# The Effect of Brand Culture on the Capability to Create Brand Identity under Sports Marketing Intelligence: A Practice in Football Base Associations[1] of Western Mediterranean Region

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**Abstract**

*Brand identity plays an efficient role in achievement of the goals by businesses/organizations. Thus, it is intended to improve the market performance by providing competitive advantage. Moreover, brand identity constitutes a significant source for this goal and renders businesses different. From this aspect, the culture of brand identity formation represents marketing intelligence. Marketing intelligence is the capability of sector businesses to make their abilities to comprehend, identify, analyse, assess and regenerate the whole internal and external environment functional and generate dynamic results in the process of brand formation with the purpose of improving the tactical and strategic decision-making processes culturally and communicatively. In this paper, the marketing culture components of TTF (Turkish Football Federation) for brand identity formation were analysed through hypotheses. 309 surveys were obtained from Football Base Associations of Western Mediterranean Region. Brand identity was expressed through the factors of innovativeness, service quality, internal communication and sale force which meet hypotheses having been accepted according to the research model as a consequence of the analysis.*

**Key words:** Sports marketing, Brand culture, Brand identity, Marketing culture, Football.

## 1. Introduction

Sport marketing includes the processes of organizing all activities in the exchange of products and services and developing and implementing strategies in order to meet the sports consumers' needs and wishes (Mullin et al, 2000: 8-9; Ekmekçi and Ekmekçi, 2010: 25). Brand identity plays a vital role in organizing the sports marketing activities, developing the strategies and making the implementation process efficient. Brand identity which draws a framework that helps us define the meaning, orientation and goal of brand is required to be assessed as a basic concept in structuring and management of brand holistically (Aaker, 1996: 68).

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[1] Football Base Associations are the partner organizations of TFF (Turkish Football Federation) such as ASKF (Amateur Sports Clubs Federation), TÜFAD (Turkish Football Coaches' Foundation), TFFHGD (Turkish Active Football Referees and Observers' Foundation) and Stadium Inspectors' Foundation.

The holistic structure of brand identity includes the words, images, opinions and associations which form consumers' perceptions on brands (Upshaw, 1995; Doyle, 2003: 411; Erdil and Uzun, 2009: 110). Since brand identity involves all aspects and entirety of brand rather than its components, it allows brand to maintain its development and ensure profitable growth in the competitive market (Uztuğ, 2003: 43).

According to Olins (1978: 209), brand identity represents what a brand is, what a brand produces and how it produces. Also, brand identity focuses on emotional benefits in addition to providing consumers with rational benefits (Perry and Wisnom, 2003: 16-17; Vallester and deChernatony, 2005: 181-203). Aaker (2003: 83-85) suggests that brand identity forms a whole of brand associations required to develop brand strategy and maintain the proper strategy being implemented. It can be assumed that brand identity becomes a whole of the elements that allow identifying a product's quality, meaning and value since it is designed taking into account all present and potential conditions (Aaker, 2003: 83-85).

The descriptions regarding brand identity express its distinctive structure and individuality. These descriptions also emphasize that brand identity makes products different and hence it plays the role of a building stone to maintain its sustainability (Erdil and Uzun, 2009: 109-110). Proving the possibility to position brands properly, brand identity supports the strategic approach while managing the brand. A brand identity system being managed in accordance with the conditions protects brand from competitors and also provides competitive advantage (Pringle and Gordon, 2001: 74-77; Selvi, 2007: 17.). Evaluating from this aspect, brand identity becomes the capability of businesses. Capabilities coordinate the activities of businesses and assume a unifying role. They also appear gradually depending on complex interaction between sources and the change, development, learning and progress in knowledge and information (Weerawardena et al, 2005: 37-45; Papatya, 2007: 99-104) and they develop when integrated with employees' background and skills (Grant, 1991: 114-135; Grant, 2006: 375-387; Papatya and Papatya, 2005: 144).

Becoming a marketing skill, brand identity is developed by acquired experience or learning process (Foley and Fahy, 2004: 209-217). Therefore, marketing skills constitute an interactive process which is designed by putting knowledge, skills and sources into practice to meet the businesses' requirements on markets, add value to products and services, adapt to market conditions, eliminate the competitive threats and turn market opportunities into advantage (Day, 1994: 37-52; Srivastava et al., 1998: 2-18).

This study will firstly consider the literature on marketing intelligence and analyse the conceptual aspect of the subject and assess the literature contribution in this context. Secondly, sports marketing and sports marketing intelligence will be described. From the perspective that marketing intelligence can be rendered functional in many ways, the capability to create a brand identity will be expressed under the scope of marketing intelligence. Also brand culture which is one of the factors constituting brand identity will be detailed in this paper.

This study contributes to the related literature with regard to strategic approach towards sports marketing. Sports marketing intelligence which can be assessed as an important concept to shape the dynamic structure of sports marketing makes contribution to traditional marketing understanding, too. Accordingly, this paper intends to analyse TFF's capability to create brand identity in the context of marketing culture components. Thus, sports marketing intelligence will be expressed by making use of opinions of TFF's partners called as football base associations which carry out all their activities in cooperation with TFF. TFF's partner organizations including ASKF (Amateur Sports Clubs Federation), TÜFAD (Turkish Football Coaches' Foundation), TFFHGD (Turkish Active Football Referees and Observers' Foundation) and Stadium Inspectors' Foundation are involved in the scope of this research. Taking into account the time and cost limitations, this study was limited to Football Base Associations of Western Mediterranean Region including the cities of Antalya, Burdur and Isparta.

## 2. Assessment of Literature and Literature Contributions to Marketing Intelligence

The literature regarding marketing intelligence addresses even any information surrounding businesses in terms of management aspects. Meyer (1987) considers intelligence cycle as a process with six stages. Consisting of the stages of planning and guiding, collecting, processing and using, producing, spreading and utilizing, this cycle emphasizes sustainability (Jaworski and Kohli, 1993). Miller (1996) highlighted that "storing" stage should be added to this cycle.

The literature concerning marketing intelligence guides also sports marketing intelligence because it represents a sectoral approach towards marketing intelligence. From this perspective, marketing intelligence always provides executives with information on the changes/progresses in marketing sector (Kotler, 2001: 94).

In parallel to this opinion, Jaffe (1979: 55) describes marketing intelligence as collection of information by businesses in the field of their internal activities and external market environment. Marketing intelligence consists of the information on the past experience of macro environment, market environment, customers, competitors and marketing mix of organization (Jaffe, 1979; Kotler; 2001).

These factors require scanning the competition in the organization's environment, customers' expectations and preferences, sources, technology, economy, political impact, social and cultural impact and physical environment. Majority of these factors remain steady in the course of time within a stable environment. However, a changing environment requires monitoring all of these factors by identifying the effect of change on both organization and environment (Grooms, 2001).

The related literature mentions that marketing intelligence should be easily-comprehendible by the recipients and have a motivational form (Maltz and Kohli, 1996). Also, marketing intelligence has a structure depending on trust. The recipients should trust the sender and there should be a reliable connection between the recipients and used information (Moorman et al, 1992; Menon and Varadarajan, 1992). Although the concept of marketing intelligence is addressed by Kotler and Armstrong (2012) under the scope of marketing research, this concept is assessed focusing on strategy beyond enquiry which is involved under the framework of marketing research (Lackman et al, 2000; Kotler, 2004). While marketing research is used when businesses are in need of special information or when the marketing research is a response to the set of their requirements, the concept of intelligence is represented as a constant process that introduces a holistic approach towards business environment including competitors, customers and market (Huster, 2005).

Moreover, the marketing intelligence system is a set of processes and sources which is used in order to obtain daily information about the changes in the environment where businesses are active (Mochtar and Arditi, 2001). In this context, the primary goal of marketing intelligence is to support the businesses' decisions that represent their responsibilities in various fields they meet every day. In other words, marketing intelligence is a system which indicates the capability to obtain the information required to take decision (Hutt and Speh).

Huster (2005) defines marketing intelligence as the capability to comprehend, analyse and assess the data obtained from the internal and external environment about organization, customers, competitors, market and other businesses with the purpose of improving the tactical and strategic decision-making processes. He also emphasizes that competitive intelligence is the integration of marketing research, marketing analysis and the analysis of business and financial information (Huster, 2005). This definition includes the strategic factors under the marketing intelligence addressed by Kotler and Amstrong (2012).

According to some authors, marketing intelligence can be defined as the current information obtained by the opinions, behaviours and needs of individuals and organizations under environmental, social and daily economic activities (Prior, 1998; Meunier-FitzHugh and Piercy, 2006). The final goal of marketing intelligence is to facilitate the decision-making process that causes an action (Prior, 1998). The efficiency of intelligence process contributes to knowledge base and leads to cumulative organizational learning (Huster, 2005). Marketing intelligence aims to transform data into knowledge and knowledge into intelligence (Markarian et al, 2008).

From the perspective that marketing intelligence can become a business capability to provide a competitive advantage, it is needed to express the concepts of sports marketing and sports marketing intelligence. Therefore, these concepts will be discussed.

## 3. Sports Marketing and Sports Marketing Intelligence

The marketing efforts in sports sector differ from those of other sectors. In this context, we can mention about two primary elements that shape sports marketing. The first element is providing the sports consumers with sports products and services and the second one is transferring other consumption and industrial products and services through using sports as promotional activity (Mullin et al, 2000; Alkibay, 2005). On the other side, why the marketing efforts in sports sector are different from other sectors is based on many abstract reasons specific to sports marketing (Parkhouse, 1996: 252-254; Argan and Katırcı, 2008: 29-32; Basım and Argan, 2009: 183).

Comparing the characteristics of sports marketing with the marketing activities of other sectors, it is seen that the different characteristics of sports marketing are highlighted by assessing its general properties (Seraslan, 2005; Parkhouse, 1996; Biçer, 2008), its properties regarding the market (Mullin et al., 2000), marketing mix (Üner, 1994; Shank, 2005), marketing communication (Altunbaş, 2007; Akşar, 2010) and consumption (Ekmekçi and Ekmekçi, 2010)[2]. These different characteristics of sports marketing have brought forward the need to address it strategically.

The concept of strategic marketing involves the whole business and has a flexible and adaptable structure. Marketing executives, academicians and professionals desire that organizations can obtain sustainable competitive advantage through strategic marketing approaches (Wright, 2005: 3-7). Thus, an approach to create a structural planning and strategy is suggested (Trim and Lee, 2008: 731-733). Strategic perspective in marketing has brought forward the concept of marketing intelligence. Huster (2005: 13) describes marketing intelligence as "the capability of businesses to comprehend, analyse and assess the internal and external environment about customers, competitors, market and sector with the purpose of improving the tactical and strategic decision-making processes (Papatya and Papatya, 2006: 55-68)." According to this description, marketing intelligence plays a vital role in decision-making process and helps facilitating share of information within organization (Trim and Lee, 2008: 731-733; Papatya and Papatya, 2011: 479-489).

Today, sports marketing intelligence serves for the purpose of collecting and analysing information systematically and using these information in line with the goals in the field of strategic management/marketing. It also focuses on the competition environment and technological, political, social and economic developments (Kahaner, 1997). Sports marketing intelligence is the capability of sector businesses to make their abilities to comprehend, identify, analyse, assess and regenerate the whole internal and external environment functional and generate dynamic results in the process of brand formation with the purpose of improving the tactical and strategic decision-making processes culturally and communicatively (For detailed information, see Papatya, 2007). Sports marketing intelligence is the indicative of competitive advantage of businesses and it plays a critical role in their sustainability (Papatya, 2012).

It consists of three dimensions including collecting information, realizing opportunities and developing applicable strategy. These dimensions of sports marketing intelligence aims to help collecting the clear/legal information in a large field, comprehending the market structure, behaviours and expectations and transforming them into a distinctive/different capability of businesses and hence creating the future perspective. Sports marketing intelligence primarily focuses on introducing the best practices and improving the business performance. Comprising the future perspective of businesses, this approach can be integrated by introducing the competition opportunities, minimizing/eliminating the surprises that businesses may encounter, providing reaction time advantage and taking opportunities (Papatya and Papatya, 2007: 369). This integrated structure is expressed by the capability to create brand identity which is addressed as the indicative of sports marketing intelligence in this study.

## 4. Method

### 4.1. Research Group

Since the sports sector has now become a large market valued at trillions, this study is important in that it introduces a strategic perspective to sports marketing. Therefore, this paper emphasizes that strategic approaches are to be involved in sports market apart from traditional approaches and it discusses the culture to create brand identity. It is seen that there are studies that address a great variety of subjects ranging from businesses to consumer behaviours while expressing the models regarding the brand identity in the literature. However, the research group is narrowed due to the research limitations and the possibility that the consumer behaviours can be a subject of another research. In this study, the branch of football which constitutes the largest part of sports market is assessed. Having an autonomous structure, Turkish Football Federation (TFF) plays a significant role in shaping the football market in Turkey. TFF acts in cooperation with partner institutions/organizations to reach the market.

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[2] The assessments on the characteristics of sports marketing can be expressed by the general properties of sports marketing and its properties regarding the market, marketing mix, marketing communication and consumption. For detailed information, see Tüfekci, 2011.

TFF's partner organizations including ASKF (Amateur Sports Clubs Federation), TÜFAD (Turkish Football Coaches' Foundation), TFFHGD (Turkish Active Football Referees and Observers' Foundation) and Stadium Inspectors' Foundation, all of which are called as Football Base Associations, are involved in the scope of this research. However, the practices were performed in Western Mediterranean cities including Antalya, Burdur and Isparta due to research limitations.

In the Western Mediterranean Region, 57 of totally 175 members from Amateur Sports Clubs Federation (ASKF); 102 of totally 663 members from Turkish Football Coaches' Foundation (TÜFAD); 118 of totally 238 members from Turkish Active Football Referees and Observers' Foundation (TFFHGD) and 49 of totally 92 members from Stadium Inspectors' Foundation took part in the survey. 326 surveys were answered with 27,91% response rate among 1168 members. It was seen in pre-assessment process that 17 surveys were to be eliminated since they weren't filled properly. According to the sample volume table, it is stated that 291 data will be adequate for 1200 universe number. Thus, 309 surveys were assessed since 309 significant samples with 1168 universe number were adequate.

This study is also important in that the concept of brand identity includes all concepts regarding brand (Uztuğ, 2009: 59). Since the football base associations represent the brand identity of TFF as stated in their activities and regulations, they are considered to be a field of application suitable for the scale.

### 4.2. Data Collection Tool

Structural survey was used quantitatively and technically in this study. The survey includes the expressions describing the market culture for market identity and the measurement was performed using a five-point Likert scale with equal intervals. Accordingly, the football brand culture scale was formed using the marketing culture scale developed by Webster (1993). The research model developed in accordance with the scale is indicated below. The variables included in the scale don't differ in the football market, either.

**Figure1: Research Model**
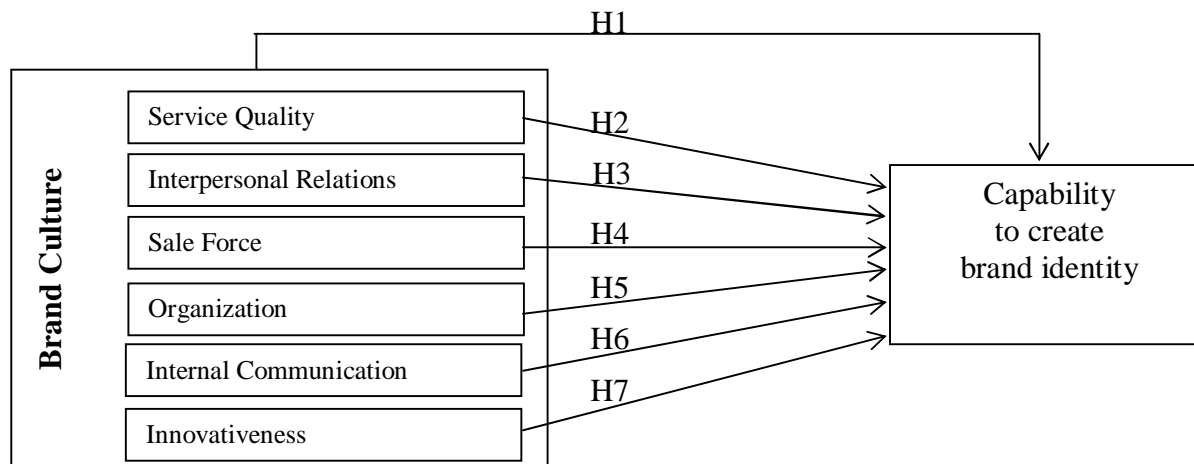


When the variables of brand culture including service quality, interpersonal relations, sale force, organization, internal communication and innovativeness are assessed by the football base associations according to the research model, it is seen that the market culture variables have an effect on the capability to create a brand identity.

Generally, the football brand culture is considered to be influential on the capability to create brand identity when it is evaluated by the football base associations. Likewise, Pettinger (2004) highlights that brand culture has influence on marketing skills. Accordingly, the below-mentioned hypotheses are developed:

H1: Brand culture has an effect on the capability to create brand identity.

Since the sports spectators' preferences change depending on improvement of sports sector and service quality of the places where sportive activities are watched and development of performance properties in line with sportsmen's skills, different consumption ways emerge (Pitts and Stotlar, 2002: 26-29). Therefore, service quality is addressed as a factor of brand culture because it is an important instrument that guides and affects the customer preferences. In this context, it is thought that service quality has an influence on the capability to create brand identity and hence hypothesis H2 is suggested.

H2: Service quality has a positive impact on the capability to create brand identity.

The relations developed by modelling interpersonal relations and the communicative skills of organizations that can be considered as their internal capability are emphasized (Aaker, 1996: 192). The interpersonal relations involve developing the styles and behaviours of employees to handle a duty in an organization (Karatepe et al, 2005: 33-47). In this context, the interpersonal relations are addressed as an element of brand culture and hence hypothesis H3 is suggested.

H3: Interpersonal relations affect the capability to create brand identity positively.

Considered as the third dimension of brand culture, "Organization of Sale Force" guides us how to help employees adapt to their working places through a marketing perspective. Organizing the sale force is a management function closely related to other sale management functions. The organization of sale force brings forward the formal (structural) structure of sale force which is evaluated as the indicative of brand culture since it can adapt to constantly changing conditions (Mucuk, 1993: 136). Apart from having a structure to meet the market requirements, the organization of sale force ensures sustainability of communication between customers and sale personnel. Thus, it represents marketing intelligence due to its capability to provide continuous and free information flow (Stanton and Buskirk, 1974: 100). Considering that organization of sale force has an impact on the capability to create brand identity in this respect, hypothesis H4 is suggested.

H4: Sale force is positively influential on the capability to create brand identity.

Addressed as the fourth dimension of brand culture, "organization" provides information on creating a working environment suitable for employees, efficient time management and the way to make the organization for a professional perspective (Appiah et al., 1999: 47-70). In this context, it is considered that the organization dimension of brand culture has an effect on the capability to create brand identity and hence hypothesis H5 is suggested.

H5: Organization has a positive influence on the capability to create brand identity.

Assessed as another dimension of brand culture, "Internal Communication" contributes to enabling employees to comprehend the vision and mission of businesses in order to allow them to realize the expectations of administration and the advantages of being involved in an organization with certain standards. Argenti (2007: 137) describes internal communication as the potential to create an organization culture and guide this culture in order to allow the positive development of organization. From the perspective that internal communication which is considered as a dimension of brand culture is effective in the capability to create brand identity, hypothesis H6 is suggested.

H6: Internal communication produces positive effect on the capability to create brand identity.

Evaluated as the final dimension of brand culture, "innovativeness" is related with how an innovative organization and its employees will change and react to innovations and their adaptation to innovativeness. The concept of innovativeness is one of the most important variables in the process of brand culture formation for competitive advantage (Karatepe et al., 2005: 33-47.). In this context, the innovativeness dimension of brand culture is considered to have an influence on the capability to create brand identity and hence hypothesis H7 is suggested.

H7: Innovativeness is positively effective in the capability to create brand identity.

### 4.3. Data Analysis

In order to assess the data, SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used. Data was dealt in descriptive and inferential bases and hence frequency distributions of demographic questions were addressed. In addition, t-test was conducted in order to determine whether the difference is significant statistically by comparing the averages of the group. Factor analysis was carried out to decide on which factors the scale items in the research are gathered and whether it is compliant with the literature. Also multiple linear regression analysis was applied to test the relation between independent variables and dependent variables in accordance with the aim of the research as indicated in the research model. Since the scale used in the research is a leading study in the field, LISREL 8.8 packaged software was utilized for heuristic factor analysis.

### 5. Findings

The opinions of TFF's partner organizations called as Football Base Associations were analysed for the research aim to examine TTF's capability to create brand identity within the context of the brand culture components.

The conducted analyses aim to test the hypotheses demonstrating that six dimensions of brand culture as service quality, interpersonal relations, sale force, organization, internal communication and innovativeness are effective in the capability to create brand identity.

In the research, KMO value was calculated as 0,848 for factor analysis of twenty-six items placed in the scale of marketing culture and Bartlett test result was found as $\chi^2$= 2733,493 ($P_{sign}$= 0.000) (p<0.05). Considering that the interval of 0.80-0.90 is accepted as highly good for KMO value; it can be said that KMO value is in advanced level in this research. The result of Barlett test as $P_{sign}$= 0,000 was found significant.

The common variance values (communality) of the items stated in the scale of football marketing culture are observed to vary between 0.307 and 0.858. .Accordingly, eigen values of the scale are gathered under six factors. These six factors correspond to the six factors in Webster's (1993) study. The variance of six factors accounts for 61,839% of the total variance. The rate of six dimensions to account for the total variance exceeds 60% which is considered as the limit in social sciences. Given that this rate is above 40% which is acceptable, it is seen that six factors as the important factors in the analysis meet most of the total variance of the items and the variance related to the scale.

Considering the results of confirmatory factor analysis via LISREL 8.8 packaged software, RMSEA value was found as 0.049 which is in an acceptable level (according to 0,05), $\chi^2$/df=658,64/284 value as 2,32 which is acceptable (according to 3,84); AGFI (Adjusted Goodness Fit Index) as 0,95>(0,90); GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) as 0,93>(0,90) and NFI (Normed Fit Index) as 0,97>(0,95). Based on these results, the holistic model has gained validity following the heuristic factor analysis of the data obtained for the scale of marketing culture.

By assessing the whole of the scale of football marketing culture, Alpha coefficient indicating internal consistency is calculated as 0.869. This value is above 0,70 which is accepted as a limit for reliability. Alpha coefficient was calculated for the dimensions of service quality, interpersonal relations, sale force, organization, internal communication and innovativeness which constitute the scale of football marketing culture. The calculated coefficients are displayed in the following table.

**Table 1: Reliability Test Results of the Dimensions Constituting the Football Marketing Culture**

| Dimension | Number of Expression | Alpha Coefficient |
|---|---|---|
| Service Quality | **6** | **0,856** |
| Interpersonal Relations | **4** | **0,652** |
| Sale Force | **6** | **0,831** |
| Organization | **3** | **0,812** |
| Internal Communication | **4** | **0,563** |
| Innovativeness | **3** | **0,760** |

The number of expressions belonging to the dimensions comprising the scale of football marketing culture and their Alpha coefficients are shown in table above. As seen in the table, though the coefficients of Interpersonal Relations and Internal Communication are below 0,70 which is generally considered as acceptable, they are within the limits acceptable according to Nunnally (1978) and Akgül and Çevik (2005). Thus, the analyses related to them were continued.

The relation between football marketing culture and the capability to create brand culture was assessed by linear regression analysis. As a result, it was seen that football marketing culture affects the capability to create brand culture positively (β=.626; p= .000). R value indicates that football marketing culture influences the capability to create brand culture (.626) positively. As the values of football marketing culture increase, there appears growth in the values of capability to create brand culture, too. Accordingly, we can say that there is a relation between them. Based on these results, hypothesis H1 is accepted. Linear regression results of football marketing culture and the capability to create brand culture are summarized in the following table.

**Table 2: The relation between Football Marketing Culture and the Capability to Create Brand Culture**

| | Standard beta | t-value | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Football Marketing Culture** | .626 | 9,777 | .000 |
| **F Value** | 95,584 | | |
| **R** | .626 | | |
| **$R^2$** | .496 | | |
| **Corrected $R^2$** | .493 | | |
| **Significance** | .000 | | |

In the research, hypotheses are developed in order to test the relation between the factors of football marketing culture and the capability to create brand culture. According to the hypotheses, the effect of service quality, interpersonal relations, sale force, organization, internal communication and innovativeness, which are the factors of football marketing culture, on the capability to create brand culture are examined by multiple regression analysis. Following the analysis, the dimensions of service quality ($\beta$=.173; p=.011), sale force ($\beta$=.162; p=.014), internal communication ($\beta$=.211; p=.000) and innovativeness ($\beta$=.239; p=.000) are discovered to influence the capability to create brand culture positively whereas the dimensions of interpersonal relations ($\beta$=-.036; p=.638) and organization ($\beta$=-.007; p=.894) obtained p>.05 and hence a significant result wasn't achieved. R value (.750) shows that the factors of football marketing culture affect the capability to create brand culture positively. It is expected that as the service quality, sale force, internal communication and innovativeness which are the factors of football marketing culture increase, the capability to create brand culture increases, too. According to these results, H2, H4, H6, H7 hypotheses are accepted. However, H3 and H5 hypotheses have been rejected as there is no statistical relation and significant result between them. The results of multiple regression analysis are shown in the following table.

**Table 3: The relation between the Factors of Football Marketing Culture and the Capability to Create Brand Culture**

|  | Standard beta | t-value | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Quality Service** | ,173 | 2,543 | ,011 |
| **Interpersonal Relations** | -,036 | -638 | ,524 |
| **Sale Force** | ,162 | 2,466 | ,014 |
| **Organization** | -,007 | -,133 | ,894 |
| **Internal Communication** | ,211 | 4,037 | ,000 |
| **Innovativeness** | ,239 | 4,020 | ,000 |
|  |  |  |  |
| **F Value** | 20,808 |  |  |
| **R** | ,550 |  |  |
| **R$^2$** | ,302 |  |  |
| **Corrected R$^2$** | ,288 |  |  |
| **Significance** | ,000 |  |  |

When considering the effect of factors of football marketing culture on the capability to create brand culture via stepwise regression analysis, there appears four models. As for the first model, innovativeness accounts for 49% of the variance of brand identity [($R^2$=.493), F(1, 47352)=69949, p<.05]. For the second model, innovativeness and service quality account for 55% of the variance of the brand identity [($R^2$=.548), F(2, 30501)=48219, p<.05]. As for the third model, innovativeness, service quality and internal communication account for 59% of the variance of the brand identity [($R^2$=.587), F(3, 23545)=39135, p<.05]. For the fourth model, service quality, internal communication and sale force account for 60% of the variance of the brand identity [($R^2$=.601), F(4, 18513)=31277, p<.05].

## 6. Conclusion and Discussion

The concept of brand identity involves all aspects of a brand as a value added to the brand with its distinguishing characteristics and it draws attention to the entirety rather than its components. From this aspect, it can be assessed as a basic concept to allow brand to maintain its development and ensure profitable growth in the competitive market (Uztuğ, 2003: 43). Considering the size and profitability of the football market, it can be observed that the businesses/organizations in the search of obtaining a share from the market need to develop strategies in order to provide/ maintain competitive advantage with their distinctive characteristics. Thus, brand identity can be analysed as a distinctive feature. In this research, hypotheses were developed to analyse TFF's capabilities to create brand identity by forming a research model. Based on the results of the hypothesis tests, it is demonstrated that marketing culture components represent brand identity.

This study used the scale which was developed by Webster (1993) and envisaged as a brand identity component for marketing culture. Webster's (1993) scale comprising thirty four questions was limited with twenty six expressions depending upon six factors with factor analysis.

The definitions of expressions are described according to Webster's (1993) definitions. Confirmatory factor analysis and factor loads related to the expressions were found adequate. In the research, the rate of accounting for variance is measured as 50% for football marketing culture. Based on the linear regression analysis, brand identity is expressed through innovativeness, service quality, internal communication and sale force that meet the accepted hypotheses according to the research model.

Sports marketing strategy requires focusing on various strategic fields because sports marketing has gained dynamic appearance depending upon the development, change and differentiation of the market for both businesses and consumers. In this scope, brand identity renders an important function to enable businesses to adapt to dynamic structure.

Marketing culture projected as the sub-dimension of brand identity is based on four factors. It is observed that the dimension of marketing culture constituting innovativeness, service quality, internal communication and sale force plays a significant role in the formation of brand identity. Considering these results, it can be evaluated that TFF and its partner organizations are open to change, follow the technological developments, present privileged services for fans, focus on fans' wishes and needs, give importance to the skills-based education and encourage the approaches that increase sales.

Evaluating the innovativeness dimension of brand culture as the capability of organization to develop new products/process/relations, it can be seen as the critical factor for the organization to continue its existence in the long term. According to the findings obtained from the research, it can be concluded that the innovativeness element affecting brand identity and TFF's structure having adapted to the change are emphasized and TFF's partner organizations are open to change. In addition, TFF's structure following the technology and its effort to improve processes by using technology is perceived positively by its partner organizations.

When TFF is evaluated in terms of its structure influencing brand identity in the field of service quality, it reveals a requirement to focus on TFF's capability of service quality with regard to the results obtained from the research findings. From this point, TFF's partner organizations emphasize that TFF identifies privileged services for fans in order to present its service quality, undertakes to provide good-quality service, follows the performances of partner organizations regularly and focuses on fans' wishes and expectations. Also, stating that TFF's partner organizations' behaviours reflect TFF's brand image, they believe that TFF partner organizations meet TFF's expectations.

It is observed that brand culture affects the capability to create brand identity through its internal communication dimension. Within this context, TFF's partner organizations state that TFF has clear policies and procedures for each partner organization; TFF's expectations are defined explicitly; each partner organization realizes TFF's mission and general purposes; TFF management shares financial information with all partner organizations; TFF encourages partner organizations to get involved in standard program and motivates its partner organizations. TFF provides internal communication as a capability to create brand identity with these aspects.

Through the organization of sale force, organizations can shape the capability to create brand identity. Within the framework of the findings obtained from the research, it is seen that TFF insists on the right person to be employed, gives skills-based education for well-known partner organizations, encourages the approaches which increase sales and appreciates overachievement. It is also discovered that TFF's partner organizations are pleased to follow the new services; they are rewarded and they pursue the new services constantly. Based on these aspects, it can be said that TFF makes the organization of sale force efficient as a capability to create brand identity.

Via fans-oriented approach, sports businesses/organizations have to develop alternative strategies in order to satisfy existing participants, spectators and fans. Thus, as the consumers of the sports, participants, spectators and fans develop behaviour to purchase again. Also, by taking the latent participants, spectators and fans' attention, they can be orientated to purchase. Turning sporting events into entertainment venues rather than sports activity, sports mostly consumed by men can be consumed by women and children with the participation of family members. Brand identity components related to market segments, franchising, licenced product marketing, sponsorship, copyright marketing, stadium marketing are indicative of sports sector.

Consequently, there are six factors (service quality, interpersonal relations, sale force, organization, internal communication and innovativeness) regarding the marketing culture in our study.

However, four out of six factors (service quality, sale force, internal communication and innovativeness) are accepted following the results of the hypothesis test. The rejected two factors (interpersonal relations and organization) play an important role in making the marketing culture efficient. In this scope, it is suggested that TFF can make its marketing culture efficient if it develops behaviours and shapes its strategies to pay attention to its partner organizations' feelings, to allow them to feel that they are an important part of TFF, to let them share their opinions with TFF comfortably and to establish interaction with its partner organizations according to open-door policy. Also, it is important for marketing culture that TFF becomes well organized with its partner organizations; careful planning is adopted by its each partner organization; TFF's partner organizations gives priority to their duties; the working field of each partner organization is arranged well and the time for duties of partner organization is used well.

It is concluded by this study that other prospective researches can conducted in the future. In this study, due to the constraints of the research, TFF's brand culture was assessed through its partner organizations. Similarly, it is thought that the studies to be conducted with TFF itself, the fans consuming football or employees, partners and consumers of the businesses which provide sports service will contribute to the literature.

**Authors' Note:** This research has been shaped by utilizing the doctoral thesis titled as "Sports Marketing Intelligence: Analysis of the Capability to Create Brand Identity and A Practice in Football Base Associations of Western Mediterranean Region" which was completed by Tüfekci (2011) in Süleyman Demirel University.

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