, 2003). WTS embodies a more

general form of pro-social motivation, which can be evoked by a variety of different situations in which partners' interests do not entirely correspond (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997). Interactions of social value orientation with commitment level were consistently observed. Commitment (as well as satisfaction, quality of alternatives and investments) do not tell the whole story in understanding WTS in ongoing relationships (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997)

**Components of WTS.** A strong commitment to promote greater WTS exists in a committed relationship composed of partners who need this relationship and are dependent on one another, having a vision beyond the immediate present, a future together, giving stability and health to the relationship (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997). For Van Lange, Rusbult, et al. (1997) there is a feeling, a way of being collectively, not expecting something in return, with a strong psychological connection to the partner who, as pointed out by Aron and Aron (1986), "giving up" something personal on behalf of the partner can be seen as an added value for himself. Such motivation parsimoniously can be understood in terms of the pursuit of long-term personal well-being rather than the pursuit of partner well-being (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997).

Therefore, the activity from which the sacrifice is made gains special importance because the value of the activity depends on the meaning or consequence it has for the individual. The greater the importance of this, the less likely he is to relinquish it, this being a good indicator of sacrificial behaviour (Mattingly, 2007). However, we must always be aware that the greater the importance given by the individual to the activity, the lower the ability to make sacrifices, i.e., the granting of sacrifice depends on the importance of the activity. The same limit exists in romantic relationships, and the relationship is never unintentionally questioned. There are selfish reasons that prevent the individual from acting in a more social way (Mattingly & Clark, 2010).

**Importance of sacrifice and motives.** For Van Lange, Rusbult, et al. (1997, p. 1374) "sacrifice represents one important mechanism by which individuals can solve dilemmas involving non-correspondent outcomes."

The behaviour around the sacrifice is very complex (Mattingly, 2008) and some individuals even sacrifice themselves around their partner because they have an overly positive, even illusory, picture of this (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997). Knowing that the motives are individually conditioners of WTS (Mattingly, 2007), and taking into account that very little research has been done so far, Impett et al., (2005) presented a paper arguing that, with respect to the sacrifice, personal and relational consequences depend, at least in part, on the real reason for individuals behaving in this way. The authors present two types of reasons; a cause for approach (which aims to make the partner happy) and a motive of avoidance (where the goal is to avoid conflict). With this work, Impett et al., (2005) achieve two objectives: firstly, defining and measuring sacrifice on a daily basis (and not only great acts of sacrifice as in previous research) and secondly, not only giving emphasis to the expression of reason (why a person performs the sacrifice) but to expression of the subject (the individual's perception of the partner's motive), which allows us to move forward to the prospect of better understanding the intimate perspective of sacrifice in a relationship between two people.

**Positive and negative side in sacrifice.** Sacrifice in a relationship, even with a strong intimacy and a good understanding, going far beyond the concept of altruism we have in today's society, can be understood as a reward in itself (Impett et al., 2005). Some positive aspects of sacrifice are linked to positive goals (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997), the positive role of sacrifice in relationships (Wieselquist et al., 1999) and the development of trust in the relationship and in the individual himself (Impett et al., 2005). It is also possible that WTS might promote greater feelings of dependence or commitment (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997) and considering the work of Van Lange, Rusbult, et al. (1997) and the consequences of WTS in the couple (defined as the label of dyadic adjustment and probability of a person persisting in the relationship): 1) sacrifice enhances the probability of the other partner reciprocating; 2) considering a new correspondent dilemma, the problem is solved; 3) creates an atmosphere of trust and cooperation; and 4) serves a communication function, allowing the authors to say that several lines of reasoning support the hypothesis that WTS may be associated with enhanced couple functioning.

According to Impett et al., (2005, p. 341), “having your own needs met in relationships is not always beneficial; rather, it can be experienced as personally and interpersonally costly if you perceive that your partner has sacrificed for avoidance motives.” When that happens and with all the emotions included (negative emotions, less satisfaction with life, less positive relationship well-being, more relationship conflict), fear of rejection, perceptions of a partner’s avoidance motives for sacrifice were also associated with poor well-being (Impett et al., 2005).

**Types of sacrifices.** Sacrifices can be of two qualitatively distinct types (Mattingly, 2007). Sacrifices can be active: where an individual engages in an undesired activity, or passive: when an individual forgoes a desired activity (Rusbult, Olson, Davis, & Hannon, 2001). Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., (1997, p. 1374) also qualify sacrifice as active or passive but added that when sacrifice means giving up behaviours then it can be both (active and passive).

**Studies.** A seminal work by Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., (1997) has data explaining how and why some relationships succeed and overcome hard times while others do not. In the authors' opinion, this is due to the fact that presenting WTS as a mechanism for maintaining the relationship helps explain, albeit partially, the association between commitment and the quality of the relationship.

Subsequently, new research was conducted in order to contribute to the social value orientation (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997). The work of Powell and Vugt (2003) dealt not only with high cost sacrifice but also low cost sacrifice, the authors showing that individuals with low commitment in scenarios of low cost have more commitment than highly committed individuals. The reasons for WTS being at the centre of the work by Impett et al., (2005) are characterized as approach motives and avoidance motives, the authors concluding that approach motives are for positive outcomes and avoidance motives are for negative ones. This study aims to find out what sacrifices are made on a daily basis, in everyday life, and not just as in other studies about major acts of sacrifice or desirable or undesirable activities (Impett et al., 2005). By examining cognitive aspects of commitment,

Etcheverry and Le (2005) build their studies on relationship commitment and its association with maintenance behaviours. Motives for sacrifice were unrelated to relational variables and the type of sacrifice was associated with perceived quality of alternatives, according to Mattingly (2007) and finally, Mattingly and Clark (2010) aimed to further examine the overall and unique effects of commitment and activity importance on WTS.

**Criticisms.** In the case of WTS in romantic relationships, Fehr (1996) in Agnew et al., (1998) refers to the specific situation in question and gives the example of the relationship between best friends and the importance of cognitive interdependence having a role in maintaining a certain exclusivity (something that happens in romantic relationships but is not present in friendships). This means that having a representation of the self-in-relationship can function as a blockage or removal in any situation that might endanger the stability of the relationship. As in the case of friends that exclusivity is less, or non-existent, the mechanism is less exclusive in relationships of friendship in romantic relationships.

On the other hand, Impett et al., (2005) in their work concerning a new approach to avoidance motivation analysis of sacrifice try to show that the personal sacrifice and relationship consequences are at least partly dependent on the reasons for having certain types of behaviours. The authors try to arrange a bridge of understanding between those who say that WTS increases satisfaction and the likelihood of permanence of the relationship (such as social psychologists) and those who are against putting the interests of the partner or the relationship before their own, creating a level of co-dependency (such as the feminist clinicians) or the fact that this type of behaviour creates psychological distress and diminished relationship satisfaction (as empirical research shows).

**The connection between WTS and marketing.** Knowing that WTS might promote greater feelings of dependence or commitment (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997), it can be considered to act in favour of the relationship's persistence (Etcheverry & Le, 2005) something crucial for marketing: knowing what kinds of actions are needed to gain client loyalty.

**Sacrifice definition.** Considering IT and WTS, the definition of sacrifice for Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., (1997) is to give up one's immediate self-interest for the sake of a partner or a relationship. Already in Impett, Gable, and Peplau (2005), the definition of sacrifice encompasses the types of sacrifice and their simultaneity: "sacrifice was defined as both doing something unwanted (i.e. "active sacrifice") and giving up something wanted (i.e. "passive sacrifice").

Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., (1997) refer to a set of definitions of sacrifice in Webster's New School & Office Dictionary (1960, p. 640) such as "giving up one thing for another", "surrender to gain some other object", "devote with loss". In "Priberam Dicionário," (2014) sacrifice is defined as "forced or voluntary abandonment of what is precious to us", or also "resignation".

For the purpose of this thesis, the most comprehensive and possibly most accurate definition is by Hornby, (2010, p. 1348), from the Oxford Dictionary:

*"To give up something that is important or valuable to you in order to get or do something that seems more important for yourself or for another person."*

Comprehensive in that it refers to the fact of desisting from doing something of great meaning (symbolic) or high value (money) for something that means even more, not only for someone else but for himself, i.e., individuality is well expressed here. It is this extending to another (close or otherwise) but above all, his/her own self which is very important because an individual makes a sacrifice to do something that is important to him at the expense of yet another important activity:

- . because it may be important to capitalize on this action for future actions towards another close person;
- . because whether the other person is close or not, an image or reputation may be at stake;
- . because it can be something else, and not a person, having the highest value for his own welfare or need, such as a sacrificial activity.

Therefore, the concept behind sacrifice which we intend to capture through this research is: *What actions you are willing to do (and fail to do) to be able to follow consistently the desired brand with the attendant consequences.*

In a close relationship, knowing that sacrifices are part of it, it is important to remember that sacrifices can be active, passive (Rusbult et al., 2001) or both (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997), depending on the behaviours in the relationship.

### **4.3 - Devoted consumers**

A devoted consumer is the “ultimate committed customer” (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004, p. 1) who benefits from a brand/product much more than the mere functionality and utility of the object, the affectionate nature being at the root of the state of being devoted to something or someone, which can be defined, according to Thorne and Bruner (2006), as a special behaviour of a fan.

**Major research.** The basis of consumer devotion emerges through the exploratory work of Pichler and Hemetsberger (2008) and Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) about the emotional intensity of the relationship linking a consumer and an object, not only by having an individual vision of how the consumer is associated with the object, but also covering the social level of these consumer relationships (Pichler & Hemetsberger, 2008).

Grounded in brand equity, Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) define the concept of brand devotion focusing on consumers and not on brands. Through a social perspective (groups and public), Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) contextualized the study (fans of a college football team) and supported it by using a categorization of fans either in the global aspect (Kozinets, 2001) or in the sports aspect (Hunt, Bristol, & Bashaw, 1999), without forgetting an important component of tripartite commitment (calculative, normative and affective). The conclusions of the study point to a generalization of the study of brands, or “product” brands (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004, p. 1). Despite being a qualitative study applied in a specific context, such as football (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004, p. 30), this

study has seminal importance both in the sports context (fans of college football teams), and globally (strong entertainment brands). Brand managers should be aware of what this particular type of consumer – the devoted consumer – can teach them with regard to strengthening relationships and keeping them, without forgetting the transcendence of these ties.

Through a broad conceptualization of consumer devotion, Pichler and Hemetsberger (2007) conclude on the need for a deeper understanding of what connects consumers to brands through individual consumer facets, private aspects. Moreover, Pichler and Hemetsberger (2007) clarified the concept of devotion, particularly through psychological bases centred on love and romantic relationships. The use of theories of psychology is essential in capturing the nature of the phenomenon of interpersonal love, going beyond the “make-up” of the term (Whang, Allen, & Sahoury, 2004, p. 320). The term devotion, encompassing the meaning of love, close connectedness and the religious form intertwine passion, intimacy and dedication (focused by Sternberg, 1997), and each of these are connected respectively by highly emotional, relationship bonds and the conscious decision (Pichler & Hemetsberger, 2007).

Although the literature on consumer behaviour has neglected consumer devotion, this type of consumer goes far beyond mere aspects of desire, emotion or connection. Devoted consumers – even when intense and solitary (Hornby, 1992) – are more than a few crazy people or mindless followers of one object or another, engaging in deep, respectful relationships, as well as the enrichment these provide them with (Pichler & Hemetsberger, 2008).

**Characteristics of devotion.** Two elements are connected to consumer devotion: (i) a high emotional concept and (ii) religious fervour with which commitment is crucial to achieve this state of devotion (Pichler & Hemetsberger, 2008). For Pichler and Hemetsberger (2007, p. 194) devotion can be characterized as a natural spiritual state, consisting of a state of devotion resulting from devotional behaviours. Devotion is also characterized by the altruistic attitude that demands responsibility and dedication, which means that in order

to maintain this unique relationship, individuals make sacrifices at various levels: in time, money or energy (Pichler & Hemetsberger, 2007, p. 197).

Devotion appears as a result of something that is missing in the consumer's life (Belk, Ger, & Askegaard, 2003). If someone feels passion and dedication towards something, sacrifice appears as a natural consequence. Devoted fans' behaviour will lead to sacrifices to achieve that for which they yearn (Thorne & Bruner, 2006).

Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) also observe cases where sacrifices are part of acts of emblematic (Ahuvia, 2005b), sacred and symbolic (Belk, Wallendorf, & John F. Sherry, 1989) devotion. A vast field remains to be studied with regard to passion and personality traits, and the use of consumables (Matzler et al., 2007), due to the fact that consumers may impose their identities on possessions but also possessions may impose their identities on consumers, knowing that "having and being are distinct, but inseparable" (Belk, 1988, p. 146).

#### **4.4 - Fanatic consumers**

Holbrook (1988, p. 144) defines fanaticism as an "excessive enthusiasm" the pursuit of "consumption activities with a level of passion grossly out of proportion" being something like "a forgetting of oneself and becoming totally involved in the activity" (Scammon, 1987, p. 126). For Thorne (2011), fanaticism is viewed as a continuous variable, the result of multiple variables concerning the degree to which one is a fan (of a topic, subject or person), where the level of interest can vary from low to high. Usually the term has a negative connotation ("pejorative implication" in the words of Holbrook (1988, p. 144)) and is commonly associated with negative connotations like extremism (Gautier, 2002) or behaviour types that emerge from large crowds (Hoffer, 1989) or hooligans (Hunt et al., 1999). The term will be used neutrally here.

**Fan typologies.** Most existing fan typologies focus on the bond between a sport or sports team and its fans (Honsel, Klaus, & Wagner, 2011) where the work of Stewart, Smith, and

Nicholson (2003) is very interesting, not only because it gathers work previously done on sport consumers but also because it categorizes research done so far (dualistic approaches, tiered typologies and multidimensional typologies), ending by suggesting the importance of a more holistic analysis because of the complexity of the archetypal sport consumer.

In general fan typology, the work of Thorne and Bruner (2006) and Thorne (2011) stands out, the latter being more relevant from a marketing perspective (Honsel et al., 2011). If Thorne and Bruner (2006) examine the importance of key internal characteristics (internal involvement, desire for external involvement, wish to acquire and desire for social interaction) and their relationships with the level of fanaticism present (dilettante, dedicated, devoted and dysfunctional) and show how self-reported fanaticism is related to fan behaviour (multiple fanaticism exists among fans within a fan subculture), Thorne (2011) applied the methodologies to find out what is common to fans across genres (not only sports fans, soap opera fans or science fiction fans) showing the fan's movement through levels of fanaticism, indicating that the three-level mode proposed by Hill and Robinson (1991) – intrinsic motivations, resulting behaviours and affective consequences, was moderated supported.

The next chapter will present football as a whole: economic, financial, social, marketing and fans.

## **5 - Football context: tribes and deep relationships**

This chapter begins by defining and characterizing brand communities and tribes. For the first time, we approach sport and its context, existing studies, the characteristics of sport and the connection between marketing and sport. Specifically in the football context, we deal with the economic, financial and social importance of football and also marketing and brands in football. We carry out a study of the literature on marketing in the sport context, speaking about the importance of sports marketing in general marketing and marketing literature in the sports context, through a selection of twenty-four articles from the two most prominent journals. We end the chapter by focusing on sports fans and their conceptualization and typology, first from a perspective of sports fans and then defining and differentiating fans from spectators, to understand their typology and importance. We compare various types of fans and define the type of fan for this research.

### **5.1 - Tribes and brand communities**

In the literature there is no consensual definition of a tribe and brand community. The meaning of tribe and brand community is not entirely clear and objective. However, several authors tend towards a common definition “we will then depict indifferently as a brand community or brand tribe any group of people that possess a common interest in a specific brand and create a parallel social universe (subculture) rife with its own myths, values, rituals, vocabulary and hierarchy” (Cova & Pace, 2006, p. 1089). Others affirm that brand communities vary in formality and structure: if they are “very formal and structured” it is a brand community but if they are “are informal and loose” this is a brand tribe (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009, p. 316).

**Brand community definition and characteristics.** For Muniz and O’Guinn (2001) a brand community is a community of self-selected individuals formed on the basis of emotional connection to a brand and is governed by a system of values, norms and representations that have no geographical boundaries but are specialized (Muniz & O’Guinn, 2001). A brand community has consistent action and there is a global awareness

of each element of the group as well as a way of being integrated in the community, by the elements influencing each other, the product or the company (McAlexander et al., 2002).

Modern society (depersonalized, with mass production and less human interaction) gives rise to the creation of communities where the degree of realism, personal interaction and sharing of experiences, according to norms and values, supported by a strong specificity (Muniz Jr & O'Guinn, 2001) means that despite being a community of consumption (Cromie & Ewing, 2009) there is a sense of social identification which is enhanced the longer the permanence in the community (Thompson & Sinha, 2008), where participation is the key to building a strong brand community (Fournier & Lee, 2009). As Thompson and Sinha (2008) mention, due to not having geographical barriers, brand communities can exist anywhere, even virtually. They can exist in local clubs based in direct interaction (Algesheimer, Dholakia, & Herrmann, 2005) or exist only on the internet (Kozinets, 1997), but even the latter have their own bases rooted in four principles of physical communities: self-discovery, social integration, social enhancement, and entertainment” (Madupu & Cooley, 2010).

**Tribe definition and characteristics.** In a society where the consumer has the possibility and the ability to model his concept of consuming and living, aspects such as a vision of life, the share of strong emotional links and a common sub-culture help to model a “consumer tribe” (Cova, 1997). The word tribe has almost archaic values where identity, religion, secrecy and group narcissism, among others, (Cova & Cova, 2001; Cova, 1997) are some of the values “embedded” in a tribe. Assuming that “environments help to shape human behaviour” (Armstrong & Stratta, 2004, p. 15), people join cults and become devoted to certain brands because membership tends to make them feel at ease by being among like-minded others (Moutinho, Dionísio, & Leal, 2007), establishing the differences that link their users (Atkin, 2004) and creating a social identification, defined by Mael and Ashforth (2001, p. 198) as “the perception of belongingness to a group and a sense of oneness with the group.”

A tribe is a network of heterogeneous individuals, in terms of gender, age, sex and income, who are linked through a shared passion or emotion (Cova & Cova, 2001, p. 69) related to a product, service, idea or concept with similar values to a brand. For Muniz & O'Guinn (2001), a tribe is more ephemeral, more geographically limited and less explicitly commercial than a brand community. Smaller than an "ethnic group" but bigger than a clan (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009), tribes have a short life and great diversity and will try to distinguish themselves from other groups and non-members through the use of idiosyncratic rituals, symbols, values and sacred places (Cova & Cova, 2002). It is through the sharing of emotions and experiences and their shared passion and commitment to continue their action that tribes have their strength (Cova & Cova, 2001, 2002; Hamilton & Hewer, 2009). Tribal brands are "the emotional result of personalization" (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009, p. 317), the brand being a sort of "identification model identifying the tribe and its members"(Moutinho et al., 2007).

Besides physical and geographical issues, for Cova et al., (2007), one of the major differences of modern tribes from those of ancient societies is the possibility of their elements belonging to more than one tribe because the borders have become conceptual. Tribal consumption is always based on loyalty and relationship remembering that "brand loyalty is essentially a relational phenomenon" (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973, p. 2) which leads us to post-modernism (S. Brown, 1999; Cova, 1997) where the search for a specific value "which is jointly created by consumers and producers, and is known as linking value" is one of the roots for the success of brands that nurture that community spirit (Cova & White, 2010).

Being a member of a tribe is an "affectively charged experience" (Arnould & Price, 1993, p. 41) where "the power of a truly transcendent customer experience lies partly in the successful, if temporary, alignment of fantasy and reality" (Schouten, McAlexander, & Koenig, 2007, p. 367). Through complete absorption in activity, a characteristic in the elements of the tribe, as stated by Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2002), the flow has the power to motivate people, both individually and as a community, and contribute to their psychological well-being. Performing an activity so passionately with a group of people

brings the elements of the tribe back to some intimate emotions they had in their childhood when they were completely immersed in the game: intimacy with ourselves and our skills alongside the proximity to friends to share our passion (Kozinets, Hemetsberger, & Schau, 2008). Belonging to a tribe can lead to a range of benefits such as “increased self-esteem, self-transcendence, meaning in life, sense of belonging and increase personal aspirations” (Mael & Ashforth, 2001).

Considering the scope of the current work, that is, understanding brand sacrifice through a brand, we will adopt the following definition of tribes:

*a tribe is a network of heterogeneous persons, in terms of gender, age, sex and income, who have a link because of a shared passion or emotion (Cova & Cova, 2001) with a range of benefits not only personal (self-esteem, self-transcendence, meaning in life) but also social (sense of belonging) and professional (increasing personal aspirations) (Mael & Ashforth, 2001).*

## **5.2 - Sport context**

Prebish (1984, p. 306) defines the importance and range of sport in a very short sentence: “In sport religion, the Sabbath is Everyday.” In everyday life, sport is present in more than two thirds of the American population (Iso-Ahola & Hatfield, 1986). In today’s society, sport is more popular than ever (Kaynak, Salman, & Tatoglu, 2008) and it is very important because it can “help to relieve the strain of everyday life by providing excitement for the individual” (Smith, Patterson, Williams & Hogg, 1981).

Sport, like an ideology (Varman & Belk, 2009), is a complex socioeconomic phenomenon, “fundamentally different to those in more mainstream sectors” (Tapp, 2004, p. 212) and generates emotions and experiences that come alive even after many years with a very strong emotional content, which is hard to describe (Arnould & Price, 1993). Sport is a product or a global service where billions of people love to play, participate and watch (Ratten & Ratten, 2011), where the sport industry is a “huge player in today’s business world – representing the 11th largest industry in the USA (Bristow & Sebastian, 2001, p. 270).

For L'Etang (2006), sport is both international and a part of everyday life, and shapes relationships at a diplomatic, cultural, economic, organizational, community and interpersonal level. Sport is one of the cornerstones of politics and has always constituted an "essential component of leisure-time activity in contemporary societies" (Moutinho et al., 2007, p. 668), as a product or service. In every business, the client always has expectations and the relationship between customer expectations and satisfaction gained is a complex one (Arnould & Price, 1993). For Smith and Stewart (2007), the consumer experience, either as active participants or as spectators meets these special needs, including those of a cultural nature (cultural celebration and collective meaning and personal identity), social (entertainment and national pride) or psychological (sense of evasion, stimulus).

In the last two decades, professional sports have been studied from different perspectives such as: sociology, ethnography and anthropology (Benkowitz & Molnar, 2012), public relations (Hopwood 2007; L'Etang & Hopwood 2008), sponsorship (Frank 2012), cultural studies (Benkowitz & Molnar 2012), demographic characteristics (Branvold, Pan, & Gabert, 1997), attraction motives, (Snyder, Lassegard, & Ford, 1986), cognitive, affective and behavioural factors (Madrigal, 1995) and committed sport fans (Mahony, Madrigal, & Howard, 2000), and also a variety of ideological positions (Sugden & Tomlinson, 2000). Even knowing that football and society are intrinsically linked (Claussen 2006), in this particular case football seems to have been ignored as a subject of sociological thought and research, especially because it has always been seen as having characteristics that fall on the less 'respectable' and relevant set of dichotomies that ensure dominant social values (Tiesler & Coelho 2006).

**Characteristics of sport.** Briefly, what characterizes sport is its aesthetic beauty, the impossibility of being a science, the final performance, and the virility and grace inherent to sports activities (Hinch & Higham, 2005). Perhaps one of the greatest qualities of sport, one of its unique features is being unpredictable, having a "gelatinous character" with respect to the control that even the major players have over the final result (Tapp, 2004). Aspects such as the underlying concept that sport is good for people, because physical

activity trains the body towards better health and a better quality of life, without neglecting physical appearance, something which is increasingly important nowadays and not just for professional sports, as demonstrated by several studies (e.g., Berri, Simmons, Van Gilder, and O'Neill, 2011).

Moreover, sport moulds people's character (Bockrath & Franke, 1995), makes them better citizens, creates pride in the community and generates a positive image difficult to refute. Sports also creates jobs and generates value for consumers (Hall, 2006). In a world with "choice overload" (Iyengar & Lepper, 2000), the sport consumer experience, either as active participants or as spectators fills human needs, where Smith and Stewart (2007) include the nature of cultural causes (cultural celebration, collective meaning and personal identity), social causes (entertainment and national pride) or psychological causes (sense of evasion, stimulus).

**Marketing and sport.** The illusion that a brand can be created by advertising is just that, an illusion. Any brand needs to have quality and value and we know that sport exhibits unique characteristics – the product is inconsistent and unpredictable, and the marketer has little or no control over the core product (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2007). It is based on this reality that the consumer forms an image. For Aaker (1994, p. 117) "the product drives the image."

Perhaps due to the globalization process, organizations worldwide are becoming more homogeneous in terms of management style and having a presence in several countries (Lauring & Selmer, 2010). As domestic markets are saturated for greater competition (the Internet having a key role), through greater cooperation, global marketing emerges not only as an element of pressure but also of opportunity. Nowadays, a company acting only in a local or national market can no longer avoid global competitive pressure (Blackston, 2013) because "professional sport is big business" Bristow and Sebastian (2001, p. 270). Sporting events on a larger scale cannot be dissociated from economic factors that are deeply rooted in global brands, sponsorship, the huge budgets for their implementation, a whole array of businesses involved and all the marketing surrounding one of the major events, as described by Yoon and Choi (2005).

### 5.3 - Football context

Football (soccer in USA) is the most popular sport in the world (Deloitte, 2012; Derbaix, Decrop, & Cabossart, 2002; Nicolau, 2011). In an industry that generates billions of euros per year (Klayman, 2008; Szymanski, 1998) and whose activity has been considered a new form of religiosity (Xifra 2008), football is of great importance, even in the restricted world of high finance (Tunaru et al. 2005). The revenue of Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the association with 209 members worldwide governing the world of football, was in 2012 almost one billion euros (FIFA, 2013).

In an increasingly media-dominated society, the importance of television is obvious. Over 50% (almost 500 million euros) of FIFA revenue comes from television broadcasting rights. Despite the major importance of Europe (with a weight of approximately 52%), areas such as Asia and North Africa (+20%), South and Central America (+15%) and North America and the Caribbean (+10%) are players starting to gain weight in the phenomenon of world football (FIFA, 2013). In fact, the case of the United States is of special interest because despite being a competition with a short history, with its inaugural season in 1996, the Major League Soccer (MLS) is gaining prominence on the pages of sport in that country. Starting from ten clubs, it has now sixteen and competition between them is fierce, as demonstrated by the impressive number of nine clubs that have lifted the title. That star players like Beckham or Henry enjoy the MLS winter break to represent European clubs such as AC Milan and Arsenal is evidence that these players still can compete in the strongest leagues and also serves to ensure that the MLS maintains a high profile in Europe. But the key point is that average stadium attendances are bigger than in countries with a strong tradition, such as Brazil, Russia and Ukraine (Deloitte, 2012)!

Football alone is said to be worth almost 200 billion euros worldwide (Brown & Walsh, 2000). In 2010/11, the European football market generated a combined revenue of more than 17 billion euros (Deloitte, 2012), in line with the work of Coombs and Osborne (2012). Also in the same period, more than 900 million euros was distributed among the clubs that participate in the Europa League and Champions League (Deloitte, 2012). In 2012, 69% of the FIFA budget, more than 600 million euros, was directly invested in

football (FIFA, 2013). No question that football is “big business” (Kriemadis, Terzoudis & Kartakoullis, 2010, p. 291).

Generating the highest revenues does not guarantee on-pitch success as demonstrated by two examples taken from the “big five” (leagues of England, Italy, Germany, Spain and France) considering the clubs: a) that generate the highest revenue, only two won their domestic leagues; b) that have the highest overall wage, also only two won their national league (Deloitte, 2012). When the World Cup 2006 accumulated twenty-seven billion viewers and the final alone had an audience of over 700 million (Fédération Internationale de Football Association, FIFA, cited in Haugaasen and Jordet, 2012, p. 177), we can say that the football-oriented public spectacle, since the last decade of the twentieth century, has become a component of the entertainment industry, also marking the game's image. As a social experience, football as a whole is more than the sum of its parts (Claussen, 2006) the club becoming a part of a person's identity, an “extension of the individual” (Funk & James, 2004, p. 11). The football fan, regardless of age, as opposed to professional careers and even inclusive of religion (Iannaccone, 1990), does not change from one club to another.

**Marketing/brands and football.** According to the research of Deloitte (2012), “the most contemporary and reliable analysis of clubs' relative financial performance”, top clubs are attractive to commercial partners who wish to market to the fan base. The appeal becomes even stronger for brands that can associate themselves with top players. The U.S. market is a good example, with an unquestionable size for the sports market. In a highly competitive country, with sports/brands such as American Football, Baseball, Basketball and Ice Hockey, MLS football (soccer), despite being a sport that has existed in the MLS format for less than two decades, was able to conquer a space for itself, as shown by the number of stadium spectators, with the MLS having an average of around 18,000 spectators per game, surpassing the average of the National Basketball Association (NBA) and the National Hockey League (NHL), with attendances below 17,500.

The FIFA financial report of 2012 (FIFA, 2013) is clear in the way it presents the data. Considering marketing rights, the importance of the revenue for marketing rights in football is so high that, knowing that from all revenues of the FIFA budget, over 35% are directly from marketing rights (a number impressive in itself and demonstrative of the importance of marketing in today's society). This number becomes even more overwhelming if we exclude revenue from television. If we do so, the revenue from marketing rights *per se* are responsible for 80% of revenue (FIFA, 2013).

## 5.4 - Marketing literature in sport context

The importance of sports marketing in general marketing. In a study conducted by Shilbury (2011) where the purpose was to “examine the influence of seven sport management and marketing journals on sport-related research published in 20 top tier generic management and marketing journals” (Shilbury, 2011, p. 423) the most cited were the Sport Marketing Quarterly (SMQ) followed by the Journal of Sport Management (JSM). With the main purpose of analyzing the link between marketing and sport, considering mainly the consumer view (such as the sport fans), we follow the work of Shilbury (2011) and selected and analysed twenty four articles from these two journals (SMQ and JSM). The main aspects are presented below (see fig. 07).

**Fig. 07. Marketing literature in the sport context.**

<u>European Journal of Marketing Special issue in Marketing and Sport</u>	<u>Shilbury Most cited SMO followed by JSM</u>	<u>Our study Twelve SMO and twelve JSM articles</u>
Positive and important signal with regard to sports management in general and sports marketing in particular.	“Examine the influence of seven sport management and marketing journals on sport-related research published in 20 top tier generic management and marketing journals.”	Main purpose to analyse the link between marketing and sport, having in consideration mainly the consumer view.
<b>1999</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2014</b>

*Source: own elaboration.*

Although these two journals stand out in the list of major journals, in recent years growing interest in sports marketing emerges in sport management and marketing journals, with particular relevance of sports management with more than 90% of citations. This study follows the work presented by the European Journal of Marketing (EJM) in 1999. When a quality journal such as EJM devotes a special issue to marketing in sport, this should be seen as a positive and important signal regarding sports management in general and sports marketing in particular.

The following pages contain a summary of JSM and SMQ in Tables 01 and 02 respectively.

JSM was first published in 1987. Of the twelve articles chosen, we divided them into four themes (our own division): consumers (6) stadiums (4) tourism (1) and internet (1) (see table 01).

**Tab. 01. JSM articles.**

Authors/Year	Purpose	Conclusions
Hansen, H. & Gauthier, R., 1989.	This study seeks to expand knowledge of factors that affect attendance at professional sport events in North America. The literature review is limited to professional sport and North American leagues.	There were significant differences between leagues in attendance items such scheduling of games for weekends, afternoons, nights, and quarters of the se quality of team rosters as represented by star players; players achieving team league records; ticket price; the existence of other forms of entertainment in of the franchise; and such residual preference items as seating, cleanliness, a accessibility.
Wakefield, K.L. & Sloan, H.J., 1995.	Desire to stay and attend games at the stadium were investigated.	The results support the premise that although team loyalty strongly affects attendance, stadium design and stadium services also directly influence spectators' desire to stay, and hence, attend games at the stadium.
Wakefield, K.L., Blodgett, J.G. & Sloan, H.J., 1996.	To assess the relationship between spectators' perceptions of stadium quality and repatronage intentions and their desire to stay. Secondly, the study developed and validated an instrument for assessing spectator perceptions of and satisfaction with sports facilities that can be used by facility managers.	The results of this research provide guidance to help managers look at their facility from the customer's viewpoint. By focusing on the specific elements of the sportscape, management can determine how their customers perceive the sportscape and predict their affective and behavioral responses.
Shapiro, S. I. & Drayer, J., 2012.	The purpose of this study was twofold. First, in an effort to understand differences in price setting strategies, the relationship between fixed ticket prices, dynamic ticket prices, and secondary market ticket prices for comparable seats were examined.	Findings showed significant differences between fixed ticket prices, dynamic ticket prices, and secondary market ticket prices, with fixed ticket prices at the low end and secondary market ticket prices at the high end of the pricing spectrum. Furthermore, time was found to have a significant influence on ticket price; however, the influence of time varied according to market and seat location.
Stewart, B., Smith, A.C.T. & Nicholson, M., 2003.	Examines models of sport consumption by undertaking a comparative analysis of the major studies completed to the present time.	While past studies have identified important motivational and behavioral consequences, they frequently provide only partial explanations of sport consumption behavior. They are often constrained by an overemphasis on social-psychological traits, and give only limited attention to the cultural and economic context in which behaviors take place. They rarely explain

		how fans might move between different segments or how relationships with sports teams are formed in the first place.
Robinson, M.J. & Trail, G.T., 2005.	Investigate the relationships among gender, type of sport, motives, and points of attachment to a team for spectators of selected intercollegiate sports.	The results indicated that significant differences existed according to gender and type of sport attended with regard to motives and points of attachment within the environment of intercollegiate athletics.
Heere, B. & James, J.D., 2007.	Identifying the external group identities that a sports team is believed to represent and then aligning more closely with key external group identities provided.	A sports team is much more than just another entertainment service and fans are more than just consumers
Koenigstorfer, J., Groeppel-Klein, A. & Schmitt, M., 2010.	Analyze how fans' loyalty dimensions and emotions are affected when their club is either relegated to a lower division, or remains in the top division.	The results support the notion that highly committed fans and their clubs are strongly bound to each other—and this connection becomes even stronger after relegation.
Kim, Y.K. & Trail, G., 2010.	Developing a conceptual framework to explain relationships among constraints, motivators, and attendance, and empirically testing the proposed model within the spectator sport context.	As quickly became apparent, determining whether factors are constraints or motivators depends on the context. The results indicated that fans were motivated to attend a game because they identified with the team.
Shapiro, S.L., Ridinger, L.L. & Trail, G.T., 2013.	Using identity theory as a framework, this study examined the differential effects of past sport consumer behaviors on various future sport consumer intentions within the context of a new college football program.	Past behavior predicted future intentions; however, the amount of variance explained varied dramatically depending on specific past behaviors and points of attachment.
Solberg, H.A. & Preuss, H., 2007.	This article analyzes the tourism impact of hosting major sport events, paying special attention to the long-term economic impact.	Many cities spend substantial amounts of money upgrading their infrastructure to host major sport events. Although the events can create welfare-economic gains, such as long-term tourism impacts, this does not guarantee that the benefits exceed the costs.
Seo, W.J. & Green, B.C., 2008.	The purpose of this study was to develop a valid, reliable instrument to measure motivation for online sport consumption.	The MSSOC is a psychometrically sound tool for sport marketers interested in better understanding current and potential Web-site users.
Authors/Year	Purpose	Conclusions

Source: own elaboration based on the articles of JSM.

**JSM studies, purpose, conclusions and recommendations.** With regard to consumers, Stewart, Smith and Nicholson (2003) made a comparative analysis between the work done on consumption in sport, concluding that this is a partial explanation and too segmented for this area, and as such, propose a more holistic search in terms of the consumer.

Robinson and Trail (2005) investigate relationships between viewers with variables such as race, type of sport, motives and connection points, to find out if there are differences as regards sex of the type of sport among spectators, and advocate that collegiate marketers should not target but create emphasis on relationships and points of connection between the viewers.

Kim and Trail (2010) developed a framework that explains the various relationships among spectators as well as their application, the importance of context and identification with the team, aspects that enable a correct assessment of what motivates or inhibits fans. Starting from the theory of identity, examining how the past affects the future of the viewer, Shapiro, Ridinger, and Trail (2013) emphasize the importance of past behavior in predicting future intentions and propose a generalization of the theory in clubs with tradition and in multiple programs.

To identify communities and what their alignment is for the identity of the consumer, Heere and James (2007) refer to the importance of collective sport and the fact that fans are more than mere consumers, focusing on the importance of the brand community. Koenigstorfer, Groeppel-Klein and Schmitt (2010) studied the degree of impairment of the fan in the case of something as dramatic as relegation, concluding that the ties binding the right kind of fans to the club become stronger, even after debacles, recommending a path of passion and interconnection to the community and the club through various initiatives in that community.

Due to its popularity, any event involving team sport requires large stadiums. Hansen and Gauthier (1989) studied the factors that influence more viewers to go to stadiums, noting

various differences in attendance (scheduling games, elements of the quality of the team, other entertainment possibilities) and concluded on the need for more studies.

In order to know what takes viewers to grounds to see games, Wakefield and Sloan (1995) found that regardless of team loyalty, the stadium design and inherent services influence attendance, and the spectator's experience must be understood as a global one and not just related to the team performance or the fan's loyalty to the team. In this sense, Wakefield, Blodgett and Sloan (1996) study not only the relationship between the spectator and his presence in the stadium but also the will to return, and they apply an instrument to try to measure spectator satisfaction, focusing on the structural aspect of sports facilities and how they should be understood by those managing the business.

From a structural and functional perspective, we proceed to something more concrete, the price of tickets and associated dynamics, where Shapiro and Drayer (2012) not only want to understand the strategy behind the pricing policy (fixed and dynamic) but also the secondary market price, concluding that there are several differences in posted prices, the time of purchase and the place where the customer will sit being important aspects in determining the final price, something that is new in sport but which has been used for years in aviation and hotels. New approaches are required to the sports phenomenon and, for example, related to the internet, Seo and Green (2008) developed the construction of a reliable instrument for measuring the motive for online sport consumption, and claim that the internet can be a tool to understand internet users, providing a new place for fans to interact.

Regarding tourism, Solberg and Preuss (2007) analyze the impact of tourism on places hosting major sporting events, focusing particular attention on the long-term economic impact, concluding that although these generate enormous economic volume they do not guarantee that the benefits will cover the expenditure, a comprehensive long-term strategy being essential.

**JSM general summary.** Stewart et al., (2003) point out the importance of the global approach, not only dealing with consumers and their relationships (Robinson & Trail, 2005) and communities built from the sports phenomenon (Koenigstorfer et al., 2010), but also with the construction of large venues where events occur, whether at the calendar level (Hansen & Gauthier, 1989) or structural level (Wakefield et al., 1996; Wakefield & Sloan, 1995), focusing on tourism (Solberg & Preuss, 2007) and without neglecting the use of new technologies, whether in pricing (Shapiro & Drayer, 2012) or new business platforms (Seo & Green, 2008).

**The importance of marketing in JSM.** Robinson and Trail (2005) highlight the importance of marketing communication design and being able to properly assess what motivates and inhibits spectators in allowing marketers to be more effective in serving their audience (Kim & Trail, 2010), developing strategies that best serve the general interest in the sports phenomenon (Shapiro & Drayer, 2012), providing not only information but also business platforms at a much lower cost, as is the case of websites (Seo & Green, 2008) and greater autonomy of production.

The SMQ was first published in 1992. We divide the twelve articles chosen into six themes (our own division): fans (6) media/entertainment (2) race (1) gender (1) single case (1) and marketing theory (1) (see table 02).

**Tab. 02. SMQ articles.**

Authors/Year	Purpose	Conclusions
Wells, D.F., Southall, R.M. & Pong, H.-H., 2000.	To identify the determinants related to attendance at NCAA Division II football games for the 1998 season and develop a model designed to predict attendance using the selected determinants.	Results indicate that previous season winning percentage and homecoming promotions had a significant positive relationship with attendance.
Trail, G.T. et al., 2003.	Examine relationships among motives and points of attachment in attendees at four college football games.	Different motives are associated with different points of attachment. These relationships differ based on whether the individual is a fan or spectator.
Mahony, D.F. & Moorman, A.M., 2000.	The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of positive and negatives attitudes as well as a team's quality, on television viewing intentions.	In both leagues (NFL and NHL) the attraction of the favorite team is greater than the attraction of the favorite player.
Dwyer, B. & Drayer, J., 2010.	The aim of this study was to investigate the differing modes of sport consumption shown by fantasy sport participants.	Therefore, not only is fantasy football not negatively impacting fans' attitudes toward their favorite team, but it also serves as a tool to increase television viewership, which should incentivize the NFL to promote fantasy football participation among its fans.
Fink, J.S., Trail, G.T. & Anderson, D.F., 2002.	This study examines the differences existing between genders and between spectators at men's and women's intercollegiate basketball games.	The differences between male and female spectators were fewer than the number of significant differences between fans of women's and fans of men's basketball.
Armstrong, K.L. & Stratta, T.M.P., 2004.	The purpose of this study was to further examine the manifestations of race in sport consumption.	The results implied an influence of race effects (i.e. the racial classification of the spectator/consumer, the racial demographics of the sport team as the product to be consumed, and the racial demographics of the environment in which the sport consumption takes place) on sport consumption.
Kwon, H.H. & Armstrong,	To examine impulsive tendencies to purchase sport team licensed merchandise, an exploratory	The results revealed that the only significant antecedent to impulse buying of sport team licensed merchandise was the student's identification with

K.L., 2002.	investigation involving a sample of college students.	the university's sport team, which also influenced the amount of money spent on impulsive sport purchases. No gender differences were revealed in terms of impulsive buying of sport team licensed merchandise.
Donavan, D.T., Carlson, B.D. & Zimmerman, M., 2005.	In this study, the researchers investigate some dispositional antecedents of identification, using a sports context.	The findings show that basic personality, traits of extraversion, agreeability, need for arousal and materialism positively affect the need for affiliation. Thereafter, the need for affiliation positively influences the level of identification with the team.
Robinson, M.J. et al., 2005.	The purpose of this study was to use the model to determine how individuals who attend college football games should be classified in the four NCAA divisions of college football.	It is apparent from the results that differences do exist among the divisions based on the motive variables and the points of attachment variables.
Theodorakis, N.D., Wann, D.L. & Weaver, S., 2012.	This investigation examined the interrelationships among overall sport team identification, specific dimensions of team identification, and behavioral intentions.	The antecedents model of team identification could be used by sport marketing professionals to segment their fan base.
Vincent, J., Hill, J.S. & Lee, J.W., 2009.	David Beckham reinvented himself.	He is a portfolio of brands, each emanating from the different roles he plays in life—soccer player, father, husband to Posh, fashionista, sexual icon, and so on. Each brand is similar, but has its own personality (Aaker 1996). In Beckham's case, each persona is a distinct segment, and from a business perspective, each is a source of profit.
Fullerton, S. & Merz, G.R., 2008.	There is no consensus as to exactly what is meant by the term sports marketing. This conceptual paper attempts to address this deficiency via the development of a new framework based on two key dimensions: type of product and level of sports integration.	The broadened set of sports marketing domains articulated here provides a method for classifying the many strategies that have recently evolved in the practice of sports marketing. This classification system is an initial step in the development of theory in the field, allowing for the development of testable hypotheses to guide the development and execution of research, and finally it provides guidance to decision-makers in the field
Authors/Year	Purpose	Conclusions

Source: own elaboration based on the articles of SMQ,

**SMQ studies, purpose, conclusions and recommendations.** Because there is no consensus as to the meaning of sports marketing, by developing a new framework, Fullerton and Merz (2008) seek to address this deficiency. With this model, in a discipline like marketing, which needs guidelines, the authors classified the strategies and practices of sports marketing, emphasizing that marketing is not just about having more fans or selling more tickets: it is much more than that and David Beckham is a good example.

According to Vincent, Hill, and Lee (2009), Beckham reinvents himself at every step, their study finding that he is a portfolio of brands, varying according to his role (soccer player, father, etc.). He has a global economic-financial value, as attested by the values which resulted in his signing with Los Angeles Galaxy in MLS.

Concerning the topic with the largest number of papers (fans), there is the work of Wells, Southall, and Pong (2000), where the authors intend to determine what makes fans watch games in a football division and develop a model that can predict future assistance, concluding that the results of the previous season and new-season signings have a positive relationship with future assistance.

Then again, Kwon and Armstrong (2002) conducted an exploratory investigation to examine impulsive tendencies to purchase licensed sport team merchandise, concluding that the most important factor relates to the student's identification with the university team without gender differences. In the same line of investigation, Donovan, Carlson, and Zimmerman (2005) studied some personality traits in a sporting context, concluding that some, such as basic personality, traits of extraversion and agreeability have a positive effect on the desire to be associated, allowing promotion campaigns to help consumers easily identify with the team.

Using a model, Robinson, Trail, Dick and Gillentine (2005) propose being able to determine who attends games in the various divisions of college football, finding differences in the divisions studied, something which is crucial from the marketing point of

view: to differentiate between the behavior of the spectator and the fan. For Trail, Robinson, Dick and Gillentine (2003), in their study on four soccer games to find out the motives and points of attachment between workers, conclude that different motives are associated with different connections based on the fact of referring to fans or spectators. It is this segmentation of fans that Theodorakis, Wann and Weaver (2012) seek with a model of antecedents of team identification, a tripartite research (identification with the team, specific dimensions and behavioral intentions), stating that this can be used to target fans and could be used in another type of fan behavior.

But the game is played not only on the field. Regarding media/entertainment, a study by Mahony and Moorman (2000) reported that television viewing prevails where an individual's favorite team plays at the expense of favorite player, which helps to decide not only the marketing field but also future television transmissions. Even in the field of parallel involvement, Dwyer and Drayer (2010) speak of a growing universe with more supporters and future, because being a fantasy sport participant leads to increased viewing of television programs in which their favorite team plays.

Armstrong and Stratta (2004) study how differences in sport consumers' race become manifest, obtaining three perspectives (racial, demographic classification team and game context), reaffirming its importance and how socio-cultural and environmental factors can influence sport consumption, something that does not correspond to the study by Fink, Trail and Anderson (2002), not only with regard to the behavior of the public itself (man and woman) but also to the behavior in public consumption of games by women and men, and these are lower among men and women than for fans of every genre played, and the coexistence of a mixed public could be noted as something to attract more people.

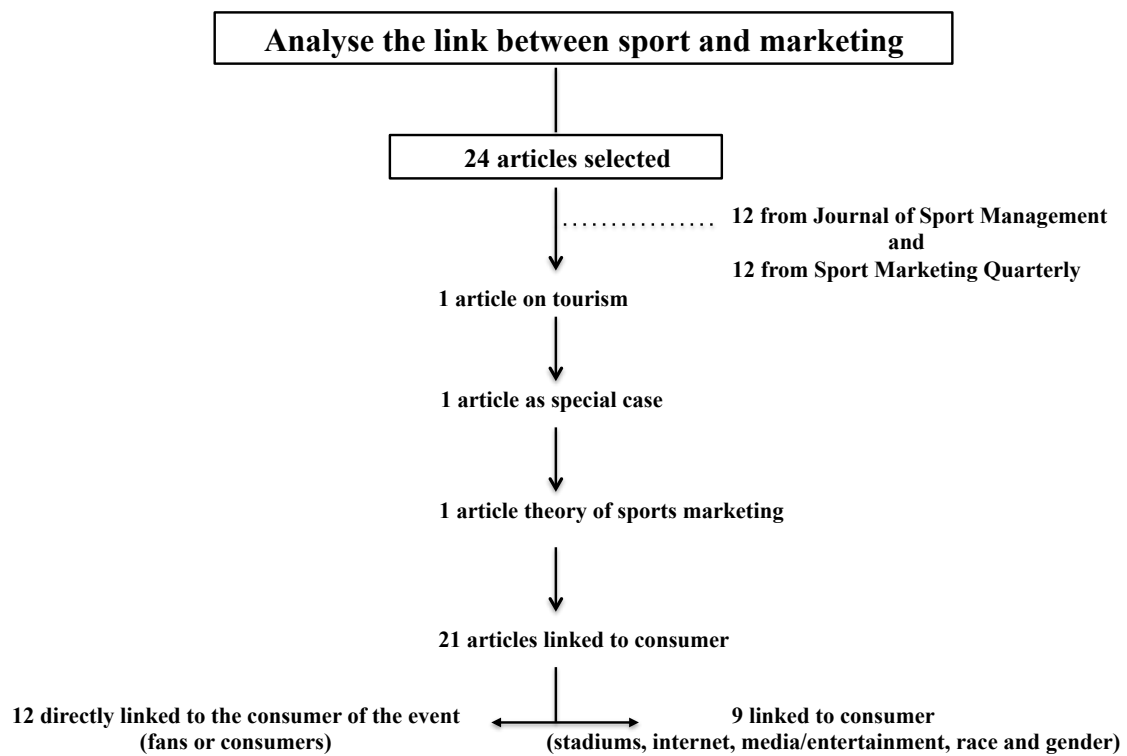
**SMQ general summary.** These articles point out the distinction between being a spectator or fan (Robinson et al., 2005; Trail et al., 2003), something that should be analyzed more scientifically (Trail et al., 2003). The combination of the very nature of the game with an inherent sport accessibility (Fink et al., 2002) as well as its cultural aspects (Armstrong & Stratta, 2004) should lead to further studies on various types of consumption of products or

services (Dwyer & Drayer, 2010) in order to promote new ways of influencing consumers regarding their level of identification with the team (Kwon & Armstrong, 2002).

**The importance of marketing in SMQ.** From a marketing perspective, on one hand, the distinction between fans and spectators can be crucial (Trail et al., 2003), and on the other, physical activity departments should also take into account the development of effective marketing plans (Wells et al., 2000). Consumers' impulses have not been adequately studied (Kwon & Armstrong, 2002), with regard to history (Theodorakis et al., 2012) and personality traits (Donavan et al., 2005). Due to the social characteristics of the human being, events may be part of a marketing strategy (Fink et al., 2002), never forgetting that most products advertised in the area of sports have little or nothing to do with sport (Fullerton & Merz, 2008).

**Final JSM and SMQ summary.** Summarizing (fig. 08), of the twenty-four articles selected from SMQ and JSM for the purpose of this thesis to analyse the link between sport and marketing, twelve are directly linked to the consumer of the event (fans or consumers) and nine are also linked to consumers (stadiums, internet, media/entertainment, race and gender), leaving one on tourism, one on a special case such as David Beckham and the last on an attempt towards modelling theory of sports marketing.

**Fig. 08. Synthesis of the analysis.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

### 5.5 - Sport fan: conceptualization and typology

Although viewing sporting activities is a something that comes from ancient times, and with all today's paraphernalia to disseminate it (TV, Internet, media, etc..), contrary to what Smith (1988) pointed out, we are far from a point of saturation or decreasing enthusiasm concerning the action and subsequent involvement of sports event consumers. In addition to the factors of pleasure or mere symbolism, depending on the degree of impairment, sports involvement may become a central component in a consumer's life (Beaton, Funk, Ridinger, & Jordan, 2011), which means that increasingly the marketer's role is to consider and develop methods which create bonds of loyalty to a brand (Donavan, Carlson & Zimmerman, 2005).

In the case of the sports consumer, we find three main perspectives of sport fans:

(i) *No distinction at all* – Those who make no distinction between sports spectator, sports fan and sports follower, in the sense they understand that everyone has a strong emotional attachment, shown by the fact that they devote a considerable amount of time, effort and money to accompanying the sports phenomenon (Smith, 1988);

(ii) *No distinction between spectator and fan* – Authors who do not even make the distinction between sports spectator and fan (Heere & James, 2007);

(iii) *Characterizing fans* – Or authors who, while not making a true distinction, report that fans are “fierce, loyal and passionate” (Smith & Stewart, 2010, p. 10).

For Trail, Robinson, Dick and Gillentine, (2003, p. 218) “fans and spectators are distinct”. From a marketing perspective this classification may be crucial in the sense that consumer behavior may vary between a viewer and a fan, with the need for different marketing (Trail et al., 2003).

**Definition of spectator and fan.** The definition of a spectator can be characterized as an individual who merely sees and observes the event (Sloan, 1989), in person or through any form of media (Wann, Melnick, Russell, & Pease, 2001) and after viewing forgets the experience (Zillmann and Paulus, 1993).

A fan is not just an “emotionally committed consumer of sporting events” (Guttmann, 1986, p. 6), but is emotionally attached to a brand (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004), with a permanent and constant interest in a club (Wann et al., 2001), an enthusiastic devotee (Sloan, 1989): and being a fan of a sport club is something that can give meaning to a fan’s life (Funk & James, 2004).

**The importance of the fan.** Sport, like art, may be regarded as a game that enriches the lives of those who appreciate the game, being forms of expression that should be cherished and properly consumed (Smith, 1988). Football is considered an important activity in Western society (Trail, Anderson, & Fink, 2000), being immensely popular in the United States of America (Trail, Anderson, & Fink, 2005), and particularly in the case of European football, the consumer’s impact on entering a stadium shows the “pervasive power of sport in modern society” (Heere & James, 2007, p. 319).

The team sports fan is enthusiastic about his/her team (Sloan, 1989) and the importance it acquires, through not being just another entertainment service offered, is such that it must be seen beyond mere consumption (Heere & James, 2007). The fan is the club’s main source of revenue, the sports industry being one of the fastest growing in the world today (DeSarbo & Madrigal, 2011).

For Koenigstorfer, Groeppel-Klein, and Schmitt (2010, p. 649), “fans are extremely important to sports clubs, as they generate a major part of the club’s income by attending games, buying merchandise, paying to watch games on television or on the Internet, and attracting sponsors. They also contribute to the atmosphere in the sports stadia, the identity of the teams, and what makes them attractive to others.” The sports spectator is an

important part of an industry that accounts for \$ 28 billion dollars (Kim & Trail, 2010) and as consumers, their needs should be understood similarly to other activities such as the cinema (Smith & Stewart, 2010).

**Typology of fans.** Sports consumers show considerable variation in attitudes, behaviors and values (Holt, 1995) and not all those who watch or attend sporting events are fans committed to the teams they watch (Mahony et al., 2000). It is therefore necessary to target consumers to allow a better understanding of their characteristics and needs. Having a fan typology helps marketers to “count” the kind of fans that exist and therefore to focus efforts on their programs.

The environment has been considered an important factor that can “help to shape human behavior” (Armstrong & Stratta, 2004, p. 15). In their study about the environment (infrastructure and other aspects) of stadiums, Wakefield and Sloan, (1995) question what makes millions of people go to stadiums, spend time and money (besides ticket purchase, spending on transport costs, food and drinks, and club souvenirs).

With respect to sports consumption, Stewart, Smith and Nicholson (2003) undertake a comparative analysis of the major studies of sport consumption models. They refer to dualistic approaches, characterized by contrasting one form of sport consumer behaviour with its opposite. For example, the Wann and Branscombe (1990) model with die hard fans (supporting a team even after years of losing) and fair-weather fans (supporting the team when successful, but not staying if the team starts losing). There are also tiered typologies, where sport consumers are grouped and then ranked according to the strength of their emotional or financial commitment to the sport or team.

The model of Sutton, McDonald, Milne and Cimperman (1997) has three levels of fans. Social fans are the first level (low in identification, enjoying socialization and caring little about the outcome of game), the second level consists of focused fans (moderate in level of identification and attracted to some aspect of the sport), and the third level consists of devoted fans (those who have a high emotional attachment to a team that lasts a long time

and who make a major financial investment and commit considerable time). Finally, multidimensional typologies combine underlying motives for consuming sport products, factors that give sport meaning, indicators of loyalty, levels of emotional attachment, and frequency of game attendance, to produce an array of sport consumer types.

That is the case of Funk and James (2001), who proposed a psychological continuum model along which sport spectators and fans operate. The model begins with the awareness level, where the individual becomes aware of a specific team. The second level is the attraction level, where the individual acknowledges having a favourite team. At the third level, attachment occurs. This is when the individual has a psychological connection strengthens. Finally, the last level is where allegiance occurs: where the individual becomes a consistent and durable user. Also Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw (1999) and Mahony et al., (2000) (see table 03) used the multidimensional typology.

With regard to consumption as a whole and its respective typology, Honsel, Klaus and Wagner (2011) made a division into three levels, starting from a situation where the consumer is emotionally attached to the brand, making a typology of fans in relation to motivation and personality traits with regard to consumer fanaticism. Also Thorne (2011) speaks of four levels of consumer fanaticism in areas as diverse as the followers of Harry Potter, sports club fans or followers of soap operas. Fullerton and Merz (2008, p. 90) conclude that “many marketers use a sports platform as the basis for appeals to consumers across a vast array of products, the majority of which have little or nothing to do with sports”, having a proper typology of fans means strategies can be further refined and attention can be paid to economic factors, product redesign and readjustment of promotional campaigns, among other aspects.

**Comparative table of fans according to authors.** Table 03 shows the four authors selected concerning consumer behavior (in the sports phenomenon and in general) as well as our perspective on the choice of fan definition in this study.

**Tab. 03. Consumer behaviour - fan definition.**

Sport		General		Our research
Hunt et al. (1999)	Mahony et al.(2000)	Honsel et al. (2011)	Thorne, (2011)	
<b>Temporary fan</b> Limited period of interest.	<b>Low loyalty</b> Weak team commitment Low match attendance.	<b>Sympathizer</b> Money and time spent, closeness to the brand.	<b>Dilettante</b> Time factor and social impetus.	<b>Believer</b> Club is identity factor. Club is important in life.
<b>Local fan</b> Bound by geographical constraints, identification with the team.	<b>Latent loyalty</b> Strong team commitment Weak match attendance.	<b>Enthusiast</b> Looking for and interacting with like- minded people, showing brand logo, attending events, protective behavior toward the brand.	<b>Dedicated</b> Self-driven shown through activities.	<b>Devoted</b> A member. Gives importance to being recognized by peers (in the context of sport, through the institution).
<b>Devoted fan</b> Stronger emotional attachment to the team. Goes to games.	<b>Spurious loyalty</b> Weak team commitment Regular match attendance.	<b>Fanatic</b> Actively participates in fan clubs or events, shows objects of affection, and endeavors to become recognized as an expert.	<b>Devoted</b> Strong desire towards acquisition, deeper levels of fanaticism.	<b>Apostle</b> Programmes daily life in terms of games (meetings, birthdays, vacations, work proposals). Defends the club on a daily basis on various platforms (internet, newspapers, TV).
<b>Fanatical fan</b> Being a fan is an important part of the individual's identity. Goes to games and paints his body or perhaps wears a costume.	<b>True loyalty</b> Strong team commitment Regular match attendance.		<b>Dysfunctional</b> Violates social norms.	
<b>Dysfunctional fan</b> Being a fan is the primary method of identification. Anti-social, deviant behaviour.				

*Source: own elaboration based on studies made by quoted authors.*

**Our definition of fan for this research.** These differences between spectators and fans enable new forms of research for better understanding of these groups (Trail et al., 2003, p. 226). Like the passion between two people, a passion for a brand also leads to a set of behaviors (Matzler, Pichler, & Hemetsberger, 2007), and taking into account that most marketing studies in sport are held in sports enclosures (Theodorakis, Wann, & Weaver, 2012), the choice of sample proves to be crucial for a relevant consideration.

For Koenigstorfer et al. (2010, p. 666), “our sample consisted of highly committed fans”, fans that are members, fans that go to the stadium, etc. (see table above), unlike the work of Robinson, Trail, Dick and Gillentine (2005) carried out with lower league fans, which showed cases where spectators have more loyalty to the players than to the team. In our case, similarly to Fournier (1998), this is not exactly brand loyalty, although this is perhaps the theory that helps us better understand the consumer’s relationship with the brand.

It is about fans/consumers who have a relationship beyond this world, regarding what they consume and how they do so (Belk et al., 1989) far beyond the merely utilitarian or social question. A fan that, due to his strong connection with the club, “feels a sense of personal success when the team wins and a sense of loss when the team loses” (Funk & James, 2001, p. 119). In essence, we consider the fact that there cannot be a separation between consumer and consumed, as epitomized by Belk (1988, p. 146): “Having and being are distinct but inseparable.”

We are talking about a fan who understands the club, the city and the surrounding community, as a joint bond with himself (Heere & James, 2007), not a fan as in the research by Wann and Branscombe (1990) who show that fans who identify are more the type of *Basking In Reflected Glory* (BIRG), i.e., claiming the club’s success as their own (Cialdini et al., 1976), and those who identify less are *Cut Off Reflected Failure* (CORF), i.e., separating from the entity before failure, as stated by Snyder, Higgins and Stucky (1983).

We talk about a fan who schedules his life according to the club and gives much importance to it in his life, for whom internal factors have more influence than external ones in predicting their participation in club activities (Crompton, Jackson, & Witt, 2005). We talk about fans who are motivated to go to their clubs' games because they identify with the club, a key factor in predicting sports consumer behaviour (Cialdini et al., 1976; Sloan, 1989; Wann & Branscombe, 1993).

We refer to fans who are always present, even when the club has an unsuccessful run, i.e., the team's performance does not affect their presence or their support, unlike in other studies (Baade & Tiehen, 1990; Pan, Gabert, McGaugh, & Branvold, 1997; Zhang et al., 1997).

Those fans who, in cases of unexpected or consecutive defeats, have a protection mechanism of self-esteem (Snyder et al., 1986), can dissociate themselves from the club temporarily – in victories “we won” and in defeat “they lost” – but never jeopardizing their participation and commitment to defending the club's good name, whether watching games or in all other activities.

Our focus is on this particular type of fan, this very specific fan segment, where we have a greater guarantee of success, because as Hunt et al. (1999) mention, the results will be clearer and more concise due to less variation of the occurrences that can exist between different types of fan segments.

Despite the lack of consensus on fan typologies (as mentioned above), a set of characteristics help to define a fan. To have more guarantees of success (Hunt et al., 1999), our definition of a fan for this research, considering the differences between spectators and fans (Trail et al., 2003, p. 226), the passion (Matzler, Pichler, & Hemetsberger, 2007), the commitment shown (Koenigstorfer et al., 2010), the relationships beyond this world (Belk et al., 1989), the strong connection (Funk & James, 2001, p. 119), the understanding of the

club (Heere & James, 2007), the motivations (Cialdini et al., 1976), the daily life schedule (Crompton et al., 2005) is as follows:

*a fan is someone who likes his club very much, recognizes it is important in his life and is willing to have a set of behaviours and attitude to defend and support his club, being aware of the inherent implications.*

The following table (tab. 04) gathers the type of fans we considered in our studies (1 to 5) with the characteristics of each group. The shaded area in table 03 (as opposed to the other definitions) and table 04 is the type of fan which we intend to study and get to know in depth.

**Tab. 04. Specific definition of the fan.**

Subjects	Believer	Devoted	Apostle
Club is identity factor	Yes	Yes	Yes
Club is important in life	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gives importance to be recognized by peers (on a daily basis)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Uses symbols of the club (sweatshirt, hat, scarves)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social is important.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Speaks daily of the club (home, coffee, friends), defending it if necessary	Yes	Yes	Yes
He is a partner	No	Yes	Yes
Regularly goes to the stadium	No	Yes	Yes
Gives importance to being recognized by peers (in the context of sport, through institution)	No	Yes	Yes
Accompanies the team to away games (Portugal)	No	Sometimes *	Yes
Accompanies the team to games abroad	No	Sometimes *	Yes
Schedules daily life in terms of games (meetings, birthdays, vacations, work proposals)	No	If possible **	Yes
Speaks daily, defending the club on various available platforms (internet, newspapers, TV)	No	No	Yes
Engages in activities outside the club (forums, meetings)	No	No	Yes

*Source: own elaboration.*

Therefore, based on the literature review, we have a table allowing us to determine what kind of fans we are talking about, aiming to find out what makes someone sacrifice for a brand and maintain a close relationship, in this case a football fan and his relationship with his club.

# **Methodology**

## **6 - Methodology**

This chapter begins by referring to consumer research philosophy and the characteristics of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. We take a thorough look at the Grounded Theory paradigm, its origins, the interpretative process and the differences between Glaser and Strauss. In the research strategy, we focus on the application of Grounded Theory, the origins of the research problem and the key question, the associated methodology and the source of data. As for the process itself, we refer to data collection and data analysis, as well as validity and reliability. The strategies used to convince and validate, as well as the research process and theory building through a global summary of all the studies made and ending with a brief written and visual explanation of each study. Various diagrams are placed throughout the chapter aiming to clarify basic aspects of the studies made.

### **6.1 - Consumer Research philosophy**

The objective pursued moulds and constructs the research (Arnould & Thompson, 2005, p. 870), forming its body. For Shiu, Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2009, p. 170), “the research objectives and information requirements are the keys to determine the type of research design that is most appropriate in collecting data”. Knowing that both qualitative and quantitative methodology have a role to play in a theoretical contribution to the literature on consumer research (Ger, 2005), we use the qualitative method, as despite McCracken (1988, p. 19) stating that “qualitative data are normally relatively messy, unorganized data” we suspect that what we are studying “turns in some important way on the ways in which individuals conceive of, or construe, their world (McCracken, 1988, p. 59).”

We know that consumer research is not carried out through one single methodology but through multiple pedagogies (Hogg & Maclaran, 2007). However, according to McCracken (1988, p. 21) “qualitative methods are most useful and powerful when they are used to discover how the respondent sees the world”, indeed, as Belk (1995) says when referring to wanting to find out about concepts, meanings and experiences (Jafari, 2008). Exploratory research is used “when the research objectives focus on clarifying the research problems, creating hypotheses and establishing research priorities” (Shiu, Hair, Bush, & Ortinau, 2009, p. 170),

McCracken (1988) presents nine key points concerning the problems to consider in the qualitative area. Briefly,

- 1) the first concerns the fact that this should be “accessible to all” (p.13) and not just to a group of professors;
- 2) it should be “coordinated and ecumenical (p. 15) with cooperation between the various research “tribes”;
- 3) there are “differences between qualitative and quantitative research” (p. 16) with the qualitative type seeking patterns of inter-relationship between the various categories found rather than stressing the relationships between a given set of characteristics;
- 4) the investigator as “an instrument”, (p. 18) in data collection and analysis, using his own experience (whenever possible), something that can be trained and systemized, and is within reach of all;
- 5) understanding well “the balance between being discrete and not being so”, (p. 21) as what is of interest is how interviewees see the world, and the interviewer should later be able to organize and structure the data;
- 6) “creating distance”, (p. 22) being able to keep a critical distance, either through procedures or through the data themselves;
- 7) having a duly prepared questionnaire (p. 24), something of great importance as it allows organization and planning what and how to ask while keeping channels open during the interview;
- 8) the “relationship between the investigator and the respondent” (p. 25) underlining the aspect of formality and the fact of treating the interviewee as a collaborator; and finally,
- 9) “multi-method approaches” (p. 28) which, besides the interview, considers focus groups and other forms of analysis such as the repertory grid.

Whatever the method, as McCracken (1988, p. 16) clearly states, “perhaps the most striking difference between the methods is the way in which each tradition treats its analytics categories”. Table 05 shows in summary form the main characteristics of each methodology.

**Tab. 05. Characteristics of quantitative and qualitative methodologies.**

Quantitative	Qualitative
1. To isolate and define categories as precisely as possible before the study is made.	1. To isolate and define categories during the process of research.
2. Well defined categories are the means of research.	2. Categories are the object of research.
3. Sharply delineated relationships between a limited set; precision.	3. Looks for patterns of interrelationship between many categories; complexity.
4. Uses a lens that brings a narrow strip of the field of vision into very close focus.	4. Uses a lens that permits a much less precise vision of a much broader strip.
5. Data reporting abilities of the respondent: easy and rapid responses from the respondent. The respondent can identify precisely what is wanted, retrieve it easily, and report it without ambiguity.	5. Data reporting abilities of the respondent: the respondent has more difficulty determining what is wanted. Must strive to identify and articulate a response.
6. Number and kind of respondents that should be recruited for research purposes: requires the investigators to construct a sample of the necessary size and type to generalize to the larger population	6. Number and kind of respondents that should be recruited for research purposes: the issue cannot be generalized. It is one of access. The purpose of the qualitative interview is not to discover how many, and what kinds of, people share a certain characteristic. It is to gain access to cultural categories and assumptions according to which one culture construes the world, “less is more”.

*Source: adapted from McCracken (1988)*

The aim of this study is to find out what makes a consumer (an FC Porto fan) have a set of behaviours (sacrifices) towards being with his brand (the club), in the context of Portuguese football. This research requires a non positivistic interpretative approach

seeking to understand and interpret the reason for this behaviour. Supported by a variety of qualitative interpretative methods, this study uses the Grounded Theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978) as we believe that in this way its specific goals are best reached. This will be explained in the next section.

## **6.2 - Grounded Theory paradigm**

The main objective of the study being to discover why consumers make sacrifices for a brand (in this case, fans of FC Porto making sacrifices for their club), there are three distinct areas: football as the context of research; the consumer-brand relationship (CBR) with the consumer and the club as a brand and their relationships; and sacrifice, little studied in the literature regarding the individual/brand relationship.

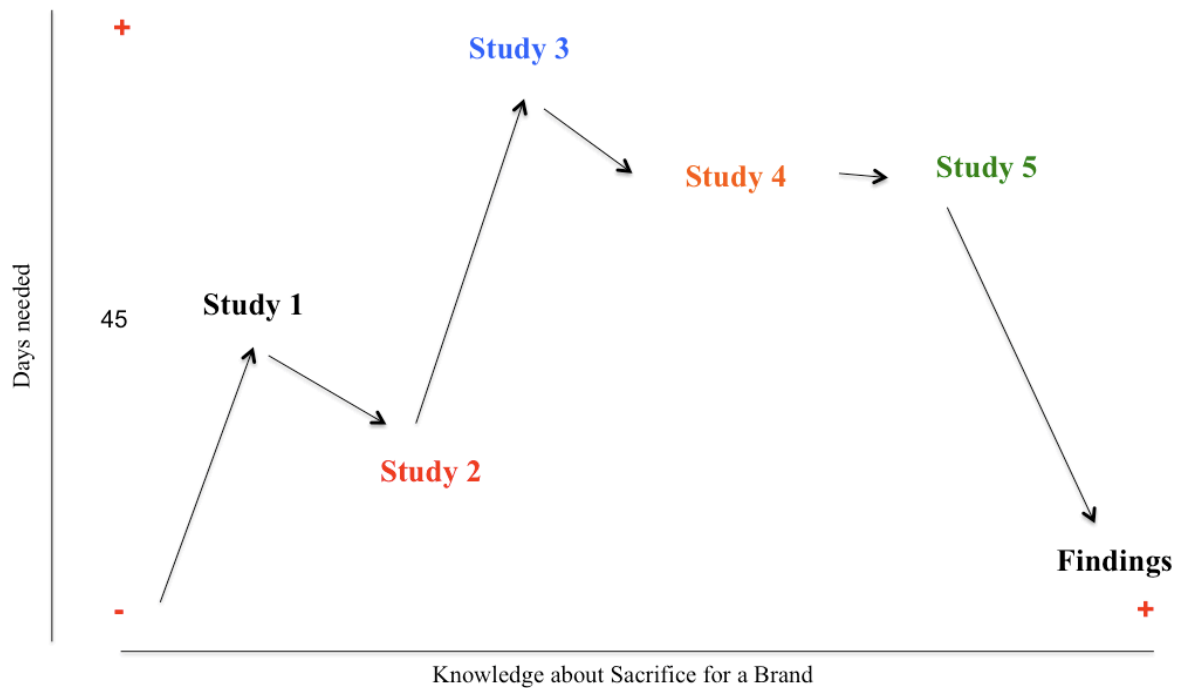
We use Grounded Theory, as it serves our purpose: to create theory where little knowledge exists in the areas referred to above. In the words of Goulding, 1999, p. 867): “Grounded Theory is used to generate theory where little is already known.”

The main objective of Grounded Theory is to make statements and conceptualizations about how those involved interpret and move in the actively constructed situation (Suddaby, 2006, p. 636). Grounded Theory method does not aim for any kind of “truth” but, by using empirical research, the aim is to understand and conceptualize what is going on. As stated by McCracken (1988 p. 25) “It is difficult to see which ideas “go” together in the mental universe of the respondent, or the “cultural” logic on which these ideas rest. For analytic purposes, it is necessary to capture not just ideas but also the context in which these ideas occur.” What is of interest in Grounded Theory is the relationships formed between the parties involved and, through them and their interactions, how the situation is constructed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Martin and Turner (1986) highlight that the best scenario for using Grounded Theory is when there are no explicit hypotheses to be tested or when these are so abstract that they cannot be tested in a logical way; this would be the ideal scenario where, without previous explanations, researchers must, in the words of Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 1) “discover theory from data” (Suddaby, 2006, p. 636). It must not be forgotten that “what is important

in Grounded Theory is that the conceptual categories, after the data analysis process, are well rooted in the data and arise from the original research question. (Suddaby, 2006, p. 638).

**Fig. 09. Timing for each study.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

Although Grounded Theory methodology in marketing began to be used more consistently from the late 90s – the author being a prolific researcher on the subject, examples of other researchers with work in marketing are shown, as well as the areas most associated with the study of Grounded Theory, from sociology to organizational studies (Goulding, 2005). In his 2005 work, comparing three qualitative strategies (Grounded Theory, ethnography and phenomenology), Goulding (2005) concludes that the use of Grounded Theory, compared to other qualitative methodologies, especially all its potential concerning the prediction of some components of behaviour, is still confined to “experiential consumer behaviour” (Goulding, 2005, p. 295). So in this investigation we will use Grounded Theory methodology rather than phenomenological or ethnographic methodology.

As in qualitative research the three methodologies considered as basic are phenomenology, ethnography, and grounded theory (Kahlke, 2014), the so-called “big three” (Richards & Morse, 2012), we will deal briefly with the first two.

**Phenomenology.** Our research is not phenomenologic as our aim is to have a vast, wide and complex set of concepts, rather than concentrating on the interviewees’ experiences (Goulding, 2002). As in phenomenology, we do not want to emphasize the interviewees’ way of life and their subjective experiences, but instead be aware of the degree of abstraction we can acquire from these experiences in order to formulate theory and have a causal relationship between the parties involved (Suddaby, 2006). Finally, “phenomenology has its own unique characteristics and philosophy which may be beneficial in terms of theory building based around lived experiences (Goulding, 2005, p. 304), where the spoken word is of vital importance in that it describes reality.

**Ethnography.** Nor is it ethnographical, as this implies the researcher will spend too much time in the field, “prolonged direct contact”, one of the characteristics distinguishing ethnography (Goulding, 2005, p. 299). Besides the information provided by interviewees, ethnography also aims to understand the cultural and/or social aspect and their structural patterns of functioning, i.e., in addition to the “merely cognitive, behavioural or affective” (Arnould, 1998, p. 86).

Therefore, in this study which intends to find out why a consumer makes sacrifices for a brand, we use Grounded Theory, following Goulding (2002) as:

- . we want to contribute to constructing a theory where there is little knowledge, as in CBR, in the relationship between an individual and a brand, much remains to be clarified regarding sacrifice;

- . we use a holistic, global and complex methodology, which incorporates a variety of sources (interviews, observations, memos), to study the phenomenon in question;

- . we use a methodology that lets the researcher apply a great number of theories transversal to various disciplines to analyze and explain the data that will stimulate the theory.

### 6.2.1 - Origins of Grounded Theory

The Grounded Theory method, like most difficult subjects, should be understood from a holistic perspective. As a methodology, Grounded Theory “emerged from the discipline of sociology, an area of enquiry that is focused on society and the individual” (Goulding, 2005, p. 297).

The methodology was developed by two sociologists, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss to combat the extreme positivism spreading in social research (Suddaby, 2006). From joint research in a hospital with terminally ill patients, the book *Awareness of Dying* appeared, originating the theory later known as Grounded Theory, in which the method of constant data comparison is used. Glaser and Straus (1967) refute the idea that scientific truth emerges independently from external reality (Suddaby, 2006).

So Grounded Theory is a systematic methodology which, through data analysis, promotes the discovery of theory (Martin & Turner, 1986). It is one of the most suitable methodologies when the aim is to understand the process by which those involved construct meanings and symbolism through a personal and subjective experience (Suddaby, 2006).

Grounded Theory is above all created as “a practical approach to help researchers understand complex social processes” (Suddaby, 2006, p. 638), its origin being in “symbolic interactionism, a paradigm which holds that individuals engage in a world that requires reflexive interaction as averse to environmental response” (Goulding, 2005, p. 295). It is an interpretative process, where the investigator has special importance in researching and collecting data.

*“Grounded Theory is an interpretive process that depends upon the sensitivity of a researcher to tacit elements of the data or meanings and connotations that may not be apparent from a mere superficial reading of denotative content”*(Suddaby, 2006, p. 639).

**The importance of the interpretive process.** The focus on the interpretative process is therefore crucial in how the investigation is carried out. For Gephart (2004), this should have an interpretative process, and in the context of an effective reality, should analyze the origin of symbolisms, meanings and concepts that individuals use in their lives, aspects which are adopted as something real and have true influence in the objective world; the interpretative researcher should subsequently study how those symbolisms, meanings and concepts are created and sustained in everyday life.

Despite being flexible with regard to data, according to Goulding (2005), for the theory to be considered effective, it is necessary to use theoretical sampling (a process through which theory is generated by coding and analyzing the data in question and what the next step should be: where to collect new data) and sampling saturation (when there are no new data, giving way to a repetition of known ideas and concepts).

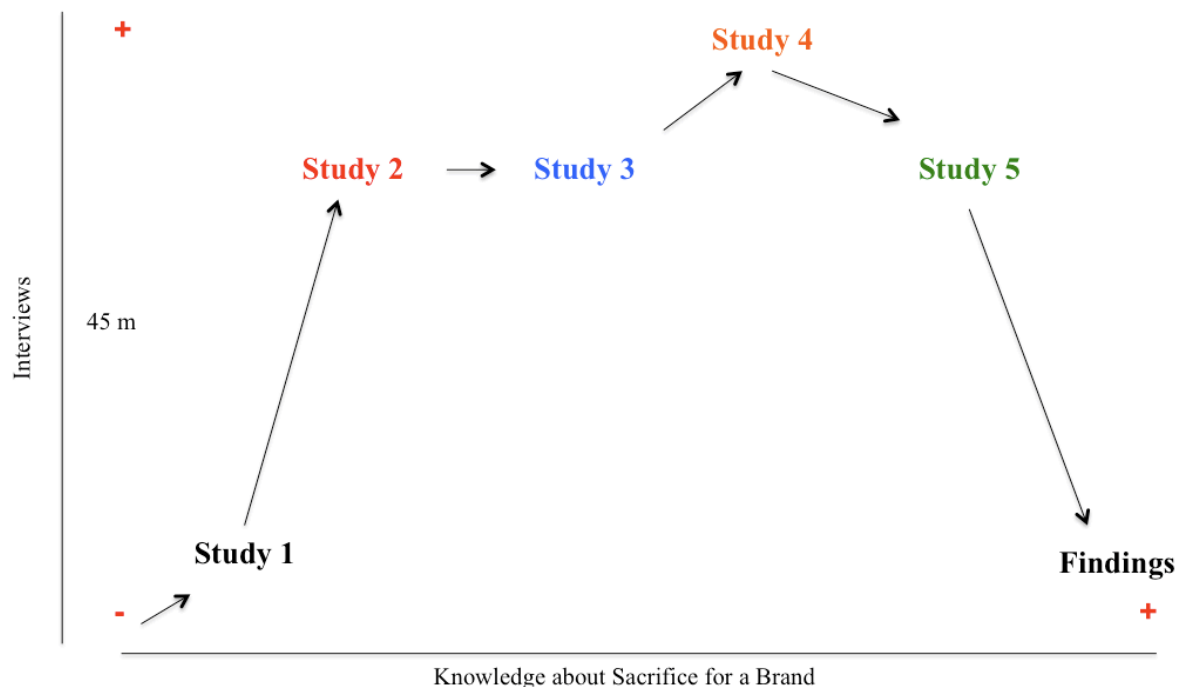
As Suddaby (2006) mentions, this data analysis, carried out constantly and comparing them, requires a consistent relationship between the researcher and the place of research. Here, the researcher's characteristics are important, and two consequences emerge from this relationship: 1) the researcher should be well aware of his position in the research process, so as not to bias information or limit the data to his view of the world; 2) due to a lower barrier between the researcher and the research context, the quality of research produced is directly linked to the quality of the contact established between the researcher and the place of research (Suddaby, 2006).

One of the most important aspects for using Grounded Theory in this work has to do with the symbolism and interlinking between its various elements. As Goulding (2005, p. 304) claims, "it is also a methodology particularly suited to situations that have a symbolic and, or, an interactional element to them" where the key is the fact of being "an interpretive process, not a logico-deductive one" (Suddaby, 2006, p. 638). Put simply, we do not want to "test or confirm existing theories" (Martin & Turner, 1986, p. 142) but rather, in the words of Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 1) to discover "theory from data".

## 6.2.2 - Glaser and Strauss Difference

Despite arising from a joint study by Glaser and Strauss (1967), the authors being equally important in developing the theory, over time there has been a different interpretation and orientation of the theory, something that which will not be alien to the origins of each and their respective research traditions, as defended by Locke (1996), with Glaser coming from Columbia University with a more formal tradition and quantitative methods, and Strauss coming from the University of Chicago with a strong tradition of observation in the field, intensive interviews and pragmatic theorization. Besides Glaser's focus "on rigorous positivistic methodological training, ... had also studied in Paris, where text analysis was a topic of interest to him", and Strauss, representing the traditional "Chicago School", through studying human beings in groups by direct observation in the field, focused "on symbolic interactionism, social processes, and pragmatism" (Hallberg, 2006, p. 42). Whereas Glaser uses a more open and flexible analytical procedure, "favoring creativity" (Suddaby, 2006, p. 638), Strauss (together with Juliet Corbin) tends to be more prescriptive and formal in elaborating his procedures (Locke, 2001, p. 64).

**Fig. 10. Duration of the interviews.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

**Quality.** Even although an open theory, Grounded Theory is made up of four quality criteria. Originally, Glaser and Strauss (1967) state in their work that these are: fit, work, relevance and modifiability. Later, Corbin and Strauss (1998) keep the four criteria, but as: fit, understanding, generality and control. The same authors define *fit* going back to the fact that the theory should be based on data generated in real-life contexts, where the researcher will collect data. In *understanding* in the sense this must be understandable to all participants in the research, making the latter clear in their eyes. The question of *generality* refers to the possibility of the research being applied in similar contexts. Finally, *control* in the sense that the researcher must handle and control the data appropriately following the course of action of the phenomenon under study. This last aspect takes on special importance due to the chaos generated by the data collected, as well as the very nature of the research, of which the investigator is a fundamental part.

**Theory.** As it is impossible to begin any research “with a blank slate” concerning the experiences and knowledge of the researcher himself, it is always necessary to set out from a formulated research question and a minimum of theory (Suddaby, 2006). And so, due to the above inference and our own understanding, the research question was duly formulated, with us wanting to find out *what makes a consumer sacrifice to be with his brand* as well as a review of the literature on sport and football, consumer brand relationship, investment model (due to the three hypotheses initially formulated), and sacrifice and the respective methodologies to use.

In the words of Bacharach (1989, p. 511), theories are no more than a “collection of constructs which are related to each other by propositions”. Regarding Grounded Theory, before the formal theory, there is a substantive theory. That is, the substantive theory is an antecedent of the formal theory. It comes from the field itself. Despite being a link to the formal theory, it does not intend to do more than explain what happens in fact in the field (Goulding, 2002), and is not only desirable but also usually necessary for the beginning of the formal theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 79). Therefore, formal theory is the consequence of formal or conceptual substantive theory, derived from comparison between

different contents (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), developing in areas of abstraction and generalization (Goulding, 2002). As mentioned by Suddaby (2006, p. 635):

*“Substantive theory is a strategic link in the formulation and generation of grounded formal theory.”*

Substantive theory, therefore, concerns operations in a specific, limited area, whereas formal theory has a wider scope of application, which as a rule leads to grounded theories being more directed towards “specific substantive areas and, therefore, most grounded theories are substantive theories” (Hallberg, 2006, p. 143).

**Theoretical sensitivity.** Another key aspect of Grounded Theory is theoretical sensitivity. Glaser (1978) used the term “theoretical sensitivity” to describe the essential tension between the mechanical application of technique and the importance of interpretive insight (Suddaby, 2006, p. 638). It basically concerns what the researcher feels regarding the phenomenon studied. Grounded Theory being about theoretical conceptualization of a concept, in the words of Corbin and Strauss (1990, p. 419)

*“Each researcher must tread a fine line between satisfying the suggested criteria and allowing procedural flexibility in the face of inevitable contingencies encountered during the life of an actual research project.”*

If Grounded Theory intends to look for conceptual relationships, this means the researcher must have a conceptual and non-concrete vision of the research environment (Corbin & Strauss, 1998). That is, in the complex creative process of theorizing (Glaser, 1978), the researcher must be sensitive to the data and understand that complexity, where nothing can be taken for granted, the researcher having to possess a set of characteristics that let him develop the research, such as: the capacity to devote himself to the project in question, sensibility towards words and behaviour in relation to the interviewees, the capacity for abstract thought, flexibility and openness to receiving criticism, the capacity to recognize possible bias and go back to reanalyze situations (Corbin & Strauss, 1998), among other important characteristics.

**Not perfect.** Although the Grounded Theory method is recommended as a “powerful way to collect and analyse data and draw meaningful conclusions” (Allan, 2003, p. 9), like any type of methodology, whether qualitative or quantitative (Suddaby, 2006) it has “some potential weaknesses” (Parry, 1998, p. 95), and all the more so as it is a methodology “in a relative infancy as a research instrument” (Kempster & Parry, 2011, p. 106).

Concerning the validity of Grounded Theory, it must be borne in mind that this methodology with interpretivist criteria cannot be assessed with the same criteria as positivist methodologies (Parry, 1998). Not only does it have different philosophical perspectives (Corbin & Strauss, 1998), but as the ideal or correct does not exist, the process will develop in the course of the work. The context in which the research is done has to be closely related to the emerging data.

However, some authors making major use of Grounded Theory find some weaknesses, as is the case of Allan (2003), who, according to his own experience, states that they include: 1) the need for an experienced interviewer, 2) there may be some lack of rigour due to careless interview techniques and the introduction of bias, 3) identifying the key points in the great amount of data from the interviews, 4) there is no clearly defined coding process or mechanism, and finally 5) it is difficult to know when coding should end and when to finish the analysis.

Goulding (2002) considers time and financial aspects as negative (from the fact of being a methodology that requires reaching data saturation due to the very process). Another aspect also mentioned by Goulding (1999) is the difficulty of applying theory when the area in question already has a credible and solid empirical basis in the literature.

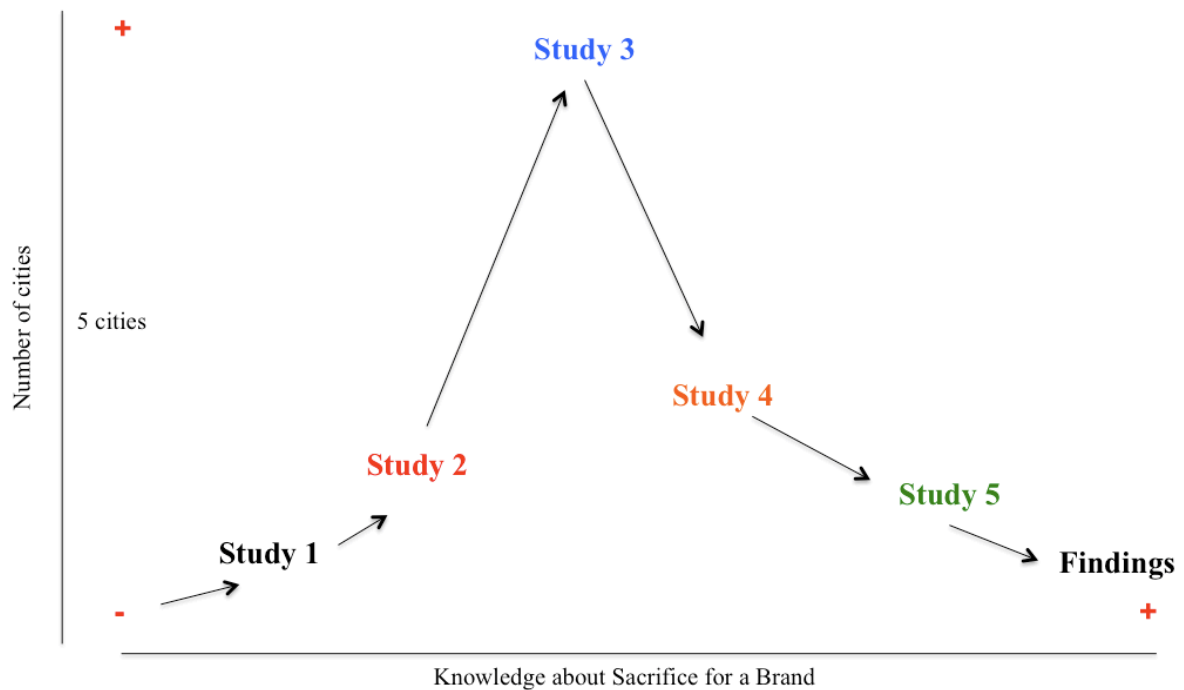
Nevertheless, despite these criticisms, Grounded Theory is used transversally (Gephart, 2004) with a set of guidelines to lead the investigation and interpret the data, which, even with the methodology’s inherent vicissitudes, gives a feeling of security in advancing with something unknown (Goulding, 2002).

### 6.3 - Research strategy

**Application of Grounded Theory.** As this research intends to construct a substantive theory in the context of a Portuguese consumer of a football club, it follows the Glaserian approach (Glaser, 1978) in data analysis. In “Theoretical sampling”, as the concepts are identified and defined, and as such, the theory begins to emerge, new interviewees (or situations or places) are incorporated in the research to strengthen the emerging results. In the words of Glaser (1978, p. 36) theoretical sampling is:

*“The process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyses the data and decides what data to collect next and where to find it, in order to develop the theory as it emerges. This process of data collection is 'controlled' by the emerging theory.”*

**Fig. 11. Number of cities where interviews were held.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

Next, we will explain how Grounded Theory was applied in this study. In order to make it more appealing and easier to explain, we will follow the advice of Woodside (2010, p. 41), that “people relate to each other in terms of stories” and we will use the form of storytelling from the researcher’s point of view for a better explanation of the actions carried out during the research process.

**Origins of research problem and key question.** The origins of this research begin to take shape very obviously in the academic year 2011-2012, in the subject of Consumer Behavior, part of the first year of the Ph.D. programme in Marketing and Strategy.

But if we reflect a little on the researcher’s past, the origins are in his life as a professional tennis player. The reason for a player only wanting to play with a certain brand of racket (losing money by not accepting proposals from other brands) is an example of something he has experienced; another, more recent one concerns the reason for having trainers of only one brand, clothes of another, trousers of another and so on. That is, what is the justification for losing money or not having a variety of equipment, in order to be loyal to one brand, even when spending more money?

During the research, it became apparent that overall concerning CBR, little had been written about sacrifice for a brand; in the field of psychology, concerning sacrifice, existing studies have essentially to do with the relationship between two people, and usually in loving relationships.

If in any research the way of asking is important (Corbin & Strauss, 1998), in our opinion the initial question is very important: what in fact do we want? The classical literature contains an example that seems appropriate for what we intend to explain. Carroll (2010, p. 69, 70) in his famous book “Alice in Wonderland” at one point of the story tells us that Alice is lost.

When speaking to the Cheshire cat, she asks him:

- *Tell me please, which is the path I should follow from here?*
- *That depends a lot on the place you want to go to – the Cat answered.*
- *It doesn't make much difference to me where – said Alice.*
- *So it makes no difference which way you go – said the Cat.*
- *Assuming that I'm going somewhere – Alice added, explaining herself better.*
- *Oh, you're certainly going there – said the Cat – if you walk far enough...*

Basically, what we want to know is:

- . in general, what leads a person to make sacrifices for a brand?
- . specifically, what leads a fan of FC Porto to make sacrifices for his club?

The next step was to identify a method which would let me set this in the research objectives and questions.

**Methodology on research question and objectives.** Selection of the methodology must naturally be in line with the objectives guiding the research (Corbin & Strauss, 1998; Goulding, 2002). Our intention is to study a phenomenon which is little studied, and as such, Grounded Theory seemed the most appropriate methodology. Considering the methodology chosen, the researcher's characteristics are fundamental (Fontana & Frey, 1994). For Merriam (2014, p. X):

*“The success of an interview depends on the nature of the interaction between the interviewer and the respondent and on the interviewer's skill in asking good questions.”*

So to carry out this work, we considered the following factors:

- . familiarity with the cultural aspects of the phenomenon and the research context (bearing in mind the author is Portuguese, has been a professional sportsman and is linked to sport in general and this sport in particular gives greater sensitivity about the subject), as well as the capacity to understand well the idiosyncrasies of this sport (Goulding, 2002);

. being able to do interviews and manage complex and difficult situations (not only the fact of having been a teacher for more than twenty years but also having interviewed some of the world's best tennis players for television gives greater knowledge of how to perform the task) (Fontana & Frey, 1994);

. being resistant, with the ability to put up with and understand the difficulties of research (having a first degree, two masters and four books published) (Suddaby, 2006).

Nevertheless, it seems important to follow religiously the advice of Suddaby (2006, p. 635): “constantly remind yourself that you are only human and that what you observe is a function of both who you are and what you hope to see”.

**Source of data.** The nature of Grounded Theory means the researcher must obtain data at an early stage of research. However, it is important that he is prepared to obtain data and prepared to carry out Grounded Theory. According to Goulding (2002, p. 56), Grounded Theory can be based on a single source or on a set of multiple sources such as secondary data, life stories, interviews, introspection, observation and memos. In our context, due to the shortage of information on the phenomenon under study, we use the multiple method of interviews, observations and memos.

Why do we interview? Knowing that in “qualitative interview studies there is no single right way” (Weiss, 1995. p. 56). The author himself describes the importance of interviews as follows:

*“We can learn about what people perceived and how they interpreted their perceptions. We can learn how events affected their thoughts and feelings. We can learn the meanings to them of their relationships, their families, their work, and their selves. We can learn about all the experiences, from joy though grief, that together constitute the human condition.”*(Weiss, 1995. p. 56).

However, we do not limit ourselves to interviews, as due to Woodside (2010, p. IX) we recognize “the limited ability of informants to accurately report their own (mostly unconscious) thinking and doing processes.” Observations and memos were also essential tools in carrying out the research.

So we also follow the orientations of Woodside (2010) and use:

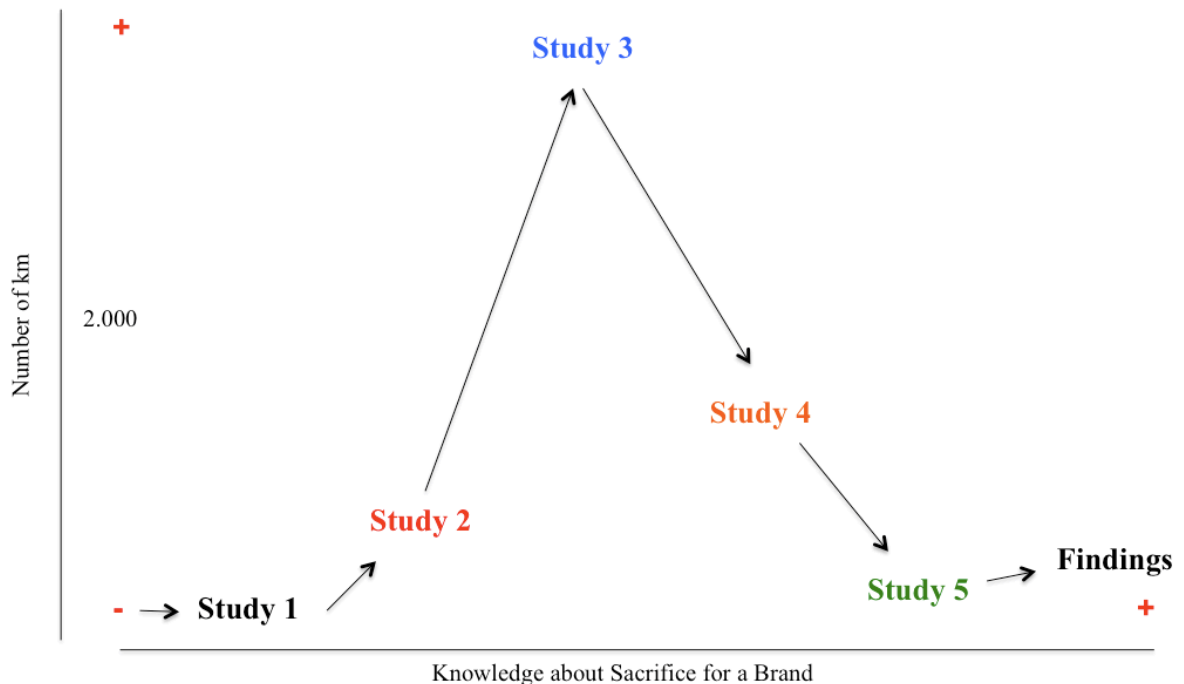
- . Dynamic designs: “go back to the field twice, thrice, and several times more if possible to see if informants’ predictions become reality” (Woodside, 2010, p. 400);
- . Context importance: “collecting data from multiple informants and for multiple contexts are both useful for confirming/refuting the accuracy of the findings and expand on understanding of the contingencies affecting outcomes uniquely for each context” (Woodside, 2010, p. 401);
- . Multiple person: “look for multiple-party participation and build theory to include the participation by multiple parties in case-study research projects” (Woodside, 2010, p. 404);
- . Satisfy decisions: “an optimal decision may not exist for a given decision-making context” (Woodside, 2010, p. 405);
- . Visual collection and interpretation: “humans first communicate visually” (Woodside, 2010, p. 407).

## 6.4 - The process

**Theoretical sampling.** Throughout the research, the investigator has to be prepared to quickly understand what is happening and make a systematic reconfiguration of the way of seeing the world, even when this has nothing to do with his own way of seeing it or if nothing is indicated in the literature; with this behaviour, the subject of analysis should therefore determine the categories, relationships and assumptions that the interviewee has regarding the world and especially the topic studied (McCracken, 1988, p. 42). Theoretical sampling is one of the features distinguishing Grounded Theory from other qualitative methods.

*“It is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45).*

**Fig. 12. Number of Km made for the interviews.**



Source: own elaboration.

Grounded Theorists should remain open and not be chained to pre-conceived concepts and frameworks, being receptive to concepts emerging during data collection (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978; Goulding, 2002). Although in Grounded Theory, data collection and analysis are made simultaneously (Suddaby, 2006), in order to better explain the process in the thesis, we discuss these aspects separately.

For the research, our first concern was who to interview. If we wanted to have an idea of what happened in the fan and begin to form a list of contacts, it was essential to speak to people to some extent inside the phenomenon to be able to acquire reliable information.

The example of the motorist who drives from Porto to Lisbon on the motorway is symptomatic. Over approximately 300 km separating Portugal's two largest cities, he drives past scores of advertising hoardings. How many does he remember at the end of the journey? Few or none at all, a sign that the effectiveness of advertising is nil. What we mean is that the distance or the number of possible requests is not important; what matters is that they are valid. "Not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that can be counted counts" and this is the great difficulty. This was one of the major concerns from the outset: Who to speak to? Why? With what justification?

Due to this research being made up of five studies carried out over thirteen months, the fact of using Grounded Theory methodology and also what it is and who the author is (a Ph.D. thesis and himself a mere student), the way of presenting the studies will be from a more "mainstream" perspective, with separation of data collection and data analysis and subsequent brief explanation of them in each study.

Each study is presented according to the following scheme:

. a figure defines its objectives, the results obtained and the process by which the study was carried out: what people, why, where they came from, who left or entered in the course of the study, among others;

. a brief summary of data collection and data analysis in particular of the study in question, above all to be more accurate.

The following section presents the data collection and data analysis used in the research, together with interpretation of the data and the author's own position regarding the research, ending with aspects such as the validity, reliability and methodological limitations of the research.

#### **6.4.1 - Data collection**

Besides literature, we used interviews, observations, photographic data and memos. We will now explain what each form of data collection consists of and how it was used in the research. Collecting evidence can follow various paths, such as: documents, archive records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts (Yin, 1994). Interviews and observations are dominant (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Golafshani, 2003), but it is worth remembering that "as in other qualitative approaches, the data for a Grounded Theory can come from various sources" always seeking "anything that may shed light on the area of questions under study" (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 419).

**Interviews.** We use interviews, as "face to face social interaction is the most regularly experienced social reality" (Collins & Cooper, 2014, p. 89). Interviews "give us access to the observation of others", through them "we can learn about places we have not been" as well as interviews being a very good way to obtain information "about the nature of social life and about people's interior experiences" (Weiss, 1995, p. 55). Different types of interviews exist. Goulding (2002, p. 59) refers to group interviews, face-to-face or telephone interviews, unstructured or more realistic semi-structured interviews.

"Interviewing has a wide variety of forms and a multiplicity of uses" (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 361) and "the most common type of interviewing is individual, face-to-face verbal interchange, but it can also take the form of face-to-face group interviewing, mailed or self-administered questionnaires, and telephone surveys." According to Yin (1994)

interviews can take different forms: spontaneous (the possibility of asking about facts or for an opinion or interpretation of matters and events), focal (short period of time) and formal (more structured interview), and may even be by telephone (Weiss, 1995).

For Fontana and Frey (1994), interviews can be structured, semistructured, or unstructured. Focus groups are no more than joining a number of people interested in the subject, and openly and spontaneously, led by a mediator, discussing a given topic or concept (Shiu, Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2009).

We carried out telephone interviews, in-depth interviews and fomed focus groups. Telephone interviews served as the basis for our research (Weiss, 1995). Coming directly from the field, they gave us a first insight into the subject, and we could begin to draw up a list of fans to interview in depth. In-depth interviews are the core of our research, as the “first objective of the qualitative interview is to allow respondents to tell their own story in their own terms. (McCracken, 1988, p. 34).

The reason for interviews, especially in-depth interviews, being a much used model has to do with the fact that “the long interview is a method that selects informants who are representative of unique sub-populations using pre-qualification” (Woodside, 2010, p. 264). McCracken (1988), creator of the long interview (lasting up to eight hours, but contemplating shorter interviews, such as one hour), observes:

*“The long interview gives us the opportunity to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves. The applications of such an instrument are, of course, endless. ... it is useful because it can help us to situate these numbers in their fuller social and cultural context”* (McCracken, 1988, p. 9).

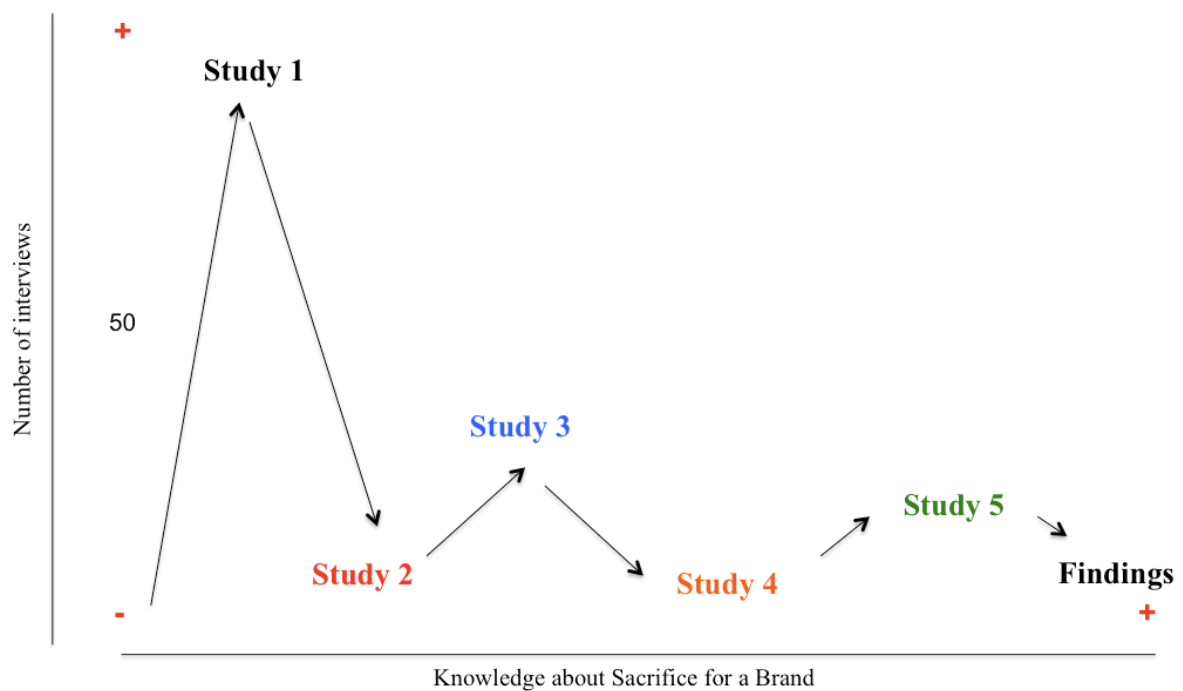
We use focus groups not only as a way to validate the previous study but also to delimit the characteristics of the final study we wanted to make. Focus groups “is the most popular qualitative research method (Shiu, Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2009, p. 175) and are useful “particularly when respondents promise to be more forthcoming with the stimulus or the

safety of a group of fellow respondents” (McCracken, 1988, p. 28). They can also be used to identify specific hidden information requirements and to provide data for better understanding of results from other qualitative studies (Shiu et al., 2009).

Bearing in mind the characteristics of this research, we understand that “focus groups and in-depth interviews would be an appropriate follow-up procedure to identify what motivates this particular group” (Shiu et al., 2009, p. 170).

Concerning the transcription of interviews, in each interview, in the memos, we noted words and expressions we considered interesting and the moment they occurred. After each interview, the memos noted were kept and a general summary was made of a maximum of five lines of the interview.

**Fig. 13. Interviews made.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

Afterwards, the interview was transferred from the recording to paper, making a complete transcription of each interview. Although it had been our intention to do what Weiss (1995) proposes, i.e., transcribe only what was needed (thinking in terms of cost and time), we then had a doubt: how much is that? Therefore, we followed the advice of McCracken (1988) and the interviews were carried out by someone else due to the extent of the work. We subsequently moved to word-by-word analysis for analysis and interpretation. At that time, we had possession of the memos and reviewed them together with the interview.

The world of football, even among fans, is a very complicated one. Complex, hermetic, little given to major changes. And extremely emotional. Initially, everyone is willing to converse, knows people with the characteristics we are looking for and shows complete willingness to converse and/or help. But in fact, once in the field, things are different. Many of the people who are available have no interest in the content, they mix up topics, articulate ideas badly, arrange a time and then do not turn up or do not answer the phone. Some indicate people who later do not want to be identified as liking football a lot. Most of these problems occurred in the first study. In that study, it was our concern, through people who make sacrifices for football, to speak to people with the same degree of concern but in relation to the club. We had great difficulty, with many telephone calls cut off. Or postponed, and postponed yet again. The success rate was 55%, very low considering the people contacted were already pointed out as people with the characteristics we were looking for and many of them had been told by the person who provided the contact that we would call. In each interview, as it progressed, we noted the words considered to characterize the interviewee. When it was over, a maximum of five lines were written about the interview. If in the course of the interview, it seemed very important, the interviewee was asked at the end whether he would be willing, if necessary, to speak again, but face-to-face. Some people suggested others who should be interviewed. All the interviews were held over the telephone, with the researcher being in his office or car. It became clear that being a football fan was something completely unknown regarding the intensity and complexity of emotions and feelings transmitted, besides the whole set of obligatory actions the fan was subject to.

The need was felt to speak to people who, although linked to the football world, were on another level, another scale. The aim was to understand better how important, how influential, how immense football can be in people's lives. So in Study two, the experts spoken to were extremely helpful. The data obtained from the interviews were not limited to the superficial or the obvious, focusing on such central aspects of life in society as life itself, democracy, the importance of the media in current society and a zone "beyond knowledge". Other concepts arose, more from inside to outside, which were to be confirmed as extremely important in interviewees' subsequent declarations in other studies, particularly Study three. In these interviews it was a delight to listen, such was the degree of knowledge, the explanation of ideas and knowing how to transmit a situation in which the author had always been present without realizing this: the importance of football in people's lives. Study three begins to define exactly what was sought: discovering what the fan feels for his club, throughout the country. Is it the same to be a fan of FC Porto in Porto and in Faro? This study gives valuable indications about what it is to be a fan and the importance of this condition and its consequences. But something was still felt to be lacking. Pieces are missing before being sure that the path ends here. Throughout Study three it was clear that, although there is no thermometer of intentions – or an "intensometer" – fans do not all experience the club in the same way, and the geographical question is fundamental. In addition, fans themselves make a separation among themselves (according to who has most credibility as a true supporter) and there are even people who do not want the club to have supporters from areas that are not close to the city of Porto.

So the need for Study four arises. If regarding the topics that emerged in Study three their importance seemed assured and their validation was no more than confirmation of that importance, the same cannot be said about the certainties regarding who to interview in a new study. This was perhaps the most complex, most demanding study and the one most difficult to carry out, because of its conceptualization, its different locations, gathering a number of people at the same time and place (and what arose from previous studies and while carrying it out), but above all because it was Study four that defined for the first time a set of objective criteria to know who to interview. And this took a long time to construct. But it was achieved, and it was this study that clarified the doubt as to what study to perform next. The one which would be the final study, Study five.

It was Study five that, through a much tighter inclusion criterion, joined fans who, in the light of the other studies made, would be most indicated to give the most authentic information possible on why sacrifices are made for a brand, in this case a football club. The knowledge obtained throughout all these studies allowed a rate of 100% of the fans we wished to speak to and with whom we effectively did this. Among other aspects, the human factor was certainly fundamental for the total success of this study, at least regarding the presence of the interviewees: because they were indicated and contacted, in the researcher's presence, by whom he had already interviewed, and also because between the initial contact and the interview, they had been contacted them by phone, to show interest and the desire for the interviewees' participation in the study. And that made all the difference.

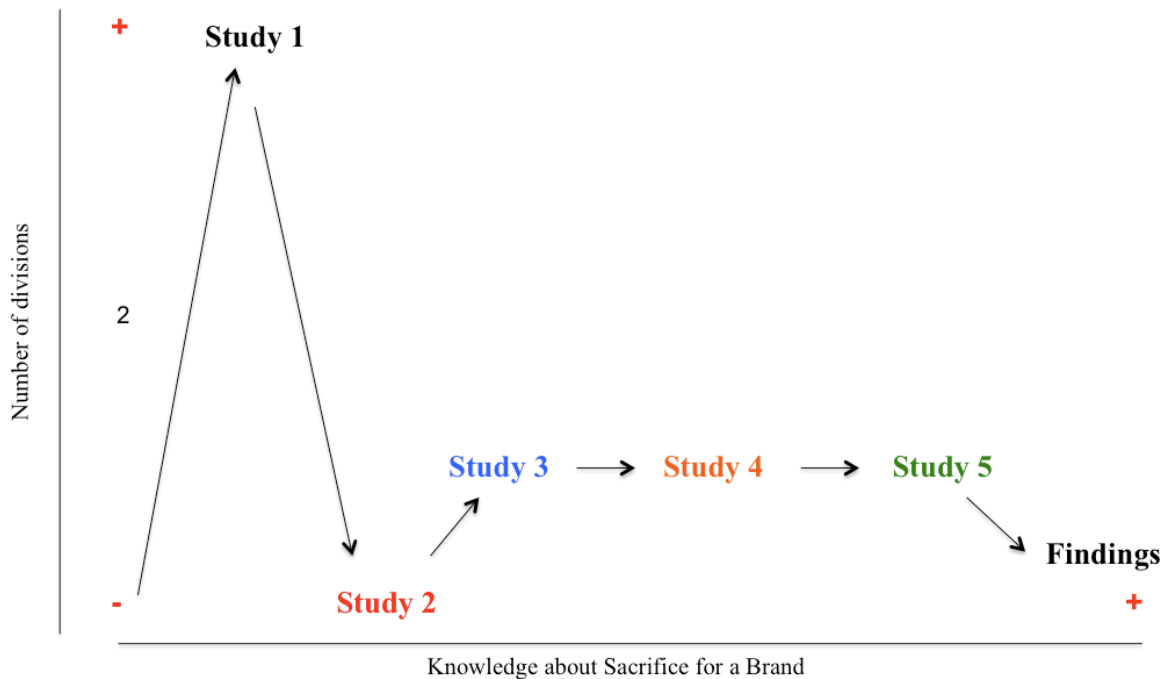
If we could summarize the factors which were important for carrying out this research (in all the studies overall), we could say that, among others: the people knew who the researcher was, that he was authentic, had a football club, had travelled for that purpose, had written books about tennis, spoken on television, was a Porto supporter and had the energy of a "dragon"... Obviously, the confidence developed between interviewer and interviewee (Fontana & Frey, 1994), the fact of recognizing what the researcher does, his past and his concern about speaking to them; above all, how they had been reached, i.e., someone had recommended them, which strengthened the researcher's credibility and indicated his attempts to speak to people who were really important in carrying out this work. The natural cultural affinity and the fact of sharing significant experiences between interviewer and interviewee (Barnes, 1996), the fact of knowing the researcher could understand what they feel also helped in this research. Constant analysis and reflection about the researcher himself in the course of each study – a subjective examination of his inner being or 'introspection' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is another factor contributing to the success of this research.

However, to summarize a single factor, the most important of all was how from the outset the researcher presented himself and how, with the studies completed, in their presentation he showed what he had done and what the aims were. That presentation, which summarized who the researcher was, what he wanted to do, what he had done and what he intended, was central to the success of this research.

*“The decision of how to present oneself is very important, because after one’s presentational self is “cast”, it leaves a profound impression on the respondents and has great influence on the success (or failure) of the study” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 367).*

Although the interviews were the major source of data, they were not the only ones.

**Fig. 14. Number of divisions of the clubs of the interviewees.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

**Observations.** Observations are something we make in everyday life as elements of society (Adler & Adler, 1994), and in the case of this study they are a powerful tool to learn, in natural contexts, how a fan behaves and acts in real life (Woodside, 2010). Multiple observations were made (Adler & Adler, 1994) in order to confirm if what was seen was repeated, even through the fan’s own self-awareness by the fact of knowing he was under observation. Various FC Porto matches were attended, both home and away, and games were watched between teams in the second division and the regional division. An annual meeting of FC Porto fans was attended, which was unofficial as FC Porto has no part in any. Two FC Porto supporters’ clubs in the country were visited to find out the situation of fans who do not live near their club. The researcher was in the houses of

interviewees, met their families, saw many of their prized souvenirs such as tickets, photos, scarves, etc. He met members of his family, meeting up with a childhood friend he had not seen for more than twenty five years. Meals were shared with some of them, one particularly memorable in a clandestine restaurant. In all these actions, validity was sought (Adler & Adler, 1994) in the sense that nobody could confirm what was been observed. For that reason, for this research to be reliable, the researcher was in different places, in different conditions throughout the process (Goulding, 2002). Directly with those participating in the study, videos were never used nor photographs taken of them during the observation procedures. Only when considering everything had finished, if deemed interesting, were participants asked for a photograph as a souvenir. Naturally, memos were written as a complement of collecting data.

**Photographic data.** Images are everywhere in society (Banks, 2008). The photograph is a way of documenting research and “in academic research photography is not a novel approach” (Castleden & Garvin, 2008, p. 1395), being a commonly used method in social sciences. Collier, Jr. (1957) was the first to use photographs systematically to provoke narrative during interviews (Cappello, 2005). For Collier Jr. (1957), photos can be used in two ways: firstly, so that the interviewee can tell us show he interprets the photo; secondly, as part of a document, supporting the results obtained and respective conclusions.

The interviewees were shown photos during the interviews in Studies three, four and five, and photos were taken on visits to stadiums and supporters’ clubs and of fans’ souvenirs, including on trips abroad. Although the thesis will be presented in Portugal where there is some sensitivity to the football factor, the photos serve to illustrate even more what in fact a brand (club) means for a consumer (fan).

**Memos.** Memos are an integral part of Grounded Theory, the “core stage” of the methodology (Glaser, 1998), “one of the appeals of Grounded Theory is that it allows for a wide range of data, the most common of which are in-depth interviews, observations, and memos” (Goulding, 2005, p. 297). Written during the research process, memos are no more than a bank of ideas, which can be revisited whenever necessary in the course of the research (Goulding, 2002), giving more density to the theory created and originality to the

concepts generated (Goulding, 2005). It is a practice of introspection (Glaser, 1998), which ensures a direction is maintained throughout the research with regard to theory development (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978). They were used intensively and extensively throughout the research process (interviews, observations and literature review).

**Literature.** The literature was an inevitable form of data (Corbin & Strauss, 1998), as Grounded Theory is not abstracted from previously existing theory, and the literature review was important in helping to develop theory creation. For McCracken (1988, p. 31), constant use of the literature during data analysis gives more robust theory:

*“Literature reviews are not simple exercises in idea collection. They are also critical undertakings in which the investigator exercises a constant skepticism. They are, in fact, a kind of qualitative analysis.”*

Constant reference to the literature is a structuring condition of the grounded theorist, not only for better interpretation of the data but also to establish connections between the meanings and theoretical concepts (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Although it is not consulted exhaustively before the data research itself, it is still a fundamental part of the process, as “it is consulted as part of an iterative, inductive and interactional process of data collection, simultaneous analysis, and emergent interpretation” (Goulding, 2005, p. 296). The literature review was naturally an indispensable source in the research process.

#### **6.4.2 - Data analysis**

Throughout the process the literature was always used to link ideas conceptually (Goulding, 2002). The procedure was to define for each study a set of objectives and some results to be obtained. Those results were analyzed based on each study *per se*, according to the results obtained, the respective literature review and the context in which they emerged. Each category that emerged in each study was due to what was done in that study, with the preceding study/studies being naturally relevant (considering here that before Study 1 there was a literature review). The fact of being a detailed and complex process makes the task more difficult.

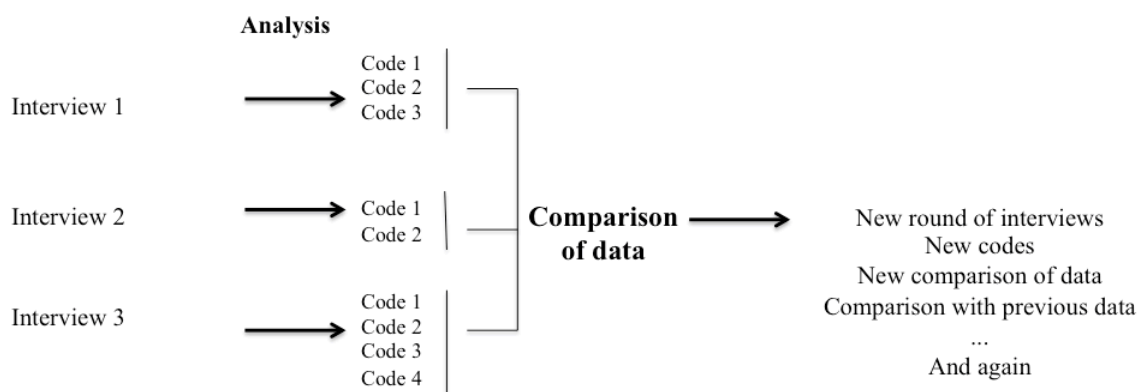
*“However, in order to fully utilise the method, there must be recognition that it is time-consuming, often frustrating, and because of its nature, frequently takes the research in a number of different directions before a plausible theory starts to emerge. This requires patience, an open mind, and flexibility” (Goulding, 1999, p. 19).*

Despite all the help provided by computer programs, nothing can replace the human being in the direction and orientation to give the research.

*“The researcher is considered to be an active element of the research process, and the act of research has a creative component that cannot be delegated to an algorithm. Qualitative software programs can be useful in organizing and coding data, but they are no substitute for the interpretation of data. The researcher must make key decisions about which categories to focus on, where to collect the next iteration of data and, perhaps most importantly, the meaning to be ascribed to units of data” (Suddaby, 2006, p. 638).*

**The process used.** First, the paper version of each interview was read, underlining everything considered interesting. Then categories were defined, giving each one a colour. While they were read, the memos made were consulted, cross-checking what had been noted down, the transcription and the researcher’s memory (see fig. 15). Next, each interview was summarized, according to the categories. Only after these steps were computer programs used. Study 1 used Atlas Ti and the others, NVivo.

**Fig. 15. Constant comparison of data.**



Source: own elaboration.

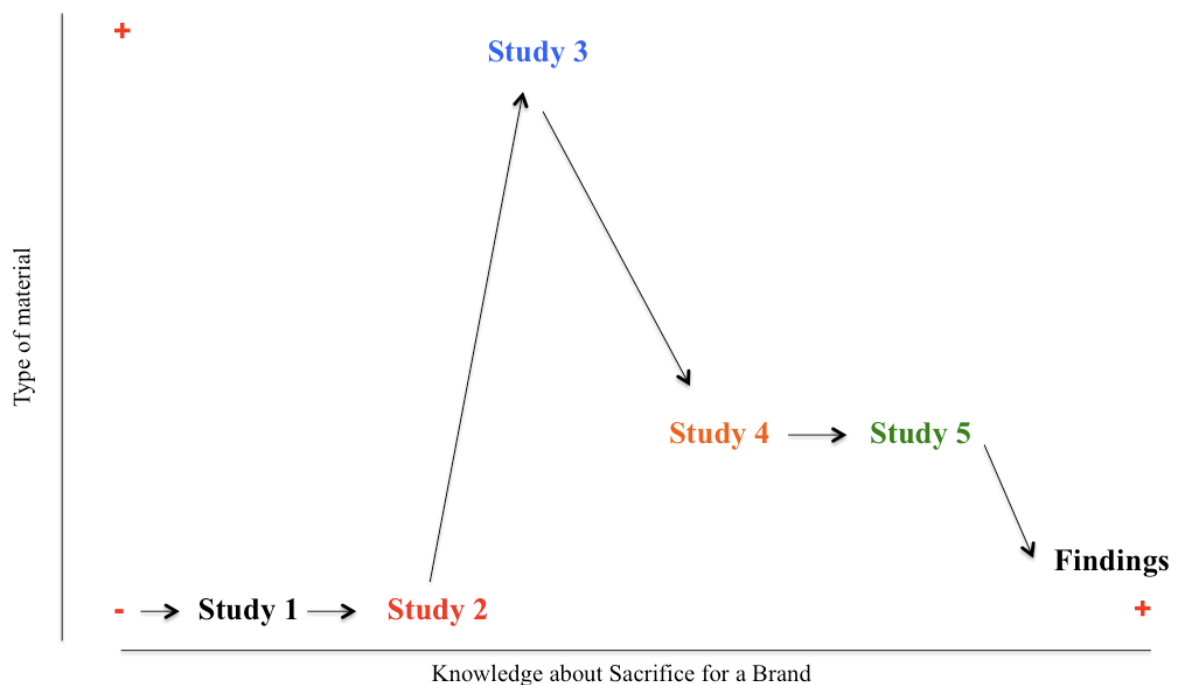
Despite having everything organized on paper, none of that knowledge was used, besides memory, when starting to work on the computer program. That is, on the program, everything found interesting was selected and placed on the respective nodes and sub-nodes. Once this was done, the degree of congruence was checked against what was written on paper. If it was the same (or similar), it was left. If it was different, we reflected on how it should be in the final version of this first analysis. Then we asked for advice and gave it to people to read. Only after getting advice and re-reading what we had were the final categories of each study defined.

Accustomed as the researcher is to managing a business (sport) where, despite there being a defined strategy, the tactic to apply depends greatly on what happens on the ground, on a daily basis, in fact nothing had prepared him for this situation. Not even the fact of having written four books prepared him for the task of completing a Ph.D. And that is stated with all due modesty. It is discouraging, frustrating and highly complex work. The fact of not being able to convey one's ideas to paper led to moments of great demotivation. To gain a clearer idea of how everything was set up and its process, the researcher had drawing classes, training in NVivo and did a course in design thinking, hoping this would help him in designing the conceptualization of everything he was doing, the objectives, difficulties, who would fall by the wayside and finally what the results achieved would be. The drawing part was like taking out teeth: it hurt before, in anticipation, and during the action. There was an awareness of what had been done and what had been achieved, but there was great difficulty in transmitting this to paper.

The researcher is able to disconnect and think only about what he needs after x hours or on the following day. However, similarly to the process when playing tennis professionally and in competitions, he never completely left the work spirit, remaining with this abstract idea. Towards the end, for many months he fell asleep and woke up with this cloud over his head. The great difference from the competitive process is that in the case of the Ph.D. it lasts much longer and is much more asymmetrical regarding the emotions. During the day, he passed from euphoria to depression on many occasions, something that is impossible in competition if we want a chance of winning and to continue competing. In addition, in

competition, it is not usual to compete for more than 4-5 weeks consecutively and even during this period, there are moments of total relaxation. Not so with the Ph.D., which is always present, although in this case not as a “burden” but as a responsibility, which one needs to connect to on time, something almost latent. It is like radio waves, always in the air. It is only a question of turning on the radio and you hear music. For the researcher, the final months of the Ph.D. process were like that. Moreover, this researcher finds it quite easy to define objectives, visualize the process and define a time to carry it out. In the case of the Ph.D., he reveals his complete inability to fulfill what was planned. In no situation, even devoting more time than supposed necessary to perform the task did he manage to achieve this. It always took longer than planned, giving an idea of how complex research is. Theory development requires density but also the transversal nature of concepts. Plus time and mental disposition. Despite being an “organic process” (Suddaby, 2006, p. 634), in the course of the research the analytical process was made up of the following stages: open coding, axial coding and core categories.

**Fig. 16. Type of material included to support the interviews.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

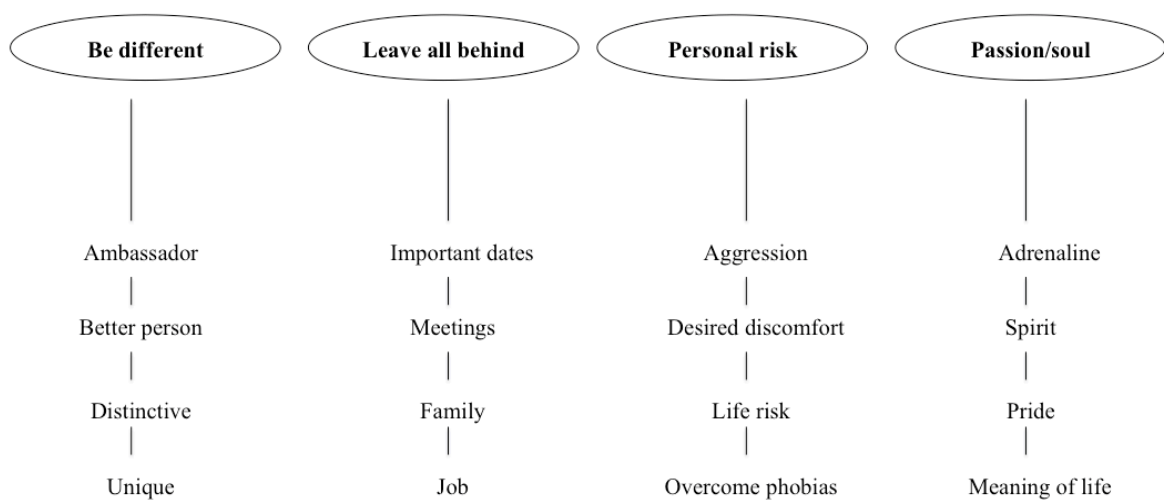
**Open coding.** “Is the interpretive process by which data are broken down analytically” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 423). Line by line, relevant units were formed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Codes with potential relevance were identified (Goulding, 2002). Through constant comparison, the data were reduced to units of greater meaning (Goulding, 2002). Concepts were identified, holding on to the most consistent ones, with greater explanatory power, more support in the literature and which were felt to be most identified with the memos already noted down, in fact “how well data fit conceptual categories identified by an observer (Suddaby, 2006, p. 634). “The purpose of open coding is to help the analyst gain new insights into the data by breaking through standard ways of thinking about (interpreting) phenomena reflected in the data (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 423). Axial coding followed.

**Axial coding.** This emerges when we move to a higher level of abstraction, trying to find theoretical relationships between concepts so as to be able to develop theory. “Axial coding categories are related to their subcategories, and these relationship tested against data” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 423). The properties of each concept, how they inter-connect, as Suddaby (2006, p. 634) states, “how well the categories explain or predict ongoing interpretations”.

**Selecting core categories and theory building.** “Identification of a core category is central” (Hallberg, 2006, p. 143). “Selective coding is the process by which all categories are unified around a central “core” category and categories that need further explanation. The core category represents the central phenomenon of the study” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 424). It is when the emerging categories are clearly central and relevant (Suddaby, 2006), whether by their own strength or by the relationship they have with the others. A core category is able to relate the other categories, together giving a global logic representing “the main theme of the research” (Corbin & Strauss, 1998, p. 146). According to Goulding (2005, p. 297), “a core category pulls together all the concepts in order to offer an explanation of the phenomenon. It should have theoretical significance and should be traceable back through the data”.

For Jafari (2008, p. 175) a core category must have the following attributes: 1) it must be central inasmuch as the other categories are related to it; 2) appear frequently in the data, indicating the strength of the concept; 3) have a logical and consistent explanation regarding the relationship among categories, i.e., it is not the theory that is distorting the data; 4) the name or expression describing that central category is sufficiently abstract. In all the studies, this was the procedure. Example of Study one in fig. 17.

**Fig. 17. Core categories and subcategories.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

**Data interpretation.** There is usually no precise way to establish the criteria to interpret discoveries (Yin, 1994), and as such, multiple theories were used to interpret the data in the course of the study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). There are naturally techniques such as “some use of triangulation of methods and multiple informants is necessary to confirm and deepen information” (Woodside, 2010, p. 10). Nevertheless, we must consider the initial objective of the research and all the associated studies.

The initial objective was to find out what causes a consumer to make sacrifices for a brand. Each study was carried out with certain objectives and the respective data emerging from these were duly dealt with and analyzed, allowing the production of theory for each study *per se*, with each one, according to Corbin and Strauss (1998), having various concepts and

categories. Each study used as many theories as possible to explain the concepts and meanings concerning the interviewees' behaviour (Glaser, 1978). In a project of this nature, comparison data is a constant (Goulding, 2002). For each study, this process of interpretation, analysis and data collection was continued until a logical and plausible theory was formed, explaining what effectively happened in it (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Only then, the result of reflection and analysis (of that study, considering the knowledge meanwhile accumulated, whether through personal experience and the literature review – Study one, or adding to those factors the knowledge from subsequent studies – Study two to Study five, was a decision taken on what to do next. Care was taken to ensure it was the data that gave theory rather than fitting the theory to the data found, never forcing the testing of hypotheses (Suddaby, 2006) – an explanation that seems sufficiently authentic, as demonstrated by the various studies made. For this reason, the research concluded with Study five due to a theoretical saturation of the data (Corbin and Strauss, 1998), despite this saturation never appearing clearly in Grounded Theory. “Saturation is not always obvious, even to experienced researchers” (Suddaby, 2006, p. 639). We should always remember the words of Suddaby when he states that:

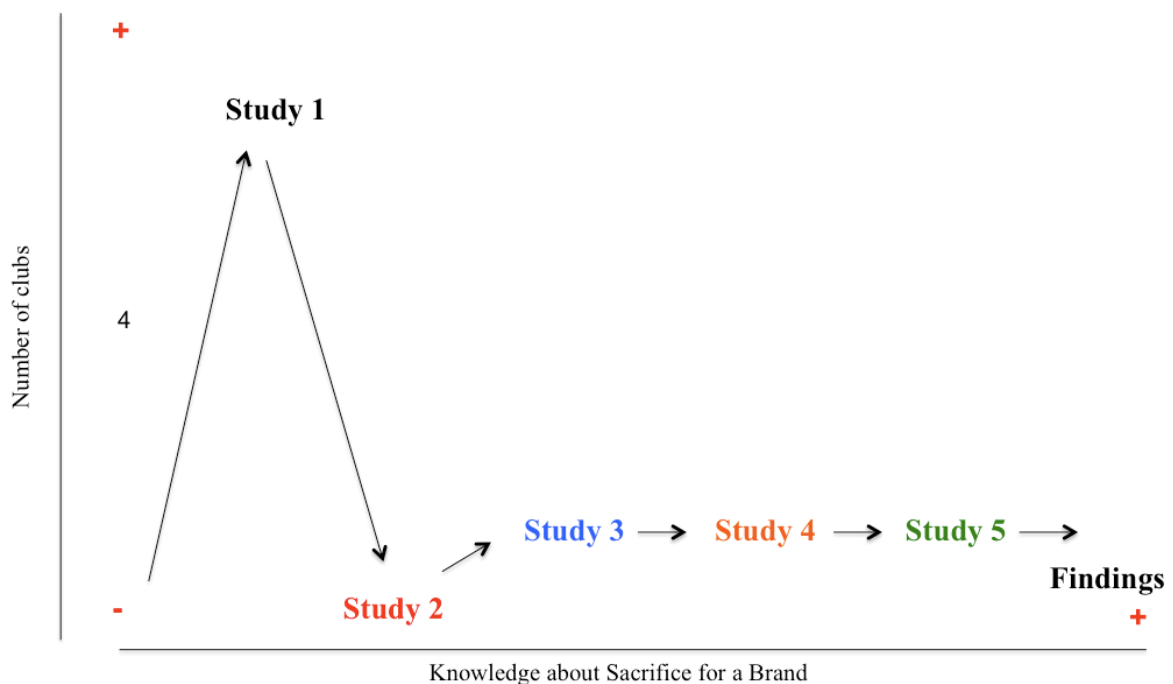
*“The seamless craft of a well-executed Grounded Theory study, however, is the product of considerable experience, hard work, creativity and, occasionally, a healthy dose of good luck. Many of the primary techniques of Grounded Theory research are developmental. That is, the quality of their application improves with experience”* (Suddaby, 2006, p. 639).

## **6.5 - Validity and reliability**

A paradigm is above all a way of seeing the world (Healy & Perry, 2000). In education there are always more paradigms and increasingly complex ones, with more thorough studies, and so education requires a new way of being in which it is “designed to give new researchers the opportunity to acquire skills” (Collins & Cooper, 2014, p. 91). Now, more than ever, qualitative methodologies are rooted in research, and are yet another method for creating knowledge and building theory. However, according to Corbin and Strauss (1990, p. 418), “qualitative studies (and their research proposals) are often judged by quantitatively-oriented readers”.

Although in its essence, Healy and Perry (2000, p. 118) stated that “the aim of much marketing research is to describe and explain complex, social science phenomena”, there are differences between qualitative and quantitative methodologies. As a concept, the term ‘reliability’ is used to assess quantitative research, but in general the term has been used in all types of research (Golafshani, 2003). However, considering the impossibility of a statistical application that allows generalization of what concerns each individual (Sharan B. Merriam, 1995), the use of ‘reliability’ and ‘validity’ tends to be seen as regarding the qualitative research paradigm, as according to Golafshani (2003, p. 597) “since reliability and validity are rooted in positivist perspective then they should be redefined for their use in a naturalistic approach”.

**Fig. 18. Number of clubs of the interviewees.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

In quantitative methodologies, in both research and analysis, there is a whole set of rules and procedures to solve difficult or problematic situations, even in the results obtained (Collins & Cooper, 2014). Consistency of action, stability and similarity of measures over time are three types of reliability identified in quantitative research (Kirk & Miller, 1986).

We can assume that in quantitative research, validity and reliability represent credibility; credibility in the case of qualitative methodologies depending on the capacities and efforts of the researcher (Golafshani, 2003).

Qualitative research Hallberg (2006, p. 141) “has its own specific fundamental procedures, techniques, and approaches for analysing the data and presenting the findings” with a common general guideline or “a primer” (Hoepfl, 1997, p. 1) for choosing qualitative research. In the social sciences, the very concept of reliability is complex as studying people and human behaviour, due to behaviour never being static, is not the same as studying inanimate subjects (Sharan B. Merriam, 1995). In as much as “qualitative research produces in-depth information with context-dependent facts” (Collins & Cooper, 2014, p. 99), listening to people and their stories requires emotional maturity on the part of the interviewer (based on very definite characteristics for data-collecting), the phenomena in question then being described in words (Collins & Cooper, 2014). Qualitative research:

*“assumes that reality is constructed, multidimensional, and ever-changing; there is no such thing as a single, immutable reality waiting to be observed and measured.”* (Merriam, 1995, p. 54)... *“Qualitative researchers are not seeking to establish “laws” in which reliability of observation and measurement are essential. Rather, qualitative researchers seek to understand the world from the perspectives of those in it”* (Merriam, 1995, p. 56).

**The message.** In general, “most empirical studies lead from theory to data (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 549). However “a positivism view is inappropriate when approaching a social science phenomenon like marketing networks, which involve humans and their real-life experiences” (Healy & Perry, 2000, p. 119). This is not our case and we are well aware of it (Collins & Cooper, 2014), the reason why we have to be sufficiently explicit and clear in what we do and present here, as for there to be an assessment, “qualitative methods, like their quantitative cousins, can be evaluated in terms of their canons and procedures only if these are made explicit” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 418).

It is not only the way we present the processes and respective results. We also have to be very careful about how we write considering not only the reader but how they interpret what is written, according to their needs or training (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993):

*“The fact that readers interpret texts actively creates a fundamental asymmetry between the reader and the text”* (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993, p. 596).

Reading is an interactive process, where the reader creates interpretations that depend, among other things, on the way the text itself is written (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993). Here we see the importance of the researcher in this interaction, to make the writing attractive, exciting, with the narrative captivating the reader, who almost longs to find out the result of each action (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The confidence in what has been experienced and is being narrated makes it convincing and “is achieved by generating a particular balance of novelty and familiarity” (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993, p. 598).

Never forgetting that in the words of Corbin and Strauss (1990, p. 419) “what is important is that all of this is made explicit”, but considering that:

*“strong theory-building research should result in new insights. Theory building which simply replicates past theory is, at best, a modest contribution. Replication is appropriate in theory-testing research, but in theory-building research, the goal is new theory. Thus, a strong theory-building study presents new, perhaps framebreaking, insights”* (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 548).

In qualitative research, for Patton (2001) “the researcher is the instrument”, and is obliged to ask himself how he can maximize the credibility and coherence of his study (in Golafshani, 2003, p. 600). Due to qualitative methodologies not having pre-defined formats but being formed by much decision-making, which is often spontaneous (Collins & Cooper, 2014) and the interpretive perspective being “based on the assumption that individuals use symbolic forms such as ideas and concepts to give meaning to and to structure their social experiences” (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993, p. 596), the researcher must transmit to the reader those sensations and the knowledge acquired in the field, which has subsequently been worked on and duly explained.

We know that qualitative research is ideal for building theory or hypotheses (Merriam, 1995) and there is no clean and defined process as in quantitative research. On the contrary, in qualitative methodologies, as Kahlke (2014, p. 39) argues, “researchers may choose to draw on a single established methodology, but deviate from its intent, rules, or guidelines in a way that they see as beneficial to the study” and therefore “there is no single paradigm which can accommodate all of the so-called qualitative methodologies, and each study should be justified on its own merits” (Rolfe, 2006, p. 309). Although on one hand, some qualitative researchers understand that the terms of validity and reliability are not “applicable to qualitative research”, on the other, they feel the need for qualified measures allowing them to “check or measure for their research” (Golafshani, 2003, p. 602).

As a consequence, many researchers developed their own concepts of validity (Golafshani, 2003). Golden-Biddle and Locke (1993) made a study of the main ethnographic work published in journals of reference. They created three concepts and applied them to three of the articles they considered most important. These are authenticity (the researcher was there on the ground and absorbed how the interviewees see the world), plausibility (meaning that the findings are a real contribution) and criticality (as being open to accept criticisms of the work presented).

Above all, there must be congruence during the research itself and the presentation of results (Merriam, 1995), and so also in qualitative methodologies, there are factors of validity and reliability which are assumed as a guarantee in quantitative methodologies. As there is not only one way to arrive at knowledge (Golafshani, 2003, p. 604), other authors developed other terms, such as quality, rigor and trustworthiness (Davies & Dodd, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Seale, 1999). In our case, we adopt these terms, understanding like Merriam (1995, p. 52), that “notions of validity and reliability must be addressed from the perspective of the paradigm out of which the study has been conducted”. Therefore, “reliability and validity are conceptualized as trustworthiness, rigor and quality in the qualitative paradigm” (Golafshani 2003, p. 604).

It is therefore important to understand the definition of trustworthiness, rigor and quality, as well as the strategies used in each study with regard to them.

**Trustworthiness.** This is clearly one of the most quoted factors by various authors (Golafshani, 2003; Merriam, 1995; Rolfe, 2006; Sandelowski, 1993). If, as Seale (1999, p. 266) states “trustworthiness of a research report lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability”, the definition of trustworthiness could not be clearer: “The question of trustworthiness becomes how well a particular study does what it is designed to do” (Merriam, 1995, p. 52).

**Rigour.** If on one hand, concerning work “rigour is clearly the key to success” (Rolfe, 2006, p. 305), on the other, considering that the quality of the work depends on the quality and objective of whoever reads it, it is seen to be a thankless task, as bearing in mind the specificities of qualitative methodology “for qualitative researchers to aspire to the rigour of the ‘hard’ sciences ... that such rigour is illusory” (Rolfe, 2006, p. 309), it being impossible to arrive at the same conclusions through use of the same data by different researchers, contrary to what is defended by Mays and Pope (1995, p. 110). Rigour in the sense of following a set of control methods throughout the process “rigor is a desired goal that is met through specific verification strategies” (Morse, Barret, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002, p. 19), such as memos, who was interviewed, the logic and the types of studies made, among others, agreeing with a new form of interpreting rigour “by exploring subjectivity, reflexivity, and the social interaction of interviewing” (Davies & Dodd, 2002, p. 281).

**Quality.** The quality of each study should be judged according to the paradigms of that same study (Healy & Perry, 2000) By quality, we understand not only the quality of concepts concerning the generation of knowledge and its subsequent explanation (Stenbacka, 2001), or consistency (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) but also quality of presentation and the study’s credibility (Golafshani, 2003). Eisner (1991, p. 58) mentions the importance of quality in a study as it allows us to “understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing” (in Golafshani, 2003, p. 601).

### 6.5.1 - How to convince: strategies

Therefore, the strategies to convince were based on the following terms:

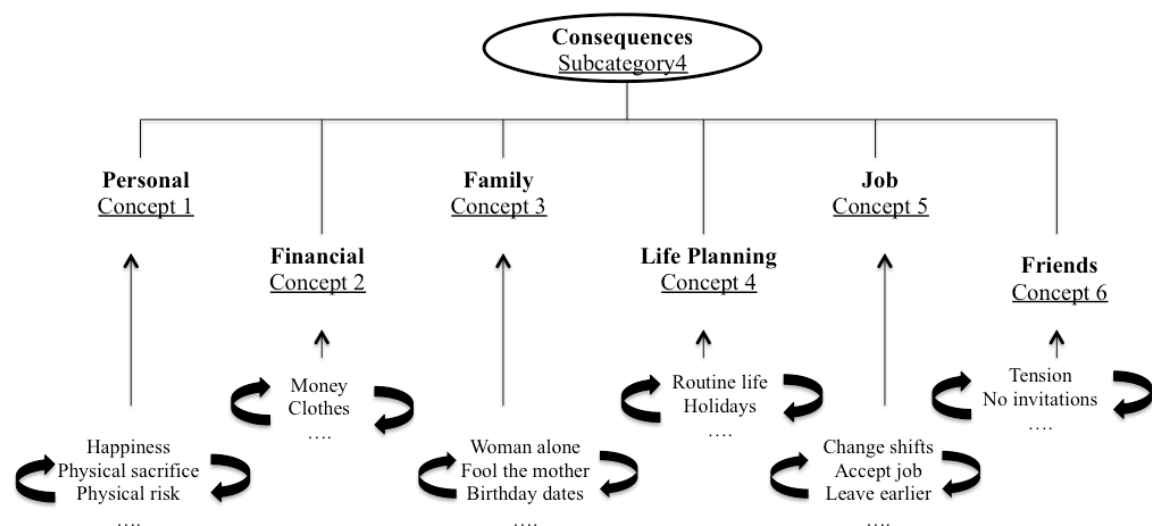
**Trustworthiness.** Right from the beginning, the objective of this study was to discover what causes a person to make sacrifices for a brand, in this specific case, a football fan for his club, FC Porto. The fact of the researcher “being there” (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993, p. 599), in so many places, arranging so many meetings, is very important as it demonstrates real effort in the research. Carrying out the studies, the aim was “not only to uncover relevant conditions but also to determine how the actors under investigation actively respond to those conditions, and to the consequences of their actions” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 419). The aim was always for the studies to be carried out and later presented clearly, succinctly and pragmatically, “visibly” (Sandelowski, 1993, p. 2), accompanying a new paradigm in the responsibility of whoever opines on the quality of research: the reader (Rolfe, 2006). Basically, we followed the suggestion of Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) when they say “in qualitative research, the best suggestions are to utilize various techniques, and if they produce strong results then they can be regarded as good” (in Collins & Cooper, 2014, p. 99).

**Rigour.** Resulting from its own characteristics, qualitative research is complex and difficult, “highly iterative and tightly linked to data” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 532), the researcher experiencing moments of frustration, and in the research carried out, with five studies, chaos and disorientation would be the most likely outcome. In our case, Grounded Theory “is especially appropriate in new topic areas (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 532). The starting point was never a “blank slate” (Kahlke, 2014, p. 39). Each study had clear objectives, an essential condition for its success, as stated by Eisenhardt (1989, p. 536) “without a research focus, it is easy to become overwhelmed by the volume of data.” Rigour that we try to convey in each global diagram on how the research was done, who came from where, who is from what place, what the objectives are. Above all, the researcher’s rigour in leading his life, as “without rigor, research is worthless, becomes fiction, and loses its utility” (Morse et al., 2002, p. 14), the rest is consequence.

**Quality.** Each study was carried out with clearly defined objectives but always as a consequence of the initial research question and anchored in each preceding study, or as Sandelowski (1993, p. 2) says “consensus on each individual study.” That is, the researcher’s intention was always to adapt his criterion to the needs felt, as Corbin and Strauss (1990, p. 418) suggest “the basic argument that we propose is that the criteria should be adapted to fit the procedures of the method”, towards better understanding and later being able to explain the knowledge and the procedures used (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Drawing and computer program courses were undergone with the main aim of being able to explain with more quality everything done and the conclusions arrived at. For Golafshani (2003), this increases the chances of success.

Figure 19, an example for Study three, which later gave rise to the core category of Consequences of my fan condition.

**Fig. 19. Axial coding.**



Source: own elaboration

### 6.5.2 - How to validate: strategies

Grounded Theory by Glaser and Strauss (1967) being one of the processes by which theory can be created (Eisenhardt, 1989), the objective was to follow the process exactly step by

step with regard to theoretical sampling, theoretical sensitivity, constant comparison of data, theoretical saturation of data, without forgetting iteration and abstraction.

It is necessary to have criteria (Golafshani, 2003; Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993), criteria that aim to produce a good theory, that should be marked by sobriety, the ability to be tested and being coherently logical, this appearing at the end rather than the beginning of the study (Pfeffer, 1982).

Grounded Theory is no more than “a package of research methods that includes the use of concurrent data collection and constant comparative analysis, theoretical sampling and memoing ”(Elliott & Lazenbatt, 2005, p. 52). Irrespective of the study having a small “sample”, in all the studies, depending on our objective, we always sought to have a well-defined focus and collect data systematically (Mintzberg, 1979). Throughout the studies made:

*“it is sometimes useful to resort to a “tiered” pattern of interviews if the research interview has a relatively narrow focus. This design strategy is especially useful when qualitative methods are being used for “exploratory” purposes. But it has the additional virtue of allowing data collection and analysis to intermingle”* (McCracken, 1988, p 48),

which for Glaser and Strauss (1967) allows the researcher the opportunity to get involved in a process of “constant comparison”, the core of Grounded Theory.

In addition, the aim was to have a series of actions to check that creation of theory and interpretation were logical and based on the real situations of the research context:

- . Each step of the research process was advised by the researcher’s supervisor;
- . We spoke to a wide variety of audiences about the research and always remained open to criticism. We presented papers, talks, different seminars and peer-reviewed conferences to have feedback on the research;
- . We wrote papers for publication to spread and share our ideas with experts and receive feedback;

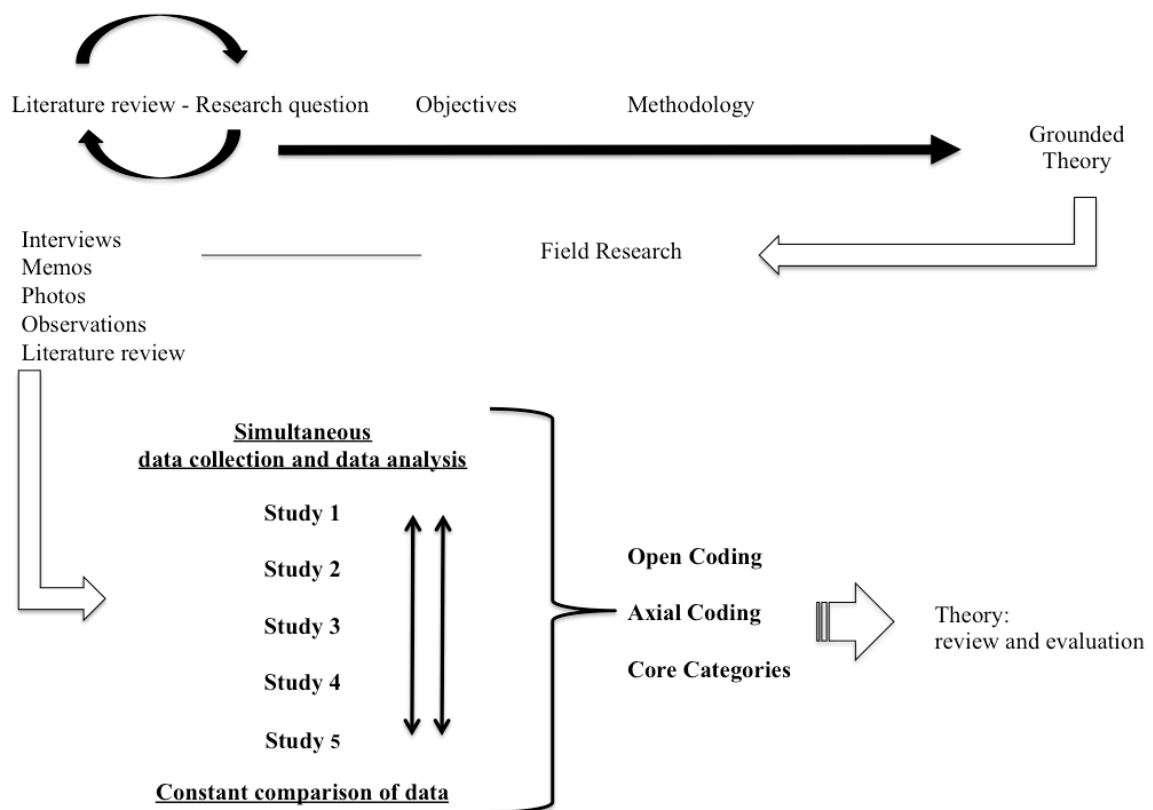
. Academic experts in CR and CBR were asked for comments about the theory generated and the research process. Although the ambition is to make the work logical, legible and understandable:

*“The exact manner in which the investigator will travel the path from data to observations, conclusions, and scholarly assertion cannot and should not be fully specified. Different problems will require different strategies. Many solutions will be ad hoc ones”*(McCracken, 1988, p. 41).

### 6.5.3 - Research process and theory building.

For better comprehension of the studies made, we now present (fig. 20), the process of research and theory construction.

**Fig. 20. Research process and theory building.**



Source: own elaboration

Very briefly but pragmatically, table 06 presents the overall summary of the studies made.

Tab. 01. Global summary of studies made. Source: own elaboration.

	Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4	Study 5
<b>Why?</b>	Start to have a general idea and screen the fans.	Search for a different perspective and global idea about football and fans.	To try to understand fans' thoughts, emotions and behaviors all over the country.	To validate the four themes and circumscribe the final panel of fans.	Thoroughly understand the meaning of sacrifice with examples of passive and active sacrifice.
<b>Who?</b>	Reference by peers, 97 fans (22-81 years, 3% women) 7 clubs from 4 divisions.	Three experts in football (44-85 years, men only): philosopher, journalist and football analyst.	Reference by peers, 28 fans (22-70 years, 85% men), from only one club: FC Porto.	Reference by peers, 20 FC Porto fans (18-76 years, 80% men), from 3 different areas of Portugal.	Reference by peers, 12 FC Porto fans (32-71 years, 25% women), with very well-defined characteristics.
<b>How?</b>	Telephone interview, three questions, 5-15minutes duration.	In-depth interviews, 50m-90m.	In-depth interviews, self-driven, 50m -90m.	Three focus groups of 7, 7 and 6 fans respectively, 90m-120m.	In-depth interviews, self-driven, 60m-90m.
<b>When?</b>	From 1st November to 15 <sup>th</sup> December 2012.	January 2013.	From 1st February to 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2013.	July and August 2013.	From 1st October to 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2013.
<b>What?</b>	Four facets: 1 <sup>st</sup> be different; 2 <sup>nd</sup> leave all behind; 3 <sup>rd</sup> personal risk; 4 <sup>th</sup> passion/soul.	Global vision: 1 <sup>st</sup> democracy; 2 <sup>nd</sup> life; 3 <sup>rd</sup> twilight zone; 4 <sup>th</sup> media. Strong focus on: family influence, social aspect, the emotions and consequences at a personal level.	Four themes emerged: 1 <sup>st</sup> what led me to be a fan; 2 <sup>nd</sup> the importance of the club in my life; 3 <sup>rd</sup> motivations; 4 <sup>th</sup> consequences of my fan condition.	Each group has validated the four themes and special characteristics of each group of fans from their own area/region are defined.	The results: . a definition of sacrifice for a fan; . the sacrifice construct; . grid of passive and active sacrifices.

#### **6.5.4 - Brief written and visual explanation of each study**

All interviews and analyses were conducted in order to enable a unifying vision and execution throughout the work and permit the holistic perspective (Fournier, 1998). It is important to note that there was no dialogue between participants and researchers regarding the study itself before it began to maximize the chance of providing insight on brand sacrifice considering a football club brand (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

Concerning formulation of questions, “it is crucially important that questions be phrased in a general and nondirective manner”, (McCracken, 1988, p. 34). In them we tried to use some techniques that allowed us to acquire the maximum information available, such as “planned prompts”: in a planned way inducing the interviewee to tell his story. For the interview in Study 1, we used exceptional incidents with the aim of quickly rousing the interviewee’s memory. In the interviews for Studies 3, 4 and 5, we use auto-driving, where “the respondent is asked to comment on a picture, video, or some other stimulus, and to provide his or her own account of what they see there” (McCracken, 1988, p. 36). At the beginning of each interview a request to record was made. All the interviews were conducted confidentially and saved (recorded) and later transcribed by another person for subsequent analysis by the researcher (McCracken, 1988). Participants were mainly contacted in accordance with the procedures of snowball sampling type (Ford, 1975). The percentage of men in all studies is over 75% – Study 1 (97%), Study 2 (100%), Study 3 (85%), study 4 (80%) and study 5 (75%) – because football fans are mostly male (Haugaasen & Jordet, 2012), but for both sexes we were concerned with having different profiles and social classes. In each study, data collection and data analysis appear together, with this type of presentation being more in keeping with the explanatory principles of Grounded Theory.

So according to the Glaser and Strauss (1967) method, we base our presentation of the results obtained on two key concepts: constant comparison (data are collected and analyzed simultaneously) and theoretical sampling (the data to be collected next is dependent on the theory that is being constructed) (Suddaby, 2006, p. 634).

#### **6.5.4.1 - Study 1**

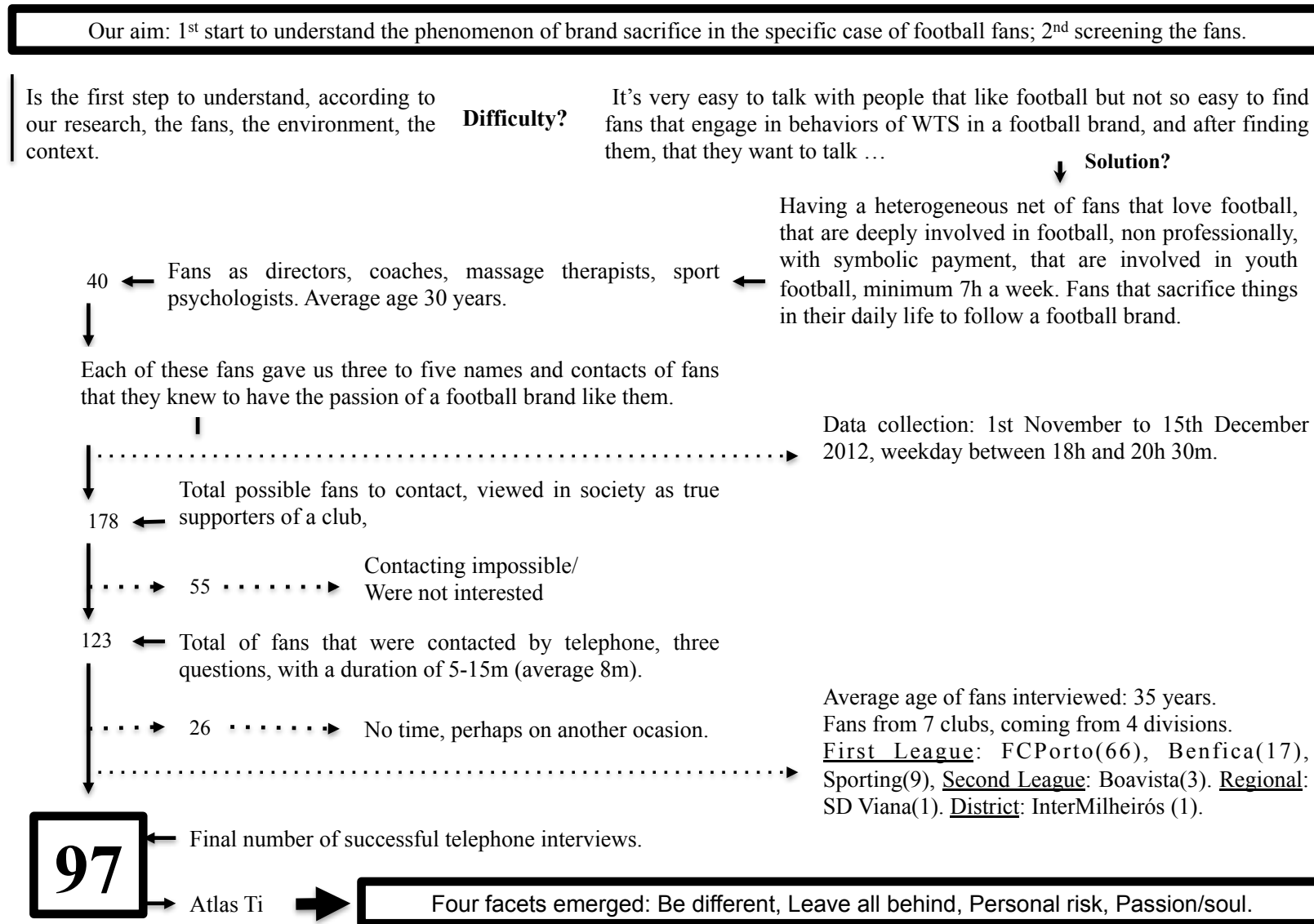
Study 1 is therefore one more step (the first in the field, but after the literature review), the first involving interviews, aiming to find out what causes a person to make sacrifices for a brand. Figure 21 shows the sequence of the work done, with the respective objectives and conclusions.

In order to start to understand deep commitment and sacrifice towards a brand, such as a football club, the interview technique was used to study the implicit meaning of sacrifice in football fans' relationship with their club. The main idea is to capture a group of facets and features (Fehr, 2006) that people associate with deep commitment and willingness to forgo a desired activity (passive sacrifice) or even engage in an undesired activity (active sacrifice) to continue the relationship with a brand.

The two objectives of this study are: firstly, to start to understand the phenomenon of brand sacrifice in the specific case of football fans and secondly, to screen the fans. This is the first step towards understanding, according to our research, the fans, the environment and the context. But how to interview the set of people that show the traits and values of interest (Thorne & Bruner, 2006)? How could we interview a number of people knowing for certain they are the right people to help us achieve the two objectives outlined?

We used a heterogeneous network of football fans, composed of forty people, who are deeply involved in football, non-professionally for symbolic payment, involved in youth football for a minimum of seven hours a week. Approaching these fans was possible because the researcher owns a football club and has the possibility, connections and proximity to build this network. So each of these fans, who sacrifice things in their daily life to follow a football brand, gave three to five names and contact numbers of fans they knew to have the same passion for a football brand. The main criterion for inclusion in the study is to be someone who really likes football and is willing to make sacrifices for the sake of his relationship with the football club brand. Thus, participants were selected to maximize the chance of providing insight into sacrifice for a brand – a football club brand

**Fig. 21. Structure of Study 1: the start.**



Source: own elaboration.

(Erlandson et al., 1993). Starting the process through a network of personal contacts, it is important to note that there will be no dialogue between participants and researchers about the study itself before it begins. The members of this network of forty people that the researcher is in contact with almost every day were not interviewed, and only provided names and telephone numbers to build the list of fans to start the interviews.

This study consisted of 97 structured telephone interviews (a total number of 178 possible fans to contact was reduced to a final list of 123 potential respondents). Each interview lasted 5 to 15 minutes with an average of 8 minutes for each interview. Profiles vary depending on jobs and functions and respondents were between 22 and 81 years of age. Variations in age and life cycle allowed understanding of the socio-cultural factors driving relationship behaviours regarding the club brand and team. Participants from seven clubs competing in four divisions of Portuguese football were contacted.

The interviews were conducted confidentially between 1st November and 15th December 2012. The meaning of sacrifice is tacit knowledge and not easily verbalized. Therefore, it is important that participants imagine themselves in the situations and scenario they have experienced and so illustrate their sacrifice for the sake of their relationship with the club brand. Participants were asked to narrate some episodes in relation to football (soccer) and their experiences.

The analysis started with a complete reading of the transcripts in order to capture the respondents' behaviours, beliefs and trends. From a very clear and succinct script, the interviews were as open as possible, leaving the interviewees complete freedom to explain their reasoning, tell the story/event/situation which in their opinion illustrated their dedication to the club. Due to some difficulties in achieving what was needed, examples were given of what was intended in the study. Then, the narratives of football club fans were considered individually and collectively in order to discover patterns and particularities or singularities.

The main questions asked were:

– “Basically, what we'd like to know is what kind of actions, attitudes and situations you are willing to undergo to keep that connection with the club, to live this passion”

– “Is there any story/situation/event experienced by you and related to the football club of your heart?”

– “Can you tell us a story that shows your attachment to your club, a story about something left out or forgotten or done on purpose, something that you would not have thought of doing or had not done before, only because of this connection with the football club of your heart?”

The interviews were recorded between 1st November and 15th December 2012 and later transcribed for analysis. The process started with the reading of transcripts and identification of main tendencies and features resulting from each interview. The second step of the process involved cross-person analysis in order to discover patterns among the interviews. In order to help the analysis process, Atlas Ti software was employed. Atlas Ti software allows selection of the coding procedure and modification of the coding schemes as the analysis progresses and new concepts or facets are uncovered. Atlas Ti software also enabled us to draw the network of facets and features.

At the end of the interview, the interviewees considered most interesting were asked if they were willing and interested in giving a later in-depth interview on the same subject. After analysis of the interviews, those who agreed were contacted to arrange the meeting.

#### **6.5.4.2 - Study 2**

Study 2 emerges due to the need felt for a different vision, another form of being, something broader regarding the phenomenon in question. Figure 22 shows the process, the objectives and the conclusions.

Knowing that 95 percent of thought is subconscious (Zaltman, 2003) and assuming respondents' limited ability to tell their own story (Woodside, 2010, p. viii), meaningful insights can only be gained through the collection of primary data (Shiu et al., 2009) that can provide researchers with "initial ideas about specific problems" (Shiu et al., 2009, p. 173).

Looking for accuracy, not generality (Woodside, 2010), in order to continue the journey towards understanding deep commitment and sacrifice towards a brand, such as a football club, the interview technique was used to study not only a different perspective of the theme but also to have a global idea about football and fans, trying to capture a group of facets and features (Fehr, 2006) associated with the phenomenon in diverse areas (philosophy, journalism and football analysis) and gain a broader idea of the specific case of fans and of football itself and its importance in today's society.

With this research, we seek a "deep understanding of the actors, interactions, sentiments, and behaviors occurring for a specific process through time" (Woodside, 2010, p. 6). The areas of philosophy, journalism and football analysis were chosen because of the broad spectrum in society, starting with a holistic perspective, continuing with a journalism perspective in the specialized field of football, and ending with an analytical and accurate way of understanding and analysing the phenomenon.

Fig. 22. Structure of Study 2: different views.

Our aim: 1<sup>st</sup> search for a different perspective 2<sup>nd</sup> have a global idea about football and fans.

Pick three areas concerning football: philosophy, football analysis and journalism.

**Why?**

Importance of  
----->  
Initial ideas about specific problems,  
Multiple actors,  
Multiple-party participation.

**3**

-----> Experts.

Which ones?  
----->  
book,  
conference,  
media presence,  
reachable.

**In-depth interviews,  
average 70m.**

-----> Data collection: January 2013.

**NVivo**

-----> Expert.

Global vision: 1<sup>st</sup> democracy, 2<sup>nd</sup> life, 3<sup>rd</sup> twilight zone, 4<sup>th</sup> media.  
Strong focus on: family influence, the social aspect, emotions, consequences at personal level

Source: own elaboration.

The two objectives of this research are: firstly, to search for a different perspective, and secondly, to have a global idea about football and fans. In this research, this is another step towards understanding the fans, the environment, the context and also the football phenomenon in a broader perspective. From the twelve principles of case study research (Woodside, 2010, p. 397), based on our objectives, we will use two: number six and number nine, respectively. **Context not context free** “because multiple-actors directly or indirectly participate in the immediate or prior contexts relevant to the main focus of research on most human behaviors, collecting data from multiple informants and for multiple contexts both are useful for confirming/refuting the accuracy of the findings and expand on understanding of the contingencies affecting outcomes uniquely for each context” (Woodside, 2010, p. 401) but also **multiple party not single person** looking for “multiple-party participation and build theory to include the participation by multiple parties in case-study research projects” (Woodside, 2010, p. 401). Setting out from global and complex questions such as:

- “What is the real importance of football in our society?”
- “How does football influence the way we live in society? And individually?”
- “What about society itself, how is it affected by football? And how does society affect football?”
- “How far are citizens, personally, affected by the football phenomenon?”

This study consisted of three unstructured in-depth interviews. Each interview lasted 50 to 90 minutes, averaging 70 minutes. Profiles (philosopher, journalist and a football analyst) were chosen, considering their vast knowledge in the area, their credibility and the possibility of being interviewed. The respondents were between 44 and 85 years of age.

Once again, approaching these individuals was facilitated by the fact that of owning a football club and that fact gives a bond, a form of legitimacy, and creates a positive atmosphere. The main criterion for inclusion in the research is being someone who is respected and credible in his area and, concerning football, has four characteristics:

- .-has written at least one book;
- .-speaks at a minimum of two conferences a year;

.-writes/talks frequently in the media: television, internet, journals, radio.

.-is accessible to the authors.

The interviews were conducted confidentially and recorded in January 2013. Considering the knowledge, education and life experience of the interviewees, the radical advice of Woodside (2010, p. 406) was followed: “Avoid asking leading questions. Avoid asking any questions at all!” The narratives of these people were considered individually and collectively in order to discover patterns and particularities or singularities.

In order to help the analysis process, NVIVO was used. With NVIVO, we proceeded as follows: a) one initial categorization according to the authors; b) a review by a professor, an expert in the use of NVIVO; c) new and final categorization according to the authors.

In these in-depth interviews, we aimed to not only to discover a different perspective of the chosen topic (Brand Sacrifice), but also acquire a global idea about football and fans. At the end, all the interviewees were asked if they knew anyone interesting that could be interviewed. Various names and their contact numbers were supplied.

### 6.5.4.3 - Study 3

After acquiring a first list of fans and having a broader idea of the phenomenon, we focused on a single club, beginning to limit the possibility of choice. Through interviews held in various parts of the country, from north to south, we aimed to find out what it is to be a fan of FC Porto in Portugal.

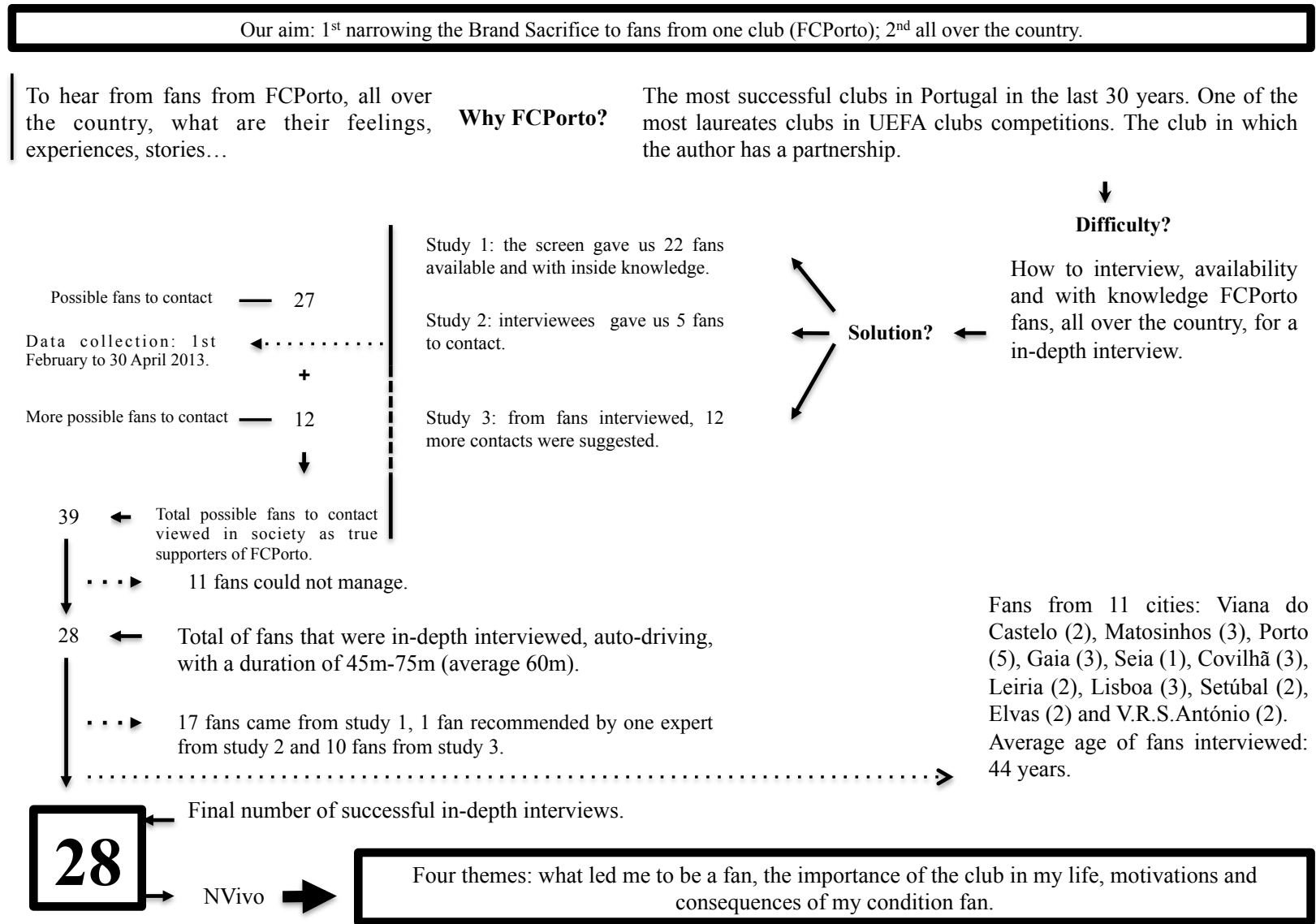
This was an extremely complex process, where the experience and knowledge acquired in the previous studies proved to be invaluable, not only concerning knowledge of the topics and carrying out the interviews, but also in gathering interviewees, as suggested by the maximum number of interviews possible (12), which took place during the study. Figure 23 shows the objectives and respective conclusions as well as the complex study path.

In this study we will follow the paradigm of Churchill (1979) and the adaptation proposed by Batra et al. (2012). The interview technique was used to capture sacrifice for a football club. The two objectives of this study are: (1) narrowing Brand Sacrifice to fans from one club (FC Porto); (2) all over the country.

The interview technique of auto-driving was used, with videos and photos, trying to give the interviewee a context where he could easily feel and express better what he is really thinking, feeling relaxed, telling stories and memories with fluidity. It is also important to take into consideration facial and corporal expressions of the interviewees while viewing the videos and photos. For Woodside (2010, p. 267):

*“Auto driving means asking the respondent to comment on photographs, a video, or some other stimulus directly relevant to the respondent: he or she is then asked to provide an account of what is seen in these visuals, and whether or not the depiction relates to him or her (and, if so, in what ways).”*

**Fig. 23. Structure of Study 3: better understanding.**



Source: own elaboration.

Initiating the third step of the process through a network of personal contacts, starting with 27 personal contacts and following the process, the final number of contacts was 39. We used photos (of the club, rivals, players, materials) and videos representative of a fan and also the origins and history of the club in international competitions. With this specifically structured screenplay, the objective was not only better contextualizing of the words of the interviewee, but to go further. Seeing the physical reactions, “forcing him” to think, so that he could give us as much information as possible about the topic in question, regarding his way of living and thinking. Then it is up to us to study the interviews and find key points that help us go beyond what the interviewee tells us. In these in-depth interviews, what we want to know more deeply is not only the motivations or the origins of becoming a fan but also the implications and consequences of being a fan for their lives.

In order to help the analysis process, NVIVO was used. With NVIVO, we proceeded as follows:

- a) one initial categorization according to authors;
- b) a review by a professor, an expert, so that the initial categorization was less extensive;
- c) new categorization according to authors and the expert;
- d) two other professors review the categories and sub-categories;
- e) lastly, categorization done by the authors.

Table 07 is made up of four guidelines: the action performed, why we chose it, the objective and time waited in each action. This is a very important moment in the interview due to the significance fans give to each photograph/film. The example of the photograph of Paulo Futre with the FC Porto shirt (and not that of Sporting, Benfica, Atletico de Madrid, AC Milan or other clubs the player played for) was crucial: it was in the season he was “kidnapped” from Sporting and helped FC Porto to win the first Champions League.

**Tab. 07. Guidelines for Study 3.**

Action	Why?	Aim	Time
Few general questions.	Relaxation, informality.	Start to have, in his own words, an idea of how the fan behaves in football and the importance it has in his life. Is there any story?	5m
Video 01. FC Porto international victories.	To facilitate speech.	To start to have some stories. Are these triumphs important? How?	1m48s + 5m
Current photo of the Benfica team.	The “enemy”.	Is there any physical reaction? Shocks? Repulsion?	30s +2m
Photo of Eusébio playing	Best player ever of the “enemy”.		
Photo of Benfica coach Jorge Jesus.	Coach of the “enemy”.		
Photo of Benfica stadium.	Stadium of the “enemy.”		
Video 02. Fan.	The importance of the fan.	Does the fan identify with this video? Does he feel the same? Stories?	50s + 10m
Several photos (specification below). Different shirt	Try to obtain emotions, feelings, thoughts, stories, presenting several diferent photos.	Anything that can help the telling of stories, events of fan complicity and brand sacrifice.	1m +5m
Professional (old and new) cleats.	Innovation, new materials.		
Photo of Futre (with FC Porto shirt)	Golden boy of FC Porto.		
Photo of Fernando Gomes (with FC Porto	One of the greatest living symbols of FC Porto but played his final years in a rival club.		

shirt)			
Photo of Yustrich.	Who put an end to many years without titles in the 50s. Innovation to bring in a foreign coach.	Sense of FC Porto history.	
Photo of Pedroto	The beginning of a golden era.		
Photo of the old Antas stadium.	For decades the home of FC Porto	Anything that can help the telling of stories, events of fan complicity and brand sacrifice.	
Photo of the demolished Antas stadium.	An idea considered impossible and utopian that was fulfilled and is a milestone in the ambition and goals of FC Porto in the club's development as a national and international champion.		
Video 03 Brief history of FC Porto.	Sense of history. The roots and European conquests.		Emotions, stories.
Photo of Dragão stadium.	The symbol of a modern, European, FC Porto.	Proud?	
Photo of Mourinho,	The coach that gave FC Porto two consecutive European titles but left the club badly.	Traitors? Heroes?	
Photo celebrtating the title in Dragão stadium.	With Villas-Boas, another sucessful coach who left the club badly.		
Photo celebrating the fifth title in a row.	Something achieved only by FC Porto in Portugal.	Anything that can help the telling of stories, events of fan complicity and brand sacrifice.	
Photo President of the club, Jorge Nuno Pinto da Costa.	Most successful club president in the history of world football.		
FC Porto souvenir.			60 m
<b>Action</b>	<b>Why?</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Time</b>

Source: own elaboration.

#### 6.5.4.4 - Study 4

Study 4 has perhaps the most complex presentation, due not only to the number of people it was necessary to gather in one place at the same time, but also in explaining the origins of each element. Having defined the limitations and the criterion to apply (for the first time it is necessary to be a member and go to the stadium), the intention was to capitalize on the three previous studies and “efforts were resumed”, making contact once again.

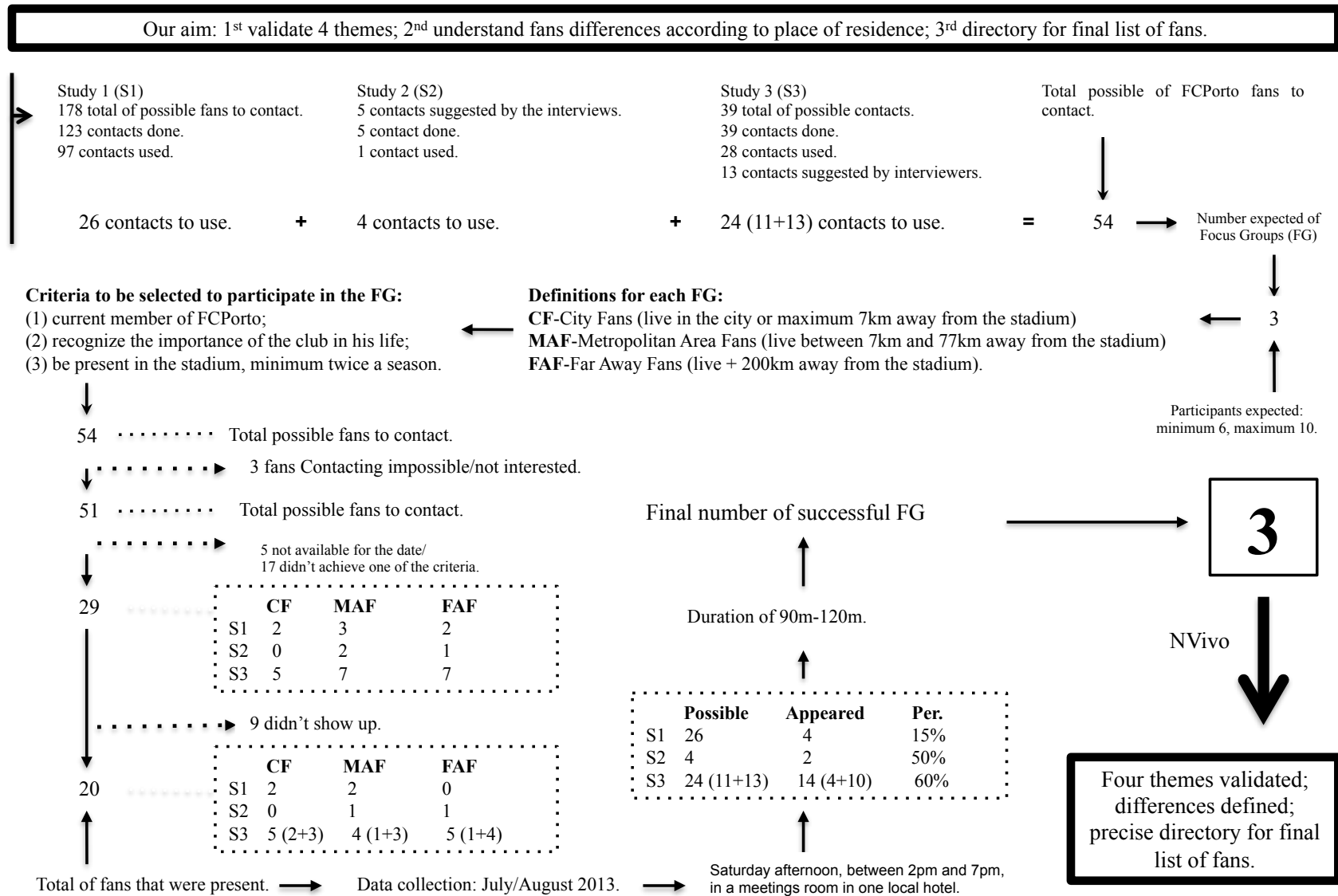
Studies 1 and 2 contributed elements to Study 4, but Study 3 was more important, not only due to the contacts it gave directly, but also due to those which were suggested by the interviewees in the course of that study. In Study 4, of the twenty components of the three focus groups, fourteen came from Study 3, i.e., 70%. Figure 24 shows the objectives, respective conclusions and steps taken during the process.

Being a fan of FC Porto is not the same thing for all fans. Without questioning the emotions, or the importance of that status, what about the distance from home to the club’s stadium? Due to the lack of studies considering where fans live in relation to their team’s stadium, a qualitative focus group method was used to attempt to validate, understand and obtain clear directions for a final research. Why a focus group? Because “they stimulate new ideas, thoughts, and feelings about a topic; foster understanding of why people hold a belief or behave in certain situations” (Shiu, Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2009, p. 193). In this study we will follow the orientation of (Shiu et al., 2009, p. 193).

The qualitative focus group technique was used with three aims:

- (1) to validate the four themes established in Study 3;
- (2) to try to understand the differences in fans’ behaviour according to where they live;
- (3) to elaborate a final list of fans to be interviewed.

**Fig. 24. Structure of Study 4: confirmation and delimitation.**



Source: own elaboration.

This study consisted of three focus groups with a final number of 20 participants (from a list of 54 potential respondents), distributed in 7, 7 and 6 individuals respectively in each focus group, lasting from 90 to 120 minutes (average 106 minutes). Name tags were provided so that each participant could speak to the others quickly, and also drinks and light snacks to make participants feel comfortable. Two short videos were used to help the discussion. It is also important to consider facial and corporal expressions while viewing the videos.

The three criteria to be selected to participate in the focus group were: (1) being a current member of FC Porto; (2) recognizing the importance of the club in his life; (3) being present in the stadium, at least twice a season.

We used these criteria because:

(1) fans consider there are differences between fans that are members and those that are not. If the fan is a member, he is more committed, shows he cares more about the club and contributes in a way that everybody can measure.

(2) personally and professionally, the fan must recognize the importance of the club in his life, an important factor for the research.

(3) we consider that two games is the minimum number of games to watch in the stadium during a season. Considering the number of games (minimum 20) each season, if the fan is not present at 10%, he does not come within our research radar.

The definitions for each Focus Group were as follows:

**CF** - City Fans (live in the city or no further than 7km from the stadium);

**MAF** - Metropolitan Area Fans (live between 7km and 77km from the stadium);

**FAF** - Far away Fans (live + 200km from the stadium).

Designation of the stadium as central, was supported by the work of Hornby (1992). The differentiation between fans that live in the city or within seven kilometers is because Dragão Stadium (FC Porto's stadium) is situated on the edge of the city with Porto being flanked by four cities: Matosinhos, Maia, Gondomar and Vila Nova de Gaia (fig. 25).

**Fig. 25. Dragão stadium and cities around.**



*Source: Google Earth.*

In Metropolitan Area Fans, our aim was to reach fans that are not from the city or surroundings, but in a maximum of 45 minutes by car or one and a half hours by public transport can reach the stadium, with no major expenditure of time and money. In Far Away Fans, not only time was important (more than one and three quarter hours by car or two and three quarter hours by public transport) but also money (petrol, ticket, toll, food), and how fans scheduled their lives (considering the amount of time spent on the activity), was really important.

All focus group sessions were carried out on Saturday afternoon because participants said this was the most convenient time for them. The option of the 4-star hotel to meet was so as to have a quiet place to talk and give credibility to the research, not to intimidate participants but to indicate the importance of the research.

Starting with 54 personal contacts from previous research, the final number of contacts was 20. Starting the fourth step of the process through a network of previous personal contacts, data analysis followed the Shiu et al., (2009, pp. 175–196) focus group method (nature, conduct and report). Two videos were used (one of the club, and another of a fan) to help the stories flow and understand the differences between the different fan situation in each focus group. In order to help the analysis process, NVIVO was used. With NVIVO, the procedure was as follows: a) one initial categorization b) review by a professor, an expert in the use of NVIVO; c) new, final categorization by the authors.

An interview guide (tab. 08) was developed to better orientate the focus group.

**Tab. 08. Guidelines for Study 4.**

Action	Why?	Aim	Time
One/two general questions.	Relax, informality.	Start to have, in the fan's own words, an idea of how the football fan behaves and the importance in his life.	8m-18m
Video 01. FC Porto international victories.	To facilitate the discussion.	To start to acquire some stories. Are these triumphs important? How?	1m48s + 10m-20m
Presentation of 4 themes	Are these themes representative and important for all these groups of fans?	Global agreement. Confirmation, or not, of the four themes.	35m-45m
Theme "What led me to be a fan?"			
Theme "Motivations"			
Theme "The importance of the club in my life"			
Theme "Consequences of my fan condition"			
Video 02. Fan.	Considering the place where the fan lives, is this video representative?	Stories. Understand the differences in fans considering their place of residence.	50s + 35m-45m
FC Porto souvenir.			90m-120m

*Source: own elaboration*

#### 6.5.4.5 - Study 5

Finally, Study 5 was carried out with the smallest number of supporters of all the studies made. The importance of Study 3 is highlighted once again, “supplying” 50% of the interviewees. With a very well-defined and tight entry criterion, the fact that no people gave up shows the careful choice. Figure 26 shows the objectives, respective conclusions and the process of Study 5.

The in-depth interview was used with two aims: deep understanding of the meaning of sacrifice for a fan and to build a grid of passive and active sacrifice. This study consisted of interviewing 12 FC Porto fans with specific characteristics. Before any contact with the authors, all these fans were contacted personally by the intermediary, who guaranteed the seriousness and credibility of the research. Seven were new names (contacts) from previous research (Study 2 and Study 3) and had never been contacted before. The other five were suggested by participants in Study 4 and had also never been contacted before. All of them were very consistent with wider criteria to narrow down the last fans to interview. There were no withdrawals among the fans finally contacted for the last interview.

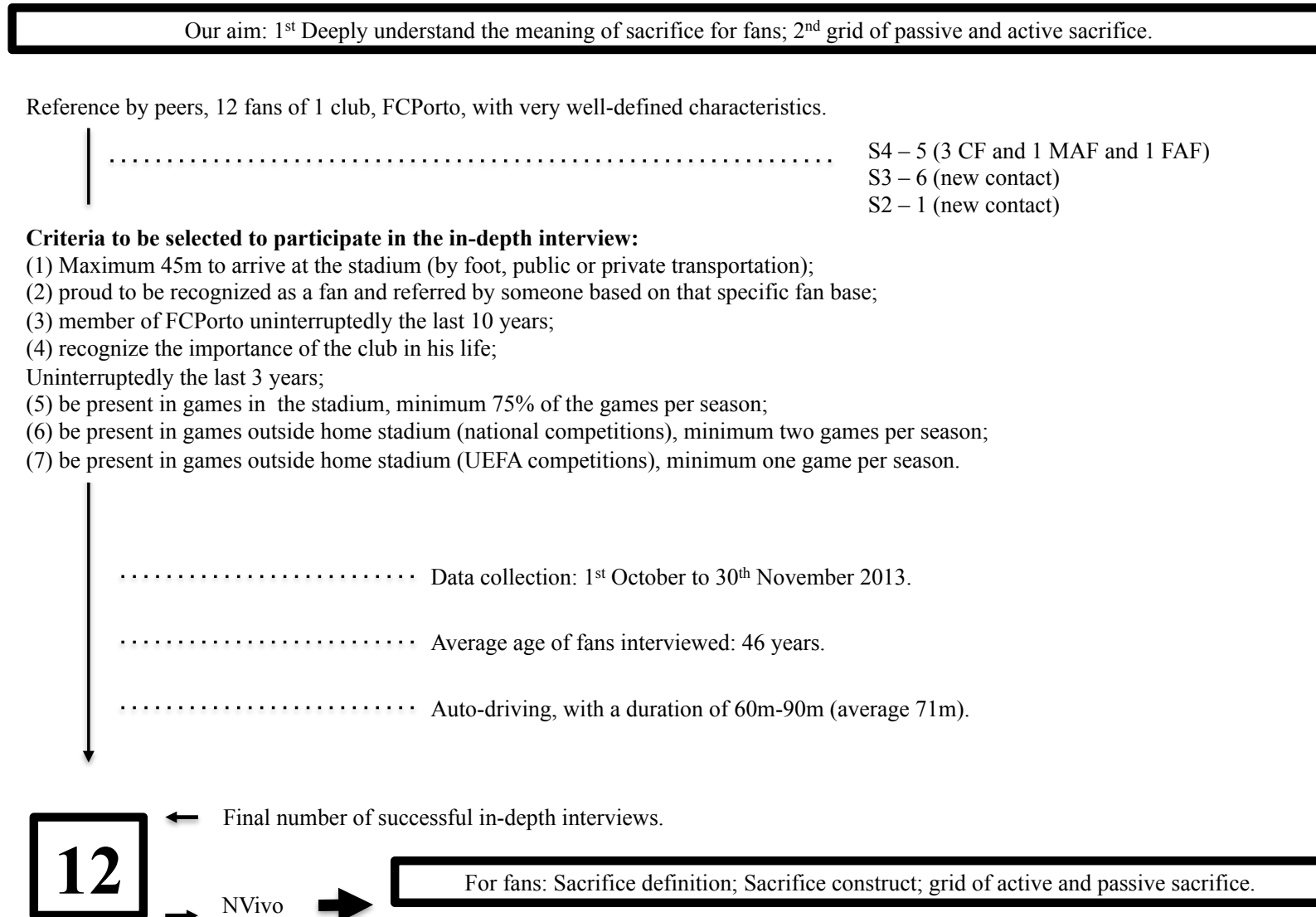
The seven criteria to be selected to participate in the in-depth interviews were:

- (1) maximum of 45 minutes to reach the stadium (on foot, by public or private transport);
- (2) proud to be recognized as a fan and mentioned by someone else based on that specific characteristic;
- (3) member of FC Porto for the last 10 years without interruption;
- (4) recognizing the importance of the club in his life;

Over the last 3 years;

- (5) attend the stadium for a minimum of 75% of games per season;
- (6) attend away games (national competitions), for at least two games per season;
- (7) attend away games (UEFA competitions), a minimum of one game per season.

**Fig. 26. Structure of Study 5: meaning of sacrifice.**



Source: own elaboration.

The definitions for the in-depth interview follow the designation of the stadium as the centre, supported in Hornby (1992). However, we change the criterion of kilometers (7) to time (45 minutes to reach the stadium) as it seemed more appropriate following the considerations of the MAF in Study 4. The criteria of needing to be a member for the last ten years without a break and being with the club in all possible scenarios (with different percentages of attendance) lets us narrow the funnel so as to be speaking about supporters who, through their actions, show how important the club/brand is in their lives and what they are willing to go through to continue following it.

The interviews were held in different locations (the authors' office, the fan's office, hotel bar, the fan's home), according to the fan's availability and the feeling of what the right place was for him to talk. The fan made the final decision. The time of day varied greatly, from 10am until 9pm and this was to fit in with the fan's availability.

The final number of contacts was 12. Starting the fifth step of the process through a network of previous personal contacts, it is important to note that all these people were previously contacted by telephone by every intermediate fan who told them that someone was doing research about FC Porto fans and he was the right person to talk to. No more than one day later, the researcher telephoned the fan and it was agreed he would contact later to set the date, time and place of the interview. For some fans (from Study 2 and Study 3), between the first contact and the final interview many months passed (six months or more). So to keep the topic fresh and alive and the fan interested and, more importantly, to let him know that he was really important for the work, during that period the researcher called each fan at least once and repeated his interest in talking to him for the research.

Two videos were used (one of a historic goal, and another of a fan's statement) to help the flow of stories, experiences and memories and also four power points with precise information about titles (comparing with the rival Benfica and with most important clubs in Europe) and the stock exchange value (concerning FC Porto).

To help the analysis process, NVIVO was used. With NVIVO, we proceeded as follows:

- a) one initial categorization by the authors;
- b) a review by a professor, an expert, so that the initial categorization was less extensive;
- c) new categorization with authors and the expert;
- d) two other professors review the categories and sub-categories;
- e) final categorization done by the authors.

An interview guide (tab. 09) was developed to better orientate the in-depth interview.

**Tab. 09. Guidelines for Study 5.**

Action	Why?	Aim	Time
One/two general questions.	Relax, informality.	Promote a climate to “dive into” a brief history of being a fan.	7m-17m
Video 01. Fan.	Does the fan feel the same?	A reference.	1m
Video 02. Kelvin.	Maximize emotion with a historic and very recent moment.	Leverage the maximum benefit from being imbued in the context.	1m
UEFA Titles	Proud, unique, amazing achievement.	Stories, experiences, memories...	50m-70m
FC Porto stock exchange.	Can he explain this gap?		
Mention, during the interview, of the four themes (emerging in S3 and validated in S4).	To help the interviewee to have a guideline.		
FC Porto souvenir.		Small gift in appreciation of his time.	1m

*Source: own elaboration*

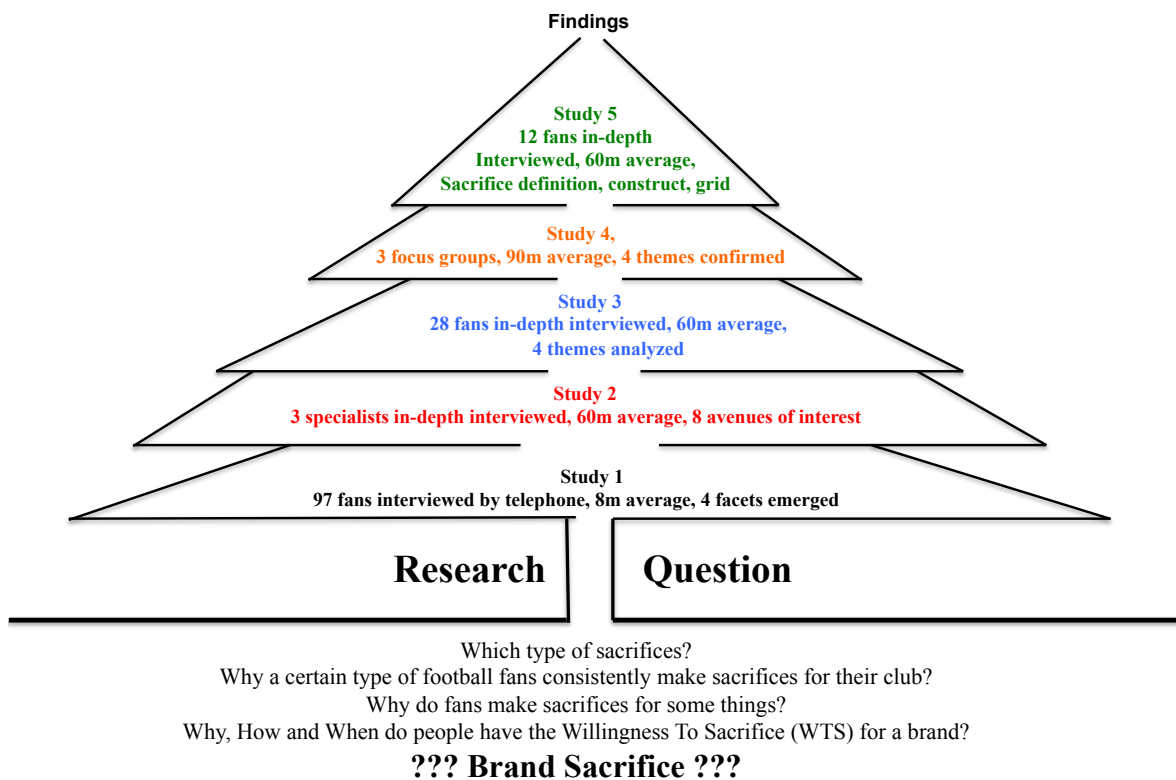
With Study 5 complete, one thing was certain: without the previous studies the researcher would not have been so well prepared for the interviews and the process of making the final choice of interviewees and subsequent final criterion would have been difficult to fulfil. This reveals the importance of each study throughout this process. With presentation of the methodological aspects of the studies completed, we present the respective findings.

# Findings

## 7 - Findings

A figure with the framework of the study development sequence (fig. 27) opens this chapter, followed by the model of presentation with the respective aims, results, explanation and visual synthesis, hoping in this way to summarize and group the most important factors in each study. Then, each study is explained within the defined moulds.

**Fig. 27. The framework of the study development sequence.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

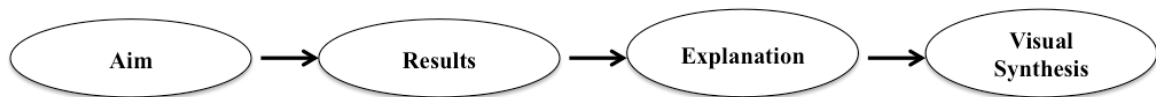
Presentation of the studies will follow the model below:

- . in each study there will be a diagram of what is to be presented (see fig. 28);
- . descriptions will be made of the respective objectives;
- . then, description of the results obtained;

. followed by their explanation;

. finally, a visual summary of the study in question, concerning why it was made, with whom, how, when, and ending with the respective results in the middle of the figure in the form of what was achieved.

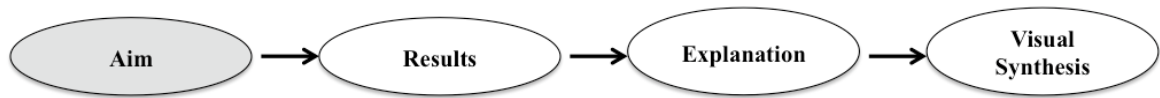
**Fig. 28. Model of presentation.**



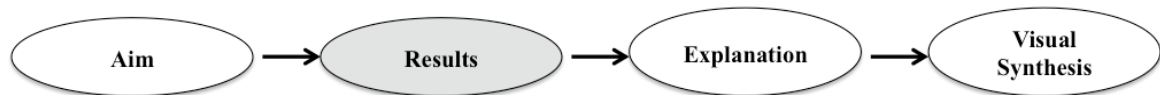
*Source: own elaboration.*

We will now present the findings of each study.

## 7.1 - Study 1: four facets of willingness to sacrifice to follow a football club.



For this study we had two major aims: (1) start to understand the phenomenon of brand sacrifice in the specific case of football fans; (2) screen fans.



The results, concerning the willingness to sacrifice to follow a football club, give us four main facets: passion/soul, the feeling of being different, personal risk and leaving everything behind.



We now explain the results of each facet with examples of quotations from some interviewees.

**Passion/soul** is a differentiating facet. It is a kind of passion that leads them to sacrifice for the club, to do almost whatever it takes to be with the club, even if only emotionally (because of distance, lack of money, etc.). Passion in a fan is an antecedent and not a consequence. Passion not only for the club but also for everything that comes with it in the “package” of being a fan, for example:

- a) the adrenaline experienced when goals are scored;
- b) the adrenaline the fan feels when the referee makes mistakes and the fan shouts abuse;
- c) the social aspect, the conviviality in the stadium or in restaurants (before, during or after matches) or while travelling;
- d) the excitement of being part of something bigger than oneself.

But for all of that, to be considered a fan, sacrifice is needed because all these aspects are time consuming, have monetary or social costs or even mean combating personal fears (travelling by plane, overcoming phobias such as being in a crowd, etc.). Passion, as a fan said, because it is almost a need to survive, like the air human beings need to breathe. This

fan lives 300 km from FC Porto's stadium and cannot afford to attend home games. Every Sunday he has dinner with his wife's family and if FC Porto are playing at that time, he leaves the house, goes to his own car and with his PC tries to see the match on the internet. If this is not possible, he stays and listens to the car radio. Why does he not go to any room in the house and do the same? Or go to a cafe?

*“Because I don't want to be with enemies (the majority of the population do not support my club). The members of my wife's family support Sporting and I don't feel comfortable. I prefer to be alone, even if in uncomfortable situations.” (NN)*

But how does his wife react?

*“My wife doesn't understand why I have this kind of behaviour. I just tell her that as to breathe you need oxygen, I need to follow FC Porto to live.” (NN)*

The way the fan talks about the club, his experiences, what the club represents in his life, is very clear to this type of fan. They feel the club and its goals with their heart and soul. The pride in being present at major victories, but especially in defeat, in difficult times, is a hallmark of these fans. Being present not only in defeat but in difficult situations in terms of weather (storms, extreme cold), infrastructure (in crowded places), standing for hours on end waiting for tickets, situations which would be unacceptable in professional and personal life. The experience of a range of factors such as the adrenaline experienced at the match, the conviviality generated by all the adventures and excitement; because the fan lives a story, a story together with multiple actors, leaving the daily routine, living adventures. All these factors are included in passion/soul.

***The feeling of being different***, part of a distinctive form of culture. The fan is a supporter of a club, because he feels he is an ambassador for the club, the city and the country beyond. The feeling of being different is not only as a fan during the match. It is much more than that, being everywhere and all the time, like a medal that you have and wear all the time. As a fan said:

*“I'm a professional FC Porto fan. I work to have money to follow my club everywhere. In my work people know me because I'm an FC Porto fan. But in the stadium people also know me because I'm an FC Porto fan, not because I work in a chemist's. In my work people come to talk to me about football, what I think, what*

*is my opinion about football, players, anything about football in general and FC Porto specifically. And the same happens in the stadium or in my normal life. People come to me because of my fan condition, just that.” (RP)*

And this feeling of being different is not only that of feeling unique. The human being likes to feel different. Being recognized by society and especially by their peers, not only through status in the group, but also in the more formal aspects such as praise in the stadium, the seniority of membership badges, etc. Others must give them that type of recognition, on a daily basis or in a ceremony by their peers – for example, being awarded silver pin badges for 25 years of membership. The fan feels he is unique because in the last ten years he has never missed a match or he has a blog for the club where he works voluntarily and has 50.000 hits per week, one of the most powerful tools for people to share their stories (Woodside, 2010, p. 91), or in the last 12 months he has not bought a pair of jeans but paid his membership fees, or he always defends the club from attacks by opponents. The fan is an ambassador not because his team is winning, as this fan of an underdog team said:

*“I’m an ambassador for my team because everywhere I go I have the same principles: be honest, work hard, respect everyone. And these are the principles of my club, like mine.” (A)*

And this feeling of being different needs sacrifice, which is an antecedent of being a fan, not a consequence. The sacrifice of being available to be with the club, or not going to family parties, or paying membership fees each year, etc. This feeling of being different is also included in a dimension of devotion (part of religiosity and something sacred).

**Personal risk** is another facet. It is something the fan takes for granted. Similarly to a person driving a car, he can have an accident but does not consider this (only thinking he is at point A and wants to go to point B and the car will take him there), every time a fan watches a football match he takes some risks for granted. But, being a fan, risks are everywhere, for example:

a) even when the fan does not go to the stadium and watches the match in a cafe where his team is not favoured, there is a risky situation;

b) or just the fact of wearing some clothes with colours that represent other clubs, the fan can have problems;

c) finally, the simple fact of leaving a flag or some identification in his car is a potential problem, depending on the area and if that day there was a match with a controversial result.

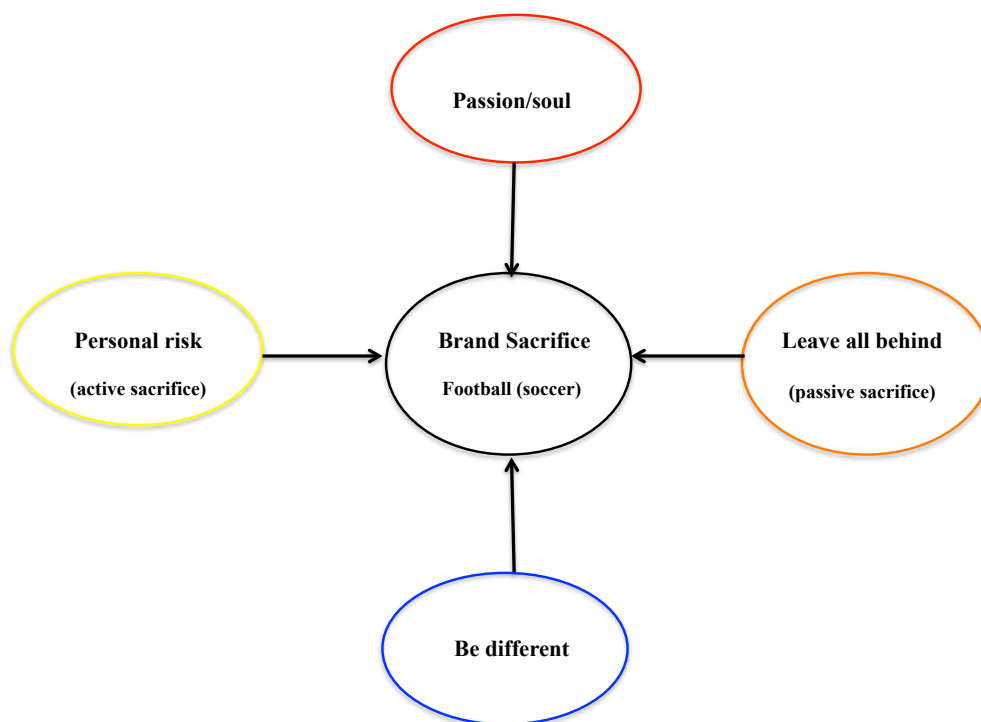
What we mean is that, for a fan, risks are like radio waves, they are everywhere. You just need an antenna to feel them. In this case the antenna is being a fan. It is also curious that overcoming phobias (like travelling by plane) or physical sacrifices (walking kilometres on crutches) are aspects that highlight the differentiating condition of the supporter that does everything for the club. It is an active sacrifice, when someone engages in an undesired activity.

*“I went to see Rosenborg-FC Porto, I travelled in one day 10 hours by plane and I panic in planes. I make this sacrifice on behalf of FC Porto.” (OL)*

The fear of being attacked, fights and risking their lives is part of the sacrifice made to the club, by being present. Situations range from emotional fear (being in a minority in the stadium, hearing songs and visual threats) to physical fear (fleeing from situations of possible attacks) or situations of mutual physical aggression. The risk is mainly present when visiting other stadiums, both inside and outside the ground. This kind of risk is one factor distinguishing the true believer, one who is not afraid to be afraid. Fans have the feeling they are part of the experience, they contribute to creating the events and sustain the magic.

Figure 29 summarizes the four facets found, differentiating the facet of Personal risk as active sacrifice and Leave everything behind as passive sacrifice, as we understand that Personal risk requires engaging in an undesirable activity (such as travelling by plane for someone who has a fear of flying) and Leave everything behind is more a characteristic of forgoing a desired activity (such as missing a relation’s birthday celebrations).

**Fig. 29. Four facets relationship.**

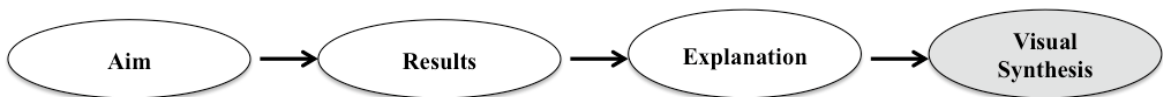


*Source: own elaboration*

**Leave everything behind** includes family, professional or personal life. Leaving the family behind and travelling for many hours in a bus, leaving work early or not going to work, or even closing business are characteristics of leaving everything behind. The stress and uncertainty of the result is part of the show, creating an emotional state with major repercussions for the fan’s behaviour. Not being present on family birthdays or important

dates is all done to follow the activities of the club. It is more of a passive sacrifice, as when someone forgoes a desired activity.

*“My daughter knows that I love her. And I’m with her every day of my life. But she also knows that FC Porto is an important part of my life. And, if by chance on any birthday of hers, FC Porto is playing that same day, she understands why I’m not there with her. Because I’m with her every day, and exceptionally, FC Porto plays on her birthday. And I don’t think it’s fair to ask me to give up that match just to be at her birthday party.” (H)*

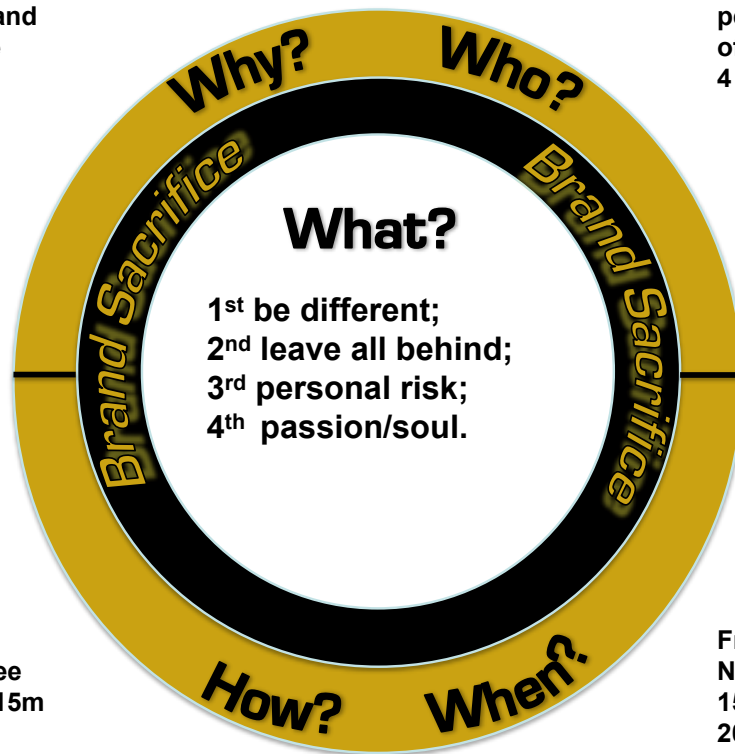


Finally, as a summary, we present the whole process of Study 1 (see fig 30).

**Fig. 30. Study 1 diagram.**

Start to have a general idea and screening the fans.

Reference by peers, 97 fans of 7 clubs from 4 divisions.

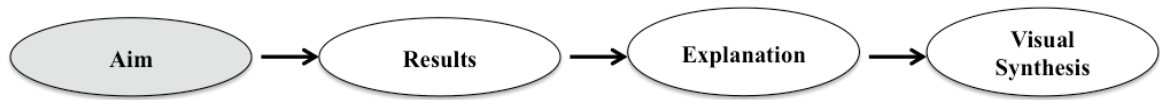


Telephone interview, three questions, 5-15m time.

From 1 November to 15 December 2012.

Source: own elaboration.

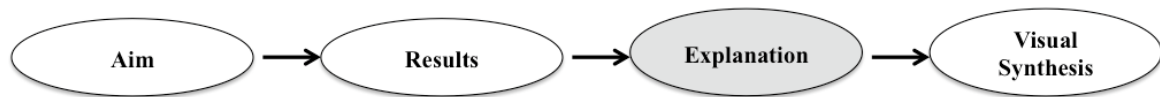
**7.2 - Study 2:** four themes about football and fans' characteristics.



For Study 2 we had two major aims: (1) search for a different perspective to understand the phenomenon; (2) obtain a global idea about football and fans.



The results are as follows: a Global Vision concerning four themes: Democracy, Life, Media and Twilight Zone and a Strong focus on other four facets of: Family influence, the Social aspect, Emotions and Consequences at a Personal Level, respectively.



The reason the term Global Vision was chosen was: firstly, due to the fact that all the experts were very specific about those terms in a global and universal way (definition and construct); secondly, because it is a trend from a global to an individual perspective, from general to particular.

The reason for choosing the term Strong focus is because these terms are more individual in a sense that they start from the individual to the world, i.e., from the personal world to the exterior world.

Before explaining the results, a brief note about the definition and construct used here. By definition, we understand that the words used by the interviewees clearly define the spectrum they are speaking about, and we can state it is a clear definition of the word in question. A construct is understood as something more global, wide-ranging and complex, being a set of ideas and concepts that, when linked, all refer to the same subject.

The first Global Vision is **Democracy**. Why is football so important in our society? Democracy is one of the keys to begin to understand football and its importance and scope. In football, the word democracy can be defined as follows, as the journalist said:

*“Football is so democratic. The most popular sport in the world: it’s easy to play, you don’t need to be specifically tall, or fast, or need a lot of equipment ... Football is the exercise of democracy.”*

But democratic in what sense? What do the experts mean by that, as a construct? For the football analyst:

*“no age, no race, no religion, no social status ... During the game everybody is made of the same essence and all are suffering for the club ... The emotional part democratizes, football is not a mathematical problem.”*

So Democracy is the first global vision. Democracy is essential to life and people fight and die because of democracy's importance in their lives. And the use of democracy in football is something to note, as the philosopher argues:

*“Being superior, more powerful is not a guarantee of victory ... As a popular activity, football makes people more equal ... Sport in general and football in particular provides educational spaces like no other area of knowledge provides, more than Mathematics or Languages.”*

**Life** comes next. What do the experts mean by Life? As a definition, the football analyst affirms:

*“Football is as natural as breathing ... Football is oxygen.... I cannot imagine my life without football ... Football is life: random, unpredictable, unfair. ... Results in football are dependent on random factors.”*

Life that is perceived not only pragmatically, but also in a more abstract way. There is no life without socialization. A human being cannot live without the love and warmth of his peers. As a construct, for the philosopher:

*“Football has an extraordinary influence worldwide ... Football is present in everybody ... Football progresses, as mankind ... Football is life and if life is not good, it is evident that what is wrong will be reflected in the vision you have of football.”*

**Media.** In an era when we are all surrounded by the media, at anytime and everywhere, the theme was almost an obligatory one. The word media was not well defined or given such powerful examples as the two previous global visions. Probably because it is more a “materialized word”, something we can touch and use, like a tool, contrary to the meaning of democracy and life, both of them more abstract. So considering the construct, for the philosopher:

*“The media is an immense power nowadays ... Football is everywhere now. I think it is exaggerated.”*

For the football analyst, the world has changed.

*“Previously there was less access ... The level of demand is much higher: different channels, television, radio, newspapers, internet ... The facility of information and the massification, or quantity of information are huge aspects of the media nowadays.”*

With personal consequences – the most obvious being a question of timetabling – the importance of the media is something that changed football completely, being a wheel with a life of its own.

Finally, the **Twilight Zone**. There is no definition, similarly to the media, for Twilight Zone because none of the experts said the exact word. But considering the “irrationality”, the “parallel worlds”, the “chaosality” and the “suspension of the rational processes”, we define this global vision with the same name as the American television series, composed of science fiction and abstract ideas, and characterized by great suspense and unexpected conclusions. From the simplicity of the philosopher to the abstraction of other realities quoted by the football analyst, this is probably the most complex and polemical theme. For the philosopher, happiness can not be found in football:

*“The separation of Descartes’ 'mind-body' is a mistake ... Happiness lies beyond football ... In football there is “chaosality” ... Happiness can be found through a great understanding of human life, for the meaning of life. Football is not the cause, it is the consequence.”*

The journalist argues for the separation of football from other things and claims that irrationality is deeply present in football.

*“People became completely irrational in football ... In football, fans suspend rational processes ... It is a question of having a sort of separation inside your brain, two dimensions: ordinary life and football ... Being a fan of a football team is like worshipping inside a secular religion ... Suspension of the rational faculties ... You can remove yourself from the reality of everyday things or get through life and survive ... the time you talk about football has to be a liberation.”*

For the football analyst things are more complicated, more complex than we can imagine.

*“I have always had a passion for the game ... Those who do not feel, do not understand ... Almost all of us have a different parallel existence ... There is the phenomenon of parallel worlds... This is the reality of parallel worlds that exist in another person, or ourselves, physically exactly the same but with a different level of relationship and integration with the world around us. In different situations, or the same ones but with different attitudes.”*

Is there a “second life”? The simplicity of the philosopher is curious, in search of the meaning of life and defining happiness as a whole.

Considering our analysis of the interviews, a **Strong Focus** on four themes’ facets (Family influence, the Social aspect, Emotions and Consequences at a Personal Level) was emphasized by all the participants, mostly from the personal world to the outside world. **Family influence** is so obvious that all admit their fathers had a huge influence on initiating their passion for football, not only because of the game but also all the stories lived around the stadiums, the demonstrations of joy, the trips, the restaurants. **The Social aspect** is also referred to. All say that football gives a collective identity, being tribal. But the football analyst gives us an interesting idea:

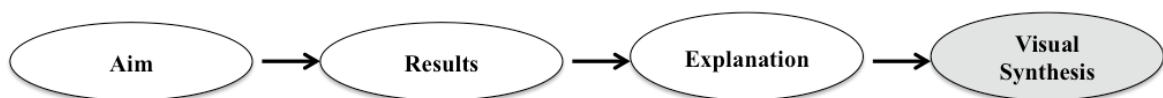
*“The human being needs a brutal form of collective feeling and emotional belonging. And football gives this. Winning in football is to win collectively. Football is more than sharing. It is an achievement you feel goes with you all over the world. In your everyday life, the following day, this state will be reflected in relationships with all others. Football is the great, the dominant, subject of global conversation.”*

At a **Personal level** consequences exist. From the philosopher’s search for happiness to the conditioning during adolescence of the football analyst, the journalist’s opinion is a good example of the importance, individually, of football.

*“Football injects in life not just conversation but also drama, excitement, emotion, and looking forward to things. Fans plan their entire life as a function of that year’s calendar. The level of knowledge is amazing. Everybody feels knowledgeable, informed and able to give an opinion. People don’t know about economics or politics or literature, but everybody is (or thinks they are) a sort of intellectual on football.”*

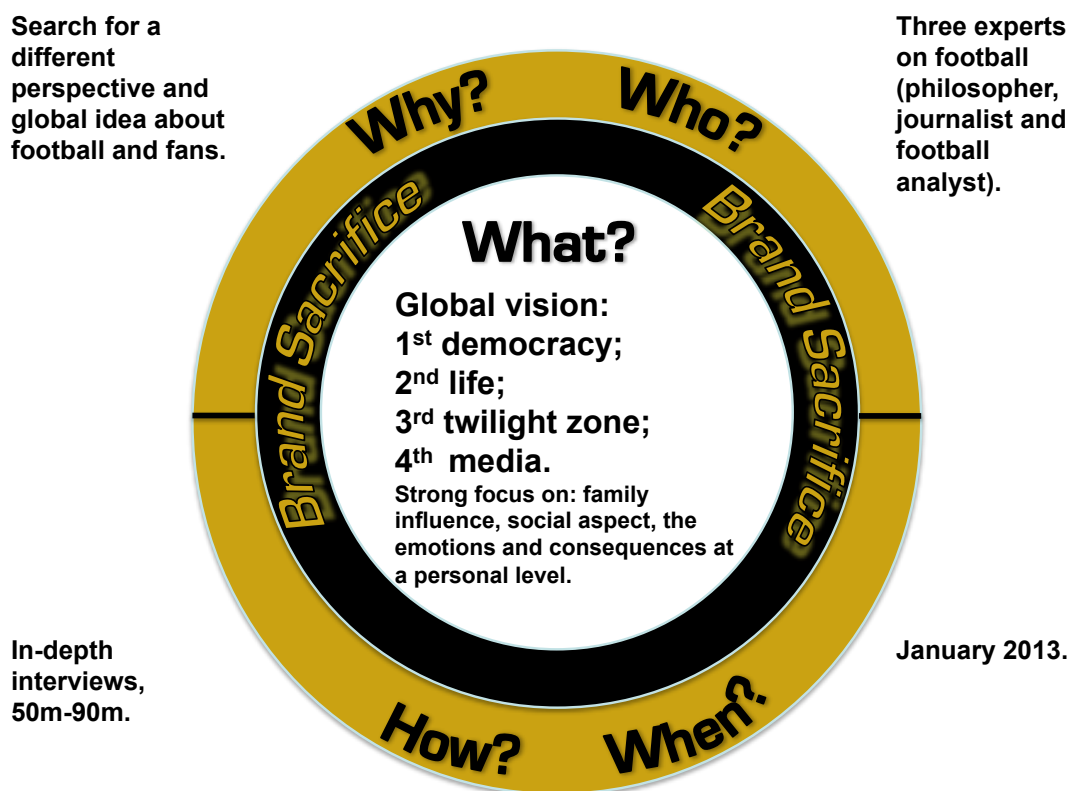
Finally, **Emotions**. Excitement and the return to childhood are important factors in emotions. And once again, the masses, people together. As the football analyst says:

*“We find thrills in our adult lives, we relive our childhood. Everything is possible. In football a player can have a flash of inspiration and decide the game. It is a kind of return to childhood. The engine of football is emotional and football gives you the possibility to channel your emotion. What moves people is the same emotional essence, a communion of emotions. In football there are very few scientific truths. Afterwards, everybody deserves to win.”*



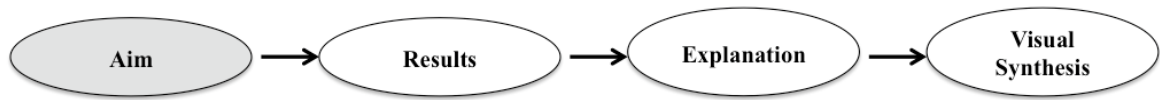
We present the entire process of Study 2 in figure 31.

**Fig. 31. Study 2 diagram.**

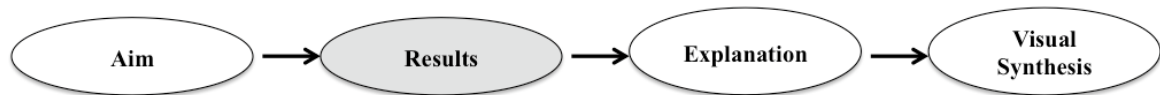


Source: own elaboration

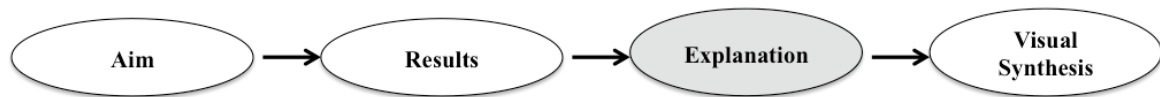
### 7.3 - Study 3: motivations, importance and consequences of being a fan.



We decided on two major aims for Study 3: (1) narrowing Brand Sacrifice in fans to one club (FC Porto); (2) all over the country.



Four main themes emerged from the analysis of verbatim transcripts of in-depth interviews and involve analysis using NVIVO: 1) what led me to be a fan, 2) motivations, 3) the importance of the club in my life, 4) consequences of my fan condition.



We now present the final results with exemplifying quotations from some interviewees. We use various, duly explained tables in order to keep the reader permanently contextualized about what he is reading.

First, we present a general framework, with the four main themes and respective sub-themes, as well as the sources and their percentages (of the sub-themes and of total references). This framework gives us a global panorama of Study 3 (see tab. 10). **In this framework, the four Main Themes appear in the order they emerged in the literature and data extrapolation.**

**Tab. 10. Global summary of Main Themes, Sub-Themes, Sources and Percentages.**

Main Themes	Sub-Themes	Sources	% References of Sub- Themes	% Total References
<b>What led me to be a fan</b>				<b>17%</b>
	Family influence	80%	41%	
	Hidden	66%	36%	
	Culture	30%	23%	
<b>Motivations</b>				<b>18%</b>
	The emotion	80%	29%	
	The need	65%	44%	
	Hatred to the opponents	41%	15%	
	Pass energy to the team	36%	12%	
<b>Importance of the club in my life</b>				<b>22%</b>
	Social	88%	28%	
	Forms character	71%	32%	
	Pride	65%	27%	
	Escape	35%	13%	
<b>Consequences of my fan condition</b>				<b>43%</b>
	Personal	100%	54%	
	Financial	58%	15%	
	Family	58%	11%	
	Life planning	58%	8%	
	Job	43%	5%	
	Friends	29%	7%	

Source: own elaboration.

To explain the most important aspects of each Main Theme and Sub-Theme, presentation of the results is divided. First, there is an overall appreciation and comparison with the findings of Study 2. Then, in more detail, each Main Theme is analyzed, explaining it and using interviewee quotes. Therefore, considering the results globally, all the Sub-Themes (17) are grouped in four Main Themes (tab. 11)..

**Tab. 11. Main Themes.**

Main Themes	Sources	% Total References
Consequences of my fan condition	100%	43%
The importance of the club in my life	100%	22%
Motivations	100%	18%
What led me to be a fan	100%	17%
		100%

Source: own elaboration.

These four Sub-Themes are responsible for 42% of all references of the fans interviewed, which gives us a clear idea of the weight and importance of these topics to them. In addition to the four Main Themes (see tab. 12), only one Sub-Theme (Personal) was mentioned by 100% of the sources and the other three Sub-Themes had high scores.

**Tab. 12. Sub-Themes most mentioned by Sources.**

Sub-Themes	Sources	% Total References
Personal	100%	22%
Social	88%	7%
Family influence	80%	7%
The emotion	80%	6%

*Source: own elaboration.*

These four Sub-Themes emerged from the data and are the result of the process (as described in Methodology). But curiously, they were focused by the three participants of Study 2 as a strong focus. Even if the author of both studies is the same, there are some aspects that must be taken into account:

- . Study 2 was made before Study 3;
- . the expert in NVIVO helping in Study 2 was different from the one in Study 3;
- . in Study 3 the process was much more complex than in Study 2, considering the number of interviews made and the content (auto-driving);
- . with the exception of the researcher, none of the elements of the Study 3 process had any knowledge that Study 2 had been made or of its results, meaning that they worked on a piece of “original marble”. Briefly, see table 13.

**Tab. 13. Main Themes and Sub-Themes.**

Main Themes	Sub-Themes	Sources	% Total References
Consequences of my fan condition	Personal	100%	<b>22%</b>
Importance of the club in my life	Social	88%	<b>7%</b>
What led me to be a fan	Family influence	80%	<b>7%</b>
Motivations	The emotion	80%	<b>6%</b>

*Source: own elaboration.*

The Main Themes will now be analyzed in greater detail, one by one, beginning with the first theme (see tab. 14).

**Tab. 14. Analytical analysis of the Main Theme “What led me to be a fan”.**

Main Theme	Sub-Themes	Sources	% References of Sub-Themes	% Total References
<b>What led me to be a fan</b>				<b>17%</b>
	Family influence	80%	41%	
	Hidden	66%	36%	
	Culture	30%	23%	

Source: own elaboration.

The theme **What led me to be a fan** is where the Family influence acquires special importance as the main cause of being a fan. This influence can be through parents, grandparents or uncles but has a direct relationship with the fact of being a fan. The passion for football can function as an element of unity among the various family members as well as giving an insight into the family’s improved quality of life.

*“Sunday afternoon game at the stadium, and I was always there holding my grandfather’s hand. My grandfather was my life reference” (AS).*

On the other hand, there are several testimonies that focus on notable events to explain why they are fans nowadays. It is not the fact of being a man, some can remember moments that appeal to a hidden side,

*“The sound of boots going through the tunnel to enter the field. The ground was cement. I was seven years old, with my father and his friend, the head of the club’s football department at the time, and I have never forgotten that sound to this day, a magical sound” (LO).*

Others add nothing, unable to verbalize what they feel:

*“I’m a fan because I am, I can’t, I don’t know how to explain” (AA).*

Although the family aspect is very important, the hidden factor, not knowing how to explain why they started liking the club, is something very present in this type of supporter.

We now deal with the second theme (see tab. 15).

**Tab. 15. Detailed analysis of the Main Theme “Motivations”.**

Main Theme	Sub-Themes	Sources	% References of Sub-Themes	% Total References
<b>Motivations</b>				<b>18%</b>
	The emotion	80%	29%	
	The need	65%	44%	
	Hatred to the oponents	41%	15%	
	Pass energy to the team	36%	12%	

Source: own elaboration.

In **Motivations** two sub-themes emerge, although with different importance in the data. “The emotion” with 80% of sources and 29% of references and “The need” with 65% of sources (less) but 44% of references (more). “The emotion” with 80% of sources is, together with “Family influence”, the aspect with the third highest percentage after “Personal” (100%) and “Social” (88%). The emotional aspect is well expressed here:

*“There is no hesitation between going to the christening party of my niece or going to the game. The game, of course!” (CP).*

“The need” is second with the highest percentage of references of the sub themes, being the second biggest contributor to the percentage of total references (about 8%). To the question of why he sacrificed time he could spend with the family to watch club games, the answer could not be clearer:

*“I feel the need” (N).*

If the emotional factor stands out, something which is natural and well-known, the aspect of need is something new. Feeling an emotional, even physical, need distinguishes and differentiates this type of supporter.

The third theme (see tab. 16) gives rise to aspects related to the club’s importance in the fan’s life.

**Tab. 16. Detailed analysis of the Main Theme “Importance of the club in my life”.**

Main Theme	Sub-Themes	Sources	% References of Sub-Themes	% Total References
<b>Importance of the club in my life</b>				<b>22%</b>
	Social	88%	28%	
	Forms character	71%	32%	
	Pride	65%	27%	
	Escape	35%	13%	

Source: own elaboration.

**The importance of the club in my life** is the main theme with the second highest total percentage of references in the research (22%). The fact of the human being feeling he has bonds with others is important. Three sub-themes stand out. “Social”, while socializing, the fellowship, the enjoyment of life emotions together, sharing common goals, experiencing a union.

*“Is not the same thing to watch the match at home, even if with friends. You must be there” (RS).*

“Forms the character” as the essence and pillar in an individual’s formation, in the way of being, the principles of life.

*“I was nineteen years without a major victory and I never stopped being a fan of my club. It made me stronger, more resilient, and even more of a fan” (JO).*

“Pride” in the aspect of consolidating the individual as a human being, in his personal identity, how the individual is in society and relates to others.

*“Being a fan of my club is to be a working person, it is speaking louder than the others, it is having your own ideas and defending them without fear” (JPR).*

Although with a lower number of sources, “Forms the character” has a higher percentage of references, something that helps to explain the structuring importance of the club in forming and subsequently developing the supporter.

Finally, the fourth theme (see tab. 17), showing the consequences of this way of being and respective behaviour in relation to the club of the heart.

**Tab. 17. Detailed analysis of the Main Theme “Consequences of my fan condition”.**

Main Theme	Sub-Themes	Sources	% References of Sub-Themes	% Total References
<b>Consequences of my fan condition</b>				<b>43%</b>
	Personal	100%	54%	
	Financial	58%	15%	
	Family	58%	11%	
	Life planning	58%	8%	
	Job	43%	5%	
	Friends	29%	7%	

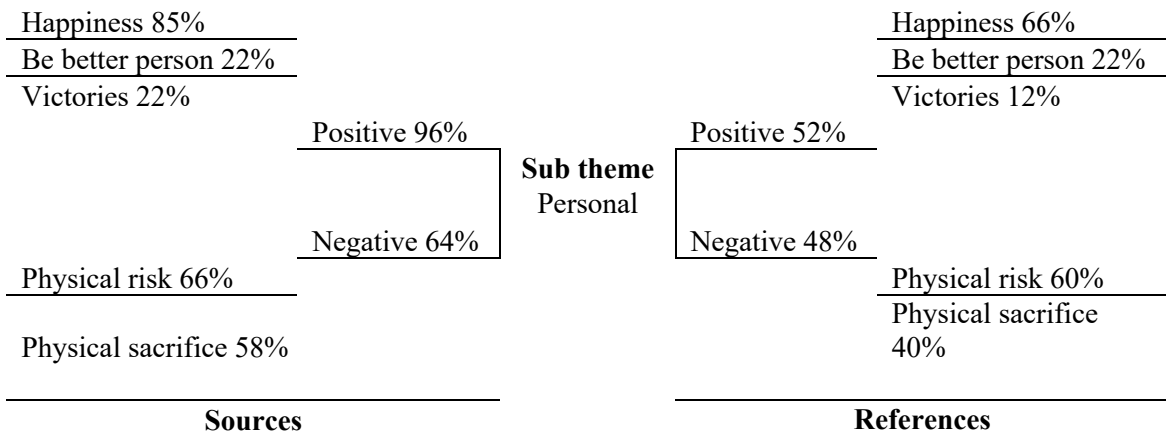
*Source: own elaboration.*

For the main theme **Consequences of my fan condition**, we will present a deep analysis, considering its importance in the global results – with 43% of all total references and the only one with a sub-theme (Personal) with 100% of main theme sources, i.e., more than 20% of all references in the research. Football helps to give people a view of the world and include them in it, providing them with an identity. This is a complex theme, with almost half the total references. The consequences include the personal universe, the circle of friends, work and family. Six sub-themes emerged from the analysis of verbatim transcripts of in-depth interviews and involve analysis using NVIVO: (a) personal, (b) financial, (c) family, (d) life planning, (e) job and (f) friends (see tab. 17).

The most mentioned theme of all is Personal. Table 17 shows that all sources have focused on this theme (100%) and more than half the total number of all references (54%).

Therefore, Personal was split into two sub-categories, focusing on the positive and negative aspects and dividing them in the most relevant issues, for the sources and the references (see fig. 32).

**Fig. 32. Sources and References of the Sub-Theme Personal**



*Source: own elaboration.*

Regarding Sources, the positive aspects are noteworthy, happiness appearing as a key factor. For the negative aspects, the values of Physical risk and Physical sacrifice are approximately equal and that can be explained by the fact that Physical risk is taken for granted.

Concerning References, starting with the topic of Personal, the positive aspects of the importance of happiness is distinguished by how the fans feel when they are with the team, the joy of victory, the welfare provided by accompanying their team. Among the negative aspects, the Physical risks are the most frequently cited factor, either in actual or potential aggression, but also the lack of security in the stadiums, which makes each game a risk. The Physical sacrifices are very evident in the infrastructural conditions (travel, meals, overnight stays). Becoming a fan has a major impact on satisfaction and behavior intentions.

So considering references, on the negative side the Physical risk is something that all fans take for granted and as “part of the job” (which does not mean they are daredevils or mad, risking their life at each game), due to the very emotions of the game and a whole set of structural factors (crowds, travelling, stadium infrastructure). In the case of Physical sacrifices, consequences can come from the most intimate sphere and be revealed in materialization of that fan condition, as this supporter confirms:

*“I suffer from claustrophobia, I go to the stadium early and leave later than everyone else. I suffer a lot, experience moments of great anxiety. For me it is not easy to go everywhere with the club because I have a fear of flying and the night before I can’t sleep. Just so you can see how much of a fan I am, to follow the team, in one day, I travelled 8 hours by plane. I only miss games if I really can’t. For example, at away games, I’ve seen games “camouflaged” among the opposing fans, not to subject myself to the police cordons formed for fans because of this claustrophobia thing. In these situations I always have to be aware, never saying or showing that I’m not one of them.” (LO)*

On the positive side, Happiness stands out with 66%. Happiness that is intrinsic to the supporter, who feels victories as his own, who sees the club’s glories as his own, who confirms the greatness of a club from a disadvantaged region compared to the capital, year after year, in a continuity and a character trait which after so many years of consecutive failure, finally triumphs.

*“Year after year we were persistent, we were always with the team. The team’s victories are our victories too because we all made what the club is today possible.” (JO) their glory is my glory.*

In Financial, the act of putting money aside as soon as the wage is received is common, to guarantee access to the game, to be with the team. Not buying clothes or eating a meal are some of the smallest sacrifices made to be with a team. Or adjusting accompanying the team to new family situations:

*“I take a part of my salary to follow the team. But it is not easy ... I go to a lot of games abroad and as we (me and my friends) didn’t have enough money, we slept in the airport. Now I can’t go to all the games like before, because I have another child and more expenses, I have to readjust.” (AS)*

For the Family theme, some consider that the love they feel for the club is as important as the love they feel for the family. To watch a match, it is normal to leave the wife alone in

the house, but other examples clearly demonstrate the importance of being with the team: lying to mothers to go to a high-stake game, cancelling a pre-arranged date or family gatherings that do not take place due to the game.

*“My mother was only seen by the heart doctor after the Champion’s League game. Before, I had no time to accompany her. You know, the club needs me.” (IS)*

The Life planning theme appears as something intrinsic to a fan’s life. The competition schedule shapes his life, either personally or professionally. Everything is planned for the entire season.

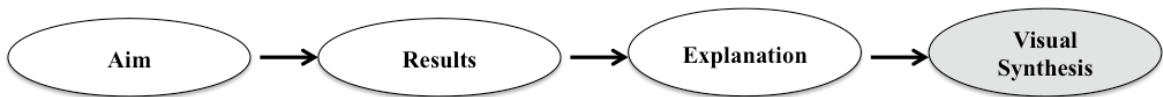
*“I make my living depending on the team’s calendar. My daily life depends on the club: the newspapers I buy, the TV programmes I watch, the schedule of the games. It’s normal for me. I only go on holiday when there are no games, after the season. I’ve been doing this for many years...” (IS)*

The Job theme is a crucial one: without money the fan cannot follow the team, so the job is really important to make money to be able to follow the club (and also for the family). However, the fan does almost everything to be present, watch the game, accompany the team. Changing shifts is a constant in order to always attend games, meetings changed or post-phoned, leaving work early and even inventing situations in order to be able to follow the team.

*“My holidays are when the team plays abroad and I never explain to my boss why I book the holidays so suddenly. It’s better that way.” (RS)*

Concerning Friends, this theme is viewed by the fact there are moments of tension and discomfort during conviviality and the fact that a real fan, to be with his club, leaves friends/family behind even on dates that are important for the latter. This relationship between the brand and the fan exists where the brand is stronger than friendship.

*“If my team is playing, a real friend never invites you to do anything because he knows that I will not. After matches discussions are part of the routine, even with best friends. But it’s ok.” (JA)*

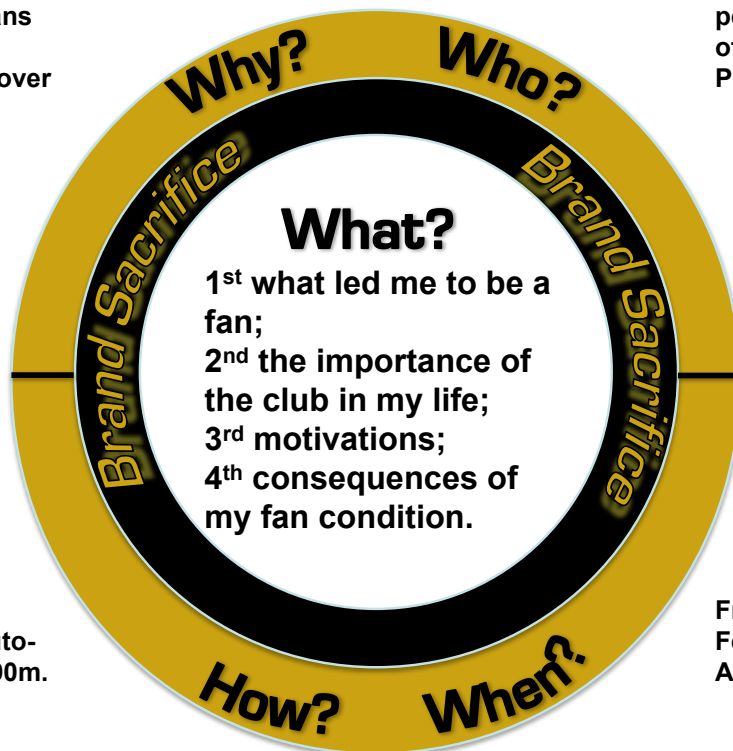


The development of Study 3 in figure 33.

Fig. 33. Study 3 diagram.

To try to understand fans emotions and behaviors all over the country.

Reference by peers, 28 fans of 1 club: FC Porto.

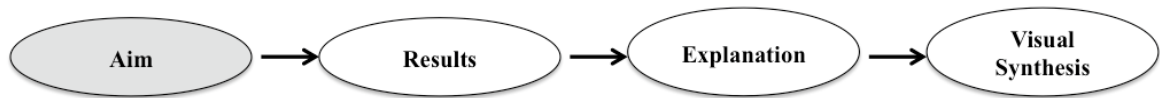


In-depth interviews, auto-diving, 50m -90m.

From 1st February to 30 April 2013.

Source: own elaboration.

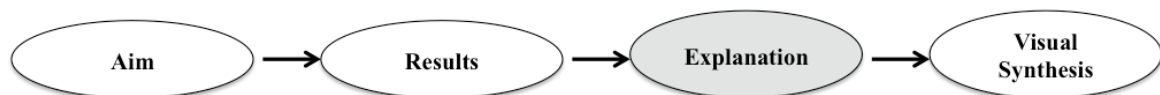
#### 7.4 - Study 4: consolidation of Study 3.



For the first time in the studies so far, in Study 4 we have three major aims: (1) validate the four themes of Study 3; (2) understand fans' differences according to places; (3) make a final list of fans.

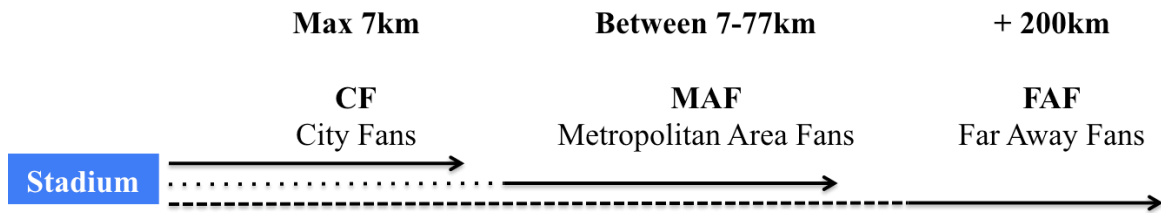


For this focus group (FG), the first main objective was accomplished. The four main themes that emerged from Study 3: 1) what led me to be a fan, 2) motivations, 3) the importance of the club in my life, 4) consequences of my fan condition were all validated by the whole focus group (3) and for 100% of the participants (20). We follow Shiu et al. (2009) pursuing the preliminary insights of Grounded Theory into validation of the previously established themes. Also we accomplish the objective to determine the type of fan according to his geographical location, achieving success in objective two. The third main objective, having a directory for a final list of fans, was also accomplished. With the detailed analysis of this research, the guidelines to follow for the fifth and last research are now very clear. Once again we followed Shiu et al. (2009, p. 173), aiming to obtain "preliminary insights into the personality, attitudinal, emotional and motivational factors" that influence fan behaviours.



In relation to the first main objective, the themes of: 1) what led me to be a fan, 2) motivations, 3) the importance of the club in my life, 4) consequences of my fan condition, were launched by coming from previous work and so validated by matching/linking of the respective previous studies. For a simpler explanation of the validation of the four themes in question, what we did was to take each theme and define a construct of the theme itself, based on the preceding studies and the respective literature review. We then present the work according to relevant quotes from each focus group in relation to each validated theme, considering the construct drawn up. In figure 34 we recall the definition of each focus group.

**Fig. 34. Definition of each focus group.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

For the theme of **What led me to be a fan** the construct defined was: family influences, memories or no explanation for becoming a fan. There is no particular difference concerning the fan's geographical location, so the construct fits. See the example of an example from an element of FAF:

*“It is inseparable from my grandfather, the closest person in my life who instilled in me values of the city and the region.”*

For the theme of **Motivations** the construct defined was: the emotions experienced and a sense of needing to live them. The personal identity, the conviviality, the excitement and the fact of living it are some of the reasons motivating fans, the construct being appropriate. As an MAF supporter says:

*“Being a FC Porto fan is part of me, it's inseparable. It's a social cloak that I wear, I am very proud of that, it's my second skin. It is an internal motivation and I feel a great sense of well-being.”*

For the theme of **The importance of the club in my life** the construct defined was: the social aspect, the connection to others, the voluntary act of being a fan. The development of the human being and his personality, the bond with other like-minded people, character traits are components of that construct. A CF supporter characterizes it:

*“My father taught me about resilience, how to put up with defeat. When I was young my neighbours annoyed me because they were Benfica supporters and they won all the time. My dad told me to be brave and always follow FC Porto. It was an important character trait he gave me.”*

Finally, for the theme of **Consequences of my fan condition** the construct defined was: personally identifying with high costs in all aspects of life – financial, family, calendar, job and friends. Being a fan affects all areas of the human being’s development. The statement by this CF is very clear:

*“The whole family supports FC Porto, also my wife (and her family). The youngest who's dating someone from a family who are not FC Porto supporters knows it's not welcome in the family and from the outset it creates a filter.”*

Considering the second main objective, we try to determine fans’ differences according to their place of residence (Shiu et al., 2009) and considerable differences and characteristics were found in the three groups. Table 18 summarizes the characteristics arrived at for each focus group (FG) concerning definition of their elements considering the FG they are part of. It should be noted that a limit of four characteristics per FG was set, and only the characteristics validated by 100% of the elements of each FG appear.

**Tab. 18. Global summary of Themes from each focus group (FG).**

Focus Group	Characteristics	% References
<b>CF-City Fans</b> Live in the city or no more than 7km from the stadium.	Need to be a member Attend the stadium to support the team Trait of character	<b>100%</b>  All components of the FG agreed.
<b>MAF-Metropolitan Area Fans</b> Live between 7km-77km from the stadium.	FC Porto as a regional force Distinguished from others Used to winning, victories Something cultural	
<b>FAF-Far Away Fans</b> Live + 200 km from the stadium	Representatives High costs at all levels (emotional, work, etc) Distance (time and money) Orphans	

*Source: own elaboration.*

Now we will analyse each FG, characteristic by characteristic. For each characteristic we present a brief explanation, followed by a quote exemplifying the finding.

Concerning the FG of CF, three major characteristics were totally agreed on by the participants (see tab. 19).

**Tab. 19. Characteristics of the FG of City Fans.**

Focus Group	Characteristics
CF-City Fans (live in the city or no more than 7km from the stadium)	Obligation to be a member Be present in the stadium to support the team Trait of character

*Source: own elaboration.*

The characteristic of **Obligation to be a member** means that all the participants in the focus group considered that being a member of FC Porto is something that is not an option.

*“Is not a question of thinking about being a member. You must be. You must do it because the club needs you, it will be stronger, again and again, day by day.” (T)*

The characteristic of **Be present in the stadium to support the team** is also something that is unquestionable. The club needs a full stadium of people cheering for the team, supporting, shouting against the opponents, creating a dark atmosphere for them and a helpful context for the team.

*“Being a member and not going to the stadium is not enough. The club needs us to be present. To be there, in rain or wind, the players feel us. And play better with our presence. ” (RC)*

**Trait of character** is the last of the three characteristics receiving 100% agreement among participants. Being proud of belonging to a club that was mistreated by politics for so many years, that fought against injustice, a club where, for so many years, victory was absent. And against everybody else, FC Porto rises up and is one of the most important clubs in the world. That is something not all can achieve.

*“We, the real fans of FC Porto, are made of more resilience than others. So many years losing, and always having faith, never giving up. That forges the character of each and every one of us.” (P)*

Regarding the FG of MAF, table 20 presents the respective characteristics.

**Tab. 20. Characteristics of the FG of Metropolitan Area Fans.**

Focus Group	Characteristics
MAF-Metropolitan Area Fans (live between 7km-77km from the stadium)	FC Porto as a regional force Distinguished from others Used to winning, victories Something cultural (resilience)

*Source: own elaboration.*

Four major characteristics were totally agreed on by the participants of the MAF focus group. The characteristic of **FC Porto as a regional force** means the fact FC Porto gives “weight” to the region, being a voice that brings more power to the region, one of the poorest in Europe. And with FC Porto winning nationally and internationally, the name of the region is everywhere. And respect is also important.

*“I was in Norway and people, when they hear the name of Porto, they shout: Porto, FC Porto, champions’ league champion.” (M).*

The characteristic of **Distinguished from others** has a historic reason. Even if in the last thirty years FC Porto has been the country’s most successful club and one of the most successful in Europe and all over the world, in Portugal, Benfica and Sporting have more fans. This is for historical reasons, political support and media coverage that almost ostracizes FC Porto. So for these fans, supporting FC Porto is something that distinguishes them from the others – the majority of the population, when they are in a minority in their workplaces, cities, etc.

*“I’m not like the others, I’m not a sheep. I’m different, we are different.” (S)*

**Used to winning, victories** is more vehemently pronounced by the younger members (under 30). The oldest mention that even with the club winning so much, they can never forget the sense of history but that these three decades gave them, memories they will never forget.

*“Now we win much more than we lose. And that is reflected in our personality and behavior.” (C)*

**Something cultural** is the last of the four characteristics to receive 100% agreement among the participants. How to behave in the stadium and in normal life, being proud of the club’s heritage, speaking louder than others, being friends with other fans, are some of the traits that are part of FC Porto fans’ culture.

*“It’s something that is nurtured, that passes from generation to generation.” (O)*

Finally, considering the FG of FAF, four major characteristics were totally agreed on by the participants (see tab. 21).

**Tab. 21. Characteristics of the FG of Far Away Fans.**

Focus Group	Characteristics
FAF-Far Away Fans (live + 200km from the stadium).	Representatives High costs at all levels (emotional, work, etc) Distance (time and money) Orphans

*Source: own elaboration.*

As with MAF, four major characteristics were totally agreed on by the participants of the FAF focus group. The characteristic of **Representatives** has historic reasons. In a country where, even after thirty years of victories, the club is third in Portugal in terms of fan numbers:

*“FC Porto knows that I represent the club here. All the time, everywhere, you can’t be a fan on match days, and after and before that be another person! No, that doesn’t happen with real fans like me.” (M)*

The characteristic of **High costs at all levels (emotional, work, etc)** is also rooted in historic reasons. Even if in the last thirty years FC Porto has been the most successful club in the country and one of the most successful in Europe and all over the world, in Portugal, Benfica and Sporting have more fans. That is for historic reasons, political support and media coverage that almost ostracizes FC Porto. So for these fans, being a FC Porto supporter is something that distinguishes them from the others – the majority of the population, when they are in minority in their workplaces, cities, etc.

*“When FC Porto loses, for a few days I don’t have a normal social life (café, walking after dinner), because I know that I will have problems. They are waiting to argue with me and to make fun of me. And I can’t stand it.” (N)*

**Distance (time and money)** is increasingly referred to, considering three factors: the introduction of motorway tolls (which used to be free), the high price of petrol and salary cuts (due to the crisis). So now the fan does not go with just one other person in the car (or alone) because he wants to share the expenses with more fans and reduce his personal cost. Also, he will take longer because sometimes he will take a secondary road instead of the motorway. Or he will go by bus or train, but that takes even longer. Even with respect to food, habits are changing due to the crisis: he will often have a picnic.

*“With the wage cuts, I can’t follow the club as I used to. It’s not possible. Distance was always a problem but we managed it. But now it’s difficult.” (C)*

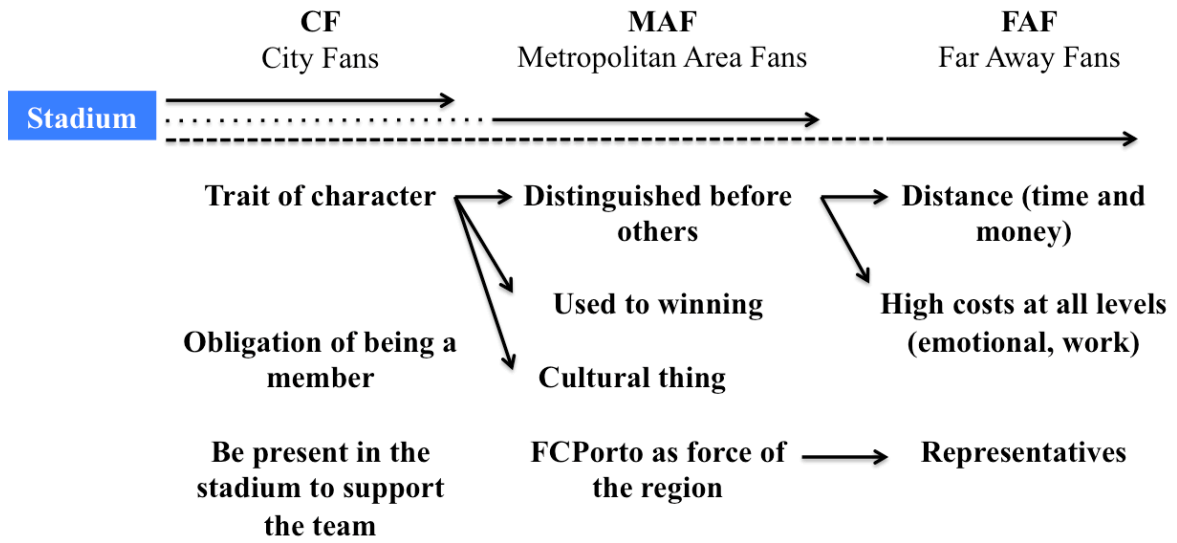
**Orphans** is the last of the four characteristics to receive 100% agreement among the participants. The participants of the focus group feel that the club, on too many occasions, does not care about them. They are almost alone against everybody else, without a hand that protects them. They feel they are abandoned.

*“The club (the administration) on too many occasions gives us the feeling that we are only important to pay the membership fees and attend the games. The rest of the time they don’t care about us. And here, so far away, we suffer a lot to be a member as we are.” (PS)*

Considering the analysis of each focus group individually and the very pronounced differences in each, we think that:

- . the first two characteristics of CF (obligation to be a member and be present in the stadium to support the team) and the last characteristic of FAF (orphans) are the only ones not connected to any other conclusions, with the CF being very important in future work;
- . all the other characteristics in CF, MAF and FAF are, one way or another, connected (see fig. 35).

**Fig. 35. Connections between the characteristics.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

Also, we appreciate the appearance of the fans making up the three FGs, with special mention for the percentage of Study 3, their commitment and efforts to help being very important (tab. 22). In fact, the interviewees who gave us the names and contact numbers called them in our presence, to make sure they would be interested and that we could count on them for the study. Those details made all the difference. Of course, Study 2 with 50% is a very important result too, but the total number of possible participants (4) is much less than in Study 3 (24).

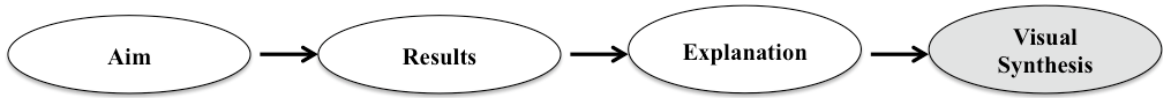
**Tab. 22. Fans' attendance in FGs.**

Study	Possible participants	Appeared in focus group	Percentage
Study 1	26	4	<b>15%</b>
Study 2	4	2	<b>50%</b>
Study 3	24 (11+13)	14 (4+10)	<b>60%</b>

*Source: own elaboration.*

In the analysis of all the focus groups, we always tried to take in the big picture and the intensity of comments, never forgetting the aim of the research, the characteristics of the audience and the format used (Shiu et al., 2009).

Finally, this study gave us greater confidence in drawing up the final framework of fans to interview, bearing in mind the aim to construct a framework of active and passive sacrifices, and to have a definition and construct of sacrifice for a brand, concerning a fan of FC Porto.

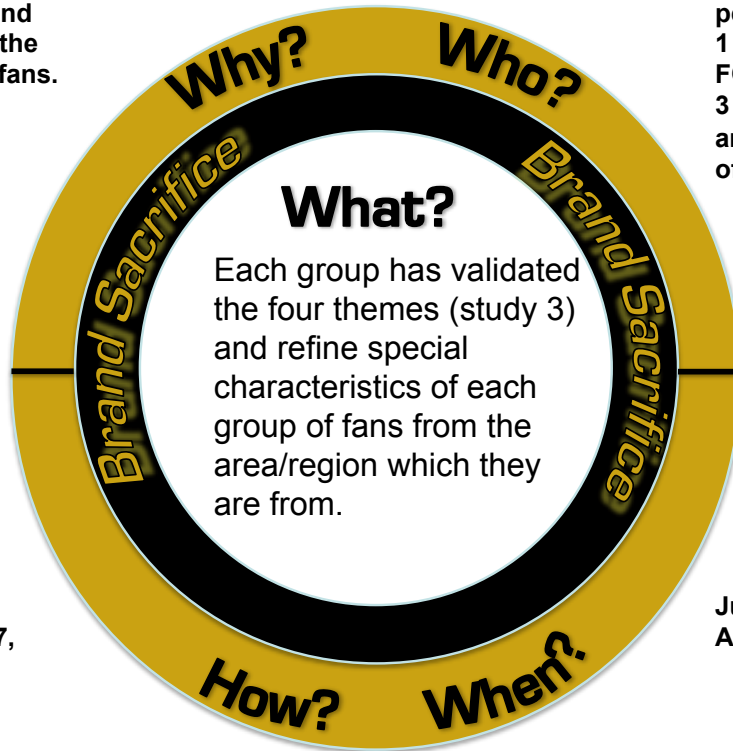


In figure 36 the process of Study 4.

**Fig. 36. Study 4 diagram.**

To validate the four themes and circumscribe the final panel of fans.

Reference by peers, 20 fans, 1 club, FCPorto, from 3 different areas/regions of Portugal.

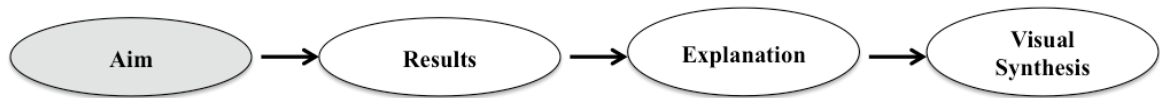


Three focus groups, of 7, 7, and 6 fans respectively, 90m-120m.

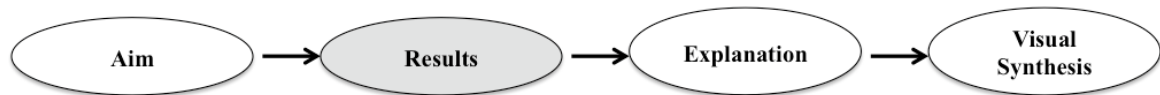
July and August 2013.

*Source: own elaboration.*

### 7.5 - Study 5: passive and active sacrifices.



For this final study, we have two aims: (1) deeply understand the meaning of sacrifice for fans; (2) a grid of active and passive sacrifice.



From the statements by the interviewees in Study 5 and the experience and knowledge accumulated in the course of all the studies, we managed to fulfil both objectives, obtaining a table of active and passive sacrifices as well as a definition and construct of sacrifice.



Our work was based on finding out the most cited words, making a grid of active and passive sacrifice and finally trying to reach a definition and construct of the word of sacrifice. Considering the two objectives (1) deeply understand the meaning of sacrifice for fans (as a definition and as a construct); (2) obtain a grid of passive and active sacrifice, we can say claim to have achieved both, but:

- a) we do not have a definition as a “clear and brief explanation” (“Priberam Dicionário,” 2014) concerning sacrifice;
- b) the various elements forming the sacrifice construct cover vast areas (including the “construction of personality”, “weight of everyday life”, “importance of the club” and the reference to “unique sensations”;
- c) the grid of active and passive sacrifice contains several mixed zones where it is possible to interpret in one way or another.

### Most cited words

This was our first task. To find out not only which were the most cited words but also in which context. We decided on the fifteen most cited words in all twelve interviews. The words were: 1st Porto, 2nd because, 3th I have, 4th very, a lot, 5th football, 6th mine, 7th after, 8th when, 9th also, 10th club, 11th always, 12th say, 13th people, 14th that and 15th stadium. After reading the context of all the words, we decided that:

- . only six were globally consistent with our aim: Porto (1%), I have (0,48%), football (0,43%), club (0,34%), people (0,25%) and stadium (0,25%);
- . all the other words were not focused on one clear direction and so we decided to put them aside;
- . considering the city (Porto) and the club researched (FC Porto), we can say there is a double meaning between the city and the club. When the interviewees mention the word Porto, 0,81% mean the club and 0,19% mean the city. So, we only considered 0,81% and we added 0,34% from the Club, joining both categories;
- . for the purposes of simplicity and uniformity, we use the terminology FC Porto when respondents mention Football Club of Porto, Club, Porto or Team, different words but referring to the same entity.

From the most cited words, tab. 23 presents the five we consider overall most consistent with our objective, as well as their weight (final percentage) in all the interviews held in Study 5.

**Tab. 23. Most cited words.**

Rank	Word	% in all interviews
1	FCPorto	1,15%
3	I have	0,48%
5	Football	0,43%
13	People	0,25%
15	Stadium	0,25%

*Source: own elaboration.*

Having the list of the five most cited words, we now make a deep analysis of each word, with the reference of a construct and the quotes of the interviewees and some explanation/contextualization for each quote. For each word, we develop a construct – a mental construction or a synthesis formed by combining various elements (Priberam, 2014), something which allowed us, from having carried out this study, to understand immediately what the respective word means for the fan in this study, and so we can contextualize or frame it. We now present the word in question the respective construct and explanations, with interviewee quotes.

For the word **FC Porto** the construct is: **The importance of a transversal element in the life of a fan, in all its aspects.**

For some fans, FC Porto is the essential element of life as a whole and in all its fullness. FC Porto is so integrated into the personality and life experience of this fan that he does not contemplate his life without FC Porto.

*“I can’t imagine life without FC Porto, I can’t imagine...” (AL)*

FC Porto appears as an integral part, due to the very essence of the fan, a transversal element during the life of this fan, omnipresent in all stages of life.

*“In my life, in all the moments I’ve ever experienced, there is a common constant denominator at all stages: it is FC Porto which is always present in my essence, rooted in my being.” (FRO)*

FC Porto is a fundamental part of the life of this fan, FRA, equating it to family in its importance, as symbolized by having a tattoo with a dragon embracing his family, which proves just that: the club is an integral part of the family but it also protects family members from all hazards, keeping them all (family and club), always together.

*“The two major concerns, the two most important things are my family and my FC Porto ... a tattoo with a picture of my family and with the symbol of the club embracing us and protecting us.” (FRA)*

If the club unites for some, for others it is a reason for conflict and separation. In some cases, FC Porto takes on such importance that this fan, unemployed, does not live at home

but in a rented room because he did not contribute to the household in favour of following the club everywhere, a situation that caused family disputes, leading not only to leaving home but even breaking off a relationship between daughter and mother. His living conditions are considerably worse and subsistence is difficult, even to the point of eating only bread throughout the day to have money to follow the team.

*“I always have money to go to see FC Porto. I give up other things, do whatever is necessary ... that's why these stresses appear.” (SP)*

For the word **I have** the construct is: **As unconditional strength, characteristic personality trait.**

For some fans the word appears as a single expression, such as strengthening an attitude, an act which has consequences in the formation of identity and fan.

*“My life with FC Porto, there is no comparison ... I go to the games because I have to, I want to and I feel tremendous joy.” (APG)*

The words “I have” is as an expression of a way of being in life, where personal goals merge with those of the club: winning, having won either solely as an individual (pride, being with friends), personal and family (divorce, remarriage and young son, the pursuit of happiness), the professional plan (have more customers) and personal sporting plan (win more titles, winning more competitions).

*“I have my goals and even at my age, 56, I still have more goals. And with FC Porto it's the same, I keep supporting to gain more and more.” (AR)*

This kind of attitude emerges as an addition to the requirement to be present, to support the club, to be another supporting element to achieve victory.

*“Man, because I have to go. It's my obligation to support...” (PB)*

Even as a child, the features are well marked, elements proving that from an early age, FC Porto was already a differentiating element in building the fan's personality. The example of this fan is elucidatory. A brilliant student, the only subject where he once got a fail mark in his entire schooling, was in Portuguese because he “dared” to do an essay about a tragic episode involving a football player of his team, FC Porto. The teacher, incredulously,

before classing it as gibberish, questioned him in front of all the others in the class about why he had wasted time doing this work on someone of little importance, and failed him.

*“My teacher asked me: “- An essay about a football player? How ridiculous... “ So I have this example of writing about Pavão, an incredible player, which demonstrates what I feel for FC Porto.” (AL)*

For the word **Football** the construct is: **Whole phenomenon as the ultimate expression of freedom to the notion of transcendence.**

Football is a place where everything is permitted, where it can give wings to a wide range of behaviours and emotions which, in the course of our daily lives, in society, are prohibited.

*“I have no limits inside a football stadium. There can be. There can be. Inside a football stadium is our very essence.” (PB)*

In this vein, football appears not as an aggregating family element but as something that has to be managed taking into account the different sensitivities and respective responsibilities of each family member (husband and wife) and the relationship with the other direct and indirect elements (children, in-laws, parents, etc.).

*“My wife does not care about football, I have difficulty doing what I do (going to games, devoting myself to the blog, following the team abroad) but I'm managing.” (NN)*

The word football appears here as something more than the club of FC Porto. Football as something broader, more comprehensive, not just focusing on a single reality – FC Porto - but part of something complex, diverse and inclusive.

*“I have a group of friends who always go to the football, and we go together everywhere ... restaurants, cafes, I plan out everything because we are many and consume too much ... not to argue with an opponent.” (FP)*

Finally, there is also the power of football, not only as an element that unites and features in an intense family relationship between father and son, but also as an element that perpetuates this connection, that feeling, conveying continuity beyond physical existence.

*“Until my father died, I never went to football without him. So now in my football games there is the omnipresence of my father, always. I remember like it was*

*yesterday, the first game I went to see without my father: FC Porto - Beira Mar. I couldn't see the game until the end. I left because I could not see the game. It was the first time that I went to see a game without my father present. While my father was alive, I never went to football without my father ... FC Porto is much more than football ... I feel that my father now sees football games through my eyes, he would love to be in cabins, chatting with friends.” (CP)*

For the word **People** the construct is: **Transcends the aspect of club and passes to the city/region, the club becoming a weapon against the injustices felt by the region, the pinnacle of happiness the city/region provides.**

People are a key element in the success of the club, the team, the basis to achieve great things.

*“If none of the Super Dragons were there, neither I nor my brother, if instead of fifty thousand people there were only twenty-five, maybe it would have an influence, and no need to think of any superstition to come to this conclusion...” (FRO)*

Those are people who, regardless of their marked differences, over a short period of time form a community, a group where everyone has the same goal: to help the club.

*“In fact, on the terracing where I am, I think there's more companionship. The whole group stayed in the same part. All in one place. It is a very heterogeneous group of people in everything: residence, age, profession, way of seeing the game, way to express yourself....” (FP)*

People are the element of a region in which FC Porto connects not only dissatisfaction with the injustices the region suffers but also the ultimate expression of joy after victories, celebrated by sport itself and for what it symbolizes against unequal treatment experienced by fans.

*“And the joys of the people of the North were what FC Porto gave them. There is no doubt about that. Expo 98, Lisbon. The Euro 2004 was channeled almost completely to Lisbon. TGV, it's all for Lisbon ... Lisbon, Lisbon. In the north nothing interesting is done. And make no mistake, when FC Porto wins, the whole of the North celebrates.” (AR)*

We have something more extreme, where people are the aggregate of a range of behavioral and emotional situations which, in defense of their cause, can even degenerate into physical violence, where each is a key part of the puzzle.

*“I grew up there, to fight together with people for a common interest, with which we vibrate as much as possible. We do whatever it takes. If we need to use our body, we use it ... people, it’s the people that make the difference.” (PB)*

For the word **Stadium** the construct is: **Stage par excellence of emotions such as aggregating factor and denominator of a collective identity where everyone is important.**

The importance of the stadium is great, with the stadium as a physical place where emotions live, a stage *par excellence* for the fan.

*“For me football is in the stadium, full stop.” (FP)*

The stadium is seen as the clubhouse, as a place that welcomes, supports and encourages its entirety and must be terrifying and deadly to opponents.

*“FC Porto play better in their home stadium ... in addition to unconditional support for our team, we have an obligation to make the hardest possible environment for the opposing team, preventing them from playing well.” (JCS)*

The stadium is an inherent part of the experience of the show. The stadium is a childhood memory. Not just the stadium itself (our own or the opponent’s) but anything that involves this experience: going to the stadium as a child, waking up early to travel to a stadium further away, the thrill of the goals, affectivity takes on a markedly physical form.

*“We began very early to take me to the stadium ... we woke up at six in the morning and we arrived at midnight ... I liked it, travelling to the stadiums ... the goals celebrated in the stadium, the hugs of my father.” (AL)*

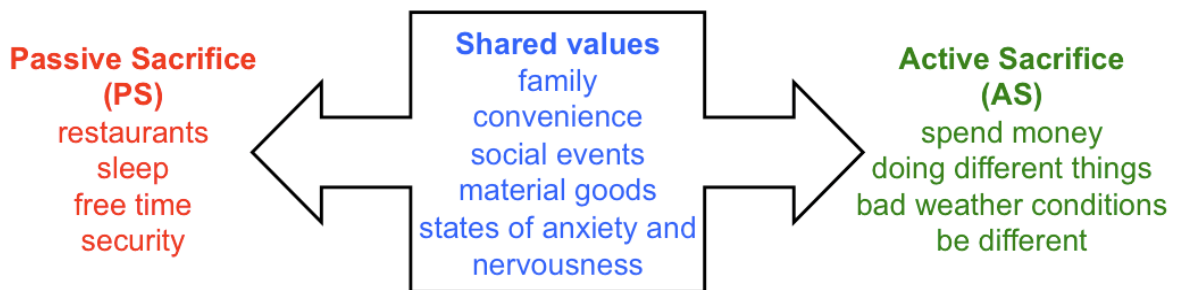
As a fan summarizes, the stadium is a space of unity, where the force of the whole outweighs the individuals, creating a collective force that is crucial to the success of the club.

*“You need to go to the stadium ... FC Porto needs everyone, the club needs everyone. It’s everybody together! We are all important, the fans who are at the stadium supporting.” (APG)*

### Active and Passive sacrifice grid

Forming a grid of Active and Passive Sacrifice was our second task. Considering the quotes of the interviewees, we tried to have examples of some aspects that seem relevant. We follow the definition of Van Lange et al. (1997): Passive Sacrifice (PS) is “when an individual forgoes a desired activity” and Active Sacrifice (AS) is “when an individual engages in an undesirable activity”. Between the types of sacrifice there are some shared values and the fans do not explicitly refer to one sacrifice or another. Figure 37 identifies them.

**Fig. 37. Shared values.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

Concerning the previous studies made we took four aspects into consideration: financial, social, family and personal. These common values are expressed in figure 38.

**Fig. 38. Passive Sacrifice (PS) and Active Sacrifice (AS) - global view.**

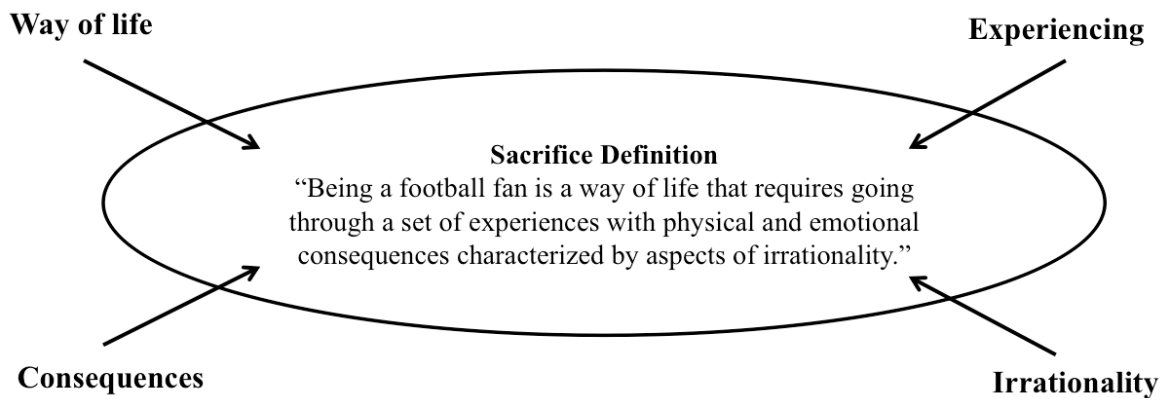
	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Familiar</b>	<b>Personal</b>
<b>A S</b>	Spend money	Be different	Become detached materially	Bad weather conditions
	Cable TV	Do different things		Poor welfare conditions
	Buy shares	States of anxiety Queues, travel	Own opinion	Unpleasant emotional sates
..... <b>Shared values</b> .....				
<b>P S</b>	Convenience	Social events Sleep	Familiar environment	Safety conditions
	Material goods	Uninhibited social life	Important family dates	Family
	Restaurants	Family	Free time	Security
	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Familiar</b>	<b>Personal</b>

*Source: own elaboration.*

### Sacrifice definition

For the football fan, the definition of sacrifice is as follows: “Being a football fan is a way of life that requires going through a number of experiences, with physical and emotional consequences, characterized by aspects of irrationality.” Figure 39 is formed of the definition of sacrifice transcribed above and its constituent parts.

**Fig. 39. Sacrifice definition.**



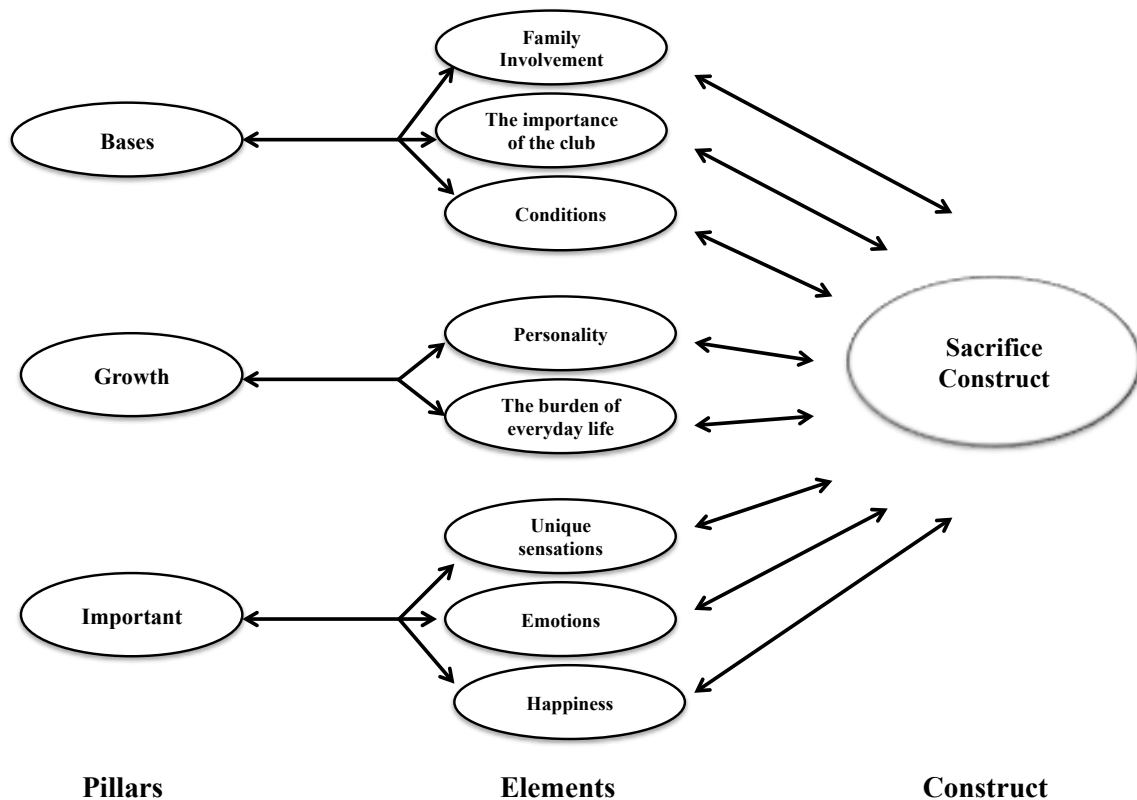
*Source: own elaboration.*

It is a **way of life** as the fan lives in function of the club, scheduling his life in all its aspects (personal, professional and family), doing without from various perspectives (physical and emotional), with aspects of obligation and where something which is not open to question reigns: football in its essence. It is necessary to **experience** situations to the limit, always support the team, mere presence at the ground is not enough: it is necessary to defend the club everywhere and always accompany it. It is that experiencing of situations that allows a unique feeling of being part of unrepeatable, historical moments where the presence of each one is an indelible mark. The **physical and emotional consequences** are something quite patent. The club's less successful moments are reflected in daily behaviour, in all aspects, but also the very way of fitting in in the world. **Irrationality** is contextualized as something outside the fan's control, but essential for life. Something inexplicable, something so strong that it can go further than love for other human beings.

**Sacrifice construct**

Concerning the construct, for the football fan, in the scope of this work, the sacrifice construct is made up of the following elements: Family involvement, The importance of the club, Condition, Personality, The burden of everyday life, Unique sensations, Emotions and Happiness. These elements are aggregated in three pillars forming the sacrifice construct: a base pillar, a growth pillar and a pillar of what is important. We will now explain each pillar, what they are formed of and the respective characterization. Figure 40 shows the sacrifice construct, with the respective constituent parts of the pillars and summarized characterization.

**Fig. 40. Sacrifice construct, elements and pillars.**



Source: own elaboration.

The **Base pillar** is characterized as being where everything begins in the supporter. It is made up of Family involvement, The importance of the club and the Conditions.

It is in the family environment that the vast majority of fans forge their fan condition. Allowing for exceptions – such as the case of the fan that entered into conflict with his mother – it is in the family environment that the fan's passion and subsequent behaviour is created and nurtured. A family environment that swings according to victories and defeats, accepting the fan's absence on important days, leading to breaking with principles regarding the laws of children's upbringing.

The importance of the club is another basic component. The priority of club activities over others, to the point of exaggeration regarding basic needs, leads the fan to recognizing it is an integral part of his life, to the extent of not imagining his existence without it.

Finally, conditions is revealing: the fan begins to limit his areas of action and operation according to the club colours, in the fields of friendship, work or even in the common life project.

Summarizing, the Basic pillar is the first structure on which the sacrifice construct is built.

The **Growth pillar** is characterized as the one covering not only the growth of the fan's personality but also the gaining of awareness of what life is, the burden of life, day-by-day, every day. It is formed of Personality and The burden of everyday life.

Personality is acquired and consolidated over the years, and is an integral part of the individual as a whole, and naturally, the fact of being a fan moulds that personality. Whether it is explained or not, it is part of the fan's character, going beyond even questions of nationality. It brings with it aspects of rivalry, even between family members, helping the supporter to feel better with himself.

The burden of everyday life is the recognition of difficulties in everyday life, which the fan cannot escape from. But in each match, he can feel he has new hope, a new opportunity, renewed vigour. Or at the very least, feel he has an escape valve for those difficulties that are slowly wearing him down.

Briefly, the Growth pillar is the middle structure, set on the Basic pillar, both of them components of the sacrifice construct.

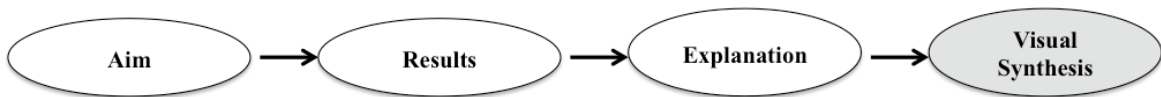
The **pillar of what is important** is characterized as being the achievement of what we all want from a life in society, and is made up of Unique sensations, Emotions and Happiness.

Beginning with the unique sensations, immersed in the personal sphere. Something experienced so intensely, often at odds with the fan's daily life, at other times complementing a more carefree way of life. It is a mixture of feelings and emotions, excitement, adrenaline, and a feeling of being at the limit.

Emotions is characterized as being a link between what is felt and other people. This link, which is much more beneficial than other types (even the religious one), which responds with much greater strength than from other stimuli, naturally has an inherent risk but with greater identification than other activities, clearly obvious in the crowds it draws. Implicit here is a social aspect inherent to human beings.

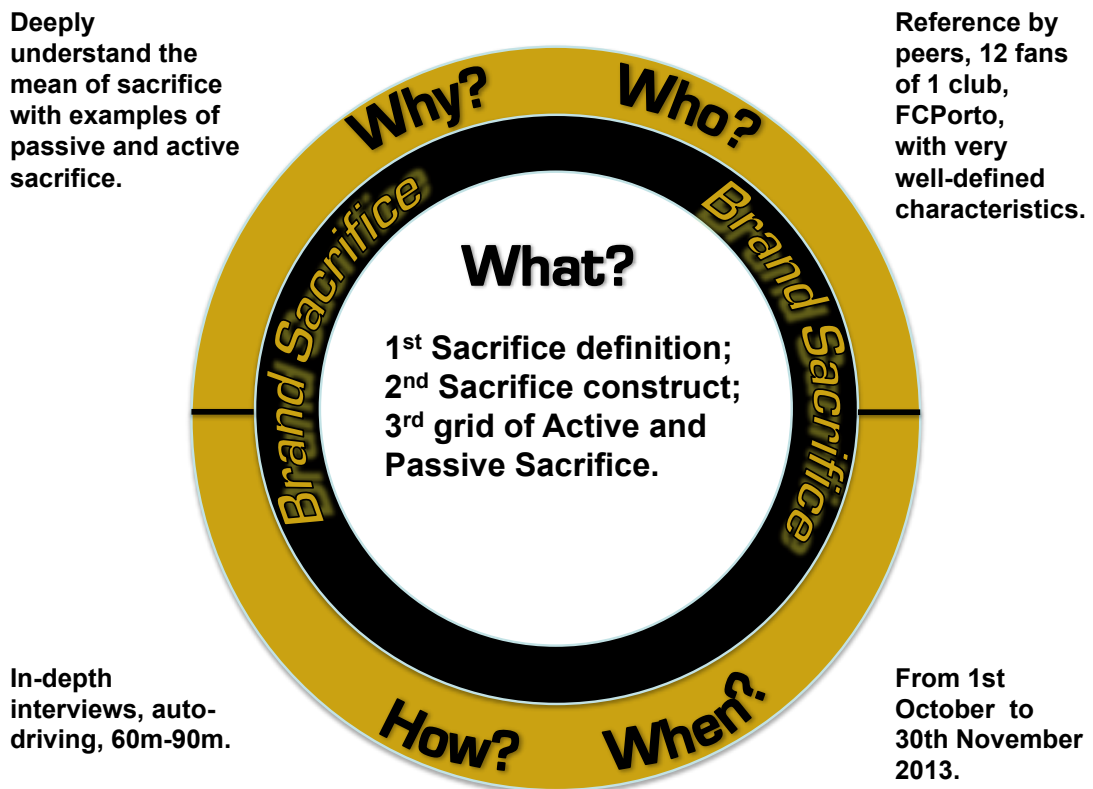
Finally, happiness is what every human being seeks: to be happy, to live in a state of happiness. Even though this state is not continuous – from the fan who declares his happiness on match days to the one who speaks of the pleasure of being in the stadium – the passion for the club that the fan feels in his heart and mind exists in a global way of being.

To summarize, the pillar of what is Important is the final structure of the sacrifice construct. Basically, it is the holy grail, that mythical object that all explorers seek and which the fan, as the human being he is, wants to reach, whether in his overall experience or in each match. Always.



We present the entire process of Study 5 in figure 41.

**Fig. 41. Study 5 diagram.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

**Conclusions:  
implications,  
limitations  
and  
further research**

## **8 - Conclusions: implications, limitations and further research**

We will begin this last chapter with a short reflection on the studies made, followed by a figure summarizing the main results. In summary form, we present the main conclusions and then discuss the five studies carried out. The methodological limitations, implications (theoretical and managerial) and suggestions for further research complete the chapter.

This research was carried out in the hope of contributing to understanding the concept of sacrifice associated with marketing and the relationship between the brand and the consumer. In all the studies made, just as Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence (2008) state in their work comparing data from France and North America, the dimension of passion and pleasure is very explicit. As Batra et al. (2012), we use Grounded Theory to find out more about what causes someone to make sacrifices for a brand. It is based on “the primary purpose of sacrifice when seen from the perspective of the non believer as an activity that constructs the divine as a desiring object” ((Miller, 1998). We do it in this way as we understand that research has to be based on what is really understood by sacrifice and by whoever does it, the reason for carrying out the five studies with the last one being a precise and very specific study of a certain type of fan/consumer.

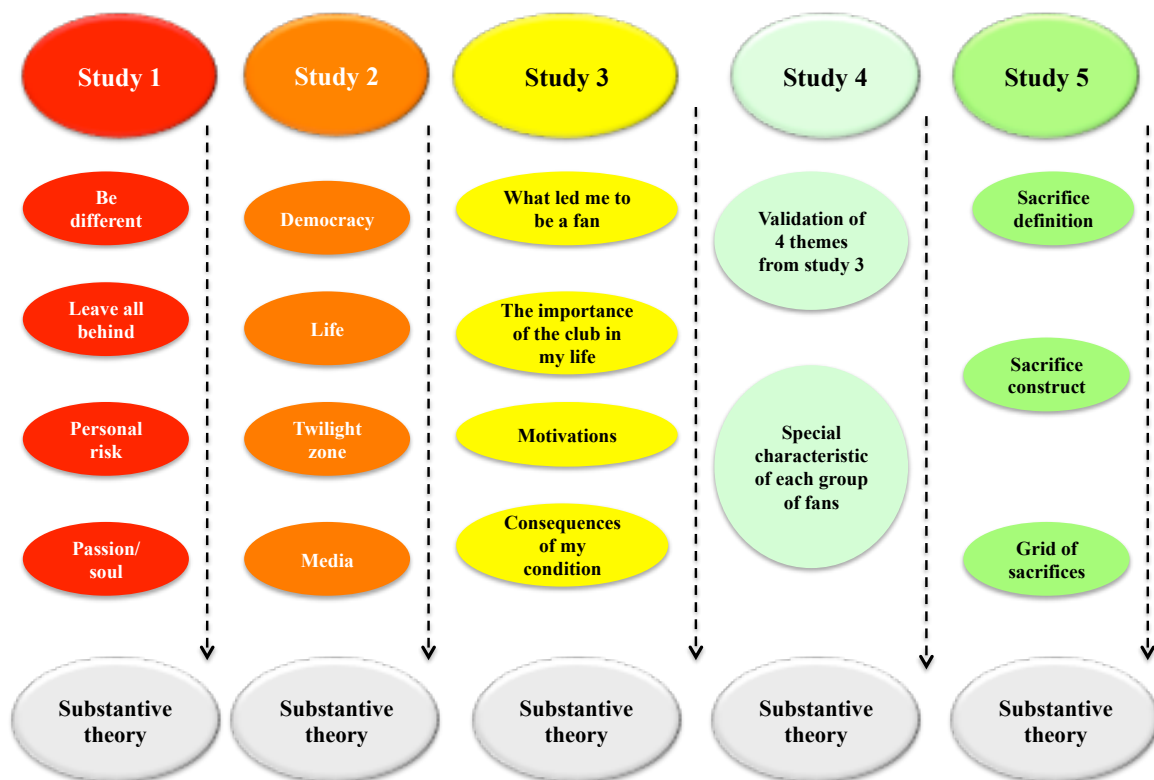
In carrying out the five studies, we do not do so, just as Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw (1999) to obtain strategies for each segment, but rather to funnel and restrict as much as possible what it is a given consumer/supporter understands as making a sacrifice for a brand. Obviously, as in the work by Thorne and Bruner (2006), in all studies there are a set of common characteristics in each consumer/supporter that influence their behaviour. In following up the original work by Belk (1988), later also confirmed by Ahuvia (2005), in these studies the importance of the consumer’s identity in how he consumes what he consumes is extremely relevant, not regarding the possession of objects but rather in his activities and in structuring underlying parallel relationships.

In a literature review that was considerably more wide-ranging than the work of Hansen and Gauthier (1989), we try to go beyond the mere presence in the stadium, attempting to

find out the reason for such a type of behaviour and the attitude of sacrifice for a brand. In the specific case of football, there are naturally gender differences, as in the work by Robinson and Trail (2005) and (Miller, 1998), with this sport being male-dominated (Haugaasen & Jordet, 2012).

As a whole, we now present the conclusions from the results obtained in the studies made, concerning: similarities to studies made previously; differences from the studies consulted; contradictions to previous studies and why; and novelty, what is unique in this research (see fig. 42).

**Fig. 42. Main results from the studies.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

## 8.1 - Main conclusions

We now present a brief summary of the conclusions of each study made.

### 8.1.1 - Study 1

In **Study 1**, the importance of the consumer's personality, as referred to by Matzler et al. (2007), as well as the great lack of knowledge about the fan (DeSarbo & Madrigal, 2011) are both confirmed. Concerning the facet of **Feeling of being different** we go further than the work of Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989) in the importance the fan gives to recognizing his way of being and, principally, recognition by his peers. As for **Leave everything behind**, aspects such as the strong emotional bond (Matzler et al., 2007), the stress felt as one of the fan's drivers (Pritchard & Funk, 2010) and his feeling that he is an integral part of the show – as a creator and animator (Piven, Davis, & Lim, 2012) are corroborated. There is also confirmation of the idea of Hornby (1992), that football is not a vicarious substitute. As for passive sacrifice, the fan's act of giving up something enjoyed (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997), such as not being with the family, seems to be a new contribution regarding marketing. For **Personal risk**, if personal determination is something already mentioned by Oliver (1999), two aspects appear to be new in the field of marketing: the first concerns the usefulness of sacrifices mentioned by Girard (1977, 2012), whether at a personal or collective level; the second is in active sacrifice (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997), i.e., the effort to perform undesired actions (spend money, wait in queues, experience unpleasant climatic conditions) to be with the club. Finally, **Passion/soul** is clear and similar to other studies made, both in being present (Powell & Vugt, 2003) and as a story experienced together (Muniz Jr & O'Guinn, 2001), as well as in fantasizing, visualizing, the passion, giving meaning to the fan (Hornby, 1992).

### 8.1.2 – Study 2

In **Study 2**, not only the importance of sport (Ratten & Ratten, 2011) but also that of football itself (Xifra, 2008) became clear. Concerning the global themes, **Democracy** can be associated with the seminal work on the community (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001) and on free expression. The theme of **Life** is controversial: in marketing, the fan's feeling that

watching football is the same as doing is something new (Hornby, 1992) and contradicts the study by Mael and Ashforth, (2001), as not only do fans affect the club's performance, but also their life is affected by the club and by the importance they give it. Then again, in **Twilight zone**, the name being original, some marketing studies confirm the findings, such as: opposing identities that cross and the separation inside the brain (Ahuvia, 2005) or the suspension of reality (Mael & Ashforth, 2001), letting the fan live different lives: that of the fan and the other (Hornby, 1992). Finally, in **Media**, their importance is corroborated in the work by Piven et al. (2012) and the preponderance of the media in forming our consciousness, as well as the collective identity that strengthens the individual (Branscombe & Wann, 1991), fundamental in the intrinsic recognition of the fan on the various platforms: newspapers, television, etc... (Hornby, 1992). As a novelty in marketing, the physiological importance of playing at home (Carré, 2009), supported by the various statements throughout the studies made, is something else confirming the importance of the fan.

### 8.1.3 - Study 3

In **Study 3**, despite different types of involvement (Moutinho et al., 2007) – the reason why in Study 4 we place differentiating aspects such as the obligation to be a member and attending a minimum number of games at the stadium, increased in Study 5 where we tighten the net in order to characterize as much as possible the type of involvement in question – as in the work of Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence (2008), memory and childhood images are important. As for the theme of **What led me to be a fan**, if, as in the work by Branscombe and Wann (1991), the aspect of the fan/consumer's quality of life is reinforced, regarding the fact of being how they are (impassioned, dedicated to the brand/club) almost 2/3 of interviewees could not define the reason, contradicting the study by Thomson, Macinnis and Park (2005). In **Motivations** various aspects confirm previous studies: the clear expression of the individual aspect (Mattingly & Clark, 2010), social identification, the importance of the group (Mael & Ashforth, 2001), the experience and emotions felt (Chakrabarti & Berthon, 2012 in Piven et al., 2012), the contagion of the feeling of victory (Hornby,1992), the hedonic value (Piven et al., 2012) or the feeling of need (Ahuvia, 2008) – the last-named understood not only in individual terms

(physiological and psychological) but also socially and culturally. The theme of **The importance of the club in my life** is another finding parallels in several earlier studies in marketing in the most diverse areas, such as the importance of links to others (Beisser, 1967), the importance of symbolic brands (Escalas & Bettman, (2005), character building and the importance and need of affiliation (Donavan et al., 2005; Smith & Stewart, 2007). The final theme, **Consequences of my fan condition** sets the condition of accessibility of commitment, a theme approached by Etcheverry and Le (2005), as well as characteristics of various studies already made, with regard to the approach motives (Impett et al. 2005), commitment (Powell & Vugt, 2003), identity (Bromberger, 1995), and behaviour (Clemes, Brush, & Collins, 2011). If in the work by Robinson, Trail, Dick and Gillentine (2005) there is a clear difference – just one division, in the case of Mael and Ashforth (2001) the contradiction is clear regarding the fact of the consumer/fan's behaviour affecting performance. The ability to remember goals or situations experienced many years ago is a privilege only understood by someone who has been there (Hornby, 1992).

#### **8.1.4 - Study 4**

With **Study 4** being a focus group – the only one – where we include the reference to distance that Hornby (1992) uses in his work, we base ourselves on several authors concerning the results. Past behaviour naturally predicts future intentions (Shapiro et al., 2013; Smith & Stewart, 2007), in which the context takes on great importance (Kim & Trail, 2010) and the way the collective is understood by its individuals gains special prominence (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009). The team clearly predominates over any individual (player) (Mahony & Moorman, 2000), where we are literally what we consume (Hunt, Bristol & Bashaw, 1999) and the feeling of belonging is essential (Hornby, 1992). There is, however, a contradiction in relation to the study by Wells, Southall and Pong (2000) as the team's result is not determinant for going to the stadium or having a series of actions that show our position in relation to the brand/club.

### 8.1.5 - Study 5

Finally, **Study 5** is clearly the one with most novel and unique aspects in relation to the research in question. What to say about the dyadic adjustment spoken about by Van Lange, Rusbult et al. (1997)? Here, that adjustment is only reflected on/understood by the human being, with clear consequences. Different results also with respect to reciprocity, structural for Pichler and Hemetsberger (2008) and strengthening the union for Pimentel and Reynolds (2004): how is it redefined in this case, in what and in only one direction? Concerning the **wordcount and their respective importance** the relevance of the individual, individuality within the group is quite clear, something new in marketing supported by the concept of psychology in the work of de Van Lange, Agnew, et al. (1997) and in that of Hornby (1992). **Sacrifice definition** here, as far as we know, is the first attempt to define what sacrifice means, what the word sacrifice means for a consumer/fan. If regarding commitment, the results obtained agree with the work by Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult and Langston (1998), we can conclude on the understanding in the study by Pichler and Hemetsberger (2007) that sacrifice is another form of devotion. In the definition found, just as Belk, Ger and Askegaard (2003), it is clear that pleasure and discomfort go hand in hand, or as Hornby (1992) says, entertainment with suffering.

As in the definition, the same happens in the originality of the creation of the **Construct of Sacrifice**. Confirming, like Mattingly (2007), that there is no interactive effect between sacrifice and motive, it is a novelty in marketing that sacrifice is a facilitator of communication between two worlds (Hubert & Mauss, 1964, 2010). The importance of fans as consumers is strengthened (Heere & James, 2007), the importance acquired by the mental construction of the brand (Escalas & Bettman, 2003), but with opposite signs regarding the importance of the brand/club's results in the life of the consumer/fan (Mael & Ashforth, 2001). Finally, regarding the **Grid of sacrifices**, this is also original. Confirming the importance of trust (Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster & Agnew, 1999), experiencing the phenomenon (Hornby, 1992) and the fact of the greater the loss, the lower the capacity of sacrifice to make (Lewandowski et al., 2006), this grid is no more than a first step towards deepening our knowledge about the sacrifices made or to be made by the consumer/fan.

## 8.2 - Discussion

We now make a study-by-study analysis with the respective conclusions in relation to the literature review.

### 8.2.1 - Study 1

After the seminal work by Fournier (1998) concerning consumers' relationships with brands, these five studies are a first step towards understanding what causes a consumer to make sacrifices for a brand, forming relationships with it. We try to go beyond the Investment Model by Rusbult (1980), as the aim is better understanding of a person's relationship with a brand and not with someone else. To achieve this aim, a sector of activity was chosen where the connection with the brand tends to be strong, i.e., football. It is fundamental to take the consumer's personality into consideration (Matzler et al., 2007) in an industry that is among those showing greatest and fastest growth, and where the supporter (consumer) is especially important through being the main source of income, but where there is a great lack of knowledge (DeSarbo & Madrigal, 2011). Four facets emerge from this study: feeling of being different, leaving everything behind, personal risk and passion/soul.

The **feeling of being different** goes beyond the sacred ritual of consumption by the fan (Belk et al., 1989), the fan feeling he is an ambassador, with an enormous feeling of loyalty to the club not in the strict sense of the work by Jacoby and Kyner (1973) where a repeat purchase is the number one condition of loyalty, but rather in recognition by peers, whether in daily life, on match days or on special occasions such as the award of pin badges for 25 years' membership. "Differentiation, more than communion, guided the action of individuals" (Cova, 1997, p. 299), with the importance of the prestige of being a fan in some social circles (Hornby, 1992).

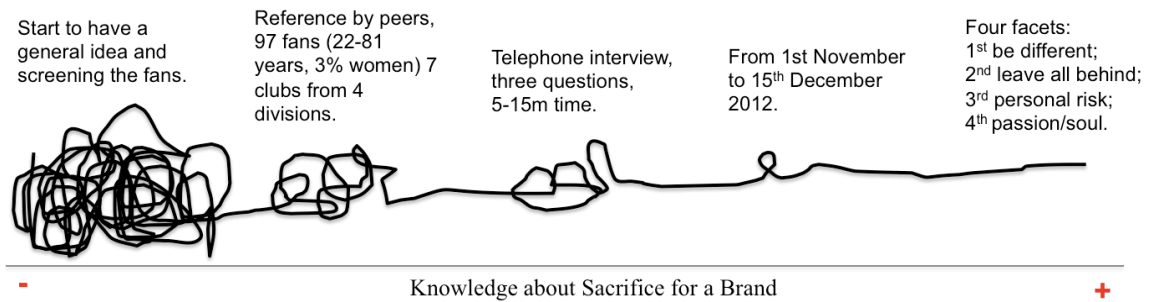
**Leave everything behind** in the strict sense of the term, in the actions carried out, voluntarily creating a strong emotional bond (Pichler & Hemetsberger, 2007). Family birthdays, friends or work, everything is left behind to follow the club/brand, where nothing is guaranteed: the stress and uncertainty of the result is one of "the drivers" (Pritchard & Funk, 2010), and football is not a substitute pleasure (Hornby, 1992). It is more of a passive sacrifice, when an individual forgoes a desired activity (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997) because fans know they are part of the experience, they contribute to creating the events and sustain the magic (Piven et al., 2012).

**Personal risk** is always present and courage is needed to be a fan (Hornby, 1992). Risks are like radio waves (they are everywhere) and the fan gives in to physical sacrifices (walking kilometres on crutches) or even overcoming personal fears (travelling by plane) – in a logical substitution where the usefulness of these sacrifices is inherent (Girard 1977, 2012), irrespective of the stadium's comfort and design and its services (Wakefield & Sloan, 1995). As Oliver (1999) mentions, the personal determination and the social bonds (in personal terms in the most diverse spheres but also at the institutional level) are fundamental traits of this type of consumer. It is an active sacrifice, when an individual engages in a a undesired activity (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997).

Finally, **Passion/soul**. What is experienced, the pride felt as a supporter, the adrenaline released, are some of the points mentioned by the fans interviewed. In situations where the choice is difficult (in financial, spatial, physical or temporal terms, for example) this type of supporter/consumer is present (Powell & Vugt, 2003), follows the club and defends it. The experience of a range of factors such as the adrenaline felt at the match, the conviviality generated by all the adventures and excitement; because the fan lives a story, a story together, with multiple actors, comes out of the daily routine, living adventures (Muniz Jr & O'Guinn, 2001) and the feeling that when there are no games, something is missing (Hornby, 1992).

**Summarizing**, with this study we acquire transversal knowledge that provides us with a generalist basis to begin the process of in-depth interview (fig. 43). However, this study made us realize there were situations/phenomena requiring greater depth and comprehension.

**Fig. 43. Summary of Study 1.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

### 8.2.2 - Study 2

With the first study complete, there was the need to deepen knowledge about the football phenomenon and what it involves. Interviewing confirmed specialists in the area was seen to be essential. Only three interviews were held but the findings allowed us to go further in developing the previous studies. Of the statements gathered, we mention four major areas (democracy, life, twilight zone and media) and refer to four more specific points (family influence, the social aspect, emotions and consequences at a personal level).

Knowing that in general “sport is a global product that many people around the world enjoy playing, watching and participating in” (Ratten & Ratten, 2011) and that specifically, football is the most important sport worldwide (Xifra, 2008), the four central points taken from the three conversations are as global as possible (democracy, life, twilight zone and media), with the most specific ones being directly linked to football (family influence, social aspect, emotions and consequences at a personal level).

**Democracy** is the first central theme. People are more equal, regardless of age or religion, and all opinions are equally valid. Football has a place for a community that can express itself in an increasingly post-modern world (Muniz & O’Guinn, 2001).

Football is **Life**. As natural as breathing, central to life, it is present in everybody, albeit in different forms. For Hornby (1992), seeing is doing, and the fan contributes to creating a context that allows the team to play better, scheduling his life according to the club. A contrary opinion is held by Mael and Ashforth (2001), in that they argue that the fan supports the club (physically and financially), but vicariously (p. 189), and that his actions have no effect on the club’s performance.

**Twilight zone** seems to us the most appropriate name for this set of ideas transmitted by the interviewees. Based on the television series shown in the 80s, narrating strange facts with rather unorthodox explanations, we find here explanations about the fan phenomenon which are not rational. The temporary return to childhood (football appearing

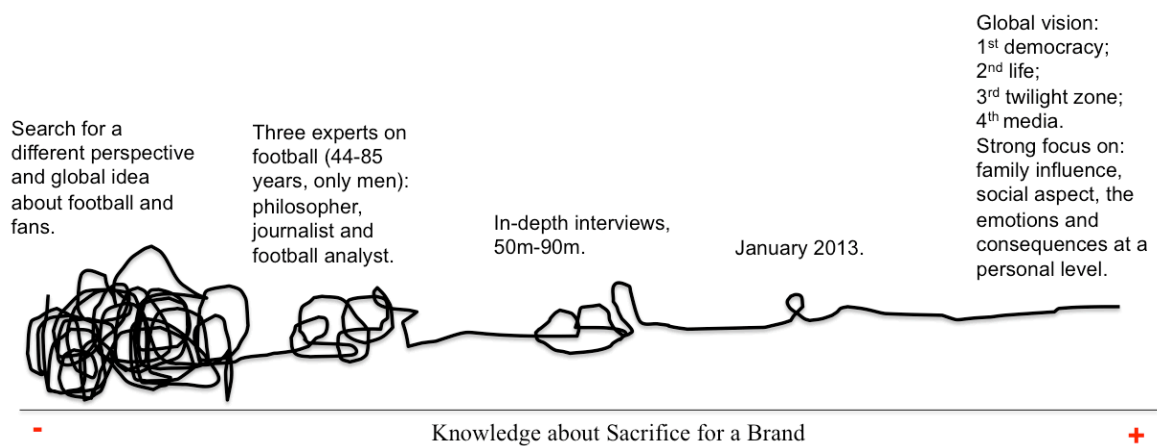
to delay the ageing process) is one hypothesis, as well as the feeling of nostalgia, both corroborated by Hornby (1992). The phenomenon of parallel worlds – with the synthetic creation of opposing identities that cross (Ahuvia 2005); or separation inside the brain – once more applying the work of Ahuvia (2005) in the sense that the emotional power (not of objects but in this case of the activity performed) helps to solve that type of conflict, are two examples. For Bromberger (1995), it can only be something irrational, such is the discrepancy between the futility of the match and the intensity of the emotions which makes this happen. In the words of Mael and Ashforth (2001, p. 198), the consumer/fan experiences a “suspension of reality” only explained by the symbolism of the game, as it is impossible to measure the support provided or have the slightest guarantees of results, in a result which in truth counts for nothing...

Finally, the **Media**. In a shrinking world, where everybody has access to all the data and information, with the human being “submerged” in the immense power of the media, football is everywhere. And in this context “brand relationships in social media consumption are conceptualised by the consumer’s emotional connection to the brand” (Piven et al., 2012).

Although less dominant, four other aspects were focused on by the interviewees, these being: family influence (father, the context), social aspect (tribal, collective identity, recognition), the emotions (return to childhood, emotional) and consequences at a personal level (time-conditioned, calendar). In a world where bonds of friendship are increasingly tenuous (Branscombe & Wann, 1991), football provides the possibility of having a collective identity which strengthens the human being individually (Branscombe & Wann, 1991; Koenigstorfer et al., 2010). Although in a different sport, this is something which is physically impossible to quantify, as proven in the work by Carré (2009) and the higher level of testosterone in home wins compared to away wins, the reason for which is not known but it can be due to being a greater source of satisfaction, and as such, potentiating the endocrine system.

**Summarizing**, for better interpretation of future data, this study aims to approach themes which otherwise would be ignored (fig. 44). We intended to research more thoroughly, acquire more knowledge, something we would only be able to interpret and understand the information provided if we had previously increased our own knowledge through involvement and detachment: after being involved in the data-collection, we distanced ourselves to be able to interpret without bias. In this way, we seek to obtain a wider and more generalist vision of the football phenomenon which, through involvement, allowed us to achieve a certain detachment during the collection and analysis of subsequent results (Study 3).

**Fig. 44. Summary of Study 2.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

### 8.2.3 - Study 3

This is the first study where we decide to interview consumers/fans of just one club. We did this in the whole country, aiming to include geographically representative regions. As in the work by Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence (2008), childhood memories and images are important in the origin and development of the relationship between the consumer/fan and the brand. Although all the interviewees were supporters of FC Porto, they naturally have different types of involvement (Moutinho et al., 2007) with the club. Four themes emerge from this study: what led me to be a fan, motivations, the importance of the club in my life and consequences of my fan condition.

**What led me to be a fan** includes family influence and hidden factors. The passion for football can function as an element of unity among the various family members as well as giving an insight about the family's improved quality of life (Branscombe & Wann, 1991). Contrary to the work by Thomson, Macinnis and Park (2005) based on the premiss that consumers are able to explain their emotional connection to certain brands, two thirds of the interviewees expressed that they could not satisfactorily explain why they follow the brand/club as they do.

As for **Motivations**, as expressed in the study by Mattingly and Clark (2010), these come clearly within the individual sphere, in as much as it is the individual who determines if and when he will make a sacrifice for the brand/club, depending on the need he feels. Hornby (1992) refers to a cartoon and the boots of the main character (Billy Boots), where the story is told of a normal boy who puts on his boots and becomes a superstar and the parallelism concerning the victories achieved by the team their effect on the fan. "Social identification is the perception of belongingness to a group and a sense of oneness with the group" (Mael & Ashforth, 2001, p. 198), where the emotional aspect stands out. As Chakrabarti and Berthon (2012) argue, "consumers have migrated from the production of services to the production of experiences (...) the primary experience of value is emotion" (p. 154) where consumers use this relationship for expression and hedonic value (in Piven et al., 2012). "The need" has the second highest percentages of the references of the sub themes, being the second biggest contributor to the percentage of

total references (about 8%). “The pursuit of subjective well-being is not the ultimate end of all action, but just one possible value competing with others such as the pursuit of honor or the desire to follow cultural traditions” (Ahuvia, 2008, p. 497).

**The importance of the club in my life** is the third theme. The human being is a social animal in that “everyone needs to feel he has ties with others” (Beisser, 1967, p. 129). Following the work by Escalas and Bettman, (2005) where the effects of symbolic brands are greater than those of less symbolic ones, construction of the consumer/fan’s identity is partially through consumed brands, with which relationships are formed. Despite basic personality traits, character is also formed by the need for affiliation to a brand/club (Donavan et al., 2005) as the essence and pillar in the formation of the individual, in the way of being, the principles of life, “character building” (Smith & Stewart, 2007, p. 165).

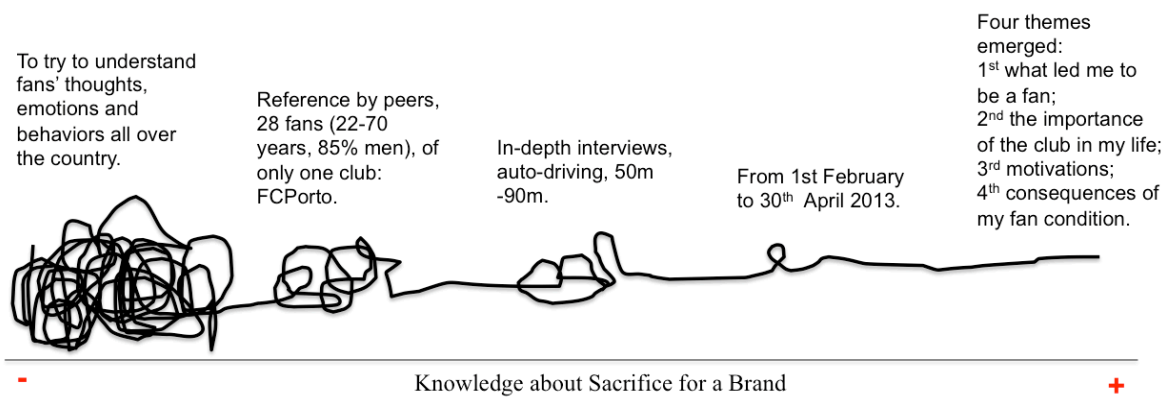
Finally, **Consequences of my fan condition**. The consumer/fan’s sacrifice concerning the brand/club, in a long-term relationship, has much to do with the type of sacrifice made being positively associated with that of “approach motives” (Impett et al. 2005). With so many variables at stake (personal, financial, family, life planning, job, friends) only consumers/fans highly committed to the brand/club can keep the relationship, considering the level of costs involved and the commitment in question (Powell & Vugt, 2003). Knowing that “football gives concrete form to people’s deepest feelings about the world; it is a complex mesh of people’s different senses of their identity” (Bromberger, 1995, p. 305), becoming a fan has a big impact on satisfaction and behavioural intentions (Clemes et al., 2011, p. 383), with football being a blanket of security that gives a direction to life (Hornby, 1992).

Being a study of only one division, we cannot assess differences between supporters according to other studies, even in different sports (Robinson et al., 2005), unlike other studies where the behavioral intention component is very clear (Theodorakis et al., 2012). Consumer behaviour can affect athletes’ performance, and as such the result of the match is very important in the life of the consumer/fan, in the most varied facets, contrary to

other studies (Mael & Ashforth, 2001). A final mention should be the “accessibility of commitment” as an important factor to consider (Etcheverry & Le, 2005, p. 104).

**Summarizing**, concerning Study 2, the themes that are not dependent on a grounded basis or that require greater reflection, such as the case of strong focus, are points in common in Study 3 (fig. 45), the perspective of a common situation, one which does not depend on a thorough, scientific study of the sport.

**Fig. 45. Summary of Study 3.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

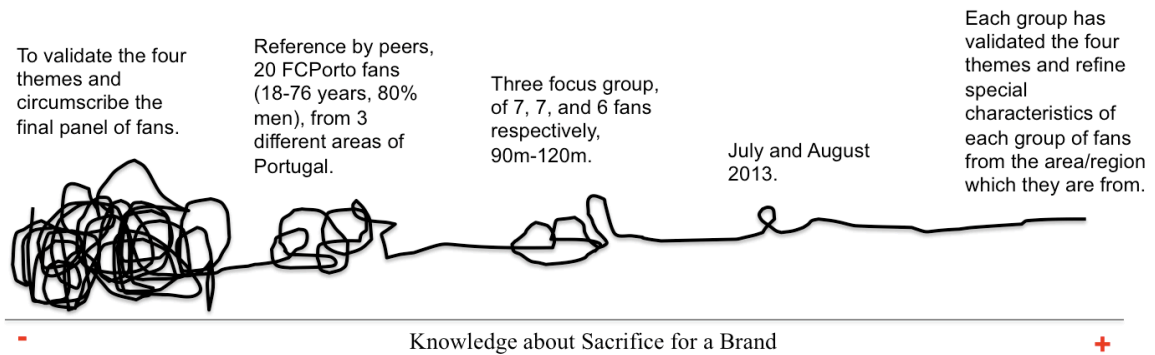
#### **8.2.4 - Study 4**

Having decided on just one club, it was important to restrict the field of interview. For the first time, the criterion of being a member was included, as was a minimum participation/presence in the stadium. Due to the extensive range (geographically) of interviews, three locations were defined, each one a certain distance from the stadium, following the indications of Hornby (1992). With the results of Study 3 validated and definition of each group's characteristics, the suppositions for the last study to be carried out were therefore defined.

Following the study made by Smith and Stewart (2007) and their four global dimensions concerning fan behaviour, where they conclude that the past can predict future intentions, corroborated here, always taking into consideration the type of behaviour displayed and the existing connections (Shapiro, Ridinger & Trail, 2013), the connections between motives and the attachment shown (Trail et al., 2003) and reinforcing once again the importance of individual determination (Mattingly & Clark, 2010). For consistent behaviour, the importance of the context is clear (Kim & Trail, 2010) and also how the collective is understood by its elements (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009), with special importance for the feeling of belonging (Hornby, 1992). Despite concerning different sports, the study by Mahony and Moorman (2000) on the the team's predominance over the favourite player is enlightening, something we agree with. Even if the team's recent results are unfavourable (Wells et al., 2000), this is not what makes fans in this study go more or less often to the stadium. Beyond the concepts of identification and connection from an internal and individual point of view, the social component, in its completeness, is always present in the fan/consumer's behaviour: through our consumption, we show what we are and what we believe in (Hunt, Bristol & Bashaw, 1999).

**Briefly**, we were able to validate the study (fig. 46) by finding similarities in the answers coming from the four themes emerging from Study 3. The factor of distance and the time taken to reach the stadium alter how the fan makes sacrifices for the club, but is not a factor characterizing the level of sacrifice the supporter is willing to make.

**Fig. 46. Summary of Study 4.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

### 8.2.5 - Study 5

The final panel of interviewees. We interviewed a well-defined group of consumers/fans. We changed the factor of distance from the stadium to that of the time taken to reach it as we considered that more appropriate. We set a limit of being a member and a measure of physical presence in supporting the club, both at home and away (domestic and international matches). We also included the criterion of pride in being recognized as a supporter of FC Porto. Here, we intended above all to ensure we would be speaking to people who, through their actions, showed they did in fact make sacrifices for the club at all levels: physical, financial, family, social and personal.

We basically defined two major objectives: thorough understanding of what it is for a fan/consumer to make sacrifices for a brand/club and to form a framework of active and passive sacrifices made by fans. To fulfil the first objective, we firstly made a word-count and determined their context. We then determined a definition of sacrifice and subsequently the construct. For the second objective, through the interviews we made a first attempt at a sacrifice framework (active and passive).

Any sacrifice between two people requires, among many other things, a dyadic adjustment (Van Lange, Rusbult, et al., 1997). And in a relationship between a brand and a consumer? In this case, between FC Porto and the fan? Regarding matches, however much it wants to the club can do little or nothing in arranging them, as they are fixed by external bodies (Portuguese Football Federation for domestic matches and UEFA for international ones). Here, there is no reciprocity as the basic element of all inter-personal relationships (Fromm, 1956 in Pichler & Hemetsberger, 2008). Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) state that, in the case of objects, sharing these strengthens that reciprocity. But in the case of meetings? We can never forget that human life is essentially social (Cova et al., 2007).

Regarding the **word-count and its importance** (FC Porto, I have, Football, People and Stadium), we believe their contextualization and respective constructs allowed better understanding of their meaning. Note that the second most quoted expression (after the most obvious one, FC Porto) is ‘I have’, which agrees with what was formulated by Hornby (1992) when stating that as a fan, he likes to think others are thinking about him. It is not “we”, but “I”! And this is not by chance, as Van Lange, Agnew et al., (1997, p. 1330) state: “willingness to sacrifice was associated with greater commitment and that this link was more pronounced among individualists than among prosocials”.

As for **Sacrifice definition**, there is no clear and brief definition of sacrifice. In our opinion, it is composed of four main vectors (the experiencing, a way of life, consequences and irrationality). We define sacrifice as follows:

*“Being a football fan is a way of life that requires going through a series of experiences, with physical and emotional consequences, characterized by aspects of irrationality.”*

For Girard (1977, 2012), sacrifice, due to its reversible nature and usefulness, appears as a form of substitution, with the need to experience it. For there to be sacrifice, there must be commitment (Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult & Langston, 1998), and sacrifice, just like devotion, can be characterized by an altruistic, more responsible attitude, and with a greater degree of dedication where there is no hesitation in sacrificing time, money and energy for the good of the relationship (Pichler & Hemetsberger, 2007) between the consumer/fan and the brand/club. Just as desire, this is a cyclical state where pleasure and discomfort go hand in hand (Belk et al., 2003; Hornby, 1992).

The transversal nature of the areas making up the **construct of sacrifice** in the scope of this work is formed of the following elements: Family involvement, The importance of the club, Condition, Personality, The burden of everyday life, Unique sensations, and Emotions and Happiness.

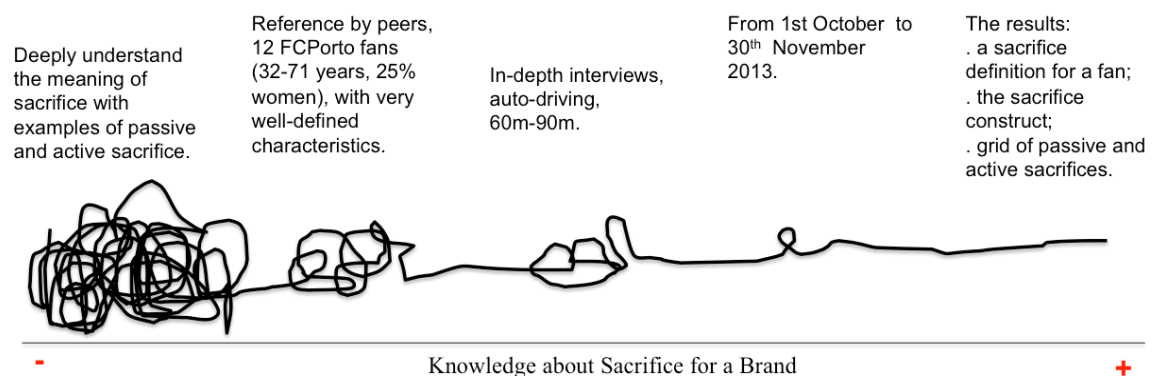
Understanding it as a social, institutional phenomenon, and as such, anchored in society, sacrifice appears as a construction, facilitating communication between two worlds (Hubert & Mauss, 1964, 2010). The reason for making sacrifices does not have a direct component with one factor or another, and this is why, for example, unpleasant weather conditions or a poor team performance at any moment do not determine the sacrificial action. That is, the type of sacrifice, as for Mattingly (2007), does not have an interactive effect on the motives. Although some authors argue that a club's results are of no importance and that fans' performance does not affect that of the club (Mael & Ashforth, 2001), it seems to us, after carrying out this further study, that not only is the result important (and extremely so) but also that the fan can (help to) alter the club's performance, even if only its own mental construction (Escalas & Bettman, 2003), which everyone (players, fans, the media, directors) is constantly forming in relation to the brand/club in question. And as in the possession of objects (Belk, 1988), that mental construction is greatly reflected in identity. Football is much more than just another leisure service and the "fans are more than just consumers" (Heere & James, 2007, p. 323).

Finally, regarding the **Grid of sacrifices**, there are several mixed zones where it is possible to interpret one way or another. We want to create examples for the financial, social, family and personal aspects, besides shared values. Naturally, the smaller the sacrifice, the greater the possibility of real loss, as suggested in the study by Lewandowski et al. (2006) and their concept of self-expansion. More than trust – fundamental in a relationship between two people (Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster & Agnew, 1999) – in the club/brand (and in the specific case of ensured victory), the consumer/fan wants to feel he has done everything possible for the victory, sacrificing everything he could to reach that objective, for the good of the relationship and, at the end of the day, for his own well-being and having the undeniable right to celebrate (Hornby, 1992). In the same way that

Wakefield, Blodgett and Sloan (1996) studied how to improve the quality of the stadium from the spectator's point of view, or as Mahony et al. (2000) created the psychological commitment to the team (PCT) and Funk and James (2001) the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) for better understanding of the states of consumer affiliation to a team/club, this grid is no more than an attempt to establish an orientation which, in an integrated way, allows us to know more about the consumer/fan and his relationship with the brand/club within four parameters.

**Summarizing**, in Study 5 (fig. 47), by narrowing down the research we were able to have a solid sample with respect to sacrifices effectively made by the interviewed fans. With examples drawn from the interviews, we were able to create a definition and a construct of the word sacrifice, as well as a grid based on the most important parameters.

**Fig. 47. Summary of Study 5.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

### **8.3 - Final conclusion**

As a final conclusion, in the course of these five studies we tried to understand the phenomenon of brand sacrifice, as thoroughly as possible and through inside diagnosis of the phenomenon (Batra et al., 2012), by studying a sport like football that stirs passions, and its respective brands, the clubs, and its supporters/consumers. We made this decision consciously, not only due to the strength of football but also the importance of knowing that consumers tend more towards hedonic brands with a greater symbolic weight (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

In general, what leads a person to make sacrifices for a brand is a whole set of very varied factors, including structuring factors in personal terms, the family context, the importance of peers and even society itself in the broadest sense. Besides the essential brand values, there is a fundamental promise to be kept regarding value creation and its association as the fruit of a unique, personal experience (de Chernatony, 2009). Trust and its importance in the relationship (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997) with the brand emerges as an aspect that may be crucial for a good relationship. What really matters, and is transversal to all the constructs of CBR, is how the consumer acts in his various relationships, the result of the real meaning the brand has for him.

Specifically, what leads an FC Porto fan to make sacrifices for his club, besides the global aspects of sacrifice for a brand, is the fact of being an option as a way of life, which has to be lived and experienced, with accepted consequences, where irrationality is present and accepted naturally.

With loyalty being important, this is above all one-directional, as for the consumer/fan of a brand/club, satisfaction, although duly contextualized and personalized, is first of all personal (Oliver, 1999). Use of the IM by Rusbult is due to the clarity and simplicity of CBR interpretation, varying only in intensity (Breivik & Thorbjørnsen, 2008). As demonstrated by Pimentel and Reynolds (2004), the process of making things sacred is extremely important in marketing, as confirmed by the various interviewees with all their

rituals and beliefs about their club, even when something improbable occurs, as found in the work by Koenigstorfer, Groeppel-Klein and Schmitt (2010).

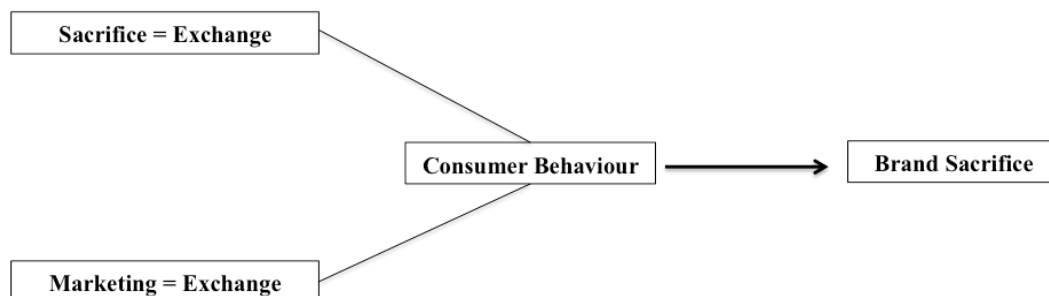
Can brand sacrifice be a type of extreme devotion?

In the sense that it goes beyond mere acts of impulse or additive relationships, requiring responsibility and involving an altruistic component (Pichler & Hemetsberger, 2008), it is a possibility. Naturally, just as Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw (1999), we would like others to develop new strategies to give a better characterization and explanation of brand sacrifice. In a society where the supporter's culture (whatever it is, from toys to cars) is increasingly rooted, a more thorough explanation of brand sacrifice can help towards better interpretation of this cultural phenomenon (Thorne & Bruner, 2006), and we go further than Clemes et al. (2011) in that it is not only of use to agents in sport (marketers and administrators) but in all activities where experience-providing service occurs.

It seems important to reinforce the structural importance of the work, sacrifice, something which requires an exchange. As an essential basis of marketing, Brand Sacrifice emerges (fig. 48).

“What emerges clearly is that it is exchange, not love, that as it were “makes the world go round”. Love, by contrast, tends to act as the very negation of this sense of movement, by confirming a stable and constant centre to one's affective identity” Miller (1998, p. 130).

**Fig. 48. Brand Sacrifice.**



*Source: own elaboration.*

In the course of the studies carried out, we try to follow the orientation of Stewart, Smith and Nicholson (2003) providing global explanations of the consumer/fan's behaviour, narrowing down only in the final study to obtain better characterization of the consumer/fan in question. In a recent field such as CBR, what we present is no more than a set of hypotheses in an area for exploration, with sacrifice, having a tendency to be seen as something pejorative and negative, spoken tacitly. Putting everything in proportion, as stated by Muniz & O'Guinn (2001, p. 428): "The brand is itself a thoroughly modern invention, in fact, as good an icon of modernity as there is."

#### **8.4 - Methodological limitations**

Any research, with any methodology, has methodological limitations. In the type of research done here, we study "phenomena and processes in their natural settings and intend to make sense of those matters in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Hallberg, 2006, p. 141).

In our research, in general, we are speaking in the first place about a sport, one in particular, and carry out three studies targeting the supporters of just one club. By speaking about a sport we are speaking about something intrinsic to human beings, necessary for a fuller, more satisfying life, but with much to be discussed regarding the policies and real needs to establish in society. Football is one of many sports and with its major implantation worldwide, its characteristics and particularities are evident. The fact the four studies are about one club (even in Study 1 around 70% of the interviewees are FC Porto fans) narrows down the sample, all the more so for the club being what it is: representing a region, a regional flag.

Secondly, the place where the supporters were interviewed. Although we always took care that the place chosen should be the best possible for the interviewee with regard to certain aspects (such the ease of getting there, comfort, feeling at ease and time available), it is not always possible to bring everything together so that the interviewee is comfortable and conveys to us all he can, and we are able to listen, observe and ask questions that allow a flowing and fruitful conversation. Whatever the interviewee's choice of place (a restaurant,

café, his office or even at home) or a place convenient to both (interviewer and interviewee), there are always pros and contras. If in public places there is the risk of interviewees being less expressive, more subdued, due to more public exposure, in private places, they are more likely to be interrupted by private telephone calls or work problems.

Thirdly, the emotional factor represented by football overall, and a club, as a brand, and its relationship with the fan. As seen in the literature presented and in the studies made throughout this work, the emotional factor in football has a much greater weight than all the other activities in the human being's life, except for family matters (and even so, not always). That is, this emotionality can in some respect alter the way the brand (club) itself is lived and the types of behaviour it leads to.

Fourthly, all interviewees (except in Study 2) were indicated by their peers. "When in Rome, do as the Romans", and so we did so. If we wanted to be with people who made sacrifices for a brand (their football club), we had to speak to people who were like that and knew others like them. If someone goes to a gymnasium with the aim of acquiring bigger muscles, he will observe how the strongest in the gym train. If in this research the aim was to know what causes someone to make sacrifices for a brand (club), we had to be advised by people who have the same characteristics. But this choice could also narrow our sample too much.

In our opinion, these are some of the methodological implications in this study, without forgetting that "the goal of qualitative research, after all, is to understand the particular in depth, rather than finding out what is generally true of many (Merriam, 1995, p. 57). This means that the findings of these studies concern each particular group participating in the research. However, as a result of the heterogeneity of ages and professions, these groups can be representative of Portuguese society.

Therefore, more specifically, for Study 1 we understand the limitations as:

a) the initial list of contacts, forty people, all being from the same place. This was due to ease of access and corresponded to convenience sampling;

- b) this initial sample is from the north of Portugal;
- c) in telephone interviews, empathy and trust is less, with regard to establishing trust and rapport.

Concerning Study 2, the limitations are:

- a) low number of interviews;
- b) study of personal opinions.

As for Study 3, although one of the authors is a fan of the club in question, he was able to distance himself, being concerned with this aspect before beginning the project, and so we understand as limitations:

- a) small sample;
- b) only one football club;
- c) the fact of being auto-driving can influence certain answers and feelings/conceptions.

Concerning Study 4, two limitations appear:

- a) abandoning one geographical option – supporters living between 77km and 200km from the stadium are not considered in the study;
- b) using kms and not the time take to reach the stadium as a determinant factor.

Finally in Study 5:

- a) having a low number of interviews,
- b) very specific supporters (characteristics),
- c) supporters of just one club, are some of the aspects we understand as limitations.

In any case, the studies complement each other, thereby contributing to reducing some of the limitations pointed out.

## **8.5 - Implications**

We now present the implications suggested by the studies.

### **8.5.1 - Theoretical implications**

The current research provides initial evidence that brand sacrifice is part of a complex construct considering CBR, and is very important for our understanding of CBR. Brand sacrifice, brand love and brand devotion are inseparably linked to each other, and as such, need to be studied so as to obtain greater depth of knowledge of CBR. This research aimed to contribute to knowing what causes a person to make sacrifices for a given brand.

Without denying the importance of the work by Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) and developing their model as a possible extension of brand equity, sacrifice appears to be inspired in the work of Albert et al. (2008), when we think that researchers can use these studies as a first step in developing a scale of measurement in relation to sacrifice for brands, thereby allowing greater and better comprehension of CBR. Even if we know, as stated by Etcheverry and Le (2005, p. 104) that concerning sacrifice, or at least part of it, we will have difficulty finding out the real reason for the consumer behaving in that way. We risk developing a specific conceptualization based on Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw (1999, p. 451): “We hope that our research will encourage others to develop conceptualizations specifically for explaining fan motivation and behavior.”

Completed globally, holistically and formed of five studies, this research allowed us to find out more about certain aspects of the fan/consumer and his relationship with the brand/club. Stories are the central aspect to achieve “a deep understanding of consumer psychology” (Woodside, 2010, p. 42). The reason for making all these studies, similarly to Batra, Ahuvia and Bagozzi (2012), is due to feeling the need for thorough knowledge of how and what consumers/fans live and experience, and only then making the due connections with the literature.

Satisfaction, “the core of the marketing concept, has been the key objective of marketing strategy for more than 50 years” (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006, p. 79). This is the search for happiness, “people need help in finding what makes them happy, and this is where marketing comes in” (Bagozzi & Natarajan's, 2000, p. 10), whether from a macro perspective/explanation – from the point of view of marketing’s role in helping consumers to become aware of the search for happiness (Natarajan’s & Bagozzi, 1999), or from a micro perspective/explanation – where happiness can also be attained through brands and their stories experienced together (Bagozzi & Natarajan’s, 2000).

Overall, sport emerges through the force of the sports industry in modern society today, and specifically, football emerges due to its transversal characteristics and its worldwide popularity. The identity of the consumer/fan is very important for the relationship and subsequent consumption of the brand/club, beyond the mere possession of the brand’s objects/products. The very personality of the consumer/fan gains new aspects, leading to the aim to find out the reason for such “sacrificial” behaviour. In the psychological literature, the definition and clear examples of passive and active sacrifice which, duly integrated in marketing, create new possibilities for more research on these themes.

Given the great lack of knowledge on consumers/fans, this research attempts to reveal to some extent what the consumer/fan thinks and how he acts, irrespective of his age, profession or place of residence. Nevertheless, much remains unknown at all levels. We highlight only two aspects: the emotionality experienced and the feeling of being an integral part; and the importance of peers, a curious aspect that highlights a whole set of behaviours and procedures we know are observed by others.

The research also points out the usefulness of the individual’s sacrifice as a tool to achieve objectives of whatever order. As we are dealing with a brand (rather than a human being), concerning matches and the fan’s presence there (or his willingness to be part of them), the dyadic adjustment is always made unilaterally without any reciprocity. The proposed definition of sacrifice and its construct allow new tendencies in the approach to the

consumer/fan and his relationship with the brand/club, mirrored in the construction of a sacrifice framework, with examples in four concrete areas of the consumer/fan's life.

The presentation of models, namely in the methodology, "help us to reduce the complexity of a situation, allowing us to overcome much of it and concentrate on what is important" (Tschappeler & Krogerus, 2012, p. 12), a model being no more than the result of active thought (p. 13).

### **8.5.2 - Managerial implications**

Regarding the contributions of this research to management, we believe we contribute in several ways, as through application of the long interview we contribute to a "deep understanding of the thinking and feeling processes of members of important customer segments" (Woodside, 2010, p. 284), important for the strategy to be designed by the marketer. As for the transversal nature of the consumer/fan (age, profession, place of residence), the data obtained can help to better define what, to whom and how the marketing process should be directed, with fuller knowledge of the various types of consumer/fan involvement.

The importance of relationships is central, given their complexity where neither time nor energy are unlimited factors (Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult & Langston, 1998). The importance of the context in which it is inserted is also clearly demonstrated, whether structurally (stadium, safety), or socially (the collective), and marketers can not only improve in terms of infrastructure (better seating, catering areas, etc.), but also regarding feeling part of the spectacle (going down to the pitch, showing posters forming a certain mosaic). If, as Hornby (1992) claims, seeing is the same as doing, which is corroborated by this research, it is up to marketers to devise strategies which, after the consumption of services, allow the acquisition of products where the purchase reflects an emotional state similar to what has been seen previously and retained as a pleasurable emotion.

The strategy to be defined in the media for presentation to the club and later spread by the media globally is extremely important, due to the information society in which we live. It

is the task of marketers to define forms of communication which depend on themselves and, in addition, not only limit the information to communication channels that are outwith their control but also have a strategy of charm in relation to them.

A final word for trust and its importance in the relationship (Van Lange, Agnew, et al., 1997) with the brand, an aspect that can be crucial for good relations between the consumer/fan and the brand/club, it being the job of marketers to make visible the trust that a brand demonstrates or conveys.

### **8.6 - Further research**

Naturally, the perspective of this research, as a starting point for subsequent work, leads to suggestions for possible forms of development: “there are many interesting directions for future research on sacrifice” (Impett & Gordon, 2008, p. 94). According to the studies made, and reinforced by the reflections of Pichler and Hemetsberger (2007, p. 194) “In the Western consumer society, a world of wealth and abundance, yet a world almost demystified, secularized, and seemingly controllable, people feel an increased desire to find new forms and opportunities to give sense to their lives”. Can a brand give meaning to people’s lives? This could be the subject of future research.

In addition, although this research is made up of five studies, each one was of a limited duration. It would be interesting to gain a longitudinal perspective, accompanying a consumer/fan over a longer period of time. It would also be interesting to know the perspectives of people directly involved in a way of life that affects them, for example, the friends, family and children of consumers/fans.

Based on the work by Pichler and Hemetsberger (2007), another possibility would be to study the intensity and/or extent of the sacrifice and consequences in the relationship with the brand. To what extent can what happens in relationships between people be transferred to those between brands and people?

Application of a conceptually developed model (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004) is another suggested path.

Bearing in mind the social importance reflected in this research (with special relevance for peers), and living in a society where belonging to tribes has conceptually limiting barriers (Cova et al., 2007), how does a consumer move between one community and another? What are his motivations and interests? This could be another line of research.

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