



## MASTER'S DISSERTATION

“IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH:  
THE CASE OF BOAVISTA FC”

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THE CASE OF BOAVISTA FC”**

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Dissertation presented to IPAM, to fulfill the requirements needed to obtain the Master's Degree in Marketing, developed under the scientific supervision of Professor Catarina Domingos.



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## **ABSTRACT**

If there is one thing everyone agrees regarding football is that this sport wouldn't be quite as special without the fans and their passion. Even so, studies have shown that several types of supporters can be seen in each football club, with different displays of attitudes, behaviors and levels of loyalty. Given this, the present investigation sought to segment the football fans of Boavista FC - an historic Portuguese football club that competes in the National top Division - according to their level of loyalty towards the team they support. For this to happen, a survey with 586 respondents was conducted and results from crosstabulations plus Pearson's Chi-Square and One-Way ANOVA tests were analysed. It was concluded that the segmentation model of Pick and Gillett (2019) could be readapted to the context of Boavista FC, although the Casual fans were converged into one group only. With respect to the proportion of each segment, it was found that 14 supporters were Fanatics (2,39%), 160 Enthusiasts (27,30%), 359 Regulars (61,26%) and 53 Casuals (9,04%). Lastly, it appeared that the attendance rate fluctuation after the club's 2008 relegation and 2014 promotion were the most efficient variables to measure loyalty, alongside "loyalty perception". On the contrary, "attendance on other teams' matches" and "average percentage of lifetime support" were concluded to be poor variables of measurement in this context.

**Keywords:** Fan Segmentation; Fan Loyalty; Sports Marketing



## RESUMO

Se há opinião unânime em relação ao futebol é que este desporto não seria tão especial sem os adeptos e a sua paixão. Mesmo assim, vários estudos já demonstraram que diversos tipos de fãs podem existir em cada clube de futebol, com diferentes manifestações de atitudes, comportamentos e níveis de lealdade. Sendo assim, a presente investigação procurou fazer uma segmentação dos adeptos do Boavista FC, de acordo com o seu nível de lealdade perante a equipa que apoiam. Para que isso acontecesse, foi realizada uma pesquisa com 586 respostas e os resultados de tabulações cruzadas, bem como de testes de Pearson's Chi-Square e One-Way ANOVA foram analisados. Concluiu-se que o modelo de segmentação de Pick e Gillett (2019) poderia ser readaptado ao contexto do Boavista FC, apesar dos fãs Casuais terem sido convergidos num grupo apenas. Verificou-se também que 14 adeptos eram Fanáticos (2,39%), 160 Entusiastas (27,30%), 359 Regulares (61,26%) e 53 Casuais (9,04%). Finalmente, constatou-se que a flutuação da taxa de assistência após a descida de divisão do clube em 2008 e subida em 2014 revelaram ser as melhores variáveis para medir a lealdade, a par da “perceção de lealdade”. Pelo contrário, a “presença em jogos de outras equipas” e a “percentagem média de vida a apoiar o clube” foram consideradas variáveis ineficientes de medição neste contexto.

**Palavras-Chave:** Segmentação de fãs; lealdade dos fãs; marketing desportivo



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**BIRGing** – Basking in Reflected Glory

**CRM** - Customer Relationship Management

**FIFA** - Fédération Internationale de Football Association



## INTRODUCTION

Sports are one of the most remarkable large-scale phenomena of modern society (Dwyer & Drayer, 2010; Tamir & Galily, 2010). Hard to assume its real origins, Crowther (2007) linked the ancient world's rituals, warfare, and entertainment with the physical activity that gave birth to sports.

Despite some sociological and political dispute on how to discern ancient and modern sports (Szymanski, 2006), it is undeniable that the world has faced some severe transformations over the centuries and the phenomenon of sports along with it. After the industrial revolution, modern forms of associativity (Szymanski, 2006), in addition to commercialism (Ben-Porat, 2009) and globalization (Barrinha & Nunes, 2004), led to the professionalization of the - now called - "sports industry", with the current century accentuating this constant evolution through the rise of new media (Galily, 2014).

Regardless of the big historical and cultural differences all over the world - evident, for instance, in the distinctness between the European countries and the United States, when comparing each sport's popularity or the format of the competitions (van Bottenburg, 2013) - this industry has a massive impact in the global and local economies, as well as relevance in political, educational and other areas of life (Bain-Selbo & Sapp, 2016).

According to Statista (2020), the 2018 worldwide revenue of the sports market was valued at 471 Billion Dollars. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, PwC (2020) expects the annual rate of growth of the Global Sports Market to slow to 3.3% over the next 3 to 5 years (from the previous 8%). Notwithstanding the severe impact in every country's economy and sportive organization, as well as the influence in the short-term purchasing power and consumption habits of the sports fans, it is assumed that, by 2025, sports will return to their previous growth path in terms of revenue and level of social impact.

With approximately 265 million participants (Wallace & Norton, 2014) and over 4 billion fans worldwide (Eryarsoy & Delen, 2019), association football (or soccer) is the most popular sport in the world.

Yang (2017) stated that a physical activity similar to football was already performed in China, in ancient times, while Madison (2019) reported antecedents of the sport in Greece and Rome too. Since then, the rules of football were revolutionized and, undisputedly, England played a huge role in it during the nineteenth century, with the births of Sheffield F.C – the first-ever soccer club –, the FA Cup – the oldest football competition, still disputed annually – and the Football Association – the most ancient football organization and the entity that created the official rules of the sport (Madison, 2019).

Nowadays, the “beautiful game” gathers big enthusiasm all over the sphere, something that explains the higher global fanbase and viewership when compared to other sports like cricket or the American ones (van Bottenburg, 2013). To better understand the impact of football, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) has more member countries than the United Nations (Stein et al., 2016).

According to Deloitte (2020), the 2018/2019 twenty highest-earning football clubs alone, produced record revenue of 9.3 Billion Euros. And despite the critical hit caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, PwC (2020) predicts that the football sector will follow the tendency of the general sports market - with a slower growth rate in the next 3 to 5 years - but positions soccer as the second sport with most potential to grow revenues, only overtaken by Esports. A phenomenon that can actually be positive for football brands, since sport simulation games (such as EA Sports FIFA or eFootball PES) are intrinsically linked with traditional sports, through a virtualization and recreation of the sports sphere in a virtual reality (Loret, 2003).

Liga NOS – the main football competition of Portugal, home country of the brand in analysis in the current study – featured in UEFA (2018) as the seventh-highest among European domestic competitions, in terms of aggregate (143 Million Euros) and club average (7.9 Million Euros) broadcast revenue. Even though Liga NOS has the least balanced broadcast revenue distribution in

Europe, these previous high numbers and the fact this source of income only represents an annual average percentage of around 32% for the top-tier Portuguese clubs, clearly gives the impression that, regardless of the Portuguese top-division team choice for analysis, this study would always cope with a brand that deals with seven-digit figures.

Thus, beyond doubt, many sports teams are gigantic financial brands, that currently generate huge revenues, mainly from broadcasting rights, commercial activity, and matchday sales (Pick & Gillett, 2019; Ben-Porat, 2009). But a sports team is, obviously, not a guaranteed success by itself. In fact, many teams are reported to operate in situations of limited financial resources (Pick & Gillett, 2019).

Companies rely on their marketing departments to understand their clients and provide them the right products or services (Kotler & Keller, 2015), since brands that don't provide added value to customers will disappear. And even though the sports industry has some unique characteristics (Tapp, 2004), this logic has to be applied to the sports companies as well – football clubs included – with fans being vital and the reason for the existing competition between them.

Throughout the years, marketing has become a vital element of the success of any established organization in the market. With globalization and technological advances transforming the world constantly and exponentially, marketing is, undoubtedly, an essential ingredient of every business - no matter from what industry - in order to quickly adapt to the everyday changes and to survive in a marketplace more competitive than ever (Lopes, 2017).

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), marketing is “managing profitable customer relationships”. In a more detailed and business-oriented approach, these authors also defined marketing as “the process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships to capture value from customers in return”.

Marketing can be branched into several types and one of its contemporary amplifications is sports marketing. Sá and Sá (2009) considered sports marketing “a set of actions and services, produced in order to satisfy the needs, expectations, and preferences of the sports consumer”. In accordance with these scholars, sports marketers need to base themselves on several marketing concepts and find multiple marketing tools, in order to create a positive professional management model that allows them to provide the best products and services, as well as to communicate with the sports consumers - the more efficiently as possible - through marketing actions. One of the referred marketing concepts is segmentation.

Rein, Kotler and Shields (2006) alerted that factors like the competition in the sector, the greater demands from the supporters, the new technologies, and the lack of time, make it more important than ever for the sports enterprises to focus on the connection with the fan. However, as will be seen in deeper detail in the following chapter, fans' loyalty was taken for granted by the football clubs for very long. A phenomenon that - alongside the peculiarities of the sports industry - explained why, during that time, the sportive entities devalued the need for implementation of customer relationship management (CRM) techniques (Adamson, Jones, & Tapp, 2005). In fact, many clubs still lag behind other common businesses in terms of understanding their customers and implementing this type of relationship management, which strives exactly to achieve a connection between clients and organizations (Hendriyani & Auliana, 2018; Richards & Jones, 2008).

Now, being well known that the fanbase of every club is not homogenous, with the supporters diverging on the level of loyalty they have towards their team and in the way they exhibit that loyalty (van Driel, Gantz, & Lewis, 2019), it is of extreme relevance for football clubs' marketing departments to be able to segment their fans and understand their particular behaviors and motivations, as detailed as possible.

The need for this segmentation is sustained on the fact it will provide valuable resources and data – in an age where “data is the new oil” - that will help greatly the marketing specialists of football teams on their task of approaching each supporter or group in a more accurate way, something crucial to achieve that desired greater connection.

The current paper, therefore, capitalizes previous works made in the fields of sports fandom and football fan segmentation, applying them to the case of Boavista FC, a Portuguese football club that competes in the top division of Portugal at the time of the study, giving an answer to the research question “What are Boavista FC’s football fan segments?”. This said, the present study investigates the existing football fan segments in the Portuguese club, considering their level of loyalty. More specifically, it aims to 1) develop a framework of the different football fan segments in Boavista FC; 2) explore the size of the segments in the club; 3) identify the main variables for measuring loyalty, in the context of Boavista FC.

The current essay theoretically displays an interesting case study due to the peculiar historical context of the club in analysis: Boavista FC was the first champion of the millennium, was relegated twice in 2008 & 2009, was promoted to Liga NOS in 2014, and has a centenary rivalry with its city neighbor FC Porto.

The presented paper envisions to contribute to the fields in analysis by strengthening the research made in the area, consolidating or challenging previous findings, and reaching new ones. These findings have the potential to help football clubs – primarily the one in analysis and others with similar contexts – better understand the peculiarities and behaviors of the different segments of customers they have, in order to overperform in the future with each one through more tailored products and services, marketing actions and campaigns, as well as better match-day experiences.

Given this, the present introduction describes the relevance of this study and provides a contextualization of this thesis, along with the themes approached in it. Chapter 1 consists of a critical review of the literature in regard to football fandom, fan loyalty, fan segmentation, and the differentiating factors between those segments. Chapter 2 presents a brief historical context of Boavista FC, the team in analysis in the study. The research hypothesis and the concept model, plus the methodology adopted to develop this essay are exhibited in Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 5 reveals the findings of the paper, obtained through the implemented questionnaire detailed in the “Methodology” chapter. Chapter 6 refers to the discussion of those findings, considering the literature review presented in the second chapter. Chapter 7 contains the conclusions of the paper. Finally, Chapter 8 includes the limitations of the essay and offers suggestions for future research, while the ending pages of this work are composed of the references of the study and the appendixes.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1.1. THE SPORTS FAN

For several decades now, scholars from multiple fields – psychology, sociology, marketing, economy, history, amidst others – have been studying sports fans and contributing to research around sports fandom. Despite the great volume of important discoveries made so far, Hahn and Cummins (2018) pointed the need for better conceptualization regarding the definition of “sports fan”.

The word “fan” was originated from the adjective “fanatic”, a term generally associated with individuals that display big enthusiasm towards one or several sports, as well as some personalities and organizations that are part of them (Walter Gantz, Wang, Paul, & Potter, 2006). According to Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw (1999), a sports fan can be described as a “consumer of organized sports” beside an “enthusiastic devotee of some particular sports consumptive objects”.

Howsoever, with no concord concerning the clear interpretation of the term, not even between “fans” themselves, many authors argue that sports fanship is a multilayered and multidimensional concept, where fans are known as that for several reasons and exhibit their fanship in multiple ways (van Driel

et al., 2019). Apparently in line with this idea of multidimensionality, Dwyer and Drayer (2010) pointed out several distinct sports consumption activities, such as attending a match, watching it on the TV, and paying online subscriptions, a list that could also include the purchase of team merchandise (Tamir, 2019a).

Experts defend that, although related, fanship and fandom are not exactly the same thing and need to be considered independently (Reysen & Branscombe, 2010). According to Ray et al. (2017), while fanship refers to an individual's interest in a particular content (ex: I like my club), fandom alludes to an individual's connection with a group that shares the same interests as him (ex: I like my club's community). Nevertheless, the classic model of sports fandom comprises multiple fan typologies too, as it includes the regular physical spectators but also all the subjects who at least track the team matches remotely (Tamir, 2019a).

Although on the surface, sports might be perceived as nothing more than a game, the connection that fans tend to have with their team is impactful and has power over their emotions, perceptions, and lifestyle choices (Wilbert-Lampen et al., 2008). This said, not rarely the club influences the mood and behavior of its supporters (Dwyer, Slavich, & Gellock, 2018), who regularly center their team as a priority in their life, even when that clashes with their daily

routine, values or beliefs (Porat, 2010), or happens at the expense of their money, health, time or even family (Dwyer et al., 2018).

Frequently, sports fandom is also associated with the presence of rituals (Tamir, 2019a), with many fans adopting and practicing superstitions regardless of being conscious of their irrationality. In fact, some scholars identify parallels between sports and religion due to these rituals, as well as a strong existence of collective faith, that guides the supporters (Gouveia, Tavares, & David, 2019).

Among other things, the symbolic power that a sports team represents to its fans (Hobsbawm, 2012) is one of the unique characteristics that makes this industry so special and its customers so passionate for the brands they identify with. After centuries of evolution and civilizational processes, Dunning (1999) referred to sports as the only remaining atmosphere where individuals can feel part of a community and frequently involve themselves in physical and symbolic fights against other lookalike communities, with the most passionate fans not rarely considering themselves “soldiers” of their club.

Although there is ground for some meeting points between the sports consumers and traditional ones - for example, Abosag, Roper and Hind (2012) evidenced fans acceptance of the notion of their club as a brand, admitting personal benefits resultant from their club’s branding process - several scholars

already highlighted the distinctness between the sports industry and the mainstream sectors. Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (2014) pointed out the inconsistency and unpredictability of sports, that hinder the job of marketers working in this field, as they have reduced or no control over the core product. Gantz, Wang, Paul, and Potter (2006) signaled dissimilarities between the sports consumers and the ones of conventional genres, in respect to TV consumption. Likewise, more recent studies placed the sportive industry in a unique place, where the typical rules of the common businesses might not as easily be applied (Baker, McDonald, & Funk, 2016; Pederson & Thibault, 2014). And Adamson, Jones and Tapp (2005) revealed differences in the case of soccer consumption specifically.

## 1.2.FAN LOYALTY

On the same line as the previous scholars, others referred how peculiar the loyalty of football supporters is, interposing with the customer of the typical consumer sectors (Fujak et al., 2018). According to Tapp (2004), soccer fans reveal some identical behavioral patterns to the ones of the supermarket goods sector, but no other shopper is this vocal on how strong his loyalty is towards a brand, adding that only football fans find loyalty this important for their self-worth.

In the context of marketing, loyalty is identified as a consistent and biased positive behavioral reaction regarding a specific brand, in comparison to its market competitors (Aldaihani & Ali, 2019; Liu, 2007; Jacoby & Kyner, 1973). Nonetheless, loyalty has to be considered as a two-dimensional construct, composed of, not only a behavioral, but an attitudinal loyalty dimension as well. For a long, researchers have been interested in this multidimensional nature of loyalty (Mahony, Madrigal, & Howard, 2000).

It is important to note that attitudinal loyalty is very much related to other marketing-related concepts, such as brand love and customer satisfaction. The latter happens when the performance of a product or service matches the expectations of a client (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). As for brand love, this is a more intense feeling than brand satisfaction and might happen when a company, not only matches but exceeds the expectations of a buyer. According to Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), brand love can be identified as “the degree of passionate emotion attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name”. In a way, loyalty is a symptom of love, as love is what makes someone loyal. And though not all satisfied customers love a brand, no unsatisfied customer will ever love it (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

Also relevant, are the notions of brand commitment and brand identification. In the case of the first, it refers to the desire of maintaining a valued relationship of high sentiment with a brand, due to prior positive

interaction with it (Osuna Ramírez, Veloutsou, & Morgan-Thomas, 2017). Commitment is the long-term intention to preserve love. As for brand identification, it can be defined as the extent to which clients recognize themselves in a brand and how their image matches the brand's one (Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010). Brand identification is also very much connected to the concept of brand trust (Nikhashemi, Paim, Osman, & Sidin, 2015) and is a significant driver of behavior (Chou, 2013).

According to several authors, both brand commitment and brand identification are antecedents of brand loyalty (Nikhashemi et al., 2015; Shin et al., 2019). Multiple scholars reasoned that psychological commitment is what best describes attitudinal loyalty (Mahony et al., 2000). As an example of how all these concepts are so related, Mahony's Psychological Commitment to Team (PCT) scale – for example – was developed with the purpose of segmenting sports consumers based on loyalty. Not enough, this measuring instrument has also been used in the literature to segment fans considering their level of team identification (Lopes, 2017).

Returning to the particularities of loyalty in football, in fact, in a world of unstable identities, soccer fanhood might be considered one of the most solid aspects of an individual's life (Porat, 2010), extending well beyond any single game or event (Tamir, 2019a) and following a path, that very likely begins at an

early age and only ends with the life of the supporter (Tamir, 2020). As seen previously, no definition of “sports fan” is unanimous, but several authors accept the description of an individual whose devotion towards a specific club dominates his complete life (Porat, 2010).

In contrast to someone who has nothing more than momentary experiences such as small and passing interests in a club or athlete, fans are people who are emotionally and continually connected with their team, have a sense of camaraderie, are aware of their team day-to-day and share their experiences online (Waters, Burke, Jackson, & Buning, 2011). Fans are people who have an affection for their club and mind about what happens to their team on the field. And regardless of the result, they are willing to commit their time to the visualization of its matches and that is an activity they enjoy (van Driel et al., 2019).

But fan loyalty is not that simple or safe. Probably influenced by some of the previous theories – as their essay correctly pointed out how football is a priority for many - Parker and Stuart (1997) assumed that fans were unconditionally loyal to their club. Indeed, for many decades, this conjecture of an irrational commitment and passion with no parallel was admitted by scholars (Smith & Stewart, 2010). However, Tapp and Clowes (2002) noticed a much more elaborate scenario in regard to fan loyalty and, since then, other studies reinforced this idea of a much more complex picture.

Tamir (2020) advocated that sports fandom is not a one-way progression and that, even the most committed fans suffer oscillations in the ferocity of their loyalty. Giulianotti (2005) championed that, although committed supporters exist, commodification intensified the existence of less-committed fans and even “bandwagon jumpers” – fans who frequently switch sides. Fujak et al. (2018) argued that the rate of loyal buying within sports is not significantly different from the traditional sectors, on the same line as Sharp, Wright, and Goodhardt (2002). And multiple other experts revealed fluctuations in the intensity of consumption among football fans, disproving the initial assumptions concerning the topic, and presenting evidence that many supporters are casual in their loyalty (Pick & Gillett, 2019; Tapp, 2004).

### 1.3.SEGMENTATION OF FOOTBALL FANS

As seen, fans are not a homogenous group. Not all consumers are even at the level of passion or fanaticism. Not all of them are completely loyal or use their team to confirm their personal identity (Stewart, Smith, & Nicholson, 2003). Not all of them exhibit their fanship in the same way (van Driel et al., 2019). And the evolution of sports throughout the years – namely football – enhances new habits and models for consumption (Gantz & Lewis, 2014). This opened the space for academic research in regard to the subject of fan segmentation and raised the need of sports marketers to understand this significant constituent of their marketing planning processes. In fact, the development of an

understanding in respect to sports fans' behaviors, motivations and affections towards their team portrays one of the most interesting ongoing threads of investigation within sports media literature (Gantz, 2011).

For several decades now, scholars have proposed to segment sports fans by strength of loyalty onto their club (Billings, Butterworth, & Turman, 2017). With respect to football fans, the frameworks appraised as the most relevant among the literature are considered in the following paragraphs.

The first resulted from Taylor (1971) and Critcher (1979). Their papers identified three segments of soccer fans: Members; Customers and Consumers. On the top were represented the supporters with high sentiments of responsibility upon their team and a feeling of being club representatives. On the bottom, the ones who chose their team because of perceived social gains.

After the Hillsborough disaster, King (1997) affirmed that events like this led to a segmentation that could be divided into two groups: Lads and New consumers. The first segment was composed of people with wisdom on the club's history and will to participate in the matchday rituals. The second one was composed of individuals that attended matches to gain social acceptance and were used to buy a lot of team merchandise, but tended to avoid the matchday ceremonies due to lack of knowledge.

The next segmentation model was proposed in Giulianotti (2002), in which football fans were divided into four distinct segments: Supporters; Followers; Fans and Flaneurs. According to this author, individuals with high levels of attitudinal and behavioral loyalty towards their team still existed (supporters). But the commercialization of football and the increasing preponderance of the internet led to a big turning to the Fan and Flaneur groups. Giulianotti (2002) claimed that Fans choice of favorite team was due to the signing of star players, and that their love was shown through the purchasing of club apparel rather than game tickets. As for the Flaneurs, their support was displayed by watching matches on the TV and interacting online. According to Pick and Gillett (2019), Giulianotti's paper was notable as it was the first one to consider the digital channels, but lacked empirical grounding.

In the same year, Tapp and Clowes (2002) suggested another framework, focused on England's top division, where fans were separated into three different categories: Fanatics; Regulars and Casuals. This study was the first one that also tried to segment football fans according to their customer value.

The previous work was renewed in Tapp (2004). Although up in years, this study is still considered by many the most comprehensible so far (Pick & Gillett, 2019; Harris & Ogbonna, 2008). Tapp (2004) proposed a segmentation based on four groups: Fanatics; Repertoires; Committed Casuals and Carefree

Casuals. In a study that also went deep in regard to the drivers of loyalty, presenting a strong data-driven conceptualization of them, the author stated that Fanatics considered their fanship as part of their self-image and were highly committed to the team. Repertoire fans were a group especially passionate about football, so they also enjoyed attending matches that did not include their preferred team. Finally, the big distinction between the two types of Casual Fans was related to attitudinal and behavioral loyalty, where Committed Casuals were high on the first and low on the second, while Carefree Casuals low on both.

Another framework resulted from Harris and Ogbonna (2008). The scholars proposed to fragment football supporters into five tiers: Die-Hard Fanatics; Club-Connected Supporters; Leisure Switchers; Old-Timers; Social Fans and Armchair Supporters. This paper, focused on the dynamics underlying service-firm customer relationships, capitalized insights from the English Premier League to distinguish individuals who did not miss a single home match, all the way to people with almost no intimacy and interaction with their club.

The latest segmentation framework proposal was written in the work of Pick and Gillett (2019). Inspired by Tapp and Clowes (2002) plus Tapp (2004), this study was applied to the English lower divisions and advanced with five different types of fans: True Fanatics; Enthusiasts; Regulars; Committed Casuals and Carefree Casuals. The main finding of this paper reported to the identification of an Enthusiast type of fan. According to Pick & Gillett (2019), the

addition of this group was justified on the fact that, among the fans with season tickets (Fanatics), a considerable percentage didn't attend all the away matches.

In Table 1, it is possible to observe a summary of all these mentioned segments converged:

Taylor (1971) & Crichter (1978)	King (1997)	Giulianotti (2002)	Tapp & Clowes (2002)	Tapp (2004)	Harris & Ogbonna (2008)	Pick & Gillet (2019)
Member	Lad	Supporter	Fanatic	Fanatic	Die-Hard Fanatics	True Fanatics
					Club-Connected Supporters	Enthusiasts
Customer		Follower	Regular	Repertoire	Old-Timers	Regulars
Consumer	New Consumer	Fan	Casual	Committed Casual	Leisure Switchers	Committed Casuals
		Flaneur		Carefree Casual	Social Fans	Carefree Casuals
				Armchair Supporters		

**Table 1 - Summary of mentioned segments converged.**

As one of the most entertaining literature topics of research (Gantz, 2011), other studies regarding sports fans' behaviors and even other segmentation proposals could be referenced. For example, Sebastian and Bristow (2000) presented the "Fair-weather" and "Die-hard" division of sports consumers. Stewart et al. (2003) distinguished sports consumers into three types: the fans with an "emotional connection to the team"; the ones focused on

the “excitement and entertainment of the big experience” and the ones moved by the “social interaction and entertainment” that matchday enhances. And Wann et al., (2003) alerted for the extension of the list of similar studies, making clear that research in the area is vast.

Although more rarely, segmenting fans of other European countries outside of England was already attempted, for example in Germany (Kaiser et al., 2019). In France, Bouchet et al., (2011) identified the “Aesthete”, “Interactive”, “Supporter” and “Opportunist” sports spectator typologies, in an investigation developed in lower tournaments. Even in Portugal, Lopes (2017) analyzed S.L. Benfica’s fans and developed an original fan typology based on their relationship with the team. The author, inspired in Hunt et al. (1999) and Mahony, Madrigal, and Howard (2000), identified four distinct types of supporters: “Casual”, “Rational”, “Highly ingrained” and “Fanatic”.

Nonetheless, Pick and Gillett (2019) called for further research on the topic of fan segmentation, namely on national contexts with fewer investigation made. The basis for this call is sustained on the literature’s deep focus on the English Premier League, a very particular context in terms of popularity and money involved, that hinders the extraction of applicable results to other realities. Moreover, Pick and Gillett (2019) argued that many papers offer extremely particular, very wide, or quite simplistic conclusions, which makes it harder to extrapolate meaningful results from them. In addition to that, the

number of years of the majority of the studies - and how the society and the economy of football have changed since those were published - has also been referred to as an argument.

On a similar line, Stewart et al. (2003) alerted for the inexistence of an archetypal segmentation model of sports consumers. In this paper previously quoted, where active and passive fans are analyzed, the scholars suggested that models have to be tactically selected or recreated according to the intentions of the user. In accordance with Stewart et al. (2003), this happens due to the heterogeneity of the consumption of sports. It is also argued that factors like the culture, the economy and the relationship formation between club and supporter have been undervalued. Therefore, more understanding is needed in regard to these components and similarities, such as game attendance patterns and other drivers of identity or commitment.

#### 1.4. DIFFERENTIATING FACTORS

In line with the preceding authors that pointed dissimilarities between sports and mainstream businesses, Tapp (2004) underlined the distinctiveness between the sports product and the traditional sectors regarding the reasons for customer loyalty. The author claimed that, rather than common factors like

service delivery and product satisfaction, supporter's fidelity is very much linked to demography and to several behavioral and attitudinal factors.

In fact, soccer fandom is complex and can be impacted by multiple elements (Porat, 2010). According to Tinson, Sinclair and Kolyperas (2017), sports fanhood is formed as a conjuncture of individual, psychological and experiential factors. The social-cultural determinant is also relevant to be stressed (Spaaij & Anderson, 2010).

Measuring supporter's loyalty can be done both directly and indirectly. Direct measures frequently include instruments constructed for the purpose, such as the one suggested in Mahony et al. (2000). The use of indirect measures is also frequent in the literature.

Tapp (2004) stated that segmenting football fans according to their level of loyalty is possible by analyzing behavioral characteristics. To come up with several of the previous framework proposals, scholars were required - from the handful of fandom attributes that have been explored in the literature - to decide which elements they would focus on, in order to identify patterns and investigate differences that ultimately would lead to their multiple segments. Whether in terms of what variables were chosen, whether on how relevant each factor was to differentiate each segment, similar and different approaches, as well as identical and contradictory results, were possible to observe among academics.

It is important to highlight that, throughout the years, different types of factors were dealt with. As seen before, the behavioral dimension of loyalty is accompanied by an attitudinal one (Mahony et al., 2000). To understand this better, the example of the frequency of attendance is given. Frequency of attendance is a consumption experience component with vast literature. Along with others (such as TV viewing and merchandise purchases) studying attendance data can provide relevant insights in regard to the level of commitment of a supporter. But research regarding the drivers of loyalty or the possible psychological reasons behind this differentiating habit is also possible to observe and, needless to say, of immense relevance and good use to sports marketers.

Quoting Mahony et al. (2000) “Although repeat attendance may be the most evident manifestation of a person's attachment to a team, this strictly behavioral indicator ignores the underlying psychological processes explaining why some people attend more games over time. In fact, research has shown attendance alone is a poor measure of loyalty”. Fans' loyalty is based on habits and moved by trust or convenience (Pick & Gillett, 2019), therefore narrowing the studies to behavioral measures only, would be insufficient to fully identify the reasons behind fans' purchases (Backman & Crompton, 1991). Likewise, Pick and Gillett (2019) affirmed that both fans' attitudes and motives, along with the way those are expressed through consumption, are particularly interesting to analyze.

Be that as it may, associating sentiments with actions is hard. For instance, a typical but complex fandom element of study is **self-perceived loyalty**. Tapp (2004) stated that attitudes may not be reflected in behavior, demonstrating differences between stated opinion and actions, as many individuals who consider themselves highly loyal display less loyal behaviors. This was particularly notorious in the “Committed Casuals” segment of Tapp (2004) and could also be applied to the “Old Timers” group in Harris and Ogbonna (2008).

Nonetheless, Pick and Gillett (2019) found the high belief of being loyal to a club one of the strongest indicators of supporter devotion, aligned with Giulianotti (2002). And Mahony et al. (2000) made reference to numerous studies that indicated that highly connected consumers are much more likely to repurchase a product or service. It could be said that, although not all the individuals that appraise themselves as faithful match their words with their actions, there is consensus that highly loyal behaviors are exclusive of highly connected fans.

In regard to **match attendance patterns**, the fact that season and matchday tickets compose a crucial ingredient for every club’s income makes it clear why this metric has been, for long, one of the most studied ones. Also, assuming that numerous and passionate support contributes to the brand image and reputation of a team and helps it achieve better results and league positions

– that often lead to bigger financial compensations – explains why away attendance shouldn't be forgotten either.

About home attendance, quite unanimously studies pointed that the most loyal fans are the ones that attend all home matches or purchase a season ticket (Pick & Gillett, 2019), while the other supporters only go to the stadium frequently, rarely or even never (Harris & Ogbonna, 2008). As Giulianotti (2002) noted, commodification and technological advances raised the prevalence of these second groups, by making physical attendance less necessary (Gantz & Lewis, 2014).

As for the away attendance, less investigation has been made, but there is consensus that this is almost an exclusive type of activity performed by the most loyal groups. Among them, Pick and Gillett (2019) was responsible for the most detailed division so far. These authors stated “True Fanatics” were present in all the away days, “Enthusiasts” in 10 to 18 (in the context of England's lower divisions), “Regulars” in 5 to 9 and “Casuals” in less than 5 or none.

It is also important to note that there is evidence of attendance declines and season ticket dropouts, even among the most fanatical supporters (Tapp, 2004). There are reports of people who avoid matches to prevent themselves from stress or because they irrationally believe their presence will negatively

contribute to the game outcome (Tamir, 2019a). But assuming this is rare and that, quite the majority of people think actually the opposite – that being present will help the team win (Moskowitz & Wertheim, 2011) - it is relevant to understand what influences these distinct attendance rates among supporters.

As seen, lack of convenience is a strong absence factor (Gantz & Lewis, 2014; Giulianotti, 2002). Even though clubs make huge investments in infrastructure to try to minimize possible matchday barriers such as bad weather and traffic, as well as to enhance the presential experience, it is impossible to compete - regarding comfort - with the possibility of watching the same match at the distance of a click and a few seconds. For the most fanatical supporters, this is actually something that boosts their fanaticism, as being present at all times and not giving in to easiness is what proves that they are truly loyal. In accordance with Giulianotti (2005), they consider this to “differentiate themselves strongly from arm-chair fans and from glory hunters or bandwagon jumpers who conditionally follow sides”.

Nonetheless, it is comprehensible that due to professional or familiar reasons, football stops being a priority for many, at least momentarily (Tamir, 2020). And for these individuals, the lack of time or the geographical distance – for example, in the case of a supporter that accepted a job offer abroad – forces game attendance to be only an exceptional activity.

Speaking of geographical distance, Tapp (2004) found the “**community effect**” to have an impact on the attitudinal loyalty of the individuals. This means that a strong bond between fan and club happens when the team is representative of the city or region the supporter feels part of. On the contrary, a fan that has no link to the city of the club he supports, not only takes more time to get to the stadium but likely has fewer ties and is not as fanatical as other fellows.

As for someone that moved recently to a new city, this subject might develop affection for the region and its club(s), but that will likely take time due to the “longevity effect” (Bristow & Sebastian, 2001). The “**longevity effect**”, defended by Bristow and Sebastian (2001), claims that fans with a long-duration relationship with their team tend to have a stronger connection with their club. This happens due to the number of life memories collected through the club, that bring to the supporter a sentiment of acknowledgment and – primarily - nostalgia, as these moments send them to the past and allow them to relieve, in many cases, happy childhood experiences. Tapp (2004) also suggested this happens because older fans live settled lives and consent to some kind of auto-repurchase. On a similar line, Pick and Gillett (2019) advocated that the percentage of life supporting a club is an effective additional measuring component of fans' commitment.

Another interesting element of analysis is **familiar history**. Tapp (2004) supported that having a familiar history of supporting a club has a connection with the loyalty towards it. Despite a few exceptional cases, the literature agrees with the theory that the majority of sports fans choose their football club at an early stage of life (Tamir, 2020). Through primary socialization agents, such as family and friends, or secondary socialization agents, such as media and social networks, children's choice and level of commitment towards sports teams is influenced and generally has an impact on the rest of their lives (Tamir, 2020).

According to Abosag et al. (2012), the club that an individual supports is often something inherited from the previous generation. Over conversations, acting as a role model and by watching live events or broadcasts together, the father is the figure who predominantly promotes a kid's initial contact with a team, especially if the child is a boy (Spaaij & Anderson, 2010). Sports are perceived as an enormous opportunity for fathers and sons to develop a special bond. And failing to introduce the infant into the world of sports and, namely, the family's team, is something that fathers threaten will damage their own masculine image (Tamir, 2019b), so dads worry about this even before the kids birth, regularly having "their task" into account when they decide the colors of the children's room or first clothes (Tamir, 2020).

For the parents – and sometimes grandparents – the new kid leads them to reconquer part of the love for the club, as they recall their childhood passion

and are willing to make more sacrifices to perpetuate the family heritage (Tamir, 2020). For the infant, this often translates into higher levels of support as they see their fanaticism as a way of pursuing their father's fandom targets (Spaaij & Anderson, 2010). Nonetheless, literature is not unanimous in regard to the importance of family history to fans' devotion. According to Tapp (2004), the "childhood effect" appears to have a clear impact on supporters' loyalty, as claimed by Giulianotti (2002). However, Pick and Gillett (2019) results suggest that family history might be less important than expected, not being preponderant in the purchase of season and away tickets.

In the opinion of several scholars, fans' loyalty is also influenced by other factors, with many making references to demographic indicators (Marinheira & Melo, 2015). In a way, age and geography were already touched upon. Still, other relevant ones such as gender, ethnicity and income, are yet to be scrutinized.

Starting with **gender**, women sports fans had recently a tremendous growth in terms of presence and visibility (Sveinson, Hoeber, & Toffoletti, 2019). On what Pope (2017) called the "feminization" of football, the sport is seeing a massive entrance of new female fans in recent years. However, sports fandom is still deeply connected to men and masculinity (Sveinson et al., 2019), which creates in women a feeling of discomfort, as they frequently perceive that they are valued and treated in a different manner in this context (Hoeber & Kerwin,

2013). This way, although women represent an enormous segment and a tremendous potential source of income, clubs still tend to be strongly constituted by men, especially among the most fanatical groups (Tamir, 2020). As for the female fans that attend matches regularly, they generally reflect the ones that successfully adapted to the traditional rituals of male fandom (Sveinson et al., 2019).

In regard to **ethnicity**, the ethnic composition of the majority of football stands also witnessed a revolution, with diversity being now much more common. Cashmore and Dixon (2016) stated that soccer suffered a big transformation and changed from a white man working-class sport to a multilingual and multiethnic phenomenon. Notwithstanding, there are still reports of ethnic minorities – for example, the African and Asian communities in the European panorama - that avoid match attendance due to fear of suffering hostile actions (Lawrence & Davis, 2019). Unfortunately, although effective efforts are being made by sportive organizations to reduce all types of violence in the sports field (Tamir, 2020), racism is still a reality and is yet impacting the number of spectators and the way many want to be involved at the game.

As for **income**, it is interesting to remember that the roots of football started with the working class (Madison, 2019). However, over time and through commercialism (Ben-Porat, 2009) and globalization (Barrinha & Nunes, 2004), the sport suffered modifications and started attracting the wealthier. According

to Tapp (2004), although results suggest that income is not *per se* a driver of loyalty, it can influence as an enabler. There is multiple evidence that ticket prices can have a negative impact on game attendance (Dutta, 2019) and governments are setting task-forces, as they know the disadvantaged are the ones that get more affected or even excluded by this (Tapp, 2004). Among the most fanatical sectors, Tapp (2004) observed that the majority of the individuals that did not renew their season tickets agreed they were going through hard times and that the money invested on the season ticket was harder to justify.

Given the fact that even satisfied customers may leave, it could be argued that satisfaction appears to have little link to loyalty. This is, however, quite questionable when assuming that satisfaction is connected with team performance and that fans are happier when their team performance is better. For a start, while the majority of the season ticket dropouts were caused by familiar, professional, or financial reasons, Tapp (2004) also reported some descent in attendance after relegation, even among the most fanatical supporters. This is in line with what was observed Richardson and O'Dwyer (2003), that added that fans become more vocal when the team is promoted and less vocal when the team is relegated.

For instance, Giulianotti (2002) supported that, the less loyal a supporter is, the higher the team's **promotions and relegations** impact the fluctuation of

his physical attendance rate. On the other hand, Pick and Gillett (2019) found no significant relationship between opinion on team performance and season ticket fluctuance after promotion or relegation. These authors also argued that the level of perceived loyalty didn't appear to have a particular influence on the behavior following a promotion or relegation. But what multiple decades of studies tend, at least, to confirm, is that the crowd size is higher when a team is promoted and smaller when a team is relegated (Tapp, 2004).

Tapp (2004) also asserted that a current bad league position can negatively impact attendance. However, this may not be undisputed, as some studies point that the number of tickets sold is higher when the standings have a bigger chance of suffering alterations, even in a struggle to escape from relegation (Neale, 1964). It seems reasonable to assume that fans rather watch a game with championship implications than with no importance to the standings. Also, it seems comprehensible to admit that match relevancy is an important factor in regard to the matchday crowd sizes and supporters' attendance – namely the less regular. Mahony et al. (2000) pointed the opponent as an element with influence on the relevancy of a match. In the case of football, where teams usually play multiple domestic or even international competitions yearly, perhaps the same could also be applied to the reputation of the competition.

Furthermore, match relevancy might not be the only factor impacting attendance rates when the team is in a low-performance momentum. Although

Tapp (2004) considers that these occurrences are exceptions, Bristow and Sebastian (2001) make reference to some supporters that actually increase their presence in this type of moment, in a behavior associated with a phenomenon of loyalty frequently described as “backing the underdog”.

According to Bristow and Sebastian (2001), “underdog supporters” are fans that tend to have lower “product performance” expectations, as they are used to support unsuccessful clubs. But more than that, these are supporters that are attracted to being loyal against the odds. By supporting a team that has little chance of success, these fans feel that they belong to something special, impossible for a stranger or a “glory fan” to comprehend. Although they do want their team to win, Bristow and Sebastian (2001) added that these fans’ connection to the team and their felt sentiment of unique love becomes even stronger during the bad moments and after weak performances. On the contrary, the club’s success can actually lead them to some bitterness, as they see more casual fans gaining preponderance.

Pick and Gillett (2019) supported that lower league clubs have a bigger predominance of hardcore fans, in comparison to the teams in the first division. It seems reasonable to admit that, even among the clubs in the top division, a higher percentage of fanatical supporters is observable between the clubs with less success. This can be explained by the fact that these teams, not only require

bigger emotional efforts but are less attractive to “glory” supporters (Kuper & Szymanski, 2012).

Glory fans are supporters that are attracted to a team because of its success and achievements. In a phenomenon known as BIRGing – Basking in Reflected Glory - supporters associate with these clubs as they see in them a representation of themselves (Cialdini et al., 1976). Even though “backing the underdog” or “basking in team’s glory” are driven by two opposites – success and unsuccess – some links can be found between both: the two are a way that fans use to symbolize themselves, the two are the way fans want to be perceived by the others (Tapp, 2004). According to Tapp (2004), there is a strong connection between loyalty and both the self-image and social self-image - strongly evidenced in these two previously detailed phenomenon - with self-image as a loyal supporter leading to high levels of behavioral loyalty, and with the ones that utilize soccer to foment their social self-image tending to be more casual fans.

It is important to stress the big contribution of the social dimension to fandom. In addition to the family - a primary socialization agent – and the role of social self-image, both touched upon, the influence of friends and media also play a big role in fans' passions, mostly during adolescence (Tamir, 2020). At this age, the social functions of sports become paramount (Brown, Billings, & Ruibley, 2012), as fans achieve their independence and are allowed to travel with their

friends and without their parents, which rises their chances of attendance. Furthermore, social sharing enriches every sportive experience (van Driel et al., 2019).

Matches are the core product every club has to offer to its fans. After looking over the literature concerning event attendance patterns and investigating numerous factors with possible implications in the attitudinal loyalty and attendance rates of the supporters, three elements of study on the topic of the matches are left to be scrutinized.

Starting with the **“awareness of the following match”**, studies quite unanimously revealed that the supporters with the highest levels of loyalty are the ones that tend to be more aware of their club’s next match. This is supported by Giulianotti (2002), as well as Pick and Gillett (2019), with these last authors concluding that knowing details regarding the following fixture of the club is a good indicator of fans' loyalty towards their team. While in Tapp (2004), the same findings were reached with respect to the most fanatical supporters, but it is relevant to highlight the tendency of the “Committed Casuals” to also know details about the next match, displaying that not all fans with less loyal behaviors are unaware of them – although, as seen, this segment is constituted by supporters with high attitudinal loyalty.

Concerning the “**choice of activity on matchday**”, in terms of how determined fans are to attend the team’s match, findings also considered this factor to be a good differentiator on the subject of supporter’s loyalty. According to several authors, the most fanatical fans contemplate matchday physical attendance as a definite choice, in contrast to the most casual fans, that look at it only as a possible activity among a wide range of others to do on a weekend (Harris & Ogbonna, 2008; Tapp, 2004; Tapp & Clowes, 2002; Giulianotti, 2002). Nonetheless, Pick and Gillett (2019) challenged this theory, arguing that the relationship of this component with loyalty may not be as effective and significant as it seems.

A closing and interesting element of study in regard to the matches is the presence in events that do not involve the fan’s favorite team, that is to say, the “**attendance of competitors’ matches**”. On the same line as traditional businesses, football brands compete with each other for the time and money of their consumers. Also, as seen, brand loyalty is very much related with the behavior of an individual towards a brand, in comparison to its market competitors (Aldaihani & Ali, 2019; Liu, 2007; Jacoby & Kyner, 1973), which makes this component a logical one for investigation.

According to a vast part of the literature, a considerable number of supporters watch live matches of other teams, especially among the least loyal segments (Harris & Ogbonna, 2008; Giulianotti, 2002). Tapp (2004) agreed with

this theory but added that even among the fans that are a regular presence on the preferred team matches, many are susceptible to do this too. According to this author, one of the main differences between the “Fanatics” and “Repertoire fans” – the two most loyal segments – is that, while the most fanatical supporters are more devoted to their club and less to football, the “Repertoires” have their favorite team but are passionate about the sport in general, attending other games, principally when their preferred team is playing away. Anyhow, the results on Tapp and Clowes (2002), as well as Pick and Gillett (2019), displayed that even the most loyal supporters attend other teams' fixtures. Given this, Pick and Gillett (2019) argued that watching other clubs has little relationship with loyalty.

It is relevant to note that attending other team's matches is very different from “brand switching”, given that fans continue to have their favorite club. It is also important to understand that loyalty does not necessarily require exclusive consumption (Fujak et al., 2018). However, these results are intriguing, as they collide with the idea of tribalism that many see as pivotal in football fandom. According to Lopes (2017), football fan groups have similar characteristics to tribes. Tribes are networks of heterogenous people who are connected through a common passion or emotion (Cova & Cova, 2002). These clans display a sense of identification, group narcissism and religiosity, where the community is always the main focus. In accordance with Cova and Cova (2002), in the context

of marketing, the members of a tribe are more than simply consumers, but advocates of a brand.

While having less effect on the attitude of the casual fans, that perceive soccer as entertainment, scholars consider that tribalism is what leads the most passionate fans to increase even more their fanaticism in the presence of local rivalries (Tapp, 2004). Football rivalries seem to be very much related to this tribalism phenomenon and also show signs of connection with loyalty, with the fans' competitive spirit becoming even more intense against local rivals. For instance, fanatical supporters not only wear clothes with their team's colors frequently, but they also avoid using the ones of the rivals (Porat, 2012; Giulianotti, 2002), which could be presumed to be complemented by the avoidance of attending those teams games. Actually, when previously observed that the opponent seems to have influence in the relevancy of a match (Mahony et al., 2000) – and, consequently, on the attendance rates - not only the reputation of this opponent could be considered, but if there's a local and/or historical rivalry with it as well. Moreover, in regard to the analyzed phenomenon of “BIRGing” and “backing the underdog”, perhaps the (un)success of the club might be perceived in comparison to its biggest rivals and not only on a national/international level.

On a different note, it is also important to understand what scholars found in regard to the **consumption of merchandise**. Although previous research has

deeply focused on attendance data, the purchase of merchandise – among other behaviors - is an expression of fan loyalty, another possible way to measure it (Mahony et al., 2000) and a significant source of income to the majority of the clubs as well. Pick and Gillett (2019) stated that there seems to be no significant connection between this element of study and fan loyalty, but this contradicts the results of other papers. According to Tapp (2004), the most fanatical supporters are enthusiastic collectors of memorabilia, especially old kits, that demonstrate authenticity and are associated with special memories or events. This author also added that these products work as a great reminder of loyal fans' sense of self. On the same line, when segmenting fans according to their financial value, Tapp and Clowes (2002) found a significant correlation between fans' level of loyalty and money spent on merchandise.

Nonetheless, the literature is not unanimous concerning this variable and its relationship with loyalty. Looking back at Giulianotti (2002), the “Fan” segment had a tendency to exhibit loyalty through the consumption of merchandise, rather than game tickets. At the same time, “Die-hard Fanatics” and “Old-timers”, two considerably loyal segments identified by Harris and Ogbonna (2008), appraised the wearing of team outfits as “nongenuine” and didn't feel the necessity to buy their clubs' merchandise, in order to consider themselves loyal to it.

## 2. BOAVISTA FC

Boavista FC is a Portuguese multi-sports club, based in the zone of Boavista, situated on the western side of the city of Porto. The team currently plays at Estádio do Bessa Sec.XXI, a stadium with a capacity of around 30.000 seats, renovated in 2003 to host two games of the Euro 2004, disputed in Portugal.

The club was founded on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August of 1903 by Harry and Dick Lowe - two English Brothers - and was originally called *The Boavista Footballers*. During the early years, a rupture occurred between the British and the locals, as the first refused to play on Sundays due to religious commitments, and the latter could only play on that day of the week due to work reasons. In 1910, with the locals emerging victorious from this issue, the current name was adopted, and the demographics of the club were highly modified.

Boavista FC is considered to be one of the most eclectic clubs of Portugal, gathering hundreds of youngsters, athletes and titles among over 30 sportive modalities. Nonetheless, football is undoubtedly the sport of biggest investment and appeal within the country and the club.

In 1933, Artur Oliveira Valença felt inspired during a trip to France and decided that the club would start using chequered black and white shirts. This tradition is maintained nowadays, with Boavista FC being considered to have one of the most peculiar uniforms of worldwide football, while its players and supporters are often named the “chequered ones” because of that.

The athletes of Boavista and the club itself are also frequently referred to as the “Black Panthers” and the mascot of the club is a panther. This was due to a tradition started in the 80’s decade, where fans would throw a plush panther to the field and Alfredo – a legendary goalkeeper of the team – would return it to the stands. This is also the reason why the Ultras group of Boavista FC is called “Black Panthers”.

After several decades competing between the first and the third division, in 1974/1975 – following two consecutive promotions – the club finished fourth in the league and won their first-ever Portuguese Cup. Since then, the club consolidated itself as one of the best in the country – Boavista FC is, by far, the fourth most titled club of Portugal’s modern football - winning four more Portuguese Cups and three Portuguese Super Cups.

In 2001, the club won their first and only National Championship, becoming the first champion of the millennium and one of the five teams to ever

win the Portuguese League. Throughout its history, Boavista FC also played 100 matches in the European competitions, 24 of them in the Champions League and 2 of them in the 2002/2003 UEFA Cup semi-finals.

In 2008, on the sequence of a corruption scandal, Boavista FC was sentenced to relegation. A year later, the club was relegated again, withdrawing from the second division due to financial problems. After a six-year absence and a long juridical battle, in the 2014/2015 season, the club was titled the right to return to the first division, where it remains at the moment of this study.

Boavista FC is known for having a big rivalry with the so-called “Big Three”: SL Benfica, Sporting CP and FC Porto, namely with the last one, as their city neighbors. Boavista FC supporters usually make allusion to the fact that although smaller in dimension and resources, they already managed to conquer many victories and titles against them, as well as to their higher dedication to the club. Moreover, Boavista FC also holds a great rivalry with SC Braga, Vitória SC and FC Belenenses. In these cases, Boavista FC fans frequently tease the opponents by making reference to the much bigger amount of trophies.

In December 2019, after a membership renumbering, Boavista FC revealed that the club had 9656 effective members. In the 2018/2019 season, the last completed one with fans in the stands – before the Covid-19 pandemic



forced worldwide football to play games behind closed doors – Boavista FC ended the competition with an average home game attendance of 8155, the sixth biggest in Liga NOS. The club is also known for having strong presential support when playing away.

### **3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND ANALYSIS MODEL**

#### **3.1. INVESTIGATION OBJECTIVES**

In order to guide this investigation, objectives were delineated to carry out. This said, the starting question of the present investigation was “What are Boavista FC’s football fan segments?” and examining the football fan segments existent in Boavista FC, considering their level of loyalty, was outlined as the general objective of this study. The deconstruction of this general goal resulted in the following specific objectives: 1) developing a framework of the different football fan segments in Boavista FC; 2) exploring the size of the segments in the club; 3) identifying the main variables for measuring loyalty, in the context of Boavista FC.

#### **3.2. INVESTIGATION HYPOTHESIS**

Research hypotheses aim to expose the relationships that are obtained between the different variables in study (Martin & Bridgmon, 2012). In order to answer the objectives proposed for this paper, 12 hypotheses were formulated. Based on the previously presented literature, these hypotheses will be detailed next:

**H1:** Fans who attend all home matches also attend all away games.

**H2:** Fans who attend all home matches are men.

**H3:** Fans who attend all home matches are of the ethnic majority in Portugal.

**H4:** Fans who attend all home matches are wealthier.

**H5:** When Boavista FC was promoted in 2014, fans who supported the club for more than 80% of their lifetime kept the same attendance rate.

**H6:** When Boavista FC was relegated in 2008, fans with a familiar history of supporting the club kept the same or increased their attendance rate.

**H7:** If Boavista FC is relegated, fans who have a connection with the city of Porto will keep the same or increase their attendance rate.

**H8:** Fans who attend all home matches never attend other teams' games.

**H9:** Fans who attend all home matches buy merchandise of the club at least once a month.

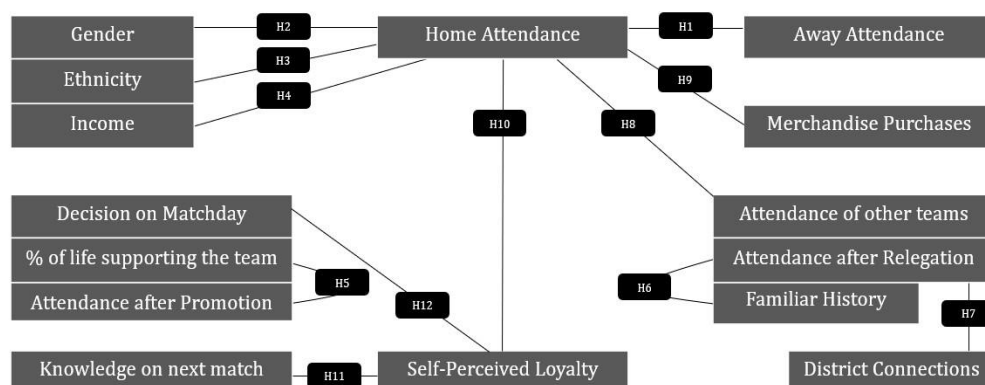
**H10:** Fans who strongly agree they are loyal supporters of Boavista FC attend all home matches.

**H11:** Fans who strongly agree they are loyal supporters of Boavista FC know the details about the club's next match.

**H12:** Fans who strongly agree they are loyal supporters of Boavista FC consider match attendance a definite choice on a matchday.

### 3.3. ANALYSIS MODEL

The analysis model (Figure 1) presents a guiding scheme with all the hypotheses in study integrated and organized in a logical way, identifying all the aspects that led to the research problem (Martin & Bridgmon, 2012). This model resulted from the knowledge acquired through the scientific papers previously explored in the literature review, outlining the research hypotheses displayed in the previous chapter. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that the decision of what variables should be analyzed and put together, in order to formulate each hypothesis and create this model, was tactically selected. This means that investigating other variables, as well as links between them, can be done and - as will be seen - was also attempted in this paper.



**Figure 1 - Analysis Model of the investigation**



## 4. METHODS

With the objectives of the study theoretically framed and the research hypotheses defined, the methodology of the study will now be indicated. The methodology refers to the way researchers collect, analyze and interpret the data in their studies (Creswell, 2007). Given this, the followed methodological approach will be explained, as well as the process of data collection and analysis. Moreover, the universe and sampling of the paper will also be identified.

### 4.1. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The current study aimed to offer an additional contribution to the literature regarding the phenomenons of fan segmentation and fan loyalty, particularly in the reality of a club such as Boavista FC, by fulfilling the proposed objectives.

In studies similar to this one, scholars chose very different methodological approaches. In this case, it was opted to use a quantitative methodology, that aims to test theories by analyzing connections between variables (Creswell, 2007) and explain phenomenons according to numerical data, mainly through statistics (Yilmaz, 2013).

Given this work's context, this was thought to be the best methodology for the case, since it allows the collection and analysis of multiple responses given by different respondents, to a limited number of questions, facilitating the comparison and aggregation of results (Yilmaz, 2013). Moreover, these respondents very likely have different realities and different perspectives on the topics.

Considering its quantitative method and the fact that similar studies on the topic were already performed, this research was also of the descriptive type. This paper sought to find relationships between the variables under analysis, with the goal of offering new information to an already exploited reality (Hackannson, 2013).

#### 4.2. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection can be divided into two types: primary and secondary data. Primary data is originally collected to respond to a specific goal of an investigation, while secondary data is data collected for a different purpose and reused to answer a new problem (Hox & Boeije, 2005). The first one was considered desirable for this paper.

#### 4.2.1. Questionnaire

In quantitative studies, the questionnaire survey is the data technique usually utilized (Brace, 2004). Taking the investigation objectives into account, this was the case in this paper, in order to collect the intended primary data and test the set of hypotheses previously defined.

As recommended by Selm and Jankowski (2006), the questionnaire was implemented online, which allowed respondents to answer from any geographical area. Moreover, the remote approach also protects the anonymity of the respondents, being argued that it increases the response rate and leads to truthful results (Coomber, 1997), though making it harder to predict the number of replies.

Though existing scales with the purpose of segmenting sports consumers based on loyalty could be of good use - such as the one resultant from Mahony et al. (2000) - it was believed that developing an original questionnaire would be the only way to guarantee the necessary data, considering the different variables being dealt with and the specific context of the club. Nonetheless, its buildout had into account the studies with similar aims as this one, namely the recent one of Pick and Gillett (2019). Google Forms platform was the one chosen to carry it through.

Seen as vital by multiple scholars, the questionnaire was constructed in a way that ensured that the content, format and order of the questions were correctly chosen, so that they would generate valid data (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

In total, this questionnaire was composed of 28 questions and divided into 7 sections (Appendix A). In the first section, a brief introduction was made explaining the purpose of research, as well as setting out the criteria for participation.

The second section had 2 questions in regard to game attendance patterns, the first one dedicated to home attendance while the second one dedicated to away attendance. The fourth section was composed of 3 questions related to attendance following the team's promotion or relegation. The fifth section was shaped by 4 questions associated with the perceptions and attitudes of the fan. In the sixth section, 7 questions were made regarding fan consumption. And finally, the seventh and final section was constituted of 10 questions dedicated to sociodemographic data.

It is also important to highlight the existence of a third section with 2 questions in regard to motives for attendance, only visible to the respondents who didn't answer "all" or "none" in the first question of the second section.

These questions were voluntary, such as one in section 5, five in section 6 and four in section 7. These were not mandatory questions because they were not essential to give an answer to the hypotheses and objectives of the study, but were present in the survey since they could help for a better description of the sample, as well as provide additional insights regarding the studied topics.

#### 4.3. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

After all the data had been collected, it was required the assistance of a data analysis tool. Since a quantitative methodology was followed and because the survey by questionnaire was the used technique of data collection, a decision was made of using the statistical software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) in the IBM 27 version.

In order to test the majority of the proposition hypotheses, crosstabulations were performed and Pearson's Chi-Square was used to explore the relationship between the nominal variables. As for investigating hypotheses 10, 11 and 12, related with "loyalty perception" (a scale variable), One-Way ANOVA was the test applied.

Given the fact it would provide additional insights, but mainly because it was fundamental to develop the segmentation framework and give an answer to the proposed objectives of the study, all the variables investigated were

compared with one another and not just the ones related to the initial hypotheses.

#### 4.4. POPULATION & SAMPLE

Defining the population and the sample is the first step when it comes to collect data through a questionnaire survey to develop a study (Brace, 2004). According to Gil (2008), a population is defined as a set of elements that share certain characteristics in common, while a sample is a subset belonging to the population.

For this investigation, the population of the study included all individuals who identified themselves as supporters of Boavista FC. The club had 9656 effective members, according to the 2019's calculations – the last to date. Nonetheless, restricting this study to members only would have excluded an indeterminable number of individuals that fit perfectly in what was intended for this research.

Given this, having a membership card was seen in this study pretty much the same way as buying a game ticket or a shirt from the club store: you pay for a product, you get certain benefits from that expense. Either way, it wouldn't be

possible to reach everyone in the population, so resorting to a sample was necessary.

To obtain the sample of this paper, judgmental sampling was implemented. This sampling method is a non-probabilistic one, where the sample is selected on the basis of the scholar's knowledge in regard to the area under investigation (Bhave & Sadhwani, 2021). Judgmental sampling was followed by a snowball sampling method as well. This process consists of enlarging a first sample of informants by also including people in the survey designated by these informants. This can then be repeated multiple times, since new respondents chosen by new informants can also be included in the sample (Audemard, 2020).

This said, data was collected between 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The total sample of the investigation was constituted of 586 individuals.



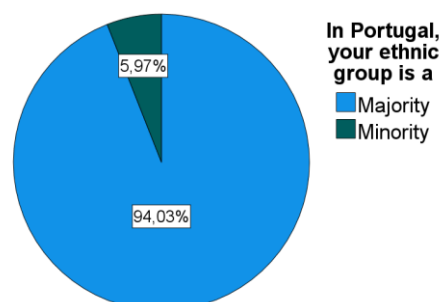
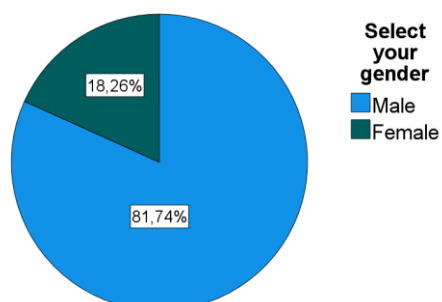
## 5. DATA ANALYSIS

In this part of the study, the data resultant from the questionnaire will be examined. A sample characterization will be done firstly, followed by a synthesis of the results in regard to the analysis of frequencies and the testing of the twelve hypotheses, among other keynotes.

### 5.1. SAMPLE CHARACTERIZATION

As seen previously, our sample was composed of 586 individuals. To get a better description of them, the last section of the implemented questionnaire was related to sociodemographic indicators. Added to a few other questions in the previous sectors of the inquiry, the resultant data from these askings allowed the following characterization of the sample in study, presented in pie-charts to ensure an easy interpretation:

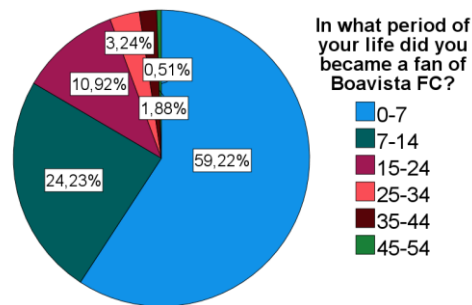
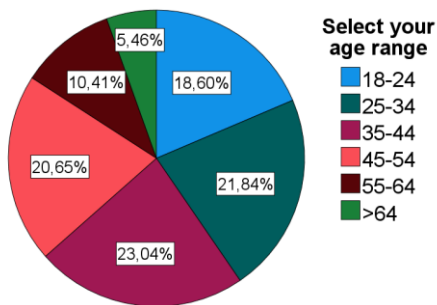
**Graphic 1 - Gender (%)**



**Graphic 2 - Ethnicity (%)**

Graphic 1 exhibits the distribution of male and female that completed the questionnaire, while Graphic 2 indicates the percentage of people that represent the ethnic majority or are part of an ethnic minority in Portugal. One can see that 81,74% of the respondents are male and 18,26% female. Furthermore, 94,03% placed themselves in the major ethnic group in Portugal, with only 5,97% being part of an ethnic minority in the country.

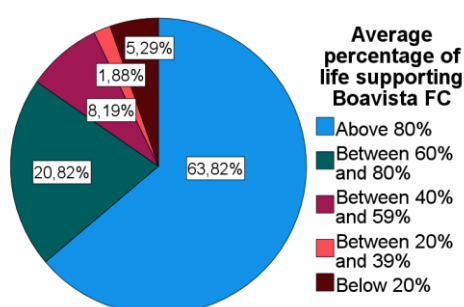
**Graphic 3 - Age range (%)**



**Graphic 4 - Initial moment of fanship (%)**

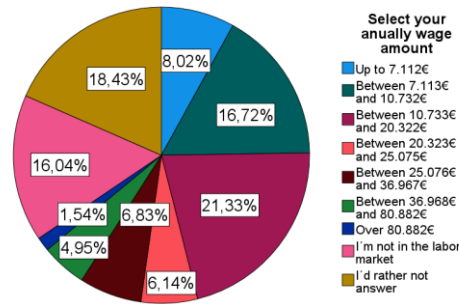
Graphic 3 shows the percentage of people of each age range that answered the questionnaire. It is possible to observe that the majority of the sample was situated in the age range between 35 and 44 years old (23,04%). Nonetheless, the difference was not substantial comparing with the other age groups between 18 and 54. Besides, concerning the two age ranges over 55 years old, they composed less than 16% of the sample, with the age group of “over 64 years old” only constituting 5,5% of the total sum of respondents.

As for Graphic 4, it presents, in percentage, how the fans are distributed in terms of when they started supporting Boavista FC. It was demonstrated that near 60% of the sample became fans of the club within their first 7 years of age. Moreover, 24,23% initiated their fandom period when they were between 7 and 14 years old and 10,92% between 15 and 24, whilst less than 6% of the subjects affirmed they only started supporting the club after their 25 years of existence.



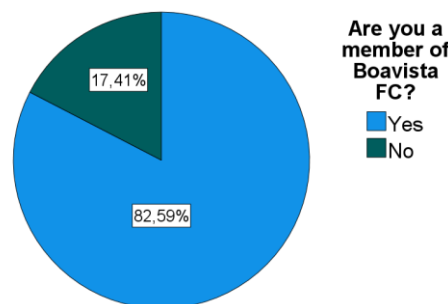
**Graphic 5 - Average percentage of lifetime support (%)**

By asking the respondents their age range and initial moment of fanship, it was also possible – after a few calculations – to get information concerning their average percentage of lifetime supporting Boavista FC. Graphic 5 displays their profile in regard to this variable. It can be observed that over 63% of the individuals likely support the club for more than 80% of their current lifetime, plus 20,82% of the subjects between 60% and 80%. However, these numbers significantly drop - to a total sum of 15,36% - when talking about the 3 groups of fans with the smallest average percentage of lifetime support to the team.



**Graphic 6 - Annual wage amount (%)**

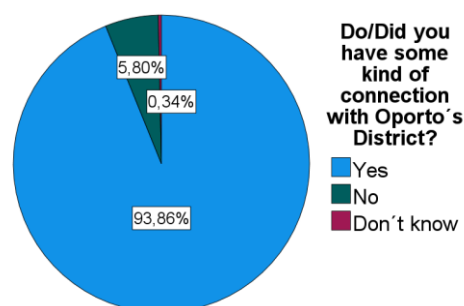
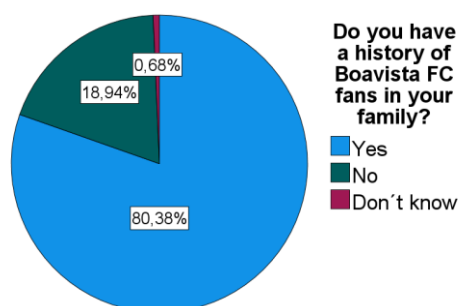
Graphic 6 exhibits how fans are distributed regarding their annual wage amount. It was verified that a small majority (21,33%) of the respondents receive between 10.733€ and 20.322€ per year. It is also important to highlight that 18,43% preferred not to answer this question, while 16,04% are not yet in the labor market. Moreover, 16,72% of the fans reported to receive between 7.113€ and 10.732€, with the brackets between 20.323€ and 80.882€ not differing that much among them, representing around 4% to 7% each. Finally, the wealthiest are represented by 1,54% of the respondents, whilst the group that receives up to 7.112€ accounts for 8,02% of the sample.



**Graphic 7 - Membership (%)**

Graphic 7 relates with the membership – or not – of Boavista FC’s supporters. The graphic demonstrates that 82,59% of the subjects affirmed to be members of the team, in contrast to the 17,41% that stated they weren’t.

**Graphic 8 - Family history of support (%)**



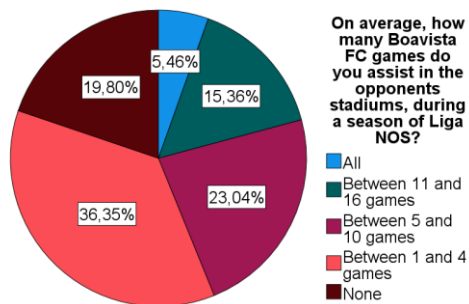
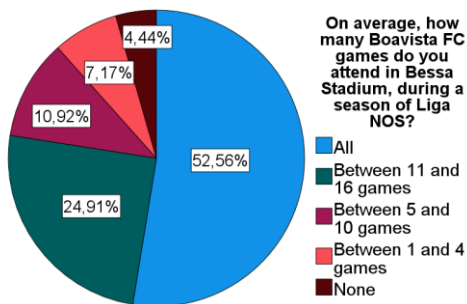
**Graphic 9 - Geographic links with Oporto (%)**

The family history of the respondents, in terms of the presence of relatives that support(ed) Boavista FC, and the connection of the individuals with the District of Oporto, are shown, respectively, in Graphics 8 and 9. It is visible that the big majority of the fans declared to have a family history of support to Boavista FC (80,4%), as well as some kind of link with the District of the club (93,9%).

## 5.2. FREQUENCIES ANALYSIS

A frequencies analysis was also performed in order to better interpret the answers given by the respondents. With the exception of Graphic 15 (a Likert Scale), the results are once again presented in the form of pie charts:

**Graphic 10 - Home attendance (%)**

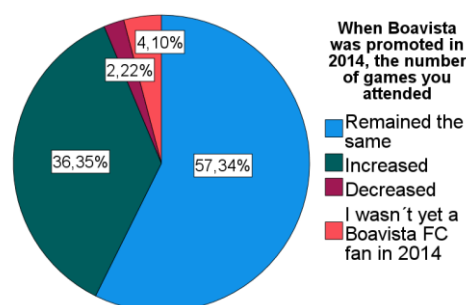
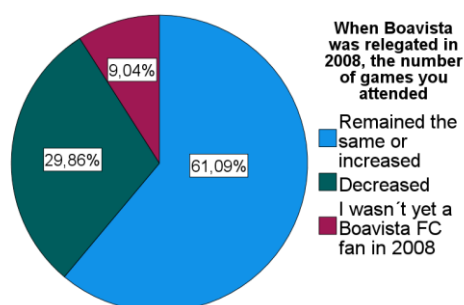


**Graphic 11 - Away attendance (%)**

In regard to Section 2, related to match presence, Graphics 10 and 11 display – respectively – the data about home attendance and away attendance. One can see that a majority of near 53% of the fans affirmed to attend all Boavista FC matches at home, whereas that number of games significantly drops to less than 6% when speaking about away attendance. On the contrary, while less than 5% admitted to never attend home matches, near 20% of the respondents answered “none” when asked the number of games attended away.

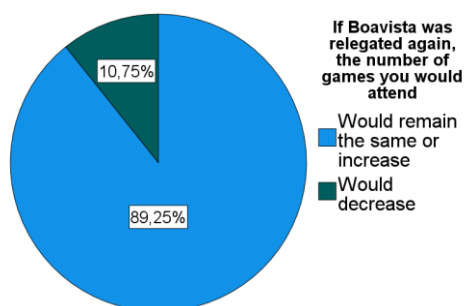
It is possible to observe that the percentages almost invert from Graphic 10 to Graphic 11. Whilst “All” and “Between 11 and 16 games” were the two most selected answers in regard to home presence, these were the least selected choices regarding away attendance. Contrariwise, a majority of 36,35% of the sample declared to be present in 1 to 4 away matches per season, a percent that considerably falls to 7,17% considering the same number of fixtures watched, but at home.

**Graphic 12 - Attendance after relegation (%)**



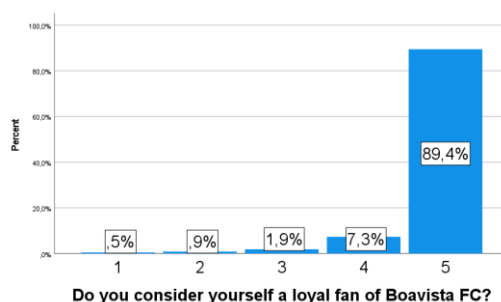
**Graphic 13 - Attendance after promotion (%)**

**Graphic 14 - Attendance in case of relegation (%)**



Graphic 12, Graphic 13 and Graphic 14 exhibit the data resultant from the questions on the fourth section of the inquiry, related to attendance after promotion and relegation. On the left, it is possible to observe that 61,09% of the respondents stated their attendance rate remained the same (or increased) when Boavista FC was relegated in 2008, while near 30% decreased their match presence. The numbers were quite similar on the graphic on the right, where 57,34% admitted to watch the same number of games after the 2014 promotion and 36,35% to increase their attendance after the return of the club to the top division.

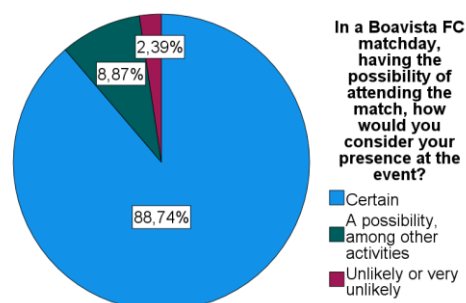
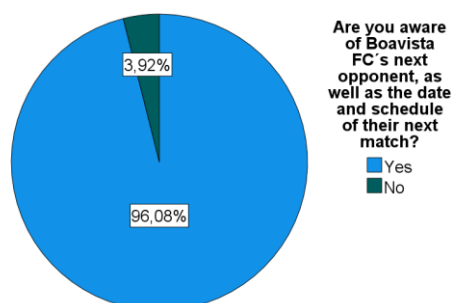
It is also relevant to highlight that 9,04% and 4,10% of the sample weren't yet fans in 2008 and 2014, respectively. Plus, 2,22% of Boavista FC supporters actually decreased their attendance after the promotion to the first division, in 2014. As for Graphic 14, it is visible that 89,25% of the individuals said their attendance would remain the same in case of a new relegation and only 10,75% admitted their presence would diminish. These numbers that emerged were substantially different from the ones of Graphic 12, where – as seen - it was revealed that 2018's fluctuance rate was much bigger and only 61% of the subjects kept the same attendance levels.



**Graphic 15 - Perception of loyalty (%)**

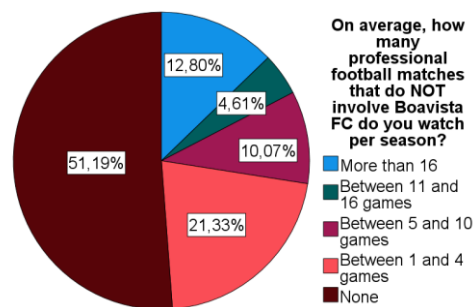
It was decided that a Likert scale from 1 to 5, being 1 “Totally Disagree” and 5 “Totally Agree”, would be the best approach to gather data in regard to loyalty perception - under investigation in the fifth section of the questionnaire (Perceptions and Attitudes). Graphic 15 shows, in percentage, how the supporters of Boavista FC are distributed in terms of how much they agree they are loyal fans of the club. 89,4% of the subjects – a big majority - totally agree they are loyal fans of Boavista FC. 7,3% partially agree, less than 2% neither agree nor disagree, whilst less than 1% partially disagree or totally disagree.

**Graphic 16 - Next match knowledge (%)**



**Graphic 17 - Presence probability on mathday (%)**

Above, two more graphics - related to data resultant from the fifth chapter of the inquiry - can be seen. On the left, Graphic 16 presents the percentage of people who were aware, or not, of Boavista FC's next match, at the time of the questionnaire. On the right, Graphic 17 exposes how would the supporters, having the possibility to go to the stadium, define their presence on a matchday. In the first one, it is possible to notice that 96,08% of the fans affirmed to know the details of the following game of the team, whilst less than 4% were not aware of that information. As for the second one, it is observable that 88,74% would consider their matchday presence as "Certain", while only 8,87% would consider it "a possibility, among other activities" and 2,39% "unlikely or very unlikely".

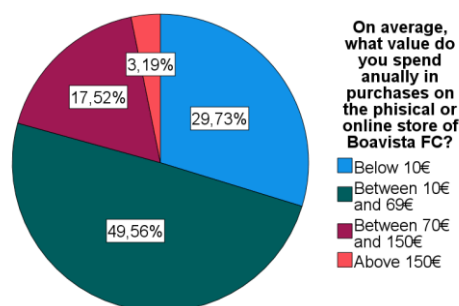
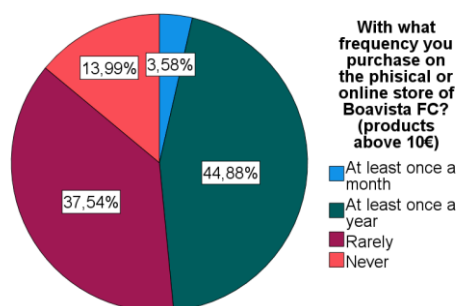


**Graphic 18 - Attendance of other teams' matches (%)**

As seen, Section 6 of the inquiry was regarding consumption. Graphic 18 exhibits the data resultant from the first question of this part of the questionnaire, where the average attendance on matches that did not involve Boavista FC was asked. More than half of the respondents (51,19%) affirmed

they do not attend any games of other teams, that not their own. On the other hand, 12,80% of the sample admitted attending “More than 16” matches per season that did not involve Boavista FC, while 21,33% of the fans stated to watch live “Between 1 and 4 games”. Finally, the 10,07% who responded “Between 5 and 10 games” and the 4,61% who answered “Between 11 and 16 games” complete the chart.

**Graphic 19 - Purchases on team’s store (%)**



**Graphic 20 - Value spent on team’s store (%)**

Yet in Section 6, two questions were made in regard to the purchase of products on the club’s store (whether made in the physical or online shop). The responses to these askings are illustrated in Graphic 19 and Graphic 20, being the first associated with the frequency of purchases (of products above 10€) and the second connected with the value spent annually in the store. It is observable that 44,88% of Boavista FC fans purchases a product in the team’s store at least once a year, although 37,54% rarely buy anything, 13,99% never do and only 3,58% do it once a month.

It can also be seen that near half (49,56%) of the respondents spent between 10€ and 69€ on merchandise and 17,52% expended between 70€ and 150€, while the percentage of people that spent an amount of money below 10€ is 29,73%. Finally, only 3,19% admitted to leave above 150€ in the team's shop.

### 5.2.1. Additional keynotes from Frequencies Analysis

The analysis of the answers regarding other questions distributed between Chapters 3, 5, 6 and 7 also led to some results that are relevant to be stressed:

From an universe of 245 respondents who don't usually watch all games at Bessa Stadium, over 92% referred they go to every match they have the possibility to. Moreover, less than 10% considered that the reasons for attending a home match were due to the price of the ticket, the club momentum or the relevancy of the match or opponent, among others. As for the reasons to miss the matches they didn't attend, more than half (56,30%) made allusion to professional motives and 32,2% to familiar grounds. 17,6% stated to live far from the stadium and 7,3% reasoned their non-attendance was often due to health motives. Furthermore, only 11,4% admitted that sometimes opted for other activities, a number, nonetheless, higher than the subjects who considered ticket pricing (5,3%) and the team momentum (3,7%) a relevant cause.

With almost the same percentage (around 44% each), FC Porto and Vitória SC were evaluated by the fans as the two greatest rivals of Boavista FC. In third, SC Braga gathered 4,27% of the responses, whilst near 8% opted for other answers.

With respect to consumption, a small majority (32,94%) stated to watch “Between 10 and 19 games” of Boavista FC on the television, during a season of Liga NOS. This group was followed by four others, with weights close to each other: “More than 30 games” (19,45%), “Between 5 and 9 games” (16,04%), “Between 1 and 4 games” (13,14%) and “Between 20 and 29 games” (10,92%). With the smallest percentage, although not far from the others, 7,51% of the fans referred to never assist matches on the TV.

Furthermore, 71,33% of the sample admitted to go, at minimum, once a day to one - at least - of the main social networks of the club, while 22,87% selected the option “at least twice a week”. Only less than 1% of the fans expressed to never check the social media of the club and only 4,95% more rarely than once a week.

Yet in regard to consumption, it was found that 47,44% of Boavista FC’s fans rarely go to the club’s Website or APP. Despite that, only 8,36% admitted to

never consult them, plus 22,35% and 21,84% stated to spend time in the platforms at least once a week and once a day, respectively.

Lastly, regarding the (negative) impact of racism, sexism and physical violence, 68,77% of the sample admitted to witness episodes of sexism or racism at a football match. However, only 11,43% avoided going to the stadium because of this phenomenon. The number of match attendance avoidances grows when speaking about reasons associated with physical violence: 43,52% affirmed that has missed a game because of occurrences of this type. It is important to note these final questions were made to Boavista FC fans, but not only in regard to the club's matches.

### 5.3. HYPOTHESIS ANALYSIS

In this section are presented the results from the tests implemented in order to validate the study hypotheses. As stated, crosstabulations were performed and Pearson's Chi-Square testing was used for analyzing most of the hypothesis, with the exception of H10, H11 and H12, where One-Way ANOVA was the selected test.

Anyway, in both tests, when the significance associated with the cases is under ,005 it means that the relationship between the variables is statistically significant – which also meant in this essay that the respective hypotheses could be validated.

	Pearson Chi-Square		
	N	Value	Significance
<b>H1:</b> Fans who attend all home matches also attend all away games	586	213,529	,000
<b>H2:</b> Fans who attend all home matches are men	586	1,379	,848
<b>H3:</b> Fans who attend all home matches are of the ethnic majority in Portugal	586	4,077	,396
<b>H4:</b> Fans who attend all home matches are the wealthiest	586	45,416	,058
<b>H5:</b> When Boavista FC was promoted in 2014, fans who supported the club for more than 80% of their lifetime kept the same attendance rate	586	246,836	,000

<b>H6:</b> When Boavista FC was relegated in 2008, fans with a familiar history of supporting the club kept the same or increased their attendance rate	586	35,942	,000
<b>H7:</b> If Boavista FC is relegated, fans who have a connection with the District of Porto will keep the same or increase their attendance rate	586	,387	,824
<b>H8:</b> Fans who attend all home matches never attend other teams' games	586	15,755	,470
<b>H9:</b> Fans who attend all home matches buy merchandise of the club at least once a month	586	69,472	,000

Table 2 - Pearson Chi-Square results for H1 to H9

Table 2 exhibits the results from the Pearson's Chi-Square tests, that allowed to either validate or reject our Hypotheses 1 to 9.

As illustrated above, a statistically significant relation (.000) was found between home attendance and away attendance, which validated H1.

In regard to the relationship of home attendance with the sociodemographic factors of gender (.848), ethnicity (.396) and income (.058), neither revealed a significant statistical result. Given this, H2, H3 and H4 were rejected.

As for the variables related to promotion and relegation, it was detected a statistically significant connection (.000) between the attendance rate fluctuation after Boavista FC's promotion in 2014 and the average percentage of lifetime supporting the club. The same happened when analyzing the link between the attendance rate fluctuation after Boavista FC's relegation in 2008 and the familiar history of supporting the team (.000). On the contrary, no significant statistical result (.824) was found considering attendance rate fluctuation in case of a new relegation and having connections with Porto's District. Having this into account, H5 and H6 were validated, while H7 was rejected.

Finally, no statistically significant relation (.470) was exhibited between home attendance and attendance in games that did not involve Boavista FC, in opposition with what happened between home attendance and frequency of merchandise purchases (.000). This led to the rejection of H8 and validation of H9.

	One-Way A-NOVA	
	N	Significance
<b>H10:</b> Fans who strongly agree they are loyal supporters of Boavista FC attend all home matches	586	,000
<b>H11:</b> Fans who strongly agree they are loyal supporters of Boavista FC know the details about the club's next match	586	,000
<b>H12:</b> Fans who strongly agree they are loyal supporters of Boavista FC consider match attendance a definite choice on a matchday	586	,000

Table 3 - One-Way ANOVA results for H10 to H12

Table 3 exhibits the results from the One-Way ANOVA tests, that allowed to either validate or reject our Hypotheses 10 to 12.

It is observable that a statistically significant relation (,000) was found between the perceived degree of loyalty and home attendance, awareness of the details of the next match and decision to be present on a matchday. Given this, H10, H11 and H12 were all validated.

### 5.3.1. Results from additional tests

As stated before, to ensure greater quality to the paper, it was analyzed the correlation between all the variables in study, and not just the ones part of the research hypothesis.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
1. Home Attendance	Black	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red
2. Away Attendance	Green	Black	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red
3. 2008's Relegation	Green	Green	Black	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red
4. 2014's Relegation	Green	Green	Green	Black	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
5. Attendance in case of Relegation	Green	Green	Green	Green	Black	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
6. Next Match Awareness	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Black	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red
7. Presence probability on matchday	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Black	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
8. Membership	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Black	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green
9. Attendance of other teams	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Black	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red
10. Frequency of store purchases	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Black	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
11. Value spent on team store	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Black	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red
12. Matches watched on TV	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Black	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red
13. Social Media consumption	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Black	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red
14. Website & APP consumption	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Black	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green
15. Age Range	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Black	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red
16. Starting period of fandom	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Black	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red
17. Average % of lifetime support	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Black	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red

18. Family History	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Black	Green	Red	Green	Red
19. District Connections	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Black	Red	Red	Red	Red
20. Annually Income	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Black	Green	Green	Red
21. Gender	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Black	Red	Red
22. Ethnicity	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Black

Table 4 - Pearson Chi-Square test results of all variables

Table 4 reveals all the situations where a statistically relevant significance was detected (in green) when correlating two variables under the Pearson’s Chi-square test. It also shows when that significance was not discovered (in red).

One can see that several connections were found. Membership was the variable with the most (19), followed by the awareness of the team’s next match, the fluctuance rate after 2008’s relegation and the Website & APP consumption (17). On the other hand, only 4 times a significant correlation existed when having connections with the District of Oporto into account, the worst result alongside gender (6) and ethnicity (3).

As for the additional One-Way ANOVA tests, results unveiled that the level of perceived loyalty also had a significant relationship with the big majority of the other variables. Anyway, there were some exceptions: attendance of other teams matches; number of matches watched on the TV; having links with Oporto; annually wage amount; gender and ethnicity.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	10	17	18
1. Home Attendance	Black	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green
2. Away Attendance	Green	Black	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red
3. 2008's Relegation	Green	Green	Black	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green
4. 2014's Relegation	Green	Green	Green	Black	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
5. Attendance in case of Relegation	Green	Green	Green	Green	Black	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red
6. Next Match Awareness	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Black	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
7. Presence probability on matchday	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Black	Red	Green	Red	Green
9. Attendance of other teams	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Black	Red	Green	Red
10. Frequency of store purchases	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Black	Red	Green
17. Average % of lifetime support	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Black	Green
18. Family History	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Black

Table 5 - Pearson Chi-Square test results of all previously studied variables.

To ensure scientific credibility when developing the segmentation model, it was important to consider the same information of Table 4, but only having into account variables already analyzed in studies with the same purpose of this one (or similar variables, adapted to the reality of Boavista FC). This is exactly what is done in Table 5.

It is observable that 9 out of the 11 variables have a statistically significant correlation with at least 7 of the other. This excludes "Attendance of other teams" (with only 3 relationships) and "Average % of lifetime support" (with 5)

It can also be seen that "2008's relegation" and "2014's promotion" displayed connections with almost all the other variables in the Pearson's Chi-

Square tests, with the exception of “Presence probability on matchday” and “Attendance of other teams”, respectively. This was a result only matched by “perceived loyalty”, according to what was revealed in the One-Way ANOVA tests.

These were followed by “Home Attendance”, “Away Attendance” and “Frequency of store purchases” (8 results of statistical significance) and, then, by “Attendance in case of relegation”, “Presence probability on matchday” and “Family history” (7).

## 6. DISCUSSION

Looking at the results explored in the previous chapter, some interesting findings were possible to obtain. These will be discussed in the following paragraphs:

Starting with the sociodemographic indicators, it is true that Pope (2017) alerted for the “feminization” of football and the massive entrance of women sports fans, whereas Cashmore and Dixon (2016) made reference to the multiethnic transformation of the sport. The overwhelmingly small percentage of women and ethnic minorities found at Boavista FC might sound contradictory with the theory, but can easily be sustained on the masculinity still rooted in football, as appointed by Sveinson et al. (2019). Moreover, ethnic minorities will always be – as the name indicates – the smaller proportion of people, and (although still considerably small) the number of female Boavista FC supporters and fans part of ethnic minorities might already be bigger than a few years ago and in a growing path.

As for the poor connections that gender and ethnicity (not *per se*, but as enablers) were found to have with loyalty, these could signify that gender and racial obstacles are being efficiently tackled, albeit the percentages of people that reported to witness episodes of sexism and racism, or even avoided a match

because of that, suggest otherwise. What these results could mean is that some fans of these groups successfully adapted to the traditional rituals of the game – to a point that some of them became highly loyal. This is a phenomenon that Sveinson et al. (2019) pointed that could happen. Furthermore, these complex components might demand a more complex study, as sexism and racism might be dodging women or minorities to the point of not following the sport or supporting a team at all.

Going into the annual wage amount, the results obtained were partially expected when observing the information of PORDATA (2019) about salaries in Portugal. Regarding the poor connection of this variable with loyalty, this could be sustained on Boavista FC's recent approach of reducing the price of membership fees and game tickets to captivate more fans and grow the attendance numbers. Intentionally or not, this tactic might be also helping the ones struggling financially, allowing them to be members and attend the same number of home matches as the wealthiest. This could also explain the high percentage of respondents that stated to be members of the team and the small proportion of people that referred ticket pricing as a reason to miss a home match.

In regard to age, the results revealed that a small number of aged Boavista FC supporters participated in the questionnaire, what might suggest these are the current demographics of the team and that the club is doing a good job in

terms of renewing it's fanbase. However, it should be taken into account that the inquiry was implemented online, a space where younger people are more keen on.

While for the variables "Starting period of fandom" and "Average % of lifetime support", the frequency results went in line with the majority of the literature, namely Tamir (2020), that noted that sports fans typically choose their football club at an early stage of life. Neither of the three previous variables were found to have a strong link with loyalty, which is surprising in the case of the last one, since the most recent studies suggested the contrary (Pick & Gillett, 2019).

The percentage of people with a familiar past of supporting Boavista FC and with present/past links to the District of Porto were even higher than anticipated, although the predominance of these two groups was predicted by great part of the literature. As seen in Abosag et al. (2012) suggested that the club a subject supports is often something inherited from the previous generation. Furthermore, it seems reasonable that due to some sense of identification or – at least – convenience, individuals likely support a local team or a club that represents a region they are/were tied to. Although not as solid as other variables, "Family history" revealed to be an efficient component to measure loyalty, in line with Tapp (2004), and unlike Pick and Gillett (2019) and what was seen with having geographic links with the District of the club.

Moving on to the next variables, “Home” and “Away” attendance, the results that revealed them as two of the strongest indicators of loyalty were anticipated, having into account what was said in previous studies (Pick & Gillett, 2019). With respect to the different percentages exhibited by both, these were also predictable, as many past works revealed that away attendance is a much more exclusive type of activity, only performed by the supporters with high levels of loyalty (Pick & Gillett, 2019; Tapp, 2004).

Adapted to the context of Boavista FC, 2008’s relegation and 2014’s promotion constituted the variables with most statistically significant correlations with others, which indicated they were very strong components to measure the loyalty of the club’s supporters. The variable “attendance in case of new relegation”, was also found to be a solid one, in accordance with Giulianotti (2002) and disagreement with Pick and Gillett (2019).

Nonetheless, given that the fluctuance rate was much bigger in 2008 than what the fans reported would be after a relegation today (presuming it is unlikely the general profile of Boavista FC fans changed so drastically in merely 13 years) and observing that the number of correlations of the two first was bigger, these results might denote that analysing fluctuances in attendance after real promotions or relegations is better to measure loyalty than studying hypothetical ones.

This outcome may be also revealing a difference between words and actions, similar to what was already reported by Tapp (2004) when the author was performing an observation about fans perceptions of their own loyalty. In fact, results regarding “loyalty perception” (with a overwhelming number of “Totally agree” answers) led to the same direction: individuals who consider themselves highly loyal might display less-loyal behaviors, with distinctions being possible to observe between stated opinion and actions. Despite that, as seen, One-Way ANOVA tests unveiled this variable as one of the most efficient ones to estimate loyalty, in line with Pick & Gillett (2019).

Proceeding, the 96% that affirmed to be aware of the information in regard to the team’s next match were a surprising proportion, given that Giulianotti (2002) plus Pick and Gillett (2019) supported that fans with the highest levels of loyalty are the ones that tend to be more aware of their club’s next match, while similar results were only found in Tapp (2004). Even so, this outcome didn’t prevent this variable to demonstrate strong relationships with most of the other components.

As for “presence probability on matchday”, the results that revealed this variable to also be a reasonable one when aiming to measure loyalty, gave strength to what multiple scholars theorized in the past (Harris & Ogbonna, 2008; Tapp, 2004; Tapp & Clowes, 2002; Giulianotti, 2002). Nonetheless – the same way as some of the cases already discussed – the near 90% that answered “certain” was a little above the predicted, which adding to the enlightening

results from Questionnaire's Chapter 2, gives the impression that the big majority of the individuals would attend all games if they had the chance to.

In opposition with Harris and Ogbonna (2008), plus Tapp (2004), attending other team's matches didn't exhibit great relevance to determine loyalty. However, the results were, as well, considerably different from the studies of Pick and Gillett (2019) and Tapp and Clowes (2002): while those authors found that almost every supporter attended matches of other teams, in this case more than half of the fans stated to never go to events of that type. It just happened these were from all degrees of loyalty.

The main finding left to discuss is "frequency of store's purchases". On the same line as Tapp (2004), this variable seemed to be good to measure the loyalty of the football fans of Boavista FC. And, even though that contradicts the theory of Pick and Gillett (2019), Harris and Ogbonna (2008), plus Giulianotti (2002), the results from the "value spent on team's store" corroborate that the most loyal fans are the ones that buy more often and spend more money in the team's store, as it was already stated in Tapp and Clowes (2002). It may also be important to highlight that the price of an official jersey of Boavista FC usually rounds 50€, whilst an official scarf costs near 7,50€, as that could have had impact.

As for the remaining results, it should be pointed they denoted the rising preponderance of the internet, especially social media, and its importance for

supporters to follow the day-to-day of their club. Nevertheless, it could be said this phenomenon can't be considered surprising or recent anymore, as it was already detected by several scholars in the past (Galily, 2014). Moreover, comparing with home and away attendances put together, the numbers also indicated that a preponderant part of the supporters watches the matches on the television when unavailable to go to the stadium.

### 6.1.SEGMENTATION MODEL OF BOAVISTA FC'S FANS

After analysing the data resultant from the questionnaire, it was possible to attempt creating the intended and personalized segmentation model of Boavista FC's fans. Since past models were proposed and great part of the current essay's methodology was inspired in these papers, it seemed reasonable to look for convergences with those previous frameworks, namely the most recent one of Pick and Gillett (2019), that updated the model resultant from the recognized work of Tapp (2004).

Over the findings, it was concluded that no additional segments had to be added to the model of Pick and Gillett (2019), implemented in the context of England's lower divisions. Nonetheless, the splitting of the Casuals segment in Committed casuals and Carefree casuals, performed in Tapp (2004) and adopted by Pick and Gillett (2019), was reverted, and both were converged once again into the same group due to the almost insignificance of the last.

This way, the fans of Boavista FC were divided into four categories: True Fanatics, Enthusiasts, Regulars and Casuals.

Moreover, the model had to be adapted to the context of the club. This was done by excluding both the variables not analysed in this study (ex: having a season ticket) and the ones that, unlike in Pick and Gillett (2019), were found to be poor components for measuring loyalty (ex: % of life supporting the team). On the other hand, were added the variables - with previous scientific background - where the opposite happened (ex: certainty of presence on a matchday), alike the ones tailored for this specific reality (ex: 2008's relegation and 2014's promotion). It is also important to highlight that, although the majority of the used segments were adopted from previous studies, their behavior - concerning each factor studied - wasn't necessarily the same as previously.

This said, Table 6 displays the proposed segmentation model of Boavista FC's fans, by levels of loyalty:

<b>1</b>	Do you consider yourself a loyal fan of Boavista FC?
<b>2</b>	On average, how many Boavista FC games do you attend in Bessa Stadium, during a season of Liga NOS?
<b>3</b>	On average, how many Boavista FC games do you assist in the opponents' stadiums, during a season of Liga NOS?

<b>6</b>	If Boavista FC was relegated again, the number of games you would attend
<b>7</b>	Are you aware of Boavista FC's next opponent, as well as the date and schedule of their next match?
<b>8</b>	In a Boavista FC matchday, having the possibility of attending the match, how would you consider your presence at the event?

<b>4</b>	When Boavista FC was relegated in 2008, the number of games you attended
<b>5</b>	When Boavista FC was promoted in 2014, the number of games you attended

<b>9</b>	With what frequency you purchase on the physical or online store of Boavista FC? (products above 10€)
<b>10</b>	Do you have a history of Boavista FC fans in your family?

Type of fan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
True Fanatic	Yes, totally	All	All	Remained the same	Remained the same	Would remain the same	Yes	Certain	At least once a year	Yes
Enthusiast	Yes, totally	All	Between 11 and 16	Remained the same	Remained the same	Would remain the same	Yes	Certain	At least once a year	Yes
Regular	Yes, totally	Between 11 and 16	Between 5 and 10	Remained the same	Remained the same	Would remain the same	Yes	Certain	Rarely	Yes
Casuals	Yes	Between 0 and 10	Between 0 and 4	Decreased	Increased	Would decrease	No	A possibility	Never	No

**Table 6 - Segmentation framework of Boavista FC's fans**

To understand in which fan's typology each supporter would fall, it also seemed that attempting to follow the same criteria as in Pick and Gillett (2019) was the reasonable thing to do.

Having this into account, each response in the questionnaire was awarded a score, with the factors representative of higher loyalty composing the highest scores. Then, that score was multiplied by a value determined by the type of variable being dealt with. This was done because - as seen - even between the variables that showed to be relevant to measure loyalty, some revealed to be

more efficient than others, and it seemed fair to assign a higher weight to the ones that displayed greater efficiency.

After multiplying every score by the respective weight of the variable and obtaining a total result by summing every weighted value, the overall score could – from that point - determine which segment each fan would fit in.

For better interpretation, the detailed process is exhibited in Table 7 and the needed result to fit in each fan’s category is portrayed in Table 8:

Weighting	Variable	Score
0,2	Do you consider yourself a loyal fan of Boavista FC?	Yes, absolutely = 1 Yes = 0,75 Don't Know = 0,50 No = 0,25 Not at all = 0
0,15	On average, how many Boavista FC's games do you attend in Bessa Stadium, during a season of Liga NOS?	All = 1 Between 11 and 16 games = 0,75 Between 5 and 10 games = 0,50 Between 1 and 4 games = 0,25 None = 0
0,15	On average, how many Boavista FC's games do you assist in the opponents' stadiums, during a season of Liga NOS?	All = 1 Between 11 and 16 games = 0,75 Between 5 and 10 games = 0,50 Between 1 and 4 games = 0,25 None = 0
0,2	When Boavista FC was relegated in 2008, the number of games you attended	Remained the same or increased = 1 I wasn't yet a fan in 2008 = 0,5 Decreased = 0
0,2	When Boavista FC was promoted in 2014, the number of games you attended	Remained the same = 1 I wasn't yet a fan in 2014 = 0,5 Increased / Decreased = 0

0,1	If Boavista FC was relegated again, the number of games you would attend	Would remain the same or increase = 1 Would decrease = 0
0,2	Are you aware of Boavista FC's next opponent, as well as the date and schedule of their next match?	Yes = 1 No = 0
0,1	In a Boavista FC's matchday, having the possibility of attending the match, how would you consider your presence at the event?	Certain = 1 A possibility, among other things = 0,5 Unlikely or very unlikely = 0
0,15	With what frequency you purchase on the physical or online store of Boavista FC? (products above 10€)	At least once a month = 1 At least once a year = 0,66 Rarely = 0,33 Never = 0
0,1	Do you have a history of Boavista FC's fans in your family?	Yes = 1 No / Don't Know = 0

**Table 7 - Process model to determine a Boavista FC's fan segment**

<b>Type of Fan</b>	<b>Score</b>
True Fanatic	1,5 or above
Enthusiastic	Between 1,35 and 1,49
Regular	Between 0,78 and 1,34
Casuals	Below 0,77

**Table 8 - Respective score gap for each segment**

After applying this framework to the empirical data, it was found that this study's sample was composed of 14 Fanatics (2,39%), 160 Enthusiasts (27,30%), 359 Regulars (61,26%) and 53 Casuals (9,04%).



## 7. CONCLUSION

On this chapter, the main arguments of the investigation and its key conclusions will be presented:

According to previous studies, for long, fans' loyalty was taken for granted by the football clubs, with many devaluing the need for implementing techniques to build strong relationships with its supporters. Nowadays, it is cognized that the fanbase of every team embraces supporters that evidence multiple divergences concerning their level of loyalty - or the way they exhibit it - also being acknowledged these supporters are getting more demanding as the days go by, with the constant evolution of the world. This is requiring the marketing departments of football clubs to know their fans better and understand their particular behaviors and motivations, in order to connect more efficiently with them.

Although segmenting supporters had been already attempted in the past, and even though different segmentation models had been proposed in the literature, some scholars called for further research on the area, mainly if focused on countries with fewer investigation made. This call was sustained on the literature's extensive focus on the context of the English Premier League (too unique to guarantee similar results in other realities), the age of some of the

studies, and due to the fact that, because of the heterogeneity of sports consumption, it seems impossible to exist an archetypal model of segmentation, with every club having to tatically select or recreate their own.

This said, the present investigation sought to segment the football fans of Boavista FC according to their level of loyalty towards the team they support. This was done with the aim of contributing to the fields in analysis by strengthening the research made in the area, consolidating or challenging previous findings, and reaching new ones. Moreover, it had the purpose of helping football clubs – namely the one in analysis, but also others with similar contexts – by providing a segmentation model that can be used or readapted by their marketing departments, in various occasions in the future.

After a theoretical analysis, three specific objectives were established for this research, intended to operationalize the main problem of the essay: 1) develop a framework of the different football fan segments in Boavista FC; 2) explore the size of the segments in the club; 3) identify the main variables for measuring loyalty, in the context of Boavista FC. In the case of the third, it is important to highlight that some scholars requested for more understanding in regard to these components, an occurrence that also added relevance to the present essay.

Given the choice for a quantitative methodology, twelve hypotheses were formulated in accordance with the literature review, in order to help giving an answer to the proposed objectives of the study. To gather the necessary data and test the hypotheses afterwards, a questionnaire survey composed of 28 questions and divided in 7 sections was implemented, where 586 answers were obtained via judgmental sampling and snowball sampling.

Regarding the data analysis and discussion, crosstabulations, Pearson's Chi-Square tests and One-Way ANOVA tests were performed. The Pearson's Chi Square tests validated H1 ("Fans who attend all home matches also attend all away games"), H5 ("When Boavista FC was promoted in 2014, fans who supported the club for more than 80% of their lifetime kept the same attendance rate"), H6 (When Boavista FC was relegated in 2008, fans with a familiar history of supporting the club kept the same or increased their attendance rate") and H9 ("Fans who attend all home matches buy merchandise of the club at least once a month"), and rejected H2,H3,H4 and H7. Moreover, One-Way ANOVA tests validated H10 ("Fans who strongly agree they are loyal supporters of Boavista FC attend all home matches"), H11 ("Fans who strongly agree they are loyal supporters of Boavista FC know the details about the club's next match") and H12 ("Fans who strongly agree they are loyal supporters of Boavista FC consider match attendance a definite choice on a matchday". However, to give an answer to the proposed objectives, more tests had to be executed and all the variables investigated were compared with one another, and not just the ones related to the initial hypotheses.

Concluded the calculations, all three of the specific objectives of the study were fulfilled, therefore also being achieved what was proposed in the main problem of the research.

With the respect to the first objective, it was discovered that the segmentation model of Pick and Gillett (2019), inspired in England's lower divisions, could be readapted to the context of Boavista FC, although with some alterations. The most significant one: Committed Casuals and Carefree Casuals were converged into one segment only - the Casuals.

Regarding the second, after applying the proposed framework to the empirical data, it was found that the sample of this research was composed of 14 Fanatics (2,39%), 160 Enthusiasts (27,30%), 359 Regulars (61,26%) and 53 Casuals (9,04%).

As for the third and final objective, it was revealed that the attendance rate fluctuation after the club's 2008 relegation and 2014 promotion were the most efficient variables to measure loyalty, alongside "loyalty perception". On the contrary, "attendance on other teams' matches" and "average percentage of lifetime support" were concluded to be poor variables of measurement in this context.

## 8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Alike every investigation, this study had some limitations.

For a start, this work was almost entirely developed during a period of public health issues caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, which created two problems. First, this situation prevented that data was also collected presentially, something that likely had impact in the size of the sample and in its demography, as some age and socioeconomic groups tend to have fewer access to the internet. In addition to that, at the time of the research, fans had been prohibited to go to the Portuguese stadiums since March 2020. Therefore, respondents completed several questions regarding their fanship habits, in a moment where those precise habits were being affected, which suggests some of their answers might have been influenced by the reality they were living. Furthermore, it is still unpredictable at this moment how long will this situation last, and what will be the impact of Covid-19 in the way the different types of fans will look at the game from now on.

Another limitation was the temporal distance to two of the events analysed: the 2008's relegation and 2014's promotion. Because these happenings occurred at 13 and 7 years ago, respectively, a part of the sample wasn't yet a fan of the club at that moment, while a portion of the ones that were

might not fully remember how they behaved at the time. Given this, the responses to these particular questions might have been slightly affected.

As for suggestions to future investigations - having into account the present study limitations - it is recommended to develop a similar study focused on the same club after the Covid-19 pandemic is fully under control and the fans are back in the stadiums. This would eliminate possible misleading due to the period this research was developed in, and might also reveal interesting discoveries in regard to fluctuances among segments caused by the change of habits due to a long period away from the football stands.

Furthermore, this study could be expanded and to each segment could be added its financial value. This has already been attempted in the literature, although - similar to part of the reason to develop the present work - those studies were mainly focused on England and the very unique reality of the Premier League clubs. Needless to say, in a marketing perspective, that would be very appreciated.

Finally, the results observed in regard to the preponderance of each factor to measure loyalty lead to two final appointments. First, due to the importance portrayed by the 2008's relegation and 2014's promotion, it is recommended to take into high consideration the episodes and particularities of each football club when investigating fandom or fan loyalty. Additionally, being a member of a team

and frequently consulting its Website & APP appeared to be two strong indicators of loyalty, and future investigation would be useful to consolidate that.



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## APPENDIXES

### Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

05/07/2021

Na saúde e na doença: o caso dos adeptos do Boavista FC

## Na saúde e na doença: o caso dos adeptos do Boavista FC

Este questionário serve o propósito de um trabalho de investigação no âmbito de uma dissertação de mestrado em Marketing Global, no IPAM Porto, que tem como objetivo explorar os diferentes segmentos de adeptos no Boavista Futebol Clube, considerando o seu nível de lealdade.

Sendo assim, caso tenha mais de 18 anos e se identifique como adepto do Boavista Futebol Clube, gostaria de pedir a sua colaboração, através da resposta ao questionário que se segue.

As suas respostas serão confidenciais.

Os dados serão apenas utilizados para fins académicos e estatísticos.

**\*Obrigatório**

#### Assistência

1. Em média, quantos jogos do Boavista FC assiste no Estádio do Bessa numa época da Liga NOS? \*

Nota: Para esta pergunta e semelhantes, não devem ser consideradas as épocas 19/20 e 20/21 - com restrições de público devido à pandemia da Covid-19 - nem qualquer época constituída por um número superior ou inferior a 18 equipas

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Todos *Avançar para a pergunta 5*
- Entre 11 a 16 jogos *Avançar para a pergunta 3*
- Entre 5 a 10 jogos *Avançar para a pergunta 3*
- Entre 1 a 4 jogos *Avançar para a pergunta 3*
- Nenhum *Avançar para a pergunta 5*

2. Em média, quantos jogos do Boavista FC assiste nos estádios dos adversários numa época da Liga NOS? \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Todos
- Entre 11 a 16 jogos
- Entre 5 a 10 jogos
- Entre 1 a 4 jogos
- Nenhum

*Avançar para a pergunta 5*

#### Motivos para Assistência

3. Seleccione o(s) maior(es) motivo(s) para a escolha dos jogos do Boavista FC a que assistiu no Estádio do Bessa

*Marcar tudo o que for aplicável.*

- Foram todos os que tive possibilidade de ir
- Rendimento da equipa
- Relevância do jogo para a classificação
- Relevância do adversário
- Preço do bilhete

Outra:  \_\_\_\_\_

4. Seleccione o(s) maior(es) motivo(s) para não ter assistido aos jogos que falhou do Boavista FC no Estádio do Bessa

*Marcar tudo o que for aplicável.*

- Optei por outra(s) atividade(s)
- Rendimento da equipa
- Preço do bilhete
- Motivos de saúde
- Motivos profissionais
- Motivos familiares
- Vivo/vivia muito longe do estádio

Outra:  \_\_\_\_\_

**Assistência após Subida/Descida**

5. Quando o Boavista FC desceu à Segunda Divisão em 2008, o número de jogos a que assistiu presencialmente \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Manteve-se igual ou aumentou  
 Diminuiu  
 Ainda não era adepto do Boavista FC em 2008

6. Quando o Boavista FC regressou à Primeira Divisão em 2014, o número de jogos a que assistiu presencialmente \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Manteve-se igual  
 Aumentou  
 Diminuiu  
 Ainda não era adepto do Boavista FC em 2014

7. Caso o Boavista FC descesse novamente à Segunda Divisão, o número de jogos a que assistiria presencialmente iria \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Manter-se igual ou aumentar  
 Diminuir

**Percepções e Atitudes**

8. Considera-se um adepto leal ao Boavista FC? \*

Marcar apenas uma oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Não, de todo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Sim, totalmente

9. Tem conhecimento do adversário, bem como da data e horário do próximo jogo do Boavista FC? \*

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Sim  
 Não

10. Num dia de jogo do Boavista FC, tendo possibilidade de o assistir no estádio, definiria a sua presença como \*

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Certa  
 Uma hipótese, entre outras atividades  
 Improvável ou muito improvável

11. Qual considera o maior rival do Boavista FC?

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- FC Porto  
 Vitória SC  
 SC Braga  
 Outra: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Questões sobre consumo

12. É sócio do Boavista FC?

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

Sim

Não

13. Em média, quantos jogos de futebol profissional que NÃO envolvem o Boavista FC assiste ao vivo, por época? \*

Nota: Jogos de Seleções não deverão ser considerados na resposta a esta pergunta

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

Mais de 16

Entre 11 a 16 jogos

Entre 5 a 10 jogos

Entre 1 a 4 jogos

Nenhum

14. Com que frequência faz compras (iguais ou acima de 10 Euros) na loja física ou online do Boavista FC? \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

No mínimo, uma vez por mês

No mínimo, uma vez por ano

Raramente

Nunca

15. Em média, qual o valor que gasta anualmente em compras na loja física ou online do Boavista FC?

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Abaixo de 10€
- Entre 10€ e 69€
- Entre 70€ e 150€
- Acima de 150€

16. Em média, quantos jogos do Boavista FC assiste na TV (em direto), numa época da Liga NOS?

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Mais de 30 jogos
- Entre 20 a 29 jogos
- Entre 10 a 19 jogos
- Entre 5 a 9 jogos
- Entre 1 a 4 jogos
- Nenhum

17. Com que frequência consulta as redes sociais (Facebook, Instagram ou Twitter) do Boavista FC?

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- No mínimo, uma vez por dia
- No mínimo, duas vezes por semana
- Raramente
- Nunca

18. Com que frequência consulta o Site ou a APP do Boavista FC?

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- No mínimo, uma vez por dia
- No mínimo, duas vezes por semana
- Raramente
- Nunca

#### Questões Sociodemográficas

19. Indique a sua faixa etária

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- >64

20. Em que período da sua vida começou a ser adepto do Boavista FC? \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- 0-7
- 7-14
- 15-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- >64

21. Tem histórico de adeptos do Boavista FC na sua família? \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Sim  
 Não  
 Não sei

22. Tem ou já teve alguma ligação ao Distrito do Porto? \*

Considere-se existir uma ligação no caso de viver ou já ter vivido no Distrito, bem como no caso de passar ou já ter passado um período bastante considerável no Distrito devido a motivos familiares ou profissionais

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Sim  
 Não  
 Não sei

23. Indique o valor do seu montante salarial anual \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Até 7.112€  
 De 7.113€ a 10.732€  
 De 10.733€ a 20.322€  
 De 20.323€ a 25.075€  
 De 25.076€ a 36.967€  
 De 36.968€ a 80.882€  
 Mais de 80.882€  
 Não estou no mercado de trabalho  
 Prefiro não responder

24. Indique o seu sexo \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

Masculino

Feminino

25. Em Portugal, o grupo étnico em que se insere é \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

Maioritário

Minoritário

26. Já assistiu a episódios de sexismo ou racismo em jogos de futebol?

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

Sim

Não

27. Já evitou estar presente num jogo de futebol devido a possíveis episódios de sexismo ou racismo?

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

Sim

Não

28. Já evitou estar presente num jogo de futebol devido a possíveis episódios de violência física?

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

Sim

Não