

# 'The Passion of the Consumer'

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*Understanding the sociocultural dynamics that drives consumers' establishment of cultural communities & social ties*

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**LUND UNIVERSITY**

## Preliminary acknowledgments

*My name is Forat Al Haider and I have conducted this Master thesis as a project while pursuing my Master of Science studies in Globalization, Consumption & Brands at the Lund University, Sweden within the department of Business Administration. This study has explored the sociocultural causes for passionate consumers' to engage in the sport of football and their establishment of cultural worlds in the line of Consumer Culture theory.*

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*I hope that you find the reading interesting and valuable.*

*Forat Al Haider*

# Abstract

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Title</b>                   | ‘The passion of the consumer’   |
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| <b>Keywords</b>                | Community, Culture capital, Identity, Social links, CCT   |
| <b>Thesis purpose</b>          | <p>The main aim with this research is to contribute to influential and decisive theory within the lines of Consumer behaviour and identity by applying various Consumer Culture theories. This research is set to examine and explore the underlying sociocultural causes and needs for the consumers to engage in the sport of football and what the consumer aims to derive by entering the social worlds of various communities.</p> |
| <b>Methodology</b>             | <p>This research has its departure in the field of CCT which promotes the use of a certain philosophy, strategy and methods which allows this study to grasp and define comprehensive insights collected. This study will use a mix-method.</p>   |
| <b>Theoretical perspective</b> | <p>The theoretical framework is divided in two sections. The first aims to bring a greater understanding of postmodernity and how this led to Consumer Culture theory which allows us to explore sociocultural dynamics that drives consumption. The second perspective explores the major theoretical concepts derived from the CCT applied on The passion of the consumer as these explore how consumers form social solidarity.</p>  |
| <b>Empirical data</b>          | <p>This study has gathered data from a ‘mix-method triangulation’ where a quantitative web-survey is set to facilitate the qualitative methods of netnography, participant observation in Madrid, Spain and seven deep qualitative sessions with participants from all over the world</p>   |
| <b>Conclusion</b>              | <p>The individual has a strong desire to extend his personality to identify himself with a community. This promotes social ties where they incorporate cultural practices to gain social currency which transforms into status. The individual identity and the community’s familiar identity are later on cohered into one superior identity in all cultural spheres.</p>  |

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# 1. Introduction

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*The introduction is where the researcher will develop an understanding for the reader in the general topic and how this is an important factor that needs to be explored. The reader will also be provided with a minor theoretical background to understand what previously has been done in this field. The introduction part will finish by stating the various research questions that the researcher aims to develop and answer with this study.*

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The main aim with this research is to contribute to influential and decisive theory within the lines of consumer behaviour and identity by applying various Consumer Culture theories. This research is set to examine and explore the underlying sociocultural causes and needs for the consumers to engage in the sport of football (soccer) and what the consumer aims to gain from this behaviour. The phenomenon of “The passion of the consumers” will be viewed from the perspective of contemporary consumer society as this research aims to bring a greater understanding of how passionate consumers establish their own cultural worlds and social ties in postmodernity by correlating their personal identity to a stronger community.

Football clubs have transformed rapidly during history as they no longer are institutions for kicking a ball in a green field anymore. They have become much more, they have become institutions for consumers who are in desperate need of finding social outlets for their emotional connectivity. These associations could be built upon pride, loyalty, identity, joy and other characteristics which are vital tools that create strong social links that binds passionate consumers together to establish various consumer communities. These passionate consumers’ are in a strong noble search for consumption objects that creates an emotional connectivity towards other consumers’. Maffesoli (1996) argues that this search for communal connectivity emerged after the liberation of the individual, where the loneliness brought a stronger quest to identify with others in a stronger community. Some researchers’ goes further and explains the consumer’s desperate search for a stronger link as a strong desire to return to old fashioned values with emotional familiarity in communities (Muniz & O’Guinn; Cova 1997).

Guilianotti & Robertson (2004) argue that major football clubs nowadays can be characterized as transnational corporations which exceed all continental borders seeking a stronger foothold within their passionate consumers’ minds and thereby their supporter communities. The passionate consumers’ of football reaches new heights every year as their

need and desire to be accepted as passionate ‘high identifiers’ of a certain global community enables them to spend money and time on consuming the sport of football (Madrigal 1995; Giulianotti 1999). These factors have transformed the sport of football to ‘the business of football’ where each club desires more passionate consumers’ who extends their strong communities. The club who possesses the strongest financial muscles is the Spanish giants Real Madrid who are in pole position in the football clubs money league for the 7<sup>th</sup> successive year with their annual income of 480m Euro (deloitte.com 2012). The world of football is a powerful tool that will be studied as this is the world’s biggest sport which is practiced and discussed daily on all continents. The world of football unites all the cultures of the world together as the sport exceeds all language barriers to promote a passion shared by all nations. The stated factors allow consumers to easily come in close contact to football which creates a crucial accessibility which develops a passionate bond between the consumer and this object. The defined perspective of football being a common and passionate feature of the global consumer’s daily routine and the accessibility of the well known sport promote a deeper study of this phenomenon from a Consumer Culture viewpoint.

Although, previous research within the field of consumer behaviour in sports exists (Holt 1995; Moutinho et al 2007; Richardson & O’Dwyer 2003; Guilianotti & Robertson 2004), they have merely focused on different aspects such as identity, loyalty, globalization and it is therefore important to focus exclusive on Consumer Culture theory in football and conduct a research in “The passion of the consumer” to understand the underlying behaviour that drives football consumption in postmodernity. The sport of football has changed rapidly during the last decade which brings the necessity of understanding and gaining insights in sociocultural aspects to add valuable theory regarding passionate consumers’ and their communities in Consumer Culture theory.

The stated enables a greater connectivity between the consumer and the powerful brand of the favorite club brand despite the distance of perhaps 15’000 km between the both parties. Consuming a sport and being a fan of a football club is not only about paying the entrance fee for a spectacular emotional experience of a match event (Giulianotti 1999) neither is it that the football consumers’ follows one team and doesn’t do anything more. Being a passionate fan is about understanding certain customs and values that are centralized within the own community (Cova 1997) in order to learn how to consume the sport of football, and most important the own club, in a perfect manner (Bourdieu 1984). These features opens up a broader social world where the consumers’ are gathered around the football club like a

‘totem’ (Maffesoli 1996) as this passionate consumption allows individuals, with nothing else in common, to interact and share an emotional familiar bond (Marx in Corrigan 1997).

Previous research has been made upon understanding the consumer and their communities by mapping out their consumption patterns within the lines of Consumer Culture theory as this field has gained a strong foothold (Holt 1995; Cova 1997; Maffesoli 1996; Bourdieu 1984; Belk 1988; Arnould & Thompson 2005; McCracken 1986). The previous studies have merely emphasized on understanding consumption patterns when interlaced with a certain community. The study of “The passion of the consumer” aims to derive the major concepts and theories in the field of Consumer Culture theory by applying these on consumers’ and their social solidarities in certain communities to extend, generate new concepts and develop a greater theoretical understanding for how passionate consumers’ relate to the social world that the consumption object opens up.

The reader has been given an early insight in the world of Consumer Culture and football consumption and what the main goals there are to derive when becoming a passionate football consumer, however in order to enable all these steps one need to understand the mind of the powerful consumer. One must understand what sociocultural motives there are that forms the consumers desires and needs into becoming an integral link in this broad community. What dynamics are there that captures the consumers’ affection which leads to this passionate lifelong relationship where the individual identity is extended to be united with the community’s. The research questions that this report aims to explore and provide theory within are

- How do these passionate consumers form their own communities and hold them together through social ties and how do they strengthen their cultural world in postmodernity?
- What are the sociocultural motives that provide the consumer the right incentives to prosper and develop into a passionate consumer where he extends his personality to the community?

This report aims to answer these questions and gain valuable insights by conducting mix-method that starts with a quantitative web-survey that will facilitate the qualitative methods. This study will therefore deploy seven deep qualitative consumer interviews, a netnographical research and a participant observation by attending the Champions League semifinals in order to understand and derive the true behaviour of the consumers’. Concepts

such as authenticity, habitus, tribal behaviour, cultural capital, community and extended self will be essential and centralized in this report when examining contemporary consumer meanings in football. The terms of consumer, fan, supporter might have slightful different meanings, however these will be used synonymously as the correlated aspect between the different terms have been mentioned earlier. The other term of community, cultural world, and social world will also be used synonymously during this report.

This master thesis aims to understand the consumers of the football industry and their cultural worlds, and will thereby primarily focus on the consumers' and their developed social ties and therefore remove the attention from sports and the major football clubs results on the pitch. The topic of "The passion of the consumer" is explored and investigated within the Consumer Culture theory and will thereby use a conceptual framework for appropriate theories. "The passion of the consumer" is a broad topic, although mentioned in terms of football in this paper; however the results of this master thesis should and can be applicable to other business areas where the consumers' behaviour and passion is top of mind. The topic might be even more suitable where there is an emotional connectivity between consumers and the brand. This study will therefore explore how Consumer Culture theories can be extended to be applied on this passionate bond between the *consumer-community-consumption object* by studying the incremental behaviour of consumers' in their passion for the sport of football.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

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*The theoretical framework is divided in two sections where the first aims to bring a greater understanding of postmodernity and how this theoretical framework gave birth to the Consumer Culture Theory which allows us to explore sociocultural dynamics and motives that drives consumption. The second perspective explores the major theoretical concepts and theories derived from Consumer Culture Theory applied on “The Passion of the Consumer” as these explore how consumers’ form social solidarity through cultural worlds and social spheres. The second perspective builds up the story of how the consumer finds identification, understands the community and thereby incorporates essential cultural values that need to be explored in order to consume the sport of football in the right manner.*

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### 2.1 Consuming the Consumer Culture Theory

#### 2.1.1 A Postmodern Review

Researchers have claimed that there are several meanings to the word “postmodernism” (Featherstone 2007). This particular term can be seen as a definition to the features of the socio-economical condition that emerged in the more affluent European countries during second course of the twentieth century. Cova (1997: 298) argue that this definition is more precise due to the fact that it “draws the attention and discontinuity as two faces of the intricate relationship between the present socio-economic condition and the formation that is preceded and gestated”. This means that the term ties the two aspects of the postmodern condition and modernity together. Postmodernity, from an economical aspect, can be interpreted as a new qualitatively different historical epoch which brings multinational globalized raptorial capitalism which has changed the patterns of consumption. This significant milieu can, from a consumption perspective, be seen as unpredicted, uncontrollable and upheaval (Brown 2006). The scope of consumption has changed during postmodernity as it has formed a nonexistent courtyard with no boundaries where there are no rules, simply choices. A consumer living in Syria can listen to reggae music, enjoy an Al Pacino movie, buy Swedish furniture from IKEA, eat American hamburgers for dinner and wear fashion labels from Milano while attending a Spanish league fixture in Andalusia (Ibid). Postmodern thinking has the feature of strong links to fragmentation, distrust in universal explanations and in uncertainties which has seriously challenged the scientific criterias of modern marketing. (Cova 1997).

### **2.1.2 The Boundless Consumer Culture Theory**

The postmodern characteristics above have given birth to the relatively new field of Consumer Culture Theory, CCT. Through history, the main focus upon consumers' has been solely on how individualistic cognition and perception influence the consumers' behaviour. During the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, an urge was created for marketers to understand whether it was possible to stretch the boundaries for contemporary marketing studies to cover relevant fields exceeding the individual level to gain a better understanding of the consumer behaviour (Cova 1997). This topic was widened in the mid 1980's when researchers needed to grasp the communal and emotional feeling of consumption by introducing Goodwin's (1994) definition of "communality". Researchers during this time period argued for a bigger scope in the field of postmodern consumption by assimilating an anthropological and sociological perspective, thus to create a communal dimension which culminate into "linking values" of products and services (Cova 1997).

The field of CCT refers to a family of theoretical perspectives that discusses the correlated relationship between the consumer actions, marketplace and cultural meanings which ties them together (Arnould & Thompson 2005). CCT also lays weight in "trying to understand the heterogeneous distribution of meanings and the multiplicity of overlapping cultural groupings that exists within the broader sociohistoric frame of globalization and market capitalism" (Ibid; 869). A truly central aspect within the Consumer Culture theory is the market-made commodities and the desire-inducing marketing symbols, which Holt (2002) states that this systems perpetuation and reproduction is dependent on the free personal choice in the private sphere of everyday life. The perspective of Consumer Culture articulates a network of global connections and extensions where local cultures are being interpreted by governing aspects such as transnational capital and the global mediascape (Featherstone 2007). Furthermore, CCT is constructed through a core set of issues related to the intrinsic relationship between the consumers' personal and collective identities. This includes: the cultures created and embodied in the lived worlds of the consumers which involves other underlying processes, experiences and structures (Arnould & Thompson 2005). These cultural meanings emphasize on the dynamics of fragmentation, plurality, fluidity and hybridization of various consumption traditions (Firat & Venkatesh 1995). The significant mark of CCT is however underlined in how consumers' transform symbolic meanings from various market intermediaries to manifest their personal and social identity through the market (Kozinets 2001). This is important to explore and analyze from "The passion of the consumer" as it

describes how consumer groups manifest a consumption object and use these to create an own cultural world which enables global social links between other consumers’.

To this point, the reader has been given an early general insight in how the field of CCT has been established and its different contrasts when exploring the individual consumers’ needs and pursuits for personal and social identity. “The passion of the consumer” will aim to capture the most important consumer meanings in football and will thereby focus on a broad theoretical view upon CCT where the consumers’ individual and social aspects are explored together. The theoretical framework will from this point be based upon a mixture of Arnould & Thompson’s (2005) *Consumer Identity projects & Marketplace cultures*. The first perspective will mention and explore what individual goals there are for the consumer to achieve by being a passionate football consumer and how these goals establishes and develop their identities. The upcoming theory will describe the consumers’ internal conflicts in coherence with their defined goals as they assume the contradictory role of “a passionate consumer” in search for the emotional climax that the world of football can offer (Armstrong & Giulianotti 1999). Holt (2002) sees these acts as certain details to how the postmodern economy flourishes by producing unconventional standards who expresses personal sovereignty and personal authenticity through the phenomenon of consumption. These will later on place the consumption object and its symbols in the center of the consumers’ identities. It is important to understand what the sociocultural motives that drives the individual consumer to develop a certain identity to become an integral part of a community. The Consumer identity projects allow this report to assimilate the consumer’s internal quest to become a significant part of a larger social community through a passionate consumption.

The latter perspective, marketplace cultures, refers to this reports first research question. This point of view will explain how the consumers form social feelings of solidarity when creating and entering their new personal and social identities of football consumption. By using this perspective, this study will aim to investigate what common features that these consumers need in order to nurture and cultivate their behaviour in their own cultural world. This angle will describe how passionate consumers incorporate the subjective role as culture producers instead of culture bearers (Arnould & Thompson 2005). This perspective builds up the first as we now have grasped the understanding of why and how consumers’ wishes to integrate their integrity to understand what underlying social benefits the consumers’ desire from this consumption. This aims to explore the reality of how these consumers’ can benefit

from correlating their personal identity to the community's identity and what the essential features are by conducting this behaviour.

## 2.2 Consuming the Passion

### 2.2.1 Fans Identification

Social Identity theory suggests that the motivation to increase the personal self-esteem causes individuals to strongly associate themselves with a strongly positive perceived group such as a football team (End et al 2002). Cialdini et al (1976) proposes that this type of basking in reflected glory can be perceived as a primary source for pleasure and benefits to the sport consumer. The process in which the team experiences failures on the pitch and the consumers' wishes to disassociate him from the losing team will be explained later in the report. Madrigal (1995) labels the supporters as either 'high identifiers' or 'low identifiers' to distinguish the passionate fans from those riding the back of a team in pursuit of glory. The study acknowledged that high identifiers utilize a greater propensity for self-serving bias. These might include counting the teams' victories as an effect of internally controllable factors such as the supporters chanting vocal support while defeats are to be blamed on externally uncontrollable factors such as the other team cheating or poor refereeing which has affected the final whistle. High identifiers have higher pre-game expectations and suffer to stronger negative emotional reactions when the team suffers negative results. These consumers are more likely to distance themselves from an objective approach and are more inclined to engage in wishful thinking when being passionate in the sport (Madrigal 2003). The high identifiers who see their involvement with the team as an important characteristic of their self-identity experiences a greater personal joy and will thereby seek a stronger association to their team when it is on the winning path (Madrigal 1995). Perhaps the most important association that a high identifier can assume is when using the pronoun of "we" when speaking in terms of his preferred team (Cialdini et al 1976).

### 2.2.2 Consuming for the identity - Being one of us

Very little research has focused on the merely important aspect of how supporters identify themselves with peers within the same football club (Madrigal 2000; End et al 2002; Cialdini et al 1976; Richardson & O'Dwyer 2003). Madrigal (2000) research on this aspect clearly depicted that consumers' benefitting from closer relationship and identification with in-group

fans enjoys higher self-esteem, higher levels of life satisfaction which brings less depression. In order to be seen as “one of us” one must understand that there are walls, such as internal values, surrounding and protecting the group from outsiders while it also serves as an entrance barrier for people trying to associate with the specific club. These values are more certain to be internalized as a specific language, actions and rituals emerges and becomes standard norms (Moutinho et al 2007). The group’s coherence and the camaraderie that emerges becomes a consumable object (Madrigal 2000). The phenomenon of the group dynamics gives birth to crucial social feelings of community, group identity, experiences and processes which create the emotional tangible feeling that only football consumption can offer (Derbaix et al 2002).

Holt (1995) states that consumption is built upon different structures. These are *actions* where the consumers directly engage consumption objects and there are *interactions* with other fans where the consumption objects will serve as a focal resource. Consumption is therefore divided in four different categories. (1) Consuming as experience, (2) Consuming as integration, (3) Consuming as classification and (4) Consuming as play (Holt 1995). These four features will be explored and later on analyzed as they provide a descriptive image of how consumers’ consume when being passionate. These different structures provide a greater understanding when mapping the consumers’ behaviour within the world of sports and provide valuable insights in how the consumer relates to the consumption object and vice versa. This engagement between the two and its features is important to understand as this type of behaviour allows consumers’ to interact which leads to the cultural worlds of the various communities that gains ground within the consumers’ minds.

### *Consuming as experience*

The first perspective emphasizes on the consumers emotional states during consumption. It describes how the consumers experience consumption objects that is structured by interpretive frameworks. One given example of this is how the social world of football doesn’t only consist by the formal rules of the game, rather the more important fact that the social world constitutes of a strong variety of conventions, strategies and various habits that are strongly correlated to the sport (Ibid). These holistic short term feelings that the consumers experience could for an example be applauding in a powerful rhythm before a free kick is to be shot in order to encourage the player shooting. These kinds of features might be how the beer in the

stadium always is more refreshing and how the hot dog tastes better than at home. This perspective views consumption from a merely psychological stand where the subjective hedonic, aesthetic and experiential dimensions are examined (Holbrook & Hirschman 1982).

### *Consuming as integration*

The second view illustrates how consumers acquire and manipulate object meanings. Consuming as integration means that the fan makes a greater symbolic use of the object. Football spectators integrate a various set of elements of the sport into their identity; this could be a particular game, a player, or the stadium which becomes a second home and serves as integration (Holt 1995). The stadium and its atmosphere can serve as a *displaced meaning* for the consumers' as it represents a bridge towards an own cultural world that serves as an ideal world. The fan doesn't only enter a stadium, they pass through the world outside and enters into the world within that can only be experienced in dreams. It is truly a moment when you leave your ordinary life and cross over to your displaced meaning (McCracken 1986). This practice has been mentioned as a self-extension process (Belk 1988) and sacralizing processes (Belk et al 1989).

A supporter might identify and assume that specific club's heritage in order to extend his own personality as a consumer with old fashioned values. These actions symbolically draw external objects into one's self-concept. A trend for consumers is to showcase their support for a team brand by tattooing the club emblem on your body. This is exactly where the quality of the object makes integration with the consumer's subjective identity (Holt 1995). Even though there is an own social world created for this purpose, McCracken (1986) mentions that it is necessary to provide the consumers with powerful recourses to construct meaningful experiences, which could be a strong emotional atmosphere. A fan can integrate the consumption by assimilating the game. These are various methods in which the consumer becomes a competent participant in the social world of football. Assimilation to the game can be conducted in several ways, following a match on TV, reading the latest sport pages or discussing the sport with someone in your everyday life. Although, the best conditions for assimilating is by attending the game where the consumer is allowed to engage in direct integration with the game, stadium, players and other peers (Holt 1995). The term producing has come to new means as it describes how the fan enhances his perception of himself being involved in producing the professional sport of football. This subjective phenomenon is

difficult to find in football where the consumption object is controlled by an external source, however supporters seek other ways of producing these practices as “they create and play out a fantasy in which they are managing and being in charge of play on the field. “Some spectators even assert that their actions significantly influence the game” (Holt 1995; 7). This involves action such as vocal chanting, booing at the opposition and verbally attacking the referee after doubtful decisions and insulting opposing players when shooting a corner. The other way of integrating the sport is by personalization. This could mean taking actions where the consumers’ symbolically and physically acquire mass produced consumption objects to manipulate their meaning (Wallendorf & Arnould 1991). One example of this is by purchasing a sport jersey and writing your own personal name with the preferred number instead of the original player. The actions of personalizing dresses, signs and comments are all aims to individuate the consumers’ relationship with the actors of the game; the players and the teams (Holt 1995).

### *Consuming as classification*

The third angle of consuming as classification describes the ways consumers can use objects to classify themselves in relation to other consumers. Supporters grade themselves by leveraging their experiential and integrating practices to gain an understanding to other consumers. A very important feature of this aspect is to showcase their affiliation for the team. This could be done by wearing the clubs sports gear, or even having a very old t-shirt which gives the consumer higher credit as a longtime serving supporter. This type of credits builds meaningful bonds between otherwise heterogeneous consumers (Ibid). This classifying behaviour aims to build affiliation and to improve the distinction. An important mark for this behaviour is the stadiums at match day which serves as the sacred site where affiliate bonds are intertwined (Belk et al 1989). There are two distinct methods of classifying – through objects and actions. The first manner describes how consumers classify through objects which Marx saw as fetishistic due to the fact that they only appear to relate exclusively to each other (Corrigan 1997). This is however not an easy task when the supporter doesn’t consume a material object and it is therefore of great importance that the consumers use certain symbols to mark their association to the consumption object which adds stronger credibility. Yet again, the best way is to attend a match for this purpose. The other method of, classifying through actions, is when the consumers experience the consumption object (Holt 1995). This

phenomenon can appear by fans predicting scores, team line-ups or even predicting which players the club will acquire next summer. These are all different rituals in which the supporters for an example chant specific messages to a certain player to distract him.

### *Consuming as play*

The fourth way of how consumers consume is by consuming as play where the fans use consumption objects to interact with fellow supporters. This dimension provides a common locus for people who often have very few commonalities or don't even speak the same language. The supporters commune when they share their insights and experiences of the consumption object in a way that makes their interaction a mutual experience (Arnould & Price 1993). This could mean how an older supporter explains how the team made a superb comeback in the year of 1984. This is a type of socializing where the consumer boasts his record as a consumer. The power of these communal interactions focused on a central icon such as a specific team serves as the basis for sacred experiences that the consumer will remember several years from the interaction (Belk et al 1989). The communal sharing practices are even more enhanced on the match day where a celebratory carnivalesque atmosphere facilitates the consumption object of football where the communing reaches higher levels as a dramatic finish or player exposes the crowd to an amazing dribble (Holt 1995).

### **2.2.3 I Love us - The Community**

The previous paragraph explored how the consumer aspires and takes the role of an apprentice to understand the core values of the team to become a true supporter and thereby becoming "one of us". It is in this moment that the apprentice has established the right emotional consumer behaviour of the sport to enter the holistic community of the team.

Maffesoli (1996) explains the return of the community and most important, the consumers urge and desires for this boundless institute. His book, "The time of the tribes", clarifies how the forces of globalization and postindustrial socioeconomic transformation have eroded the ancient and traditional bases of sociality and have instead encouraged a greater and more dominant individualism, to promote a stronger quest for personal distinctiveness and autonomy. These later on created an alienating and isolated condition

which has given consumers the incitement to build more ephemeral communal identifications where the consumers take part in rituals of solidarity in which they have a common interest. These types of communities has become an open forum for consumers and are held together by shared emotions, moral beliefs and consumption practices and exists only in a symbolically and ritually manifested commitment between the members (Cova 1997). Muniz & O'Guinn (2001) goes one step further and explains this concept from Tönnies *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* where these two different distinctions are waging a struggle between the customary, familial, emotional rural community and the more mechanical individualistic rational urban society. This is a very important aspect to consider from football consumption as entering a community can be seen as a desperate search for a social link as the consumers' aim to extend their personal identities by acclaiming a greater community's (Cova 1997). This type of behaviour has transformed football teams to certain totem for which they can gather and share mutual emotions and passions thus creating a community that is otherwise absent from their ordinary lives (Maffesoli 1996; Derbaix et al 2002). It provides individual consumers' the spark needed to ignite a communal fire where they practice their cultural belief together and strengthen bonds with other passionate consumers who they may not have anything else in common with. Although not all football fans have made a statistical calculation of what neotribalistic benefits one can gain from joining a certain football team by joining a community, yet they form a subculture of football consumption which has certain behaviour (Giulianotti 1999).

There are three core commonalities which characterizes a community (Muniz & O'Guinn 2001). The first is Weber's (1968) term of consciousness of kind which explains the intrinsic connection between the members that creates a shared attitudes and perceived similarity which can be the mutual love for one team. The second step that signifies a community is the rituals and shared history that sets up the visible social solidarity (Durkheim 1915). These could be having a sacred tradition of behaviour hours before entering the arena. The last mark for community is the strong sense of moral duty toward your own community and its members. These, in times of threat, produce collective actions (Muniz & O'Guinn 2001) which can be providing a greater chanting for your team when they are down by a goal. These core commonalities explain essential values that the individual consumer needs to understand when aspiring to become a part of a strong social link. This leads to a stronger cemented membership that provides loyalty towards the own football team and the peers of the community (Madrigal 2003).

#### **2.2.4 The Authentic Culture Capital**

Consuming the authentic sport of football is a phenomenon that can be viewed from different aspects. From a consumption perspective, one might understand the authenticity as experiences and sensations that are real, genuine and true. Research has shown that consumers' tries to find a subjective meaning in their lives that are strongly associated with their personal goals. This is a truly important fact as the consumers are strongly motivated to search unexplored meanings in brands and various experiences that will support their identity. As diverse consumers' seek different goals, they will find authenticity in a wide range of events and objects. The football fans personal goals that can be identified as drivers correlated to consuming authentic objects are control, virtue and connection. The first view reflects the consumers' means when using authenticity to achieve mastery of the environment and the self. Virtue goals are incitements to being true to a set of moral values. The last view of connection is that the consumer connects authenticity to other terms such as culture, time, place and community (Beverland 2010) which leads us to authenticity of identification in football.

From a marketing perspective, one might take advantage that some clubs have stronger historical records and are perceived as pioneers and producers of authenticity within football which can transfer into higher match tickets which the consumer is happy to pay. These attributes are very important features that the club aims to gain when relying on higher brand equity to justify the higher prices that the football consumers are charged with (Kapferer 2008). Marketers might face difficulties when transferring the authentic meaning as postmodern consumers seems to avoid conventional corporate influences. Many brands in postmodernity are failing to correlate their brands and the authentic stamp due to that a significant amount of brands are acting aggressively to be perceived as authentic while the critics in society are educating the consumers on this particular topic (Holt 2002).

#### *Earning & Gaining Cultural Capital*

The term authenticity in football is contradictory as researchers claim that various fan groups and communities have different definitions of the authentic fan (Giulianotti 1999). The concepts of high and low identifiers have been mentioned earlier, however they aren't fully

assumed to the term of authenticity and it will therefore be more instructive to examine this aspect in a football consumption context from the concept of Bourdieu's (1984) culture capital. Culture capital can in the case of "The passion of the consumer" explored as a formal education and social background in connection to the own team and their cultural world. The Author argues that the way one consumes corresponds to the individual's culture and social class and thereby claiming his idea that it is not enough to consume, the consumer must consume in a proper and seemly manner to be considered as someone with higher class. Time and money are also very important features in cultural capital as this serves as means for preserved distinctions such as social classes when consuming in the perfect manner and thereby attaining a greater social currency (Corrigan 1997).

These distinctions are applied in this paper to the category of football fans. The cultural capital is an explanatory instruction manual for how the football consumers consume, how to appreciate the sport; and thereby one must have a deep sense of understanding of what is worthy and what is not worthy to know. These are all intrusive and extremely important for a football fan in order to fully understand and appreciate the emotional spectacle of football. This knowledge of how to perceive the sport of football allows the supporters to distinguish themselves between those with a strong allegiance to the preferred team and those with none. The same behaviour can, within the community, be manipulated to impress others and thereby attaining higher social class (Holt 1995). This is a very important aspect to reconsider as "each act of consumption reproduces social differences" (Corrigan 1997; 28). Perhaps the most important part of this type of behaviour is by showcasing that you are a truly passionate consumer who understands the way one should perceive the sport and at the same time has the money and they time to consume by being a season ticket holder. To be a season ticket holder is to be considered as one of the extremely inner circle of the elite fans. This trend that enables fans to relate to each other and compare the true experiences of the match day forms a key part of social currency and culture capital among the supporters. These forms of tickets and other 'sacred sites' for the communities cultural belief will automatically be reviewed as a sacred consumption object (Belk et al 1989).

### *The Loss of Culture Capital*

The term of cultural capital in football doesn't solely exist in gaining cultural capital in order to climb further and gain social currency. The team and the fans can also experience a loss of

cultural capital through different actions which are extremely hurtful for a passionate fan as solidarity and pride has a central role in the world of football (King 1997). Losing players or experiencing defeats to rival clubs causes severe blows to the supporters of the club. Other examples of losing culture capital are not winning trophies, not qualifying for continental competitions or an early departure from the finest European competitions such as the Champions League. This type of embarrassments results in a deep blow for the pride and hurt feelings which contributes to consumer behaviour such as booing the own team and protesting at the team ground. Perhaps the most important behaviour that is to be reviewed is how the consumers try to shake off the social link between themselves and the club fans that they have previously attained and showcased with pride.

### **2.2.5 Status & Glory – Our way to the top**

The previous parts of the theoretical framework have established themselves as a ladder in which the consumer first needed to understand the term identity to recognize the concept of community and thereby joining the community where he is taught the great importance of authenticity and cultural capital. By climbing these steps on the ladder, the consumer uses created social links to gain status from the own created cultural world and thereby experiencing glory with his peers. This ladder might, in a worst case scenario, develop into a devastating cold mountain if the followed team's performances on the pitch drops severely and it is exactly why this experienced emotional phenomenon is named and reviewed as "The passion of the consumer".

Turner (1988) states that the word status can be seen as a cultural dimension where the consumer features in a cultural practice where they develop a certain lifestyle which is built the way they dress, speak and use their bodies to gesture in a certain way. This definition of status goes hand in hand with the previously mentioned chapter of Bourdieu's distinction on cultural capital and explains further how the consumers develop a certain *habitus* where they structure and organize to incorporate a lifestyle that is essential and defined for their own cultural world in football. Goffman (1951; 294) sees status as something "that can be ranked on a scale where of prestige, according to the amount of social value that is placed upon it relative to other statuses in the same sector of social life". The term of status, the Latin word to relate to a person's position in a society, has evolved and entered the cultural world of communities (Turner 1988). Supporters might gain higher recognition and status by leading

the supporters chanting towards their fierce rivals, even though they aren't participating in the ongoing match and speaking a common language which only the fans of the particular clubs express themselves in. This type of behaviour, in understanding who to derogate and how to derogate them, helps the created world to define who they are and more important who they absolutely aren't (Muniz & O'Guinn 2001).

### *Symbols*

Status symbols are the objects that visible divides the social world into categories of persons, thereby providing an aid to maintain social solidarity between a category and hostility towards other categories (Goffman 1951). The author later on emphasizes on the importance of how status symbols must distinguish from the collective symbols, which serves to deny differentiation between categories, to serve heterogeneous communities (Ibid). This is an important characteristic sense of solidarity that the football supporters create between themselves as they wear the clubs jersey as a symbol for their glory towards the club while others create their own symbols which highlight their commitment. Baudrillard (Corrigan, 1997; 20) mentions that the same commitment in consumption creates a need to differentiate by stating "that there is no need for a specific object rather the need to need, desire to desire" which thereby creates an understanding for consumption as essentially a tool for communication and improving the social link that exists between football fans. A present status symbol that creates and defines the consumer's great support for the club might face difficulties in overtime as the can fall victims of decline in popularity. Supporters can lose their emotional connectivity to the symbol and thereby searching for a new symbol (Goffman 1951). In these times, where supporters are missing a valuable symbol, fans can use longtime serving legendary players as symbols, even though they aren't present in the current squad.

### *Classes of Consumption*

Thorsten Veblen theory of the leisure class (1899) defines the question of "what lies at the basis of social honour, social prestige and social status?" (In Corrigan 1997; 21). Veblen's simple and cynical answer of "wealth", explains that the possession of wealth can grant the consumer more social currency that is of greater importance than economical wealth (Ibid). This leads to a world of consumption where the consumers' has a strong desire to showcase

and demonstrate their wealth so all the others can admire them. There are two certain ways in which the consumer can conduct this behaviour; through conspicuous leisure and conspicuous consumption. The first perspective mentions the most efficient way of demonstrating the wealth, by simply not conducting any labour and having the money and time to spend on other actions such as football. A supporter's conduct and strong association to a club can be based on the consumer's conspicuous leisure where he aims to showcase that he has the time to travel to continental matches and experience the sensation of Champions League which others aren't available for these trips due to labour. Conspicuous consumption refers to the individual's advantage in consuming the more expensive goods. His richness can buy him expensive season tickets and live expensively abroad to follow his team's pursuit for success. A football consumer from a minor city might avoid the local team by being a strong supporter for the capitals team, just to showcase his wealth in conspicuous consumption and leisure (Corrigan 1997).

### 2.3 Summarizing the theoretical framework

The theoretical framework provided a comprehensive understanding for the term 'postmodernism' which explained the stage of consumption which might be called limitless due to its zero-sum restrictions. This granted the researcher to exploit "The passion of the consumer" from a conceptual framework supported by Consumer Culture theories which explained how cultural motives and dynamics drive postmodern consumption. The mere part of the theoretical framework then concluded valuable insights on how the consumers promote a stronger social activity that acquires and establishes greater links between other passionate consumers and how they build up their cultural world which they later must answer before. This creates a community where certain customs, values and behaviour becomes essential and requires characteristics within the individual in order to be seen as "one of them" to become "one of us". The defined criterias of the theoretical framework will set the basis for the chosen methodology later on as it has set the premises for conducting a righteous study where essential concepts are tested and bended to the limits to be applied on the sport of football. These measurements are necessary as it will allow us to grasp the reality of the underlying behaviour, motives and dynamics of "the passion of the consumer" which later on can be applied on various themes within CCT.



### 3. Methodological Framework

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*This chapter is where the researcher argues for the chosen methodology and the approach that sets the basis for exploring and analyzing “The passion of the consumer”. The research has its departure in the field of CCT which promotes the use of a certain philosophy, strategy and methods which allows the study to grasp and define comprehensive insights collected. The researcher is set to explain his reasoning when defining sampling, designing and the major factors that inspire the research to conclude the best results possible in coming chapter. The methodology will serve as a powerful tool which connects the empirical studies and the theoretical framework to analyze these meanings from a CCT stance as the study will provide the reader with an incremental understanding of how the empirical data is linked to the theoretical framework.*

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#### 3.1 Research Philosophy

This paper applies a theoretical framework that has its basis within the subject of consumer culture theory which restricts and narrows the scope for different research philosophies. The methodological philosophies chosen will steer and guide this study which directly affects the results and its applicability on further studies. “The passion of the consumer” is set to examine consumer meanings and behaviour and their created cultural worlds within CCT. This social phenomenon emphasizes on exploring the mind of the consumer to gain a deeper understanding on what motives that drives the consumers of football. This means that one must penetrate their cultural sphere to develop valuable theory.

This study will use what Easterby-Smith et al (2008; 72) describes as a social constructionist stance as this gives the strength of “understanding the consumers meanings, contribute to the evolution of new theories while it also allows the author to adjust to “new issues as they emerge”. This position challenges the view that that categorizes such as culture is pre-given which therefore confront social actors and their worlds (Bryman & Bell 2003). This is a truly important aspect to reconsider as the social reality easily can be seen as a phenomenon created by social interactions that generate contingent links between individuals (Moisander et al 2009). The social constructionist perspective allows the research to focus primarily on the consumers preferred language among each other and thereby the development of their comprehensive meanings (Thompson et al 1994). The mentioned gives ultimate support to conduct this research from a merely qualitative viewpoint (Easterby-Smith

et al 2008) in order to categorize the football consumer's broad use of social links to transfer their values and meanings that holds the social bonds of the communities together (Moisander et al 2009). This becomes an even more interesting view to examine as the same individuals that shapes these communities, expresses their personal meanings as a sense of cultural perspectives that allows the both to interact (Thompson et al 1994). The use of this particular philosophy is widely considered as the most appropriate as it aims to explore new theoretical insights to extend existing theoretical frameworks in CCT (Arnould & Thompson 2005).

Another factor one must consider in the research philosophy is the choice of epistemology. The epistemology explains the process where the author gains knowledge during his study. It also raise the question of what is (or should be) regarded as knowledge in a discipline (Bryman & Bell 2003). The constructionist stance allows this report to grasp the subjective meaning of social actions. This stance respects the important separation between people and the objects of the natural science which allows a closer study of the consumer's worlds. The hermeneutic-phenomenological perspective of Max Weber's *Verstehen* will be an essential and integral part of this study as it wishes to explore how individuals make sense of the world around them and "attempts to see things from that person's point of view" (Ibid; 17). The chosen philosophy grants a further empirical research which centralizes on the explanation of human behaviour, subjective meanings of social actions and a greater empathic understanding of human actions (Ibid) which reflects on cultural meanings (Thompson et al 1994).

### 3.2 Research Strategy

The aim with "The passion of the consumer" is as mentioned earlier to extend relevant theory in Consumer Culture by applying it on football fans to understand the consumers' attributes in this matter. The theoretical framework gathered the relevant primarily information that is essential when conducting an exploratory study as "The passion of the consumer" and it is therefore of great importance to conduct a research strategy that enables the best possible results from the empirical observations.

#### *Qualitative methods*

This study will, as briefly mentioned in (3.1), take a primarily stance in the qualitative methods as "it has the monopoly of the ability to study meanings" (Bryman & Bell 2003;

469). It is also only in the qualitative research method that allows the world to be studied from through the eyes of the people being studied (Ibid). This choice of method is more appropriate when conducting studies in the field of CCT as focus is on experiential and sociocultural dimensions of consumption that can't be reached through experiments and data base modeling (Arnould & Thompson 2005). The qualitative method will be centralized as it distinguishes the importance of words instead of numbers that are vital when understanding consumer meanings (Bryman & Bell 2003). This matter is even more highlighted as McCracken (1988) argues that a qualitative research emphasizes on how the words establishes a connection between culture and human actions. The chosen method provides a research which is more inclined to offer descriptive details that emphasizes on the context which will be decisive to understand the underlying behaviour of football consumers (Bryman & Bell 2003). The qualitative methods are seen as very useful when revealing the rich symbolic world that underlies needs, desires, meanings and choice (Kozinets 2002).

### *General critique*

Critique has been raised on the qualitative methods as some researchers suggest that it is too subjective and that the social settings that are studied are difficult to replicate (Bryman & Bell 2003; 299-301). The first critique refers to the qualitative researcher's "unsystematic" view of what is important to consider in the studied context. The second aspect refers to the difficulty in freezing a social setting which gives other researchers the opportunity of replicating the study (Bryman & Bell). Brown (2006; 214) argues that postmodern marketing is increasingly acknowledging the critique on the qualitative methods by paying greater attention "to the boundedness of knowledge, the limits to generalization, the lack of universal laws, irrationality rather than rationality, subjectivity instead of objectivity". The fact that qualitative methods are increasingly acknowledging these subjects during the latter years allows us to conduct a study that emphasizes on different important aspects.

### *Mix method triangulation*

This report will focus merely on qualitative methods; however it will not focus solely on the qualitative methods as this study strives to provide the best possible results from various perspectives. "The passion of the consumer" will assume what Easterby-Smith et al (2008;

70) describes as “Mixed methods” where the researcher is allowed to strengthen the qualitative methods with a quantitative touch. This method has been mentioned as positive when trying to provide wider perspectives on the phenomena that are investigated (Easterby-Smith et al 2008).

The prospect of mixed methods allows this report to cover the critique of the qualitative research by assisting it with a quantitative method. Bryman & Bell (2003; 291) defines this method as “triangulation” which entails the use of more than one method in the study of a social phenomenon. This can be used as a minor introduction where the quantitative research facilitates the qualitative research by aiding the researcher a background of the social phenomenon that is to be studied. The chosen argument is further backed up by Arnould & Thompson (2005; 870) positive view; “Consumer culture theory researchers embrace methodological pluralism whenever quantitative measures and analytical techniques can advance the operative theoretical agenda”. The use of triangulation defines this research as gaining access to “different levels of reality” (Bryman & Bell 2003; 291). The use of these techniques are more suitable when using various research methods such as ethnographic studies, qualitative interviews and participant observation due to the fact that not “everything that the researcher need to know is accessible through these methods” (Ibid; 486). The use of this mixture is further embraced as quantitative measurements can provide positive features on the social-constructionist view as it helps to identify and analyze various themes and trends that are essential when exploring the football consumer’s minds (Ibid).

### *Iterative approach*

This study will further use an iterative approach as it “involves a weaving back and forth between data and theory” (Bryman & Bell 2003; 12). The iterative approach and its weaving allow this study to relate the general research questions to the theory and thereby to the results that are generated. The author of this report is a Master of Science student in Globalization, Brands & Consumption which has given a good interpretive framework in the topic of Consumer Culture theory and its significant aspects. The iterative approach goes hand in hand with the previously mentioned frame which explains that the author’s preconceptions provide a necessary edge of reference to support a better understanding of the topic (Thompson et al 1994). The preconceptions that has been granted during the studied year provides a theoretical framework where one can use theories and concepts that have been previously studied to

apply on the consumers' behaviour when interacting in the sport of football. McCracken (1988) argues that these preconceptions are of great benefits as it permits the author to set a loosely structured frame that is built on previously studied concepts that can be changed and set in new perspectives as the relevant cases of the study emerges. This weaving back and forth between the previously studied and new theories in coherence with the collected data makes the iterative approach the most valuable when designing this report.

This approach is of significant importance as it binds the collected empirical data and allows the researcher to analyze it from the concepts of the theoretical framework. This ensures that the study is conducted solely from a Consumer Culture research stance that aims to grasp the behaviour of the passionate consumers' in postmodernity. This approach allows the researcher to make several 'short stops' when collecting the empirical data to grasp a stronger understanding of how the various phenomenons mentioned below influences the cultural sphere of the passionate consumers. These stops are vital as they ensure that every single data collected becomes thoroughly 'blueprinted' and investigated from a CCT stance to provide a stronger analysis and thereby results.

### 3.3 Research Method

#### **3.3.1 Choosing the Cultural world**

To this point the reader has been given a fair understanding of relevant Consumer Culture theories applied on football consumers' behaviour with no limitation to a certain football league or a club. The methodological framework will from this point conduct a deeper analytical study of how consumers/supporters/fans of a certain group behave in order to gain a deeper understanding of their common values and shared identities. The focus on one particular club facilitates the advantage of diving deeper into the common features that these exact consumers share among themselves and showcases prideful towards other cultural worlds. This valuable choice gives the researcher an advantage in developing analytical results in how supporters behave when analyzing the common nominators for this exact group of consumers. To use only one club also derives the researcher the edge of exploring the true underlying consumer meanings that triggers this craving for shared cultural communities rather than scrapping the surface of three to four clubs (Bryman & Bell 2003). This choice is further strengthened by McCracken (1988) principle of "less is more" where resources are allocated where they can serve the study in the best possible manner. To centralize the report

on one club also gives the benefit of denying outlying aspects that might influence the results of the study in a negative aspect. This can be factors that are correlated with the sport of football although not correlated with the own identity in coherence with the peers identities and thereby the community where the shared cultural world is established under certain values. Other factors that are important are that the club has a significant history which brings millions of supporters exceeding all national borders together. The club should possess a strong brand within the sport of football which makes them known and well established on every continent of this planet. The history is also important as the researcher aims to develop an understanding of how passionate consumers behave in established communities which makes the study of minor clubs or clubs under development less suitable for this report.

The chosen club that will undergo this study is the Spanish giants Real Madrid. The most memorable mentions to why Real Madrid's passionate consumers will be explored and studied are their financial muscles and the fact that they are the club with the best historical record in the sport of football. The Madridistas (the name of the Real Madrid supporters) are well known in the football world for their passionate support and their global expenditure in numbers. The mentioned factors are very important as the consumers of Real Madrid have a high spread which enables an easy tracking of various supporters from different continents which also allows a direct interaction with the consumers to gain the vital understanding of their shared meanings and values. This gives further space for different research methods that can be applied to Real Madrid supporters without any concern to restrictions and limitations such as national borders and the distance in kilometers between the researcher and the studied objects.

### **3.3.2 Quantitative Web-survey**

As earlier mentioned, the use of triangulation will deploy a quantitative web-survey to develop an overall understanding of how world-wide consumers behave when consuming the sport of football. The results of this web-survey will serve as a basis for the other mentioned research methods named further below. They will also serve as an understanding for the researcher in what he needs to explore further in the other methods to achieve the expected outcome of this study. A web-survey invites others to join a website where they can submit the survey online and it is also the most optimal choice of method that can spread and generate valuable results during a short time period (Bryman & Bell 2003; 508). One of the major advantages is that the easy use of the internet allows the web-survey to be sent and answered within a few seconds from every continent. The web-survey can also easily be

explained through various pop ups and comments on every question which isn't possible on paper surveys and it also possible to build dynamic error checking of answers to ensure that people respond consistently (Easterby-Smith et al 2008). The social media and internet communities have made connectivity between peers an easy phenomenon and the researcher can easily spread the web-surveys link on different social sites to generate responses (Eysenbach & Till 2001). The survey can't limit the number of respondents that has chosen to participate and how many who ignored the survey. This type of web-survey provides certain difficulties in interpreting the response rate, how the respondents relate to the total population in the world of passionate fans and how representative the respondents are. These are minor bumps that the researcher has counted on when conducting this type of research. The consumers' who are more engaged in the chosen 'locations' where the web-survey is deployed are merely residents in England, Spain and Sweden. However the spread of global fandom doesn't hinder those passionate consumers on these pages that might be spread all over the world.

Perhaps the most valuable feature in this choice of method is the simple use when processing the data as the answers automatically can be downloaded to a database where the results are displayed. This eliminates the difficulties spent on coding data collected (Bryman & Bell 2003). Google documents will be used to conduct this survey as collects and codes data in perfect diagrams where the results are illustrated.

The quantitative web-survey will aim to develop an empirical basis for the researcher and the reader to understand how the football consumers relate to essential themes in the theoretical framework. The question will therefore be based on concepts such as high/ low identity, authenticity, culture capital, community, tribal behaviour, habitus, self-extension processes and other underlying themes that allow the consumer to engage in a passionate relationship with the sport of football. The answers will derogate the researcher a stronger insight into the minds of the passionate consumer as he will possess a stronger theoretical and empirical background on certain themes that proof to be vital when conducting and squeezing out every important data from the following research methods named below. They will also ensure that the researcher use the questions, based on the themes named above, that provided the most valuable answers and develop them further when conducting the qualitative methods named below to generate best possible results.

### **3.3.3 Ethnography**

The use of ethnography as an approach to study group consumption has been argued for in the literature in consumer culture (Holt 1995, King 1997). Ethnography is originally an anthropological method that has gained attention in the fields of sociology, cultural studies and consumer research (Kozinets 2002). These types of studies are based on strong participation and observation of a cultural arena to develop underlying consumer meanings of a phenomenon. The use of a ‘netnographical’ research method is an online marketing tool for providing valuable consumer insights. A major problem a researcher is faced with when conducting an ethnographical research is the limit of access to a social setting (Bryman & Bell 2003). This obstructer can be limited severely as one can use cultural worlds which enable a greater access and thereby a better sphere to study. This choice of method is seen as the best possible when exploring various ‘communities’ with their own customs and practices (Easterby-Smith et al 2003).

#### *Netnography*

“Netnography is ethnography adapted to online communities” (Kozinets 2002; 61) This online technique for studying viral communities is faster simpler and more naturalistic as it records what real consumers say or do and value which is essential when mapping the real Madridistas football behaviour. This method is also less obtrusive as it captures the real supporter behind his screen while it also provides information on their symbolism, meanings and consumption patterns (Ibid). The digital media entitles the researcher the right to access contemporary records made by individuals by using the mobile phone, cameras and a laptop (Easterby-Smith et al 2008). This approach allows the researcher to gain a strong inside perspective of detailed understanding that can be gained from “other people realities” (Ibid; 155). The internet and online communities is important aspects to study as consumers seek these contexts to partake in discussions where attempt to inform and influence fellow consumers by reaching out to them directly (Muniz & O’Guinn 2001). “The passion of the consumer” has well defined general research questions that set the standard for where to look for answers and a deep understanding for the largest contemporary online communities one wishes to use in order to grasp the best observational results possible (Kozinets 2002).

The use of Facebook, YouTube and Twitter will set the basis as these three online communities allow the best interaction between consumers and makes the information easily

accessible. The netnographical observation will be an integral part of this study as it aims to map contextual language, symbols and behaviour that the football consumers of Real Madrid uses that strengthens their community. The netnographical observation will be conducted continuously during the whole study although, the observation will take a natural stamp and the research will put mere focus on the 21th April when Real Madrid faces their fierce rivals Barcelona in an encounter that is certain to decide the outcome of La Liga.<sup>1</sup> This particular day is set to enhance and show the true characteristics of the Real Madrid supporters before and after the match and will therefore serve as an important day in this study. The researcher has searched for a certain behaviour, language and actions that signify the origin of the passionate consumer which brings all Madridistas together. The netnography aims to understand how they behave individually to summon their passionate heritage to their beloved community by assuming the role as complete observer (Bryman & Bell 2003; 323).

### *Participant observation*

Another perspective of the ethnographical dimension is the participant observer stance where the researcher immerses himself to the football fans to experience their behaviour to develop the needed understanding of the consumer's cultural world. The participant observation is a vital element as it allows the researcher to enter the social setting to fully understand the emotional spheres that the Madridistas experience when being in contact with each other. This type of observation is suited for this report as the researcher gains full access to an emotional ground where the social links between the consumers aren't restricted which allows the studied fans to be studied in their natural environment (Bryman & Bell 2003). Holt (1995) argues that this type of observation allows the researcher to develop a sixth sense and ethics understanding for attributes and actions of passionate consumers that otherwise are taken for granted.

The participant observation is set to take place during the Champions League second leg semi-final between Real Madrid and Bayern Munich at the Santiago Bernabeu arena in Madrid, Spain. The Champions League is the finest European tournament and the home game in Madrid at the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2012 will serve as the perfect social setting for this participant observation as Madridistas all over the world relishes the match between these European giants. The researcher of this study will acquire the "complete participant role as it is essential

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<sup>1</sup> La Liga is the spoken name of the Spanish League.

that he is a fully functioning member” from the morning of 25<sup>th</sup> April to the late hours of the night to experience the true Madridistas rituals, meanings, behaviour and the social links that builds the worldwide bridges between the passionate football consumers’ of Real Madrid (Bryman & Bell 2003; 323). This research method might be the only way to gain the kind of insights that is sought to extend relevant theories in CCT (Easterby-Smith et al 2008). The researcher will act to all intents and purposes as ‘one of them’, by assuming the complete participant role to the fullest (Ibid; 157). This involves dressing to learn how to eat, chant and consuming the passion of football as a true blooded Madridista. The participant observation aims to map their underlying behaviour that connects them with each other, which brings the social ties that holds and nourishes their community. The observation is set to explore the drivers for the consumption that forms their feelings of solidarity and how this grants a certain behaviour that only occurs when they are connected.

### **3.3.4 Qualitative Interviews**

The interview is the most widely employed method within the qualitative research as its flexibility makes it an attractive phenomenon. The triangulation of the web-survey will structure a set of specified research question that is to be investigated thoroughly through qualitative interviews (Bryman & Bell 2003). Thompson et al (1989) argues that the interviews among the most powerful tools when attaining an in depth understanding for consumers individualistic experiences. It also gives the researcher the chance to “probe deeply to uncover new clues, open up new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate inclusive accounts that are based on personal experiences” (Easterby-Smith et al 2008; 144). These are all vital factors that need to be explored in order to explain the consumer’s behaviour in football. The qualitative interviews will be seen as an attempt to grasp an understanding from the respondent’s perspective which includes not only what their viewpoint is but also why they have this stance and acts to preserve their particular viewpoint (Ibid). This study will use semi-structured interviews which gives the researcher a larger set of freedom in deploying his question and following up on those being relevant and interesting. The researcher has an “interview guide” with questions on fairly specific topics to be covered during the interview and the answers that are seen as insightful can be developed further (Bryman & Bell 2003; 343). This twist and turning between the topics and the question is an important tool in this study as it allows the researcher to focus deeper on the consumers’ perception on relevant motives and dynamics that drives their social worlds. The semi-

structured interviews grants the researcher to “assist individuals to explore their own beliefs” to develop rich and detailed answers (Easterby-Smith et al 2008; 144, Bryman & Bell 2003).

Another stance that this study will apply is the use of existential-phenomenology as researchers has used this stance to explore social behaviour in terms of cultural pattern in the Consumer Culture theory (Moisander et al 2009, Thompson et al 1989). This method allows the researcher to focus primarily on the interview object and his personal experiences which is essential when discovering their social links to other football consumers. The method of existential-phenomenology aspires “open-ended and in-depth qualitative interview where the researcher aim to describe and understand consumer experience as it is lived and described from a first-person view” (Moisander et al 2009; 333). When conducting existential-phenomenological interviews, the researcher must take three characteristics into consideration. The first is that the consumer experiences are reviewed as contextual. The second characteristic is that experiences are a dynamic process which means that certain events can shine and thereby overshadow other events. This makes important to understand the participants experience within the own life situation. The third, the consumer’s meanings are reflected and un-reflected which makes it important to emphasize on encouraging the participant to reflect on certain events that the participant might take for granted and hasn’t given much consideration in the past (Thompson et al 1989). The main aim with conducting these interviews is to have the interviewees reflect upon and give thematic descriptions of their personal experiences in order to produce authentic descriptions of the ways they act upon objects of their experiences (Moisander et al 2009). The use of these topics within qualitative interviews allows this study to grasp the individuals’ true authentic experiences of their social worlds and their personal behaviour. Conducting these long interviews allows the researcher to enter the interviewee’s mental world and thereby glimpsing into their cultural world.

These qualitative interviews will take place with football consumers who are true Madridistas from several parts of the world. The study aims to understand their common and shared values in their communities and it is therefore essential to interview people with various backgrounds to understand the common nominator for being a true blooded Madridista in football consumption. The use of interviewees from different continents of the world denies this study to be solely influenced by local “attitudes and beliefs” regarding a certain club which might provide a deceptive result and thereby a doubtful analysis. Bryman & Bell (2003) argues for the use of face to face interaction when conducting qualitative

interviews and this study aims to use this interaction as much as possible. However, the distance between the researcher and the interviewees will give incitements to the use of digital alternatives to face to face interaction such as Skype. The questions that the interviewees will be faced upon are based on the same themes that were earlier mentioned in the web-survey. Although, the results of the web-survey will influence the shaping of the questions that will generate a stronger analysis based on the theoretical framework. The results from web-survey will give the researcher an insight in which questions that needs to be fully developed through these qualitative sessions.

### 3.4 Research Design

#### 3.4.1 Web-Survey design

Question marks have been raised on how much structure a researcher should deploy in his research (Easterby-Smith et al 2008). When using surveys to find respondents it is very important to understand that these respondents might be inclined to provide professional answers when there is a risk of ridiculing the answers (Bryman & Bell 2003). The use of social media for finding respondents to these surveys might fall victims for these factors and it is therefore of great importance to provide questions that are strict and firm which doesn't invites to this behaviour. This can be avoided by allowing a few alternatives and no commenting boxes that are free to type in (Ibid). Easterby-Smith et al (2008) describes five principles of good design when thinking about how to word the questions. The first principle of *each item should express only one idea* means that questions should only ask one thing at the time which prevents the researcher's doubtfulness in understanding what question the respondent answered in what order. The second principle, *avoid jargon and colloquialisms* means that the researcher should avoid the use of words and expressions that some might understand while other doesn't. The third, *use simple expressions* explains that one should take advantage of using only simple words and terms that makes it easier to understand and answer the questions. The fourth principle, *avoid the use of negatives* means the use of adding 'no' or 'not' to a verb so give it the opposite meaning. Respondents read through the question very quick and the use of negatives can easily make the question understood in the wrong matter. The last principle, *to avoid leading questions* describes the way a question is phrased gives a strong lead on what answer is expected (Easterby-Smith et al 2008; 227-228). It is very important to take the mentioned into consideration to generate as many respondents as possible that provides valuable material.

### **3.4.2 Interview design**

It is important for the researcher to formulate interview questions or topics in a way that helps him answer his research questions although an important factor is not making them too specific. The use of the language is also important as it should be comprehensible and relevant to the person being interviewed (Bryman & Bell 2003). The mentioned factors create an important flow that should exist during the entire session which creates and gives calm to the interviewee and a sense of joy when presenting his cultural world of football instead of feeling investigated. The mentioned are decisive features when trying to develop different themes in the story of the interviewee to facilitate an unbroken discussion which doesn't tie them up (Easterby-Smith et al 2008; 143).

The interview should take part in a relaxed atmosphere as the session should be designed as a conversation where the object is allowed to freely describe a detailed story of his experiences containing valuable insights, rather than providing questions that are quickly answered (Easterby-Smith et al 2008, Thompson et al 1989). The researcher's role as a fully expert interviewer is diminished as this role will be passed on to the respondent to incorporate him in the role which would make the respondent loosen up and thereby provide valuable experiences. This emphasizes on the interviewees as experts and the researcher as someone taking notes to study their behaviour while follow-up questions will be based on the respondent's own experiences, words and phrases in order to identify useful data (Thompson et al 1989). Bryman & Bell (2003) proposes that one should start the interview soft and gently by asking simple informational questions which build a connectivity and relationship of trust between the both. This concept is further acclaimed and backed up as McCracken (1988) claims that this general background information of the participant is structured to capture minor descriptive details of the respondent. There is a risk of "tying" the respondent up which will affect the interview negatively (Easterby-Smith et al 2008; 143). To avoid this phenomenon, the researcher has used what McCracken (1988) mentions as "planned prompts" to stimulate the conversation. These are kept in the form of images showcasing different moments in Real Madrid's history packed with emotional activity to stimulate the respondent and by inducing an emotional feeling that allows the respondent to feel a stronger connectivity and thereby having a better interest in providing useful insights. These will of course be shared as links if the interview is being conducted through the digital tools of Skype.

Easterby-Smith et al (2008; 145) concludes that “people cannot be trusted to say exactly what their motives are, as they often get ideas about their own motives from commonly accepted half-truths”. This statement emphasizes the importance of encouraging the respondent to reflect and share individually attained emotional experiences that they have endured as a passionate consumer. These are used in an attempt to avoid uncertainties, deceptions and unintentional lies that could affect the results in the study in a negative aspect. Deep interviews might sometimes take longer time than one is accustomed to and it is in the researcher’s consideration that it’s more appropriate to listen and taking fewer notes rather than solely taking notes which can shatters the flow of the interview. This study will therefore use a recorder which later will be transcribed into a document which the researcher can review on a different occasion (McCracken 1988). The evolution of the digital media has made this phenomenon an easy task which certainly will make the respondent more comfortable. The interviewees will all know that their words are being recorded as they need to sign a document protecting their privacy and confidentiality regarding the research data. This was done in order to evade from ethical issues that might occur (Easterby-Smith et al 2008).

### 3.5 Method sampling & Participation selection

#### 3.5.1 Quantitative Sampling

When conducting a survey it is important that the results are reliable and trustworthy. Two key aspects in sampling are the concepts of population and sample. The first refers to the whole set of entities that various decisions relate to. Sample refers to a subset of those entities from which evidence is gathered (Easterby-Smith et al 2008; 212). The web-survey will be posted on social media sites due to the consumers’ engagement and the time spent on these. The survey will later be posted on sites that constitute of approximately 350’ 000 consumers’. These sites has been particularly been chosen as they are football fan sites where consumers often engage in answering question and sharing thoughts and arguments. These sites have also been chosen as they include consumers who are aware of the passion that football consumption secretes and might be more willing to assume the role as study objects. The higher number of participants, the better results there are to be studied. This study will not secure the maximum number of participants neither will it apply this concept with the minimum as it is sometimes more or less impossible to discern from how the interviewees are selected nor *how many* there are that responds (Bryman & Bell 2003).

### 3.5.2 Participant selection

The qualitative methods have a different and deeper angle than the quantitative. The means with conducting qualitative methods is gain the use and understanding of underlying social phenomenons. This underlines the importance of gaining access to the right Madridistas who are willing to share and define their emotional experiences which stresses the important impact of receiving rich data (Bryman & Bell 2003). The participants of the qualitative studies are true blooded Madridistas as they are known through direct and indirect social ties. The participants are known to the researcher from the past or through viral online communities as they have distinguished themselves as Real Madrid consumers' while others have been presented through various social ties. The sensitive subject of emotional experiences, in relation to football consumption, that is studied in "The passion of the consumer" is seen as a phenomenon that is better analyzed when there is a mutual trust between the interviewer and the object. This allows the participant to open up and fully share his view and opinions on various levels and spheres. This view is further backed up by researchers' as they see 'perfect strangers' as a myth (Nancarrow et al 2001). The method to sample the participants is by using a minor combination of *purposive sampling*, where the researcher has a clear idea of what sample units that are needed and then approach them for their eligibility to take part. The other sampling method is the *snowball sampling* where the participants in the purposive sampling are asked to name others who would meet the criterias and is eligible for the research (Easterby-Smith et al 2008; 218). These methods have been widely used by researchers (Bryman & Bell 2003; 357) while the method of snowball sampling is acknowledged and often conducted in student thesis (Easterby-Smith et al 2008).

This study has followed the structure of using no more than eight respondents (McCracken 1988); however the lack of time restricted the respondent to seven as the most diverse consumers' have been chosen. The participants have been chosen depending on their varied background regarding; nationality, age, gender, occupation, education. These factors will allow this research to generate results that aren't demographically and geographically restricted to understand the Madridistas contemporary world in football. The chosen participants are those who can provide the most valuable insights as they have been experiencing the passion of football for a certain amount of time. Their age and their personal experiences will reflect their answers during the sessions as they have had the time to consume the sport of football properly and are passionate followers of Real Madrid and their institution. These attributes reflects back to the theoretical framework where this study aims

to combine the participants experiences and relevant theory to present a view of football consumers in Consumer Culture theory.

The participants that will be used in these ‘qualitative sessions’ has been summarized in the table below. This will give the reader a better insight in understanding and following the analysis of these sessions.

| <i>Name</i>      | <i>Nationality</i> | <i>Gender</i> | <i>Age</i> | <i>Occupation</i>     |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Rawa Sager       | U.A.E              | Male          | 24         | Marketer              |
| Taeir Alak       | Spanish            | Male          | 23         | Prison Officer        |
| Heather Daniel   | US American        | Female        | 21         | Student               |
| Saif Al Radhi    | Iraqi              | Male          | 31         | Restaurant<br>Manager |
| Semina Jakobsson | Swedish            | Female        | 38         | Lawyer                |
| Younes Hassan    | Sudanese           | Male          | 28         | Financial<br>Analyst  |
| Indrit Maliqi    | Albanian           | Male          | 18         | Student               |

### 3.6 Primary & Secondary Sources

This study will be reliant upon the researcher’s previous academic merits in a Consumer Culture theory course which has provided valuable insights in the quest for exploring “The passion of the consumer”. The mentioned will provide a theoretical framework, as the researcher has a basic understanding for various theoretical concepts and their main literature. The stated will accelerate a continuous process of collecting literature and new theoretical concepts which can be applied on the passionate consumers in the sport of football. The internet will be used as a supplementary tool for searching academic journals in CCT where academic search engines such as LIBHUB, Google Scholar, Ebscohost and JSTOR will prove vital when collecting primary sources. The primary sources, which are the data collected and explored during this study, are double peer reviewed which confirms their reliability for this purpose (Easterby-Smith et al 2008). The articles that will be found from these search engines will state a valuable point in this study as an academic article allows the findings of several

others as they authors refers to other researcher that has explored the Consumer Culture theory from various standpoints.

Secondary sources, as in textbooks that use primary sources as references, will be explored in this study (Ibid). Although, not in the same extract as academic journals, the secondary sources are an important tool as they developed a contextual understanding to how CCT can be drawn and extended as an elastic material to the researcher's preferred explorative field. The research methods named above will also serve as an explorative phenomenon where the researcher hopes to gain insights in the consumers' minds by entering their cultural spheres. These are all important factors that set the reliability of the study as it is vital to provide valuable results that are consistent and where the result of this study can be replicated. This means that one should be able to conduct the same research on several occasions and still generate the same valuable result. The mentioned brings us to the validity of this research as it defines the integrity of the conclusions that needs to be generated from a piece of research as the reader needs to know that the report really has studied what is intended to do (Bryman & Bell 2003; 33).

## 4. Analysis

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*The analysis will answer what motives there are that drives the consumers' to establish social communities in "The passion of the consumer". The analysis chapter is where the gathered empirical data is explored and analyzed through the theoretical framework to provide valuable insights in how the passionate consumers' interact in their cultural worlds. The methodological framework defined how the researcher aimed to gather valuable data which will be presented below. The quantitative web-survey will as mentioned provide the researcher with an empirical background to how general football consumers think and behave to understand what dynamics that needs to be explored through the qualitative methods in order to generate the best possible results.*

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### 4.1 Web-Survey

The internet based survey will as mentioned serve as an extension to the qualitative methods by providing the researcher with a valuable insight in how several football consumers' think in general. The survey was answered by 683 respondents who was fair and provided valuable results for this study. The results can also be seen in the appendix under section 7.1 where various charts and numbers are displayed.

29 % of the respondents claimed that they had been passionate fans for more than 15 years. This result can be added in perspective of the disclosure of figures stating that 39 % of the total respondents are in the age of 16-20. The football supporters might be eager to show that they possess the right knowledge and experience by exaggerating these numbers. This can be reflected to the early pages of the theoretical framework where consumers' are eager to show off their skills to gain respect from others in the community by claiming that they have been passionate football fans for a longer period than they actually have (End et al 2002; Cialdini et al 1976).

The web-survey disclosed the important fact that 81 % of the respondents have a favorite team that is among the top three historically in terms of won trophies in the national league. This fact implies that the consumer has a desire to identify himself with a winning team and a strong institution to draw links from the winning team to the personal identity. This self-extension process (Belk 1988), where the consumer assimilates the winning characteristics and prideful history of the team, is a mighty tool which is proofed to enhance

self-confidence and the self-esteem of the consumer (Madrigal 2003). This is further established in the survey as 74 % of the participants responded that their teams had qualified three or four times for continental glory in the past four seasons. The qualification for continental competitions is a measure that the researcher employs to evaluate the favorite team's success during the last season. This measure is argued for as the top positions in the league grants the team to play in the continental competitions such as the Champions League. These terms for the clubs success as in winning the league, qualifying for the Champions League and advancing in this tournament can be highlighted as credit points for the football consumers' as they earn and gain culture capital towards other communities fans who loses these points (Bourdieu 1984).

Football has become a viral sport nowadays as match events are broadcasted live all over the globe and where consumers can stream any game for free. This has created an access for fans to have a favorite team in another country where the postmodern Consumer Culture exceeds all national borders and advances in the global world (Arnould & Thompson 2005). This fact was illustrated in the results as 78 % and 80 % extremely rarely attends home and away fixtures due to factors such as distance and other experienced difficulties. Although, 6 % and 3 % answered that they have an attendance ratio of 75-100 % on home and away matches during the season. These figures can be seen from the 'leisure class' perspective where a social elite showcases their superiority in the football society by having the money and time to spend on football consumption and who aren't afraid of showcasing this towards other consumers' (Veblen in Corrigan 1997). As earlier mentioned, the desire for the consumer to be seen as true authentic fan (Beverland 2010) or an high identifier (Madrigal 1995) of the team is seen in the survey as a total off 88 % of the 683 respondents have sport kits of their own club. This phenomenon can be reviewed from the stance where consumers use objectification to incorporate the individual identity with the club and the use of fetishistic commodities (Marx in Corrigan 1997) for connectivity and communication with other football consumers' in the own community (Holt 1995). This phenomenon can also be seen as an attempt to use well known symbols (Goffman 1951) which allows the consumer to gain status in the community by showing his affiliation (Baudrillard in Corrigan 1997).

54 % of the participants' replied that they always visits various communities<sup>2</sup> before and after the match while 33 % claimed that they always discuss, post, argue and trash talk

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<sup>2</sup> In this context, communities are seen as gathering with friends, visiting online forums, web-sites official sport pages etc.

with other football consumers' on these communities. 22 % of the respondents claimed that they do this very often while only 7 % replied that they never interact on these communities. This type of behaviour highlights the need for a shared social world with perfectly tied social strings that are carefully woven into a community constituting of *Gemeinschaft* (Muniz & O'Guinn 2001). This behaviour creates a familiar situation between the consumers as they discuss, collect information, shares photo which establishes a 'sacred place' (Belk 1989). This place takes the consumer far away from the reality, as in a displaced meaning (McCracken 1986), where he might be seen as a front figure who manages the troops in the community. One important aspect of being part of this community is as earlier mentioned to understand certain values and behaviour (Cova 1997) that one must assume and one truly important is to know the fierce rivals and expressing a mutual hate towards them and their fans. 62 % of the respondents clearly showed their hate towards their fierce rivals while 27 % of these claim that "they are disgusting cheaters" while only 1 % admits that they are afraid of them (Giulianotti 1999).

An interesting factor that the web-survey pointed out was that 95 % of the respondents stated that they feel a greater sense of connectivity to other supporters of the same club. 35 % of these explain that they experience this "very much". This means that the consumers identify themselves much easier with peers of the same club. This is a truly interesting factor as it clearly prove that the mutual feelings the consumers experience in their own communities creates a connectivity that might not have been there if it wasn't for this passion (Derbaix et al 2002). Another interesting aspect is that a total of 60 % explains that they to some extent try to hide/downplay their affiliation to a club when they are experiencing bad results such as a loss to the fierce rivals while only 9 % states that they never do this. This is interesting to recognize as it explains consumer's behaviour when losing culture capital (Bourdieu 1984) and thereby utilizing a desperate attempt to downsize their connectivity which therefore diminishes the consumer's self-extension process (Belk 1988).

73 % recognizes that they are aware of themselves when creating certain habitus to the match events. The development of this habitus can be such as watching at that certain pub, always wearing a jersey or always chanting the clubs slogans and triggering fellow peers on Facebook etc (Bourdieu 1984). This concludes the fact that these passionate fans can be seen as tribe members who induces this behaviour by dancing around the totem which can be seen as the football club (Maffesoli 1996). They have developed certain habitus that are strongly correlated to the team and this is further argued for as 85 % claim that they experience the

emotional games together with others while 21 % of these claim that they always watch with other football consumers'. Football has become a social event where supporters gather and experience the drama, joy and great moments together with 47 % of the respondents replying that they always get emotionally aroused during matches (Moutinho et al 2007). These moments' infinites a deep embedded consumer behaviour which creates irreplaceable bonds between these actors which induces to stronger communal values in their own community.

## 4.2 Netnography

As previously mentioned, consumption and consumer behaviour is social ties and links between various individuals and it is therefore a positive factor to be able to explore and study the behaviour of Madridistas on the social web. It is here that the passionate consumers post, comment, argue and showcases their abilities to create a social connectivity to other peers who might be on the other side of this planet. The netnographical observation will illustrate how consumers' demonstrate their affiliation to the Madridista community. This type of behaviour clearly depicts who they certainly aren't. The factors that will be mentioned and highlighted below can be found in pictures in the appendix.

Passionate consumers' are eager and has a decisive urge to demonstrate their commitment to other Madridistas and to showcase their superiority towards other communities. The Netnographical observation clearly defined that more than 800' 000 passionate consumers' wants to show their inherency to their own cultural world by clearly mentioning 'Madridista' in their names at Facebook. This attaches the identity of the consumer as he can be sought as "one of us" (Madrigal 1995; Muniz & O'Guinn 2001). This message is a powerful urge from the football consumer to be recognized as one of the inner circle and as an 'authentic' Real Madrid fan while it creates boundaries as this consumer should inherit the same habitual behaviour that is essential to gain higher 'culture capital' when entering inner sphere (Bourdieu 1984). One define example is 'Yousif Madridista' who also "works at Real Madrid CF", this type of loyal behaviour towards the own club builds walls to other rival communities while Madridistas can use their social links to establish a connection in their own community (Cova 1997).

The observation explored a continuous behaviour of the football supporters as they use social networks to connect with other Madridistas all over the world. This behaviour was

clearly illustrated before the encounter versus Barcelona as this title winning “El Clasico<sup>3</sup>” match served as a reference point for the Madridistas to show their true character. The social media served as a tool for the supporters to trigger each other. This was done in reference to historical well known slogans that the passionate consumers’ use when chanting for Real Madrid to overcome their fierce rivals. This chanting and triggering may be likened to a war where the passionate fans urges and calls for their fellow ‘community-men’ to never give up and fight to the end. The use of historical powerful Spanish messages such as “Hala Madrid!” and “Vamos Merengues<sup>4</sup>” is an own developed language between all Madridistas all over the world (Moutinho et al 2007; Maffesoli 1996). Passionate consumers’ who doesn’t even speak Spanish use these terms to showcase their loyalty and knowledge in Real Madrid by chanting these to support their team and pushing them forward.

Another phenomenon that the netnographical observation concluded was that consumers’ often seek to establish and find personal links towards Real Madrid. This process of ‘extended self’ (Belk 1988) can be seen where passionate fans derives the link of for an example the common religious view of a certain player to the consumer himself. Other links that can be drawn is when extremely passionate consumers’ create their own glocalised sites which allow consumers from the same regional area to take greater part. This can be seen as various fan sites are deployed in diverse languages such as in Arabic and Russian. This behaviour reflects the consumers wish for a larger sense of local community where other similar football consumers can share their common interest. The glocalization has gone one step further as well known artists are composing their own fan songs in their own language towards Real Madrid and clearly waving their patriotic Madridista flag by singing and defining their emotional stand (Guilianotti & Robertson 2004).

Consumers’ has a desire to prove their authentic stance (Beverland 2010) as they know who the enemy is and how to use the right “Madridista language” to show their disgust towards the rivals. The use of foul words towards the rivals depicts the fact that the football fans aren’t afraid to use these words to show their affiliation and to drag their opponents to the dirt. These terms spreads in the Madridista community as they find develop a shared language towards the common enemy (Moutinho et al 2007). This behaviour is an important factor as consumers search to identify themselves as “one of us” by assuming the language, the chants,

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<sup>3</sup> El Clasico is the encounter between Real Madrid – Barcelona which has a deep history of rivalry and emotional factors which has its roots in various dimensions such as politics, culture and thereby a classical fight.

<sup>4</sup> Merengue, is meringue in Spanish which refers to Real Madrid’s all white dresses.

the behaviour and the respect that is mutual for all in the community (Holt 1995). The El Clasico match ended in a 2-1 favor for the Madrid based team which strengthened the spirit of the Real Madrid supporters as it had a negative effect on the Barcelona supporters who didn't had the desire to identify themselves to the club after this defeat. This phenomenon can be seen as a 'loss of culture capital' where Barcelona's official fan page on Facebook lost more than 400' 000 likes<sup>5</sup> after the game while the Real Madrid supporters gained culture capital (Bourdieu 1984).

### 4.3 Participant observation

The participant observation was set to take part in Madrid, Spain on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2012. The researcher dressed up as a Madridista and prepared himself for a long exciting day as he was set to experience the carnivalistic atmosphere of the Madridista community. This experience is best practiced by acting as a 'complete participant' to gain a deeper understanding of how the sociocultural dynamics drive the consumption of football and how the Madridistas form their unique feelings of social worlds through this emotional sphere (Bryman & Bell 2003). The positive aspects of this study were that it allowed the researcher to embrace the cultural sphere that is well known to the rigorous supporters of Real Madrid. It also provided very valuable insights as the researcher experienced the theoretical framework from his own eyes and could conclude facts from that view. The following text is based on the key extracts before, during and after the match that the researcher noted while being a participant in the inner circle of the Real Madrid community.

#### *The pre-match*

The sound of the radios echoes in Madrid, as the whole city is preparing for what the consumers' are naming "the clash of the titans", the semi-final second leg of the Champions League against continental rivals Bayern Munich is set. This match is particularly special for the Madridistas as they prepare to win the tournament a tenth time, or as they call it "La decima". The taxis, TV, newspapers, online forums, this is only the build up phase and everybody wants to gather any information and insights available from other football consumers' who can be considered as 'experts' in the community (Muniz & O'Guinn 2001).

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<sup>5</sup> See appendix

These football consumers are other peers in the community who has climbed up the ladder of prestige in the community and thereby attained a higher status (Goffman 1951) in the cultural world of Madridistas. These are illustrating their social currency (Corrigan 1997) by feeding the hungry football consumers their insights of the pre-match and the supporters are more than pleased to nourish their minds with all relevant information.

The metro to Santiago Bernabeu arrives, and the eyes are swept away by the view of the commuters as they all are wearing white Real Madrid jerseys. The metro is packed to the fullest as these soldiers prepare themselves for their mission. You receive the warm feeling as ‘one of them’ and they glance at you and grasp the understanding of me as being ‘one of us’. An elderly man sitting in front of me at the metro catches my eye and looks through his big old-fashioned glasses and nods to me as if he was saying; “today we stand firm and united, we are getting the mission done”. You immediately become incorporated in a community where the emotional sphere of football is taking place (Derbaix et al 2002) and you, as a Madridista, only have the glorious duty of supporting your team. The nervousness is catching up the fans on the journey to the Santiago Bernabeu as the metro has gone from being loud and noisy to mute with disturbing emotions due to the fact that an exit from the Champions League may be around the corner. The emotional disturbance is suddenly overthrown by a thick bearded man with an old Raúl<sup>6</sup> flag who sparks life into the Real Madrid supporters by starting a chant that swings the metro and the other Madridistas quickly joins the chant as they have no desire to be seen as ‘low identifiers’. The supporters overshadow each other’s chants as they have the desire to showcase that they are high identifiers who aren’t attending a semi-final, they are rather attending Real Madrid to the fullest (Madrigal 1995).

### *Arriving at the ground*

While walking up the stairs of the Santiago Bernabeu metro station, the roaring and chanting becomes louder and you start to grasp the reality of the emotions that are running through every single vein while you take a deep breath towards that last step and enter the carnival that the Madridistas are offering on spot. An ocean of white dressed Madrid supporters are marching together, chanting and encouraging each other as if they were a Spartan army marching for glory. This visible ‘social solidarity’ (Durkheim 1915) generates a consumption

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<sup>6</sup> Raúl is a former Real Madrid player who is considered as a legend in football and is also the current highest goal scorer in the club.

of the sport that produces short term holistic aesthetic feelings that transforms consumption to an experience (Holbrook & Hirschman 1982; Holt 1995). Bars are crammed side to side as everyone who is old enough, is enjoying a cold beer and eating seeds as the football supporters are packing themselves in these bars and like it was their ritual before the match (Moutinho et al 2007). You struggle your way into a bar and beer is spilled on your Real Madrid jersey and in your hair and you splash beer on other fans while trying to make room for yourself in the bar. It is a hectic and almost chaotic surrounding that everybody seems to enjoy and this pushing and splashing and chanting seems to belong to the carnival of the match that the other more experienced fans doesn't seem to notice.

After settling in to this mysterious surrounding, one can assemble a pattern of consumer classification as the conversations include predicting results, goal scorers and other interesting match factors that could interfere or gain the social world of Madridistas (Holt 1995). A nearby table with older couples is sitting and discussing how many years ago it was that they experienced such a thrilling position and glorious seat in the Champions league while the female waitress shouts the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century when Real Madrid faced Bayern Munich. This behaviour can be drawn to 'consuming as play' where old results, turnover and statistics are debated to illustrate that you aren't a regular consumer, rather a consumer who plays with the team (Ibid). Unfortunately, the time doesn't stand still which can be detected as thousands of supporters' rushes to the gates of the Santiago Bernabeu. It is approaching the late evening as you can hear a company of young men engage in 'wishful thinking' of how they would like to see that particular player in the Champions League final game and how they are going to make fun of their friends who aren't part of their own community after winning this semi-final (Madrigal 2003).

### *Entering the Santiago Bernabeu*

The gates open up and the football consumers' are swelling over as they face difficulties in hiding their excitement. The sound of the ticket being divided in two pieces catches your heart as you realize that you have entered the mighty Santiago Bernabeu, home of millions supporters world-wide. The venue serves as a displaced meaning (McCracken 1988) for the global Madridistas as this arena is seen as a second home and can be identified as a 'sacred place', like a Mecca for the passionate football consumers (Belk et al 1989). You walk up on the endless steps as the mix of humid spring scent with popcorn scent, penetrates your nose

until you finally reach out to the field and the spectators seats. Standing there, to take a moment to fully incorporate your senses, you hear the supporters sing, cheer, dance, drums beating at the rate of your heart and camera flashes going off at the speed of the light while the applauses for the team, as they come out to warm up, overwhelms you. While taking that brief moment, the few seconds to gather your senses, you suddenly realize that when you are entering the Santiago Bernabeu as a passionate Madridista consumer you are being transferred from Tönnies concept of *Gesellschaft*, where the individual and his behaviour is centered, to the absolute familiar emotional connectivity of the *Gemeinschaft* (Muniz & O'Guinn 2001). The passionate consumers' have fully entered the *Gemeinschaft* of the community when entering the arena and they enhance the familiar connectivity by placing various symbols in terms of banners, flags etc as they symbolically assumes the role of the consumption object (Wallendorf & Arnould 1991). The lower parts of the left corner is covered with the face of Karim Benzema<sup>7</sup> on Algerian flags as these consumers' seek to draw the affection of Benzema's heritage to their own. This is an attempt to manipulate object meanings to extend their identities to Real Madrid and that particular player (Holt 1995).

The community and the social world that was established, as the match official blew his whistle to start the match, made one realize why they see each other as an own community with social ties to Madridistas all over the world. Their shared passion, culture, emotions, love, loyalty, respect and familiar feelings tied a personal link of bonding between me and any person sitting in the same sector as me and who I never had met before in my life. These aspects made one understand why the Madridistas takes great pride in using the pronoun "we" when talking of the total institution of Real Madrid (Cialdini et al 1976). This also provoked a 'cultural dimension' where 'we' had a duty in chanting in a certain way, using a foul language towards the referees when they blew the whistle against our team, and dressing in Real Madrid jerseys, and standing up whenever "we" threatened "their" goal (Turner 1988). Conducting this behaviour over and over created a certain 'habitus' (Ibid) that was interlaced in the own culture as we were gathered around our Real Madrid totem and consumed the passion of football by using our own language such as; Hala Madrid, Vamos Madrid, Orgullo Blanco and other chants such as foul words against the fierce rivals Barcelona even though we weren't facing them (Maffesoli 1996). The behaviour created a better assimilation to the sport as the consumers' where fully integrated in their fantasy as themselves being a part of the

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<sup>7</sup> Karim Benzema is a French striker in Real Madrid with Algerian roots.

team and even more convinced that their actions was a part of the game which also affected the outcome of the match (Holt 1995).

A sublime shot at goal, and the ball passed the line and ridged the net behind the Bayern Munich goalkeeper. Real Madrid had scored and you could feel the atmosphere as a chaotic surrounding evoked and everyone in my surrounding jumped over me and we were all hugging and screaming together. People, who I haven't met before in my entire life, people whom I had never uttered a single word to before was hugging me as their feelings couldn't hold them back. The only thing we had in common was that we where passionate Madridistas as we interacted through this consumption object (Marx in Corrigan 1997)

### *Leaving the home & bowing out*

Real Madrid played a hard fought match with the continental rivals of Bayern Munich and the match had ended in a 2-1 favor for Real Madrid which brought the match to the final stage of penalties. Real Madrid bowed out of the Champions League semifinals due to a missed penalty by Sergio Ramos<sup>8</sup>. The fans were in deep sorrow as their heroes had fought during the whole campaign to reach this stage. They were all sad and you could see tears running down on various cheeks as they all thought that their time had come to win "La decima". They had lost and faced the risk of losing culture capital by not winning this highly prestigious encounter (Bourdieu 1984). The fans stayed and applauded their heroes as they fought until the end and was unlucky to conceive a defeat which created a mutual engagement between the players and the supporters (Armstrong & Giulianotti 199).

The white shirts poured out of their home, Santiago Bernabeu, and the most took their way to various metro exists, cars, busses, taxis as they sought to return to their ordinary lives. The tight crowded mass paved the way to a local bar as Madridistas, who wasn't willing to call it the end of the night, stayed to share their insights of their disappointment, their pride and their thoughts for the future of their community at this place. You had to have that sad look on your face as if a tragedy had occurred in your family in order to be recognized as a high identifier of the community (Madrigal 1995). A tall thin man with long black sideburns with "Miguel 7" written on the back of his jersey discussed his disappointment and expressed that he didn't have the patience to wait until the next year to see Real Madrid as the same

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<sup>8</sup> Sergio Ramos is a Spanish defender in Real Madrid with jersey number 4.

stage of this continental championship. However he also reminded his company of seven men that they never should blame Sergio Ramos for missing the penalty as he is the “león”<sup>9</sup> who holds the Madrid defense together and has been for a certain amount of seasons. The company nodded their heads and shared the expert of the community’s feelings while they clutched Miguel’s empathy (Muniz & O’Guinn 2001).

As the late hours of the night approached and various Madridistas left the bar to overcome the sad evening, I realized that the community of the Madridistas was formed like a big family (Cova 1997). They all met on certain occasions, when they faced the problem of distance they used alternative tools such as online communities to keep in touch, they expressed their joy together and they all grieved together in times of sadness. They forgave Sergio Ramos for the loss as he was an integral family member and they even had the home of Santiago Bernabeu where they could behave in their own manners and ventilate their passionate emotions. They celebrated their victories and triumphs together and sang through the entire night long like it was a religious holiday that brought the relatives together such as Christmas. These factors created eternal bonds between these passionate consumers’ as there familiar spirit and the social ties brought them together in their own cultural world. By assuming the role of complete participant, one can easily define the reality of these passionate consumers of Real Madrid as they live in a world unto itself where they inhale the institution of Real Madrid and exhale social constituted ties of pride and shared cultural beliefs.

#### 4.4 In-depth qualitative interviews

The qualitative interviews will provide the researcher with the glorious opportunity of exploring the minds of the Madridistas. Seven global Madridistas has been chosen for this task as the researcher aims to capture similar features that these passionate consumers share towards the institution of Real Madrid. Many of the respondents has answered in the similar way regarding certain situations and these presentations’ are thereby based on key extracts that the researcher has collected which are in coherence with various theories and concept that can be applied on “The passion of the consumer”. The following text aims to conceptualize various emotional extracts that these Madridistas experience.

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<sup>9</sup> León is the Spanish world for Lion.

#### 4.4.1 Indrit Maliqi – “Being a Madridista isn’t a hobby, it’s a lifestyle”

Indrit Maliqi is an 18 year old man living in Albania and has recently started his engineering studies in the capital of Albania, Tirana. Indrit is a very sport interested person as he plays for a local football club during his spare time and has been engaged in the sport of football “as long as he can remember”. Other than his sport activities, he loves spending time with his family and friends.

Indrit describes himself as a truly passionate Madridista and explain that he has been for a very long time despite his current age. He further explains that he has been a passionate consumer for more than 13 years and thereby tries to legitimize his authorization as a truly authentic consumer of football (Beverland 2010; Giulianotti 1999). He further describes how he first came in emotional contact with Real Madrid in the Champions League final 1998 and understood the power of this club.

*“The Serbian player Mijatovic scored the only goal of the final for Real Madrid and my father produced insult after insult as the Albanians had a mutual hate for the Serbian citizens after the Balkan war. I quickly realized the power of the sport of football and I wanted to explore this team further. I also had a special thing for the short bald Brazilian left back (Roberto Carlos<sup>10</sup>) that ran up and down the left flank as if his life was dependant on it.”*

The hate for the Serbian player can be seen as an attempt to manipulate object meanings (Holt 1995) as the hate for Mijatovic creates a link between Real Madrid’s identity and the personal (Madrigal 1995). He further argues that his first strong emotional connectivity to the football team of Real Madrid came two years later as he saw Raúl score the third goal in that Champions League final (Derbaix et al 2002). When asked if the young student could name moments that characterizes his tenure as a Madridista, he first mentions another Champions League final in the year of 2002 where Zidane<sup>11</sup> scores a tremendous volley to seal the win.

*“I still remember that match like it was yesterday, the excitement, the passion and the joy had no limits as I arrived the second day to school wearing my first Real Madrid jersey. The other kids called me a prosperity supporter who only followed the team that won; I didn’t care*

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<sup>10</sup> Roberto Carlos is a legendary Brazilian left footed defender who played in Real Madrid with the jersey number 3 for more than a decade.

<sup>11</sup> Zinedine Zidane is a legendary French midfielder who is widely considered among the finest during the entire football history who played for Real Madrid with jersey number 5.

*about them as I was still enjoying Zidane. How can you even score this type of goal, and in a Champions League final?”*

The winning attributes of Real Madrid earned the young boy a higher self-esteem (End et al 2002) as he was basking in the glory of his football team (Cialdini et al 1976). His team had won three Champions League trophies within a short time period and these attributes gained ground in the heart of young Indrit. Real Madrid later on experienced a few seasons with no trophies as the winning cycle turned. The club was easily eliminated from the Champions League for several seasons and had lost its glamour to fierce rivals Barcelona which caused a great loss of culture capital for the team (Bourdieu 1984). Indrit explains how this came to a joyful end at the season of 2007 as Real Madrid won the La Liga after four years without any trophies.

*“It had been a long and tough season were Real Madrid had fought the entire season against Barcelona and superb comebacks were made in the last seconds of every match to seal the victory of this season. It all played down to the last match where Real Madrid had to win and they collected a dramatizing victory which set my heart on fire. It was an amazing seasons and a crucial one as we had suffered for a long time to re-establish ourselves as the best club in Spain and you could see the players’ joy as Iker Casillas<sup>12</sup> cried during the last minutes of the match. Just thinking about that magical match gives me goose bumps.”*

The loss of culture capital for several years has clearly taken its toll on the Madridistas as this victory and ‘great’ achievement allows the Madridistas to earn the lost culture capital. This is why this particular achievement is valued higher in the community than other victories (Ibid; King 1997). The expectation are always extremely high on the club as the supporters historically have been spoiled with trophies and it is therefore that moments like these awards the Madridistas with higher emotional joy (Giulianotti 1999).

#### **4.4.2 Semina Jakobsson** –*“The nails and the cuticles are ruined after a Real Madrid match”*

Semina is a 38 year old lawyer residing in Malmo, Sweden. Semina Jakobsson has always been sport interested although the development for her football interest started in her mid 20’s

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<sup>12</sup> Iker Casillas is the current goalkeeper and captain of Real Madrid. His high status as a Madridista has given him the name of ‘San Iker’, Spanish for Saint Iker.

as she gained greater contact with her passionate cousins. Semina is willing to put any cliché aside as she claims that she sometimes feels like a “boy-girl” when eating pizza and watching football with friends.

Semina starts this session by explaining how she always used to listen and learn about Real Madrid when her two cousins had intensive arguments with their father who is a Barcelona supporter and indirectly gained knowledge of Real Madrid.

*“At first, it was just fun to sit and laugh at them, after a while I learned and could participate in these hefty discussions as it still was fun due to the ‘younger Vs older’ teams and I got quite good at processing relevant information as the boys gave me extra credit for being a lady and having all this knowledge”*

Semina’s description of how she entered the cultural sphere of Real Madrid and gained social currency (Corrigan 1997) can be seen as a symbol for social solidarity where she came in contact with her cousins (Goffman 1951). When being asked to explain her dearest emotions for Real Madrid she explains that her biggest reaction was the season of 2006/2007, as Indrit Maliqi mentioned, as she was relieved to finally be able to lift a trophy after being without any trophy for a long time. The other moment that she described was during the fall of 2011 as Real Madrid faced Barcelona in a highly aggressive Copa del Rey<sup>13</sup> final encounter where Real Madrid won 1-0. This victory also came after a few years with Barcelona dominance where capital culture was redeemed at the expense of the fierce rivals (Bourdieu 1984). Furthermore, she explains this moment as truly significant for all Madridistas as their community rose on the prestige scale which gave them status for beating Barcelona (Goffman 1951). She recalls this moment perfectly as if she was wearing her white jersey and outplaying a fantasy and was extending her while sitting on the Real Madrid bench (Holt 1995; Belk 1989). Semina celebrated the goal by acting like any other Madridista in the community by using their common language against the fierce rival (Cova 1997; Moutinho et al 2007)

*“Nothing was holding us back as we stood up and was waving our Real Madrid scarves and chanted the well known foul-chant towards the disgusting Barcelona”.*

The session goes on as she is ashamed when asked upon her habits when Real Madrid is playing. She describes her actions exactly as she starts talking about how she has to eat a

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<sup>13</sup> Copa del Rey, The King’s Cup in English is an annual cup played alongside the La Liga.

couple of hours before the match, preferred pizza, so that she doesn't focus on the food while they are playing. Semina further states that she needs to have her Iphone fully loaded while smoking her menthol cigarettes as she always has a cold glass bottle of Ramlösa<sup>14</sup> citrus. She further describes that wherever she are, or how late it might be she always texts or calls her two cousins to discuss the approach of the game during half-time. These types of 'ceremonies' can be seen as type of habits that are being developed and strengthened and later on incorporated as certain tribal behaviour as a Madridista (Maffesoli 1996).

Semina is asked upon her connectivity to other peers in the social world of the Madridistas as she truly expresses the vital components of familiarity, gemeinschaft, when describing her love and delight towards peers as they share her emotional affection (Muniz & O'Guinn 2001).

*"I feel a greater sense of connectivity to the people who are Madridistas as they support the same cause. It gives me a certain personal security that I am not the only one experiencing these passionate moments as there is other people, just like me, who shares every moment of joy/grief with me. I simply adore and love every single Madridista in the whole world as if they were my two cousins".*

#### **4.4.3 Younes Hassan – “The social connection with peers allows me to discharge myself”**

Younes Hassan is a 28 year old man working at a local bank office in Sudan as a financial analyst. His early Madridista days began during the mid 90's as he was received a Real Madrid kit from his uncle. His love for football grew during these years and he identified himself with the “white-team” from Madrid as he already possessed the whole kit.

Younes Hassan describes the difficulties they earlier faced when trying to follow the Spanish league on television and their concern for the electricity as the tough Champions League encounters approached. He explains that the electricity could go on at any second leaving you to engage in wishful thinking regarding substitutions, goals, spectacular dribbles and beautiful saves when electricity arrived (Madriral 2003). Younes later on explains that he liked Real Madrid in his early days and that he loved football however, he didn't 'transform' to a fully passionate Madridista until the early days of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the internet exploded and the better conditions for electricity became a standard as he could interact with others. He

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<sup>14</sup> Ramlösa is a Swedish brand that sells sparkling water.

argues for the vitality of this time period as it allowed him to establish a connected network with friends and family where they could share their love, passion, pride as it gathered them and fed their hungry minds (Maffesoli 1996).

*“We were young and we didn’t have many options after our homework so we always gathered around to discuss various themes that interfered with the institution of Real Madrid. It was all from their new jerseys to new possible transfers. We were satisfied as it established a sacred bond between us Madridistas”.*

The session continues and Younes is passionate when he tells us about his dearest memories, he explains exactly the same situations that the other interviewees described as he proceeds by mentioning that it is sometimes the love for the community and the love for the passion rather the love for football that keeps him going. Reminiscing about his early days as a Madridista, he mentions that it became like a rivalry with the other boys in the neighborhood who loves Barcelona. They established two different camps where they always played in the same teams, always agreed with each other and made fun of the other camp (Muniz & O’Guinn 2001).

*“We always joked around, we were all friends even with the other camp but it was almost like we had been divided by nature. We could discuss everything, but when it came to Real Madrid Vs Barcelona it automatically turned them to a despicable group of people. This strengthened us as we became more and more attached to Real Madrid as we got older”.*

He further describes how they got older and the boys in various “camps” got jobs and families and moved out of the neighborhood although the same rivalry still lives on. The rivalry lives on in every aspect as they still meet on a specific café to see the matches and make fun of each other. The mentioned can be seen as a discrete process where the culture of being a Madridista is incorporated with the personal culture to create an own subculture with various values such as the boys in the different camps displays (Richardson & O’Dwyer 2003; Cova 1997).

Younes Hassan describes his affection for other Madridistas outside the “camp” as he is requested to answer on his behaviour when he sees an unknown person with a Real Madrid jersey. He explains that he probably would shout their common phrase (Moutinho et al 2007) of “Hala Madrid” to identify himself with the other person (Madrigal 1995) which is a common ‘classification of consumption’ where the supporters use the jersey object to classify

themselves towards the peers (Holt 1995). He becomes even more emotionally aroused as he sees a child wearing the jersey as they are on a journey to become “passionate Madridistas”.

*“I would probably all spontaneously shout Hala Madrid with an enormous smile as this beautiful white jersey makes me proud, happy and satisfied as I know that this person shares my cultural belief, he belongs to me and I belong to him, it’s a mutual respect. The kids make me extremely happy as I know that they have an ocean of passionate moments ahead of them where they will create their own camps”.*

#### **4.4.4 Rawa Sager** – *“Pride is like energy to a Madridista, it can never be lost only transformed”*

Rawa Sager is a hard working young man at the age of 24 who recently established himself in the business world by acquiring the position of ‘regional marketer’ at a global firm in Dubai, U.A.E. Rawa’s passionate journey to become a Madridista began in the year of 1996 as he was “fascinated with the speed of the team as they moved the ball around the pitch”.

Rawa speaks proudly of his passion for Real Madrid as he focuses on the subject of connectivity. He explains that the distance from Madrid to Dubai ‘promotes’ the use of the social web where he is allowed to interact with other Madridistas without any limitations in any aspect. He explains that the viral web provides limitless information on every single feature as he aims to “read and explore his own society”. Rawa further explains that the difference in time also provides a few difficulties to follow Real Madrid and other Madridistas live which makes the viral communities of Facebook, Twitter & YouTube essential necessities of the day to find about the latest information regarding the institution and the social community. He mentions that he works with Englishmen who are passionate about the English team which makes their mutual interest for the La Liga and Real Madrid a minor topic of the day. This creates a sense of “loneliness” when discussing his team results in connectivity with the greater global cultural world of Madridistas. The lonely individual searching for a stronger familiar emotional connectivity can be seen from the concepts of Gesellschaft to Gemeinschaft which enables the peers to connect through social media (Muniz & O’Guinn 2001).

*“It is more fun to be online to see what other people from other continents with a different culture experiences when it comes to Real Madrid. The real life allows me to connect with a*

*few Madridistas every day while the social web provides a social link to millions within a few clicks. It is an easy tool to use to find people who share the same emotions as you; it is not that easy to notice a passionate Madridista every day as they look different on the surface”.*

Stories of his connection to Real Madrid and their history together are overlapping as he explains that he doesn't only visit fan pages and “investigate other Madridistas” he goes one step further as he is a daily follower of the various football player's personal pages as they provide a better insight in their lives. This includes family pictures, messages to Madridistas or comments on certain events which gives an authentic connectivity between the inner spheres of the Madridistas (Beverland 2010). This authentic relationship between the player and the Madridistas is much more comprehensive as it allows a live all around access to the players every move where they can be experienced as normal individuals. This phenomenon can also be glanced from the ‘consuming as integration’ concept where the Madridistas produce practices which the players reciprocate that establishes the authentic emotional connection (Holt 1995).

*“My favorite to follow is without any doubt Karim Benzema as he always strikes funny poses as if he was an action hero. I see him as the French thug from the suburbs who try to emulate frightening movie characters. I love doing this as it allows me to see more than their performances on the pitch. The Madridistas are gained access to everything from their nights out to their practical jokes on each other or even their moonwalks on the airplane to a match event while listening to Michael Jackson, I really think that is creates a stronger social net between us”.*

Rawa explains his emotional reactions to the question of him visiting the Santiago Bernabeu, as he feels ashamed and embarrassed to never have set his foot at “the home of the Madridistas”. He further describes that it is the first thing he will do when having the extra time needed to experience his full dream. He shakes his head as he talks of the admiration for the spectacular atmosphere with his fully passionate peers as “they stand together with the players on the holy field of Santiago Bernabeu while pushing forward” (Belk et al 1989). Rawa adds the subject of being passionate as if it is a religion while speaking of the Santiago Bernabeu as “heaven”. He is questioned on his remarks of choosing to visit the “holy place for Madridistas” before traveling to holy monuments for his religion as he replies ambiguously;

*“Traveling to Madrid and the Santiago Bernabeu is an adventurous journey for all the passionate Madridistas, it is where all the sixth senses of being a Madridista comes together as we experience history in the making while supporting our team and is thereby more filled with action. Visiting a religious monument is a moral duty that needs to be faced when the soul has found freedom and it is hard for my soul to reach freedom without experiencing Santiago Bernabeu”.*

**4.4.5 Taeir Alak** – *“The feeling a Madridista experience when entering the Santiago Bernabeu is the same you get when returning home after a long trip”*

Taeir Alak is a 23 year old prison officer living in Madrid, Spain while being a member number 213 400’ and an annual season ticket holder for all Real Madrid fixtures at the Santiago Bernabeu. He has been a Madridista as long as he can remember as his uncle made use of strong propaganda when he was a child to guide him in the right direction, which Taeir doesn’t regret any second.

Taeir explains that he has been a season ticket holder for a few years now as he didn’t have the right age or maturity to follow his elder relatives or transporting himself to the Santiago Bernabeu safely. He also explains that these tickets are very expensive and this was an important factor to why he didn’t possess season tickets earlier during his younger days. He further develops this argument by claiming that he isn’t an “uptown bourgeoisie who has a forest where money grows on trees” and that these season tickets have made him cut down on other leisure activities that could interfere with being a passionate Madridista. This can be viewed from the concept of ‘conspicuous leisure’ (Veblen in Corrigan 1997) where Taeir values his emotional experiences higher than other activities which allows him to be identified as a ‘high identifier’ (Madrigal 1995) by spending his salary and time on “the experiences that Real Madrid produces”. The time is very important as he always leaves home several hours before the match starts for various reasons.

*“I always leave home several hours before the kick-off as I need a time gap in case some unplanned events occur. I am terrified of missing the match due to events such as being hit by a car, trouble at the metro station, being abused, being robbed, breaking a leg. Madrid is as safe as any other major city however there is still a minimum percentage that these ridiculous*

*events might occur and the time span is therefore essential for me to not miss Real Madrid and my fellow Madridistas”.*

He describes his habitual behaviour such as waiting for the players’ bus, watching them warming up, singing the official Real Madrid anthem as factors that needs to be experienced every single match day as these are a major part of the event (Turner 1988; Bourdieu 1984). He argues that a high identifier needs to do this as they are set to experience the cultural community of the Madridistas and not “watch a football game” (Muniz & O’Guinn 2001). Taier describes how everyone steps out of their individual world where they have their personal family, joy and trouble to enter the Madridista stage where they are fully focused and passionate about every single move on the pitch. They emerge the stage of ‘consuming as experience’ as Taier explains that they act to their fullest emotional senses by producing aesthetic holistic feelings (Holt 1995; Holbrook & Hirschman 1982). He firmly states that it becomes a duty to sing, applaud your team to glory and most importantly to put pressure on the referee by booing and cursing him out the entire match along. He assumes the “ordinary foul words” that the Madridistas use at the Santiago Bernabeu while they are followed by chanting “fuera”<sup>15</sup> (Maffesoli 1996).

Taier Alak concludes the qualitative session by explaining the familiarity between the Madridistas at the Santiago Bernabeu by drawing comparisons to an online community though this is created through an underlying process (Arnould & Thompson 2005) where commodity of football consumption ties the social net between these consumers’ (Marx in Corrigan 1997).

*“We are just like any other family; we share the same opinions to 95 % of the cases due to our communal upbringing that intertwine us as Madridistas. The supporters might be political enemies, members in rival gangs, employed at rival companies, all these factors doesn’t matter at all as the cultural Madridista spirit is well above any other sphere in society. We talk, hug, celebrate, and discuss anything that has something to do with the sport of football. It is just like any other online community although we are a physical one with more than 80 000, where we meet in person to produce spectacular feelings that can’t be generated in any other way”.*

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<sup>15</sup> Fuera is Spanish for the English term ‘get out’.

#### **4.4.6 Saif Al Radhi – “You don’t realize that it is an extreme passion until you really suffer”**

Saif is a 31 year old restaurant manager living in Bagdad, Iraq with a large Real Madrid tattoo covering his left arm. He has been following the “all white heroes” from Madrid since 2003 where a regime change in Iraq opened up the country to the rest of the world which brought the Spanish football to them.

Saif speaks proudly of himself as a Madridista when talking about the players of the team as if he shared a special bond with them. The focus turns to his tattoo as it is of great interest to understand what relevant motives that drove this behaviour. He thoroughly explains that the sorrow and tragically moments that the Iraqi people experienced during the last war created a desperate need for them to attach to something positive that could take their minds off all the devastation. The passion for the sport of football has always been in Iraq as it “liberated the people from oppression” and the focus quickly drifted towards the Spanish giants of Real Madrid and Barcelona when they finally could see international football. It became a sacred consumption object as it provided a powerful alternative to the war (Belk et al 1989). He further explains that it is very important for him to associate with a strong winning mentality and Real Madrid provided this extended link for his personality (Belk 1988). The passion became greater during the years as the whole Iraq was either Real Madrid or Barcelona which created an exciting tension between the both parties with a “humiliating fun” where we made fun of each other. Saif needed to overcome the consumption object winning mentality purely symbolically (Wallendorf & Arnould 1991) which gave birth to his tattoo that allowed him to correlate his subjectivity to the object (Holt 1995).

*“It felt like if I owed it to them, they had asserted me with hope and glorious wins which planted a greater love in my heart which grew stronger for every season. I was in desperate need for something that constantly reminded me of the joyful moments in my life and nothing was better than Real Madrid, while I also wanted everyone to see my tattoo and understand that I am very passionate about being a Madridista until the day I leave this earth”.*

He had previously mentioned that everyone in Iraq was either Real Madrid or Barcelona, which gave birth to the question why he chose Real Madrid over Barcelona for what causes. He explained that he felt better connected to Real Madrid for the reason that they had a few

Muslim players and had even more during the upcoming years. This behaviour can be seen as tool to manipulate object meanings by linking his religious belief to the players' which provided a social link (Holt 1995). This has been more enhanced as the current squad has "crown jewels such as Mesut Özil<sup>16</sup>, Sami Khedira<sup>17</sup> and Karim Benzema". He argues that it became the start however that he doesn't feel the importance of this matter anymore, only that he is proud over this connection.

Saif explains that he doesn't only watch the games, he argues that he is practically involved as he always create or participate in certain events where they cherish Real Madrid and make fun of the arch rivals Barcelona. He mentions moments where he and friends gathered around on the town square to scream funny Iraqi cultural chants adjusted to humiliate Barcelona (Giulianotti & Robertson 2004). Although he explains the moment he cherishes at most is the latest El Clasico win against Barcelona where all the Madridista supporters were gathered and acted as if it was a proper burial with a coffin covered in a Barcelona flag (see appendix). He explains that these moments where people of the city are marching together with the coffin became a symbol for the war as they suffered casualties every day. This made this moment a funny way to illustrate the flip side, while it is important to showcase your Madridista spirit towards the other just as it is important to show your sorrow when losing a family member.

*"An older man in our neighborhood came with the idea. We all thought that it would be a fun way as it is vital for us to see the funny aspect in any moment to survive our own world. The moment couldn't be better as we had beaten Barcelona who has been having the upper hand against us during the past seasons. We started the funeral march and people joined in from every corner to show their Madridista spirit as we made the way, everyone wanted to touch the coffin as it passed".*

**4.4.7 Heather Daniel** – *"I am an addict to Real Madrid and other Madridistas; I need them to soothe my soul"*

Heather Daniel is a 21 year old student from Los Angeles. She is pursuing an international marketing career and has been passionate about her connection to Real Madrid for some years

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<sup>16</sup> Özil is a German footballer with Kurdish-Turkish origin in Real Madrid which holds the jersey number 10.

<sup>17</sup> Khedira is a German footballer in Real Madrid with Tunisian origin which holds the jersey number 6.

now. She explains that soccer<sup>18</sup> hasn't been a major sport on their continent until a few years ago. Heather describes that she and all her friends really became "aware of soccer" when David Beckham<sup>19</sup> transferred from Real Madrid to the LA Galaxy as their domestic league started to attract major stars.

Heather admits that she faces an internal emotional struggle when Real Madrid is playing as she gets excited and can't do anything than doesn't include her team. She provides a detailed description when asked to map her behaviour as a passionate consumer before, during and after watching a game. Patterns of 'consuming as classification' (Holt 1995) can be detected as the young student automatically seeks her way to the community of Real Madrid (Maffesoli 1996) and engage in tribal behaviour with other peers on the social net (Moutinho et al 2007).

*"I'm always nervous; of course the heart skips a beat or two when we are facing a difficult task. I'm also very stressed out before the match event and that's why I always turn to the internet to see what the others think of the game, their opinions of the starters and other things such as the color of the jerseys and previous results between the two teams on this particular arena."*

Heather explains that there are many fans in the US who barely follows the sport and act as if they understood everything. She argues that she sometimes gets upset as these fans only follow certain individuals like if they were rock stars and not their connectional tie to Real Madrid and other Madridistas. Heather almost take drastic measures to paint a detailed painting of her being a high identifier (Madrigal 1995) of Real Madrid by mentioning that he has purchased the annual sport jersey since the season of 2006/2007. By incorporating that she sees herself as a high identifier of the team, she is faced with the questions of how she emotionally feels when the team doesn't live up to the high expectations. Heather simply answers that the self-confidence suffers a major blow as he have to wait a longer time period for the club to restore their honor. She further explains that in these times, it's almost a task, a duty to defend his community against outsiders. These collective actions are normally produced when the own community are facing different threats (Muniz & O'Guinn 2001).

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<sup>18</sup> Soccer is the American name for football.

<sup>19</sup> David Beckham is an English football player who previously played for Real Madrid and is now playing for LA Galaxy.

*“It almost becomes a duty to set the record straight with fans that follow rival teams. It is like they are trash talking my friends when speaking of Real Madrid and that is exactly why it becomes my duty as a Madridista”.*

When asked on her behaviour regarding his discussions with passionate consumers from outside and inside communities Heather replies that she discusses and argues very much although she use the weapon of knowledge and pure facts that are linked to her arguments. Reading and learning about historical facts has granted Heather Daniel social currency (Corrigan 1997) to receive the mutual trust and respect from the community when arguing (Cova 1997). This can be seen as a cultural dimension (Turner 1988) where she has spent time and efforts to ‘study’ in order to consume Real Madrid and its social worlds in the right manner. Heather only 21 years old and a proper consumer of Real Madrid, explains that she has never had the possibility to visit the Santiago Bernabeu for various reasons. However she describes the home of the Madridistas as a displaced meaning that he hopes to reach one beautiful day in the future when she has finished her studies and received a good job (McCracken 1986).

## 5. Discussion

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*In this part the researcher concludes his gathered results through the analysis chapter by discussing them from the theoretical framework which is built upon insights of the Consumer Culture theory. Even though this study has explored “The passion of the consumer” from a football perspective, this part aims to discuss the general findings that this study has generated to promote the applicability of this topic on further cases where consumer groups has a passionate emotional connectivity towards the consumption object. This part will answer the two questions stated in the introduction by first (5.1) discussing how the consumer explores individual dynamics to (5.2) define how this social solidarity is established in their cultural worlds and (5.3) how these later on allows the personal identity to cohere with the community’s identity to mold into one superior identity.*

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### 5.1 The individual consumer’s dynamics

The individual consumer has always had a strong desire to identify himself with a positive phenomenon (End et al 2002). This craving for identification has allowed the consumer to seek for establishments that he finds interesting within his sought cultural world where he personally is allowed to extend his personality (Belk 1988). This important feature allows the individual to strengthen his personal identity as he can experience a stronger self-esteem and a better confidence (Madrigal 2003) as he is in search for a social link (Maffesoli 1996). The consumer can therefore exploit a consumption object (Holt 1995) to use it as an entrance ticket to be granted the visit to a fairground where he is allowed to enjoy a greater pleasure while connecting with other consumers to build social ties. While the consumer has penetrated the external shells of the fairground/cultural world, it is important for him to earn as much social currency (Corrigan 1997) as possible in order to gain greater respect to be experienced as a high identifier (Madrigal 1995) of the community (Cova 1997). By attaining this higher social currency and the respect, the consumer will be seen as truly authentic (Beverland 2010) and will thereby increase on the vital social scale of prestige to gain crucial status (Goffman 1951) by the peers. This is the highest individual achievement that the consumer is allowed to prosper within. There is always a ‘social elite’ in every society and the consumer that has prospered to these high levels can illustrate his social belonging by having both the money and time to consume and, according to themselves, consume in the right and proper manner (Veblen in Corrigan 1997; Bourdieu 1984). The first contact that the

individual consumer can experience with a specific cultural world might be through an emotional coincidence when the consumer was a child, it might be a consumption object that was given as a gift which created an emotional connection or it can be a familiar connection that introduces you to a specific social world. Other factors that might be experienced when coming in contact with a certain community might be how the consumer searches for consumption objects that allow him to enter a socially constructed world that disguises the harsh reality.

## 5.2 The Passionate Community

While establishing a 'personal home' in the sought community, the consumer is learned how to interact and socialize within the cultural frames. The sought community can be anything from being a passionate football fan of a specific club or being a part of a punk rocker community. The consumer becomes "one of them" by discussing, arguing, showing his dedication, learning to use their language and behaving the same way as the other passionate consumers while also developing a greater understanding for their own values and what other values that they despise (Turner 1988). This behaviour incorporates the consumer in the community that grants the consideration of this phenomenon as a cultural sect where they jointly celebrate their common festivals and mourn the less joyful moments (Maffesoli 1996) that transforms the consumer into a 'passionate consumer' and builds strong social links. The integrity that holds the social ties together within the community enhances the passionate consumer's view of the community as a 'family'. The crowded family later on provides the consumer with a strong emotional connectivity that generates a precious *gemeinschaft* (Tönnies in Muniz & O'Guinn 2001). These emotional feelings entail the cultural world to become in a strong need of a 'sacred place' (Belk et al 1989) where the passionate consumers' are allowed to behave into their fullest emotions while bonding with other comrades. This physical or abstract sacred place serves as a monument (Moutinho et al 2007) for every passionate consumer in the family as it defines the true spiritual place of the community while those who hasn't visited the monument sees it as a displaced meaning (McCracken 1986) which they desperately long for.

This community/family/social world/cultural world is further strengthened by winning/acquiring culture capital (Bourdieu 1984) where their familiar connectivity becomes publically positive acknowledged which allows the passionate consumers' to bask in reflected

glory (Cialdini et al 1976). Although, a significant loss of culture capital (Bourdieu 1984) puts the consumers' on an authentic test as some might choose to leave the community due to the community's failure in providing the individual with the right features that he sought to extend his identity with. The passionate consumers' who choose to stay are to be considered the building blocks of the community as they are extremely strengthened when they win back the glorious culture capital that they previously lost which creates a stronger emotional connection (Derbaix et al 2002) between the passionate consumers'. The remaining passionate consumers' are those who experience a stronger emotional arousal at their communal festivities and are more likely to strengthen their cultural values which leads to higher entrance barriers for new comers who seek to join the community.

### 5.3 The individual & the Community

The above stated in part 5.1 and 5.2 'disguises' the passionate consumer as he develops a certain habitus (Bourdieu 1984; Turner 1988) that is essential to be recognized as one of the community and is a vital part of the familiarity. The passionate consumer achieves this habitus as he has been part of this growing family during a certain time to understand their core values and assert their behaviour. This phenomenon proves important as it brings the consumer's personal identity, outside the community, and his communal identity to coherence into one specific strong identity that is characterized by the family's shared beliefs which penetrates all cultural spheres (Holt 1995). This aspect can be seen from the perspective of a passionate football supporter, a passionate punk rocker or a passionate science fiction fan. This feature sees the consumer attempting to manipulate the object meanings of the consumption object as he tries to interconnect everything in his personality to his 'family's' identity (Ibid). Such behaviour could be obtaining the same nationality as an integral family member which brings this strong social tie. This social link and the correlation between your personal identity and the community are constantly searched for as the passionate consumer utilizes every possible tool to frequently aspire a stronger contact with the peers. As the more passionate consumers enter the community and the family grows, the passionate consumers' will gather merely closer and glocal comrades to establish a closer social tie within the large community such as American 'Star Wars' fans corresponding to global science fiction fans. These aspects doesn't hinder the community's integrity as the own cultural worlds values and specifically developed language exceeds all national and language barriers (Moutinho et al 2007).

When these passionate assemble around their sacred place, they engage in a certain tribal behaviour that is asserted for their own cultural world where they exercise their familiar rituals around this monument (Ibid). These rituals distinguishes the personal identity as this aspect is molded together with the own cultural world which transforms every passionate consumer at the site into a dear family member. These are the specific festivities that gathers the passionate consumers' in one place and provides them with an emotional experience that cements the loyalty and identification towards the own social world as it creates a lifelong bond.

Finally, the mentioned sociocultural dynamics and motives have allowed the consumer to extend his personality to form feelings of social solidarity in cultural worlds to transform the individual to a 'passionate consumer'. This perspective where the passionate consumer understands the underlying cultural behaviour and values to consume an object allows him to incorporate the social values of the cultural world as the two identities becomes on. The stated allows the passionate consumer to inhale love for the community, that the consumption object provides, and exhale a familiar lifelong bond.

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# 7. Appendix

## 7.1 Web-Survey

### Football Survey ☆

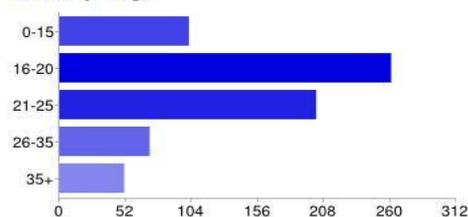
Arkiv Redigera Visa Infoga Format Data Verktyg Formulär (683) Hjälp Senaste ändring gjordes för 14 timmar sedan av forat.alhaider

|   | A                      | B                   | C   | D              | E                                       | F   | G   | H  | I                                      | J   | K   |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|---|----------------|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| 1 | Tidstämpel             | 1.What is your age? | 2. For how many years have you been a passionate fan of football? | Exempelfråga 2 | 3. Where does your favourite team play? | 4. Is your favourite team among the top three in the league historically? | 5. Out of the last 4 seasons, how many times have your football club qualified for continental championships? | 6. How many times have your club won the finest European tournament? | 7. Do you hold a club membership card? | 8. How many HOME games do you attend per season?                    | 9. How many AWAY games do you attend per season?                    |
| 2 | 2012-05-13<br>22.55.55 | 21-25               | 2012-08-15  |                | Spain                                   | Yes   | 4   | 2012-04-05   | No                                     | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) |
| 3 | 2012-05-13<br>22.56.07 | 21-25               | 2012-08-15  |                | Spain                                   | Yes   | 4   | 6+   | No                                     | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) |
| 4 | 2012-05-13<br>22.58.12 | 26-35               | 2012-08-15  |                | Spain                                   | Yes   | 3   | 6+   | No                                     | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) |
| 5 | 2012-05-13<br>22.59.10 | 21-25               | 2012-08-15  |                | Other                                   | Yes   | 1   |  | 0 Yes                                  | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) |
| 6 | 2012-05-13<br>23.01.09 | 21-25               | 15+   |                | Italy                                   | Yes   | 2   | 2012-01-02   | No                                     | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) |
| 7 |                        |                     |   |                |   |   |   |  |  | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) | Extremely rare, due to distance (Such as living in another country) |

683 svar

### Sammanfattning [Se hela svar](#)

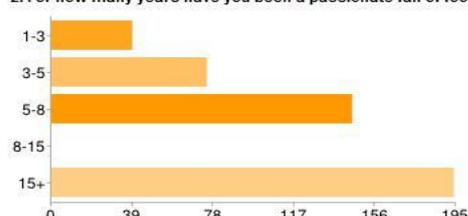
#### 1.What is your age?



|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| 0-15  | 102 |
| 16-20 | 261 |
| 21-25 | 202 |
| 26-35 | 71  |
| 35+   | 51  |

Eftersom det går att välja fler än en kryssruta kan procentsatsen överstiga 100 %.

#### 2. For how many years have you been a passionate fan of football?



|      |     |
|------|-----|
| 1-3  | 39  |
| 3-5  | 75  |
| 5-8  | 145 |
| 8-15 | 0   |
| 15+  | 194 |

Eftersom det går att välja fler än en kryssruta kan procentsatsen överstiga 100 %.

## 7.2 Netnography

facebook Sök



**Baha Real Madrid**  
 Bor i Lund, Sweden · Från Basrah, Al Basrah, Iraq · Född den 17 augusti 1910

Skriv inlägg Foto/filmklipp

Skriv något...

**Ilham Jamaledine**

logg

Information



**Taeir Alak** ▶ **Aseel Alhaidar**  
 Hala Madrid!!!!!!

Gilla · Kommentera · Visa vänskapssida · för 30 minuter sedan i Lund-området · 

 Saif Alradhi gillar detta.

 **Aseel Alhaidar** أحله تاجر  
 Visa översättning  
 för 29 minuter sedan via mobilenen · Gilla

 **Aseel Alhaidar** Ha sig kefet ,yalla 3mi hala Barca ok shloni wyaak  
 för 7 minuter sedan via mobilenen · Gilla

Kommentera...



**Taeir Alak** ▶ **Adam Beydoun**  
 Hala Madrid!!!!!!

Gilla · Kommentera · Visa vänskapssida · för ungefär en timme sedan i Lund-området · 

 Sharam Michael Gh och Adam Beydoun gillar detta.

 **Adam Beydoun** HALA MADRID!  
 för ungefär en timme sedan via mobilenen · Gilla

Kommentera...



**Taeir Alak** ▶ **Alan Abdulkarim**  
 Hala Madrid!!!!!!

Gilla · Kommentera · Visa vänskapssida · för 17 minuter sedan i Lund-området · 

madridista

**Alla resultat**



**Simon Madridista**  
 Skicka meddelande

+1 Lägg till vän



**Ruba Madridista**  
 Har gått på Polhemskolan  
 3 gemensamma vänner · Skicka meddelande

+1 Lägg till vän



**Khalil Madridista Sulayman**

+1 Lägg till vän



**Madridista**  
 Madrid, m · professionellt sportlag · 7 692 gilla-markeringar  
 Gilla

 Gilla



**Youusif Madridista**  
 Jobbar på Real Madrid C.F.  
 Bor i Malmö, Sweden  
 Från Baghdad, Iraq  
 2 gemensamma vänner · Skicka meddelande

+1 Lägg till vän



**Simsim Madridista**  
 Jobbar på Trygg Hansa  
 Bor i Malmö, Sweden  
 Från Malmö, Sweden  
 1 gemensam vän · Skicka meddelande

+1 Lägg till vän



**Jorghino Madridista**  
 Logistic på IKEA  
 Bor i Malmö, Sweden

+1 Lägg till vän



**Marc Mezel**

för 2 minuter sedan via mobilen

puta barca, puta barca, puta barca.... hala madrid, hala madrid,  
hala madrid

**You Tube**



Bläddra | Ladda upp

أغنية ريال مدريد- انا ريال-جديد 2012

madrid141



Prenumerera

50 videoklipp ▾



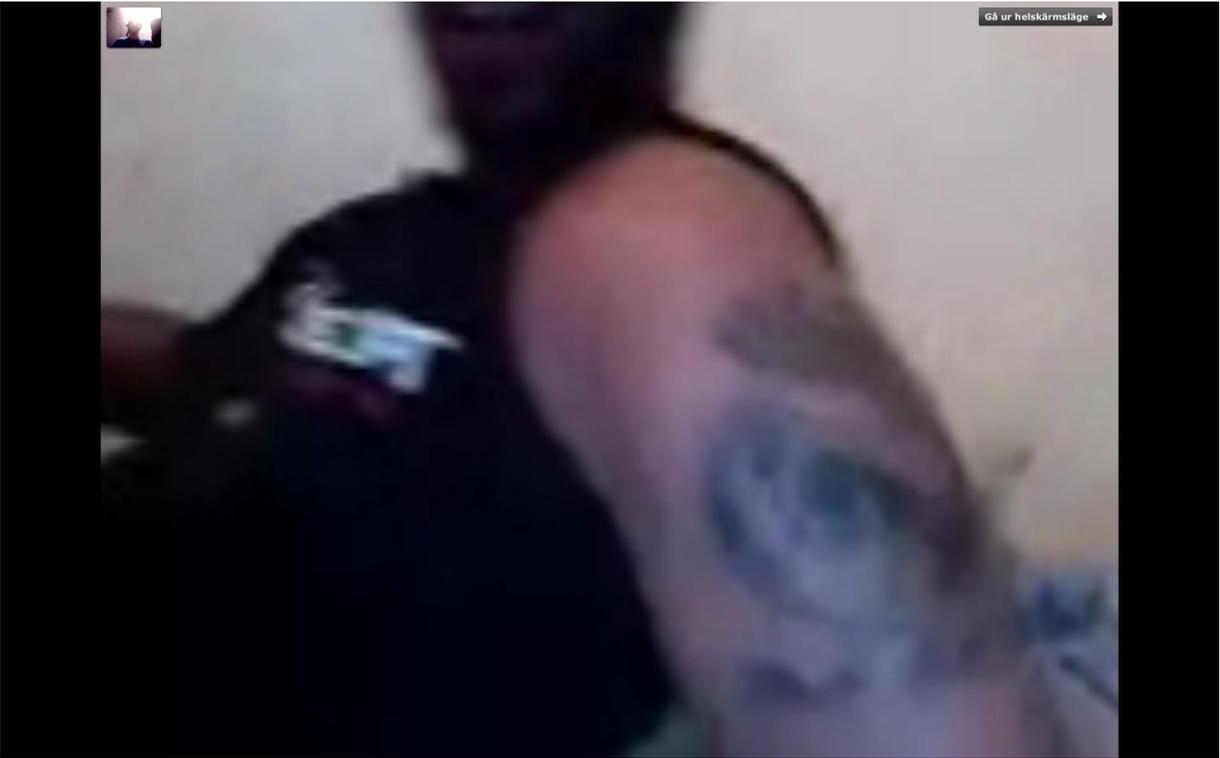


7.3 Participant Observation





7.5 Qualitative Interviews





## 7.6 Interviewee protocol

My name is Forat Al Haider and I am currently pursuing my MSc studies in Globalization, Brands & Consumption at the Lund University in Sweden.

These qualitative sessions are an integral part of a master thesis that aims to explore the significant motives that drive passionate consumers' in the sport of football. I would like to thank you for your participation as your time and passion will provide valuable results in my study.

Excerpts from these qualitative sessions will be used to complement the report. The participant is allowed at any time to stop the session or withdraw certain comments that might be seen as misunderstanding. The participant is also aware that their personal name will be signed on this report to define this project's authenticity while a photo might be taken in order to illustrate the session and that this session is being recorded.

I would, once again, like to thank you for describing your experiences as a passionate Madridista.

Please sign below if you have read through the terms and are willing to conduct this study.

Signature

---