









This notion has been supported by the findings by Schlesinger and Gingerich (2011) on their Swiss Ice Hockey Club study as they supported the assumption that highly identified fans are more likely to exhibit positive effect related to the sponsorship than low involved fans. In addition to that, the relationship between sports sponsorship and brand loyalty has been supported by the mere exposure theory by Zajonc (1968) as this theory suggested that repeated exposure to stimulus like pictures, logos, and figures, evokes effective positive brand image thereby leading to strong brand loyalty. This results has been supported by the Operant Conditioning and Vicarious Learning theory (Peter and Olson, 2005) which states that there is great chance of repeating behaviour if usage in the past was positively reinforced.

### The impact of sports sponsorship on castle lager perceived quality

Linear regression was used to determine the impact of sport sponsorship on Castle Lager perceived quality using SPSS in order to compute the regression analysis as follows:

**Table 3:** Correlation between sports sponsorship and castle lager perceived quality

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .757 <sup>a</sup> | .573     | .571              | .885                       |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Sport sponsorship

Table 3 shows the value of R square (R=0.573) which describes the change in castle lager perceived quality variable due to sport sponsorship. The rate of change in perceived quality due to sports sponsorship is 57%. According to Salkin (2008), R square value within the range of 0.45 to 0.59 is a moderate positive relationship. Therefore it can be inferred that R square of 0.573 shows a moderate positive relationship between castle lager soccer sponsorship and perceived quality of the castle brand. While the remaining 42.7 % variation in perceived quality cannot be explained by castle lager sport sponsorship alone, there could be other factors.

The coefficient B of 0.757 denotes that, the effect sport sponsorship has on perceived quality is direct. Therefore, we accept H3 which states that the sport sponsorship has an impact on castle lager perceived quality.

In another study by Gwinner and Swanson (2003), concluded that sport sponsorship is highly correlated with other outcome measures of perceived outcome measures of perceived quality. The findings by Robinson and Barlas (2011) agree with the notion that sport sponsorship has an impact on perceived quality because they found that soccer sponsorship by Samsung on Chelsea Football Club provide the basis for the conclusion that Samsung perceived quality in sport sponsorship is derived from sport-related events such as the team and opposing teams.

## 4. Summary and Conclusions

The three dimensions of Yoo and Donthu brand equity model, showed that sport sponsorship by castle lager is effective marketing tool because a positive impact has been

realized on brand awareness, brand loyalty and perceived quality. Findings show that castle lager is managing to improve brand awareness, brand loyalty and perceived quality through sponsoring the premier soccer league in Zimbabwe. The results have proven that if sport sponsorship for castle lager is improved, customer satisfaction will be enhanced and it is likely to be the brand of choice for many soccer fans. More research is required on the psychological classifications of consumers and how the various groups respond to sponsorship stimuli.

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