

Ashesi University College



An Investigative Study of Sponsorship in the Ghana Premier League

By

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Thesis submitted to the Department of Business
Administration,
Ashesi University College
In partial fulfillment of Bachelor of Science degree in Business
Administration

Thesis

APRIL 2015

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's Name:.....

Candidate's Signature:.....

Date:.....

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by Ashesi University College.

Supervisor's

Name: Kobina Graham

Signature:.....Date:.....

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank God almighty who gave me the grace to write this paper to the day to the month to the year.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of my friends Vanessa, Amanda, Joseph and Theresa.

Finally, I would like to appreciate my supervisor Kobina Graham for his patience, tolerance and guidance.

Abstract

For many football leagues all over the world, sponsorship is a very lucrative source of income. This is especially true in Germany and USA. Given that the sponsorship in the Ghana Premier League has not really been stable, this study seeks to understand how exactly, sponsorship works in the Ghana Premier League and also recommend solutions or ideas to improve sponsorship in the league based on the findings of this study.

From the research, I was able out that the Ghana Premier League is not independent of the Ghana Football Association. Concerning sponsorship, sponsors are found using an external marketing body. The Ghana Football Association is therefore not involved in the process of finding sponsors but they are involved in negotiating the sponsorship fee. All the money that is gained from sponsorship is invested back into the league but the Ghana Football Association still funds the league regardless of sponsorship.

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CHAPTER 1

1.0 – Background

Overview of the Ghana Premier League

The Ghana Premier League (henceforth referred to as the 'GPL') kicked off on the 19th of December 1993. There was already an existing league that was running; however it was not run professionally. This means commercializing the league and making the clubs corporate entities. The idea to make the Ghana Premier League a professional league came from the Minister of Youth and Sports at the time, E.T Mensah. The head of the GFA (Ghana Football Association) Samuel Nana Brew Butler supported the idea because he had wanted the clubs in the premier league to go commercial (Yeboah, 2013).

Accra Hearts of Oak	2-0	Accra Great Olympics
Prampram Mighty Royals	0-2	Neoplan Star
Tema Ghapoha	1-2	Afienya United
Okwahu United	2-1	Dawu Youngsters
Obuasi Goldfields SC	2-0	Ebusua Dwarfs
Kumasi Asante Kotoko	0-3	Real Tamale United

Table 1: Match day 1 of Ghana's first-ever professional league Sun Dec 19, 1993

NB: Asante Kotoko did not turn up because they failed to raise a team due to reports that their players were still demanding from management unpaid allowances in their unsuccessful African Champions' Cup final against Zamalek of Egypt. RTU were declared

winner, technically and Kotoko started the league with a deficit. (Yeboah, 2013)

Sports Sponsorship

According to Mullin et al (2007) sponsorship is “the acquisition of rights to affiliate or directly associate with a product or event for the purpose of deriving benefits related to that affiliation or association.” (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2007). This means that sponsorship is based on acquiring the right to advertise a product or company, during an event. These events can vary from political events, to sports events. However, it is important to note that not a

Event sponsorship works in two forms. Companies sponsor events by giving the sponsored party money or by giving them products and in exchange, the sponsored party allows the company to advertise its brand.

In sports, sponsorship can take both approaches. Companies like Nike and Adidas sponsor sports teams by making their jerseys (Hanke & Kirchler, 2013). Other sponsors pay money over a period of time. The major sponsors are called the jersey sponsors. (Jensen, Bowman, Larson, & Wang, 2013). These are sponsors who are allowed to have their brand images or names printed on the jerseys of the sponsored team. It is possible to have more than one shirt sponsor for a team but

an agreement would have to be made between the team and the sponsors on specific terms.

Sponsorship in the GPL

Sponsorship began in the Ghana Premier League as early as the 1997-1998 season (Boafo, 2014). The sponsorship in the Ghana Premier League started with title sponsorship. Title sponsorship is paying a league body in order to own the right to have the league named after the sponsor. For example, Barclay's Premier League (The English Premier League sponsored by Barclays Bank), La Liga BBVA (The Spanish Top Division sponsored by BBVA).

It started with ABC Golden Lager as the title sponsors and they were the title sponsors for three years. There is no evidence to show that the Ghana Premier League had any title sponsors from the 2000-2001 season to the 2002-2003 season. In 2004, the pharmaceutical company, Kinapharma agreed to sponsor the league for one season and then, Ghana Telecom took over as sponsors for two seasons (2004-2006) before renewing under the name of One Touch for another two seasons. Before the end of the 2007-2008 season, the Ghana Premier League signed a 5-year deal with Globacom Ghana but at the end of 2012-2013 season, The Ghana Premier League refused to renew its contract with GLO therefore leaving the Ghana Premier League without a sponsor for the 2013-2014 season. The reasons for this are not e

On the 4th of February 2014, First Capital Bank signed a 5 year deal worth \$10million to sponsor the Ghana Premier League (First Capital Plus, 2014).

Season	Sponsor	Season	Sponsor
1997-1998	ABC GoldenLager	2008-2009	Globacom Ghana
1998-1999	ABC Golden Lager	2009-2010	Globacom Ghana
1999-2000	ABC Golden Lager	2010-2011	Globacom Ghana
2000-2001	No Sponsorship Data	2011-2012	Globacom Ghana
2001-2002	No Sponsorship Data	2012-2013	Globacom Ghana
2002-2003	No Sponsorship Data	2013-2014	Globacom Ghana
2003-2004	Kinapharma	2014-2015	First Capital Plus Bank
2004-2005	Ghana Telecom	2015-2016	First Capital Plus Bank
2005-2006	Ghana Telecom	2016-2017	First Capital Plus Bank
2006-2007	One Touch	2017-2018	First Capital Plus Bank
2007-2008	One Touch	2018-2019	First Capital Plus Bank

Table 2: Sponsors of the Ghana Premier League 1997-2019

1.1 – Problem Statement

Sponsorship in the Ghana Premier League has not been stable. The league has had five title sponsors in the last eighteen years and in that period the league went on for three seasons without a title sponsor. This study intends to find out how sponsorship works in the Ghana Premier League works and if there is a model for spending money in the league.

1.2 – Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of my paper is based on the conclusions of Andre Buehler's research. He concluded that professional football sponsorships are based on the following factors: Trust, Understanding and Fairness, Cooperation, Commitment, Communication and Satisfaction. He also came up with three factors that have a positive influence on the quality of a relationship between the sponsors and a sponsee, especially in a professional football context and these factors summarise the factors stated earlier: 'relationship compatibility', 'Long-term perspective' and 'collaborative behaviour'.

1.3 – Research Objectives

To find out how sponsorship in the Ghana Premier League is managed.

1.4 – Research Question

1. How is sponsorship managed in the Ghana Premier League?

1.5 - Relevance of the Study

The relevance this study is to contribute to the improvement of football leagues in Africa, specifically Ghana. It is also a study that will shed light on what is going on in the Ghana Premier League, especially in the area of sponsorship. This study will also cover some gaps in literature as there is little literature that specifically talks about sports sponsorship in Ghana.

CHAPTER 2

This chapter seeks to give the reader insight on the concepts of sports marketing and sponsorship. It will also give the reader an idea of what this study is trying to investigate.

2.1 – Sports Marketing

In football, there are three major sources of revenue for the leagues. These are Matchday Revenues, Broadcast Revenues and Sponsorship & other Commercial Revenues (Ragonnaud, 2012).

These sources of revenue are derived from sports marketing. That is, without sports marketing, it would be difficult to gain revenue from the sources listed above. Beech and Chadwick define sport marketing as "... an on-going process through which contests with an uncertain outcome are staged creating opportunities for the simultaneous fulfilment of direct and indirect objectives amongst sport customers, sport businesses and other related individuals and organizations." (Beech & Chadwick, 2007) However, according to Mullin "Sport marketing consists of all activities designed to meet the needs and wants of sport consumers through exchange processes." (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2007).

From their definitions, it can be noted that both authors have different approaches to the meaning of sports marketing even though some similarities exist. Both authors agree that sport marketing needs to

meet the needs of consumers. Beech does not specify the means or ways of going through sports marketing but Mullin does and divides the process into two thrusts. What is interesting about these thrusts is that they can be looked at from a sponsorship perspective.

Mullin's 2 thrusts are:

1. Marketing and sale of sports products and services to the consumer. For example, selling tickets to consumers to watch sports games or selling sports merchandise to consumers.
2. Marketing of non-sport products or services to consumers using sports promotions.

This means that companies make money from sports by using them as marketing tools. The companies give the sports organizations some form of payment (this could be in cash or merchandise) and in return, this sports organization, allows the company to advertise through them. This type of business is what is called sponsorship.

2.2 – Sponsorship

Sponsorship is a marketing concept. It's a tool for companies to advertise their goods for the lowest possible cost. According to Mullin et al (2007) sponsorship is "The acquisition of rights to affiliate or directly associate with a product or event for the purpose of deriving benefits related to that affiliation or association." (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton,

2007). Amoako et al talk about how sponsorship can be viewed as a form of investment by looking at sponsorship as an investment opportunity where the sponsor gets paid back in the form of brand recognition and brand value. (Amoako et al, 2012). Meenaghan buttresses this point in his definition of sponsorship. He defines sponsorship as "an investment, in cash or in kind, in an activity, person or event, in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that activity, person or event by the investor (sponsors)" (Meenaghan, 1991). Groza et al argue that even though literature adopts the approach that sponsorship occurs in a one sponsor-one sponsored organisation dyad, in reality, consumers are exposed to multiple sponsors at the same time (Groza, Cobbs, & Schaefers, 2012). For example, the American football league, MLS (Major League Soccer), has 18 different sponsors (MLSsoccer, 2014).

Mullin says that sponsorship agreements may include the following:

1. The right to use a logo, a name, a trademark, and graphic signifying the purchaser's connection with the product or event. These rights can be used in advertising, promotion, publicity or other communication activities employed by the purchaser.
2. The right of entitlement to an event or facility.
3. The right to an exclusive association within a product or service category.

4. The right to use various designations or phrases in connection with the product, event, or facility such as "official sponsor".

There are different ways and perspectives that sponsorship can be looked at but in the end, they all point to the same thing which is obtaining the right to advertise a brand using an event, body or individual.

2.3.1 - Sports Sponsorship and Football

There are different types of sponsorship. Amoako et al specifically talk about 3 types.

- I. Programme Sponsorship
- II. Educational Sponsorship
- III. Sports Sponsorship

This paper focuses on sports sponsorship so it will not go in-depth on the other two forms of sponsorship. Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (2007) define sports sponsorship as:

the provision of resources (e.g. money, people, equipment) by an organization (the sponsor) directly to a sponsee (e.g. sport personality, sporting authority or sport body or code), to enable the sponsee to pursue some activity (e.g. participation by the individual or event management by the authority or sport body or code) in return for rights contemplated in terms of the sponsor's

marketing communication strategy and which can be expressed in terms of corporate, marketing, sales and/or media objectives and measured in terms of linking the objectives to be the desired outcome in terms of return on investment in monetary and non-monetary terms. (Sport Marketing, 2007).

2.3.2 - Professional Football Sponsorship

“Professional football sponsorship is a business-related partnership between a sponsor and a sponsee based on reciprocity in the context of the football business. The sponsor provides financial or non-financial resources directly to the sponsee and receives predefined service in return in order to fulfil various sponsorship objectives” (Buehler, 2006).

In professional football sponsorship, there are two major players

1. The sponsor – a business or an organisation
2. The sponsee – football clubs or associations.

Breaking down football sponsorship further, the sponsorship of a football club can be divided into four different sections using a pyramid system. The top of the pyramid has the main sponsor, followed by the kit sponsor in the next section. The 3rd section includes the commercial sponsors while the 4th section has the local or regional sponsors. (Buehler, 2006)



Figure 1: Sponsorship Triangle (Buehler, 2006)

- I. The main sponsor: This is the major sponsor of the football club. This sponsor has its brand logo pasted on the jersey or the kit of the club. The top 20 teams in the English Premier League earned more than \$155 million in 2010. (Jensen, Bowman, Larson, & Wang, 2013) Examples of main sponsors are Chevrolet (Manchester United), Emirates (Arsenal, Real Madrid and PSG), Samsung (Chelsea) and AIA and HP (Tottenham Hotspurs 2013-2014).

- II. The Kit sponsor: This is the organisation that produces the kit for the football teams. The sponsors can then use the club for promotional activities. Teams get millions of dollars in kit sponsorship. For example, Manchester United FC signed a 10 year

deal worth about \$1.15 billion and the deal will begin at the start of the 2015-16 season (Jackson, 2014). In 2010, Adidas signed a deal worth at least \$200m with the MLS to sponsor the kits of all the teams till 2018 (Associated Press, 2010).

- III. Commercial sponsors: the commercial sponsors pay a lot less than the other 2 sponsors above them. They benefit by getting advert boards in the stadium as well as being mentioned on the website or any other publications. These sponsors can also mention the name of the club when advertising their brand but this is not always the case. An example would be the Etisalat perimeter board at the Nou Camp in Barcelona.

- IV. Local or regional sponsors: they are just like the commercial sponsors but pay less than the commercial sponsors. They are place advertisements in the match programmes or buy perimeter boarding in the stadium (Buehler, 2006).

2.4- Why Companies invest in professional football

Based on the research done by Andre Buehler, there are various reasons why companies choose to invest in professional football.

Firstly, football provides a passion and an image. It helps companies who are looking to improve their image through the football as the sport emits a positive image and if a company that is seen as boring or

dull needs a passionate spark, football is the way to go since football has always been depicted as a passionate sport. Secondly, football has a wide audience and it has access to different target groups. This all important for sponsors who want to reach different target groups at the same time. Also, it is an avenue for companies to be able to reach groups that do not necessarily watch television but go to stadiums to watch matches or groups that can be accessed through the use of television adverts in other countries. This leads to the third and final point which is, football has a global appeal. A league like the English Premier League is watched by millions (if not billions) of people around the world. This helps companies access to advertising in many countries around the world without having to actually make adverts in each county.

2.5 – Benefits of sponsorship

2.5.1 - Benefits to the Sponsor

There are many benefits of being a sponsor of a football team or association. For one, sponsors are able to create awareness and strengthen the image of their brands. They can also use this avenue to create a relationship with new and existing customers (Jensen, Bowman, Larson, & Wang, 2013). For example, the kit sponsors would attract people who would not normally buy their products to start buying their products because they are the producers of the kits for the clubs that these people support. This could allow the customers to

develop an affinity towards the product and even if the club changes kit sponsors, the customers will already be used to the product and might be unlikely to change.

It also helps to save advertisement costs. For example Herbalife was able to earn an equivalent of \$175,000 in television exposure to its brand from a game that ESPN broadcasted with David Beckham wearing a Los Angeles Galaxy jersey with Herbalife's brand (Jensen, Bowman, Larson, & Wang, 2013). Lings & Owen point out that many sponsors aim to improve the performance of their bottom lines through sponsorship which leads to an increase in sales. (Lings & Owen, 2007). Amoako et al say that sponsors benefit from sponsorship because sponsorship helps differentiate the company from competitors. This is especially relevant to companies (sponsors) who have to compete with other companies with huge advertising budgets (Amoako et al 2012). Lastly, companies partake in sponsorship in order to gain goodwill (Jensen, Bowman, Larson, & Wang, 2013).

2.5.2 - Benefit to the Sponsee

The benefit of being sponsored or being a sponsee is that it is a means of income for the sponsee. For example, Manchester United signed a 7 year shirt deal with General Motors worth at least \$70m every year. This bettered the deal Barcelona has with Qatar Sports Investment. (Deloitte, 2013).

The deal with General Motors and Manchester United also included each Manchester United first team player being entitled to any Chevrolet car of their choice (Harris, 2013). A deal similar to this was the deal that Huawei had with the Ghana Football Association to sponsor the Men's first team in the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil. This one year deal was worth \$100,000 in both cash and products (Africatime, 2014).

2.6 - Relationship Between the sponsor and the sponsee

According to Buehler, the relationship between the sponsor and the sponsee can be viewed as a business-to-business relationship. This means that the sponsors and the sponsee are seen as business entities. Buehler also points out that professional football sponsorship can be done from a transactional or relational paradigm. This means that sponsors can go into a sponsorship for a short-term period (transactional paradigm), in order to gain some of the benefits of sponsorship while other sponsors go in for the not just the benefits, but in order to create a long term relationship with the football organization. The choice of which paradigm to go with, is based on the relationship orientation of the sponsor.

In recent times, there has been a shift, from the transactional paradigm to the relational paradigm and this has led to the development of relationship marketing and relationship quality.

2.7 - Relationship Marketing and Relationship Quality

Morgan and Hunt define relationship marketing as all “marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing and maintaining successful relational exchanges” (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). This is becoming a more and more important term in marketing and sponsorship now because it is not just about getting sponsorship partners or associates, but it is important to be able to retain them.

This is where relationship quality becomes important. Relationship Quality is viewed from the perspective of three factors that were created by Andre Wolfgang Buehler. These factors are:

1. **Relationship Compatibility**: Relationship compatibility is made up of trust, cooperation and understanding between the sponsor and the sponsee. Understanding and fairness are also necessary in improving or measuring relationship quality with this factor. Andre Buehler points out that relationship compatibility has the greatest influence on the quality of the relationship between a sponsor and a professional football organisation.
2. **Long-term Perspective**: Commitment is vital to this factor being successful. If both parties can agree to be committed in the long term there is a high chance of having a positive relationship and the opposite is the case when there are issues of commitment.

3. **Collaborative Behaviour**: Collaborative behaviour shows a good relationship quality if both parties are willing to work hand-in-hand and do more than what needs to be done in order to make the relationship work. This usually involves cooperation and communication and it means a mutual involvement in both parties' marketing and planning efforts.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 - Introduction

The previous chapters of this research have captured the concept of sponsorship and its benefits to both the sponsor and the sponsee. My paper looked at the league from the perspective of the sports marketing theory by B. Mullin and investigated the relationship between the Ghana Premier League and its sponsors.

Sport marketing is as an essential way to make money. And based on this, many companies have taken to advertisement in sports, football to be specific, by a means called sponsorship.

Based on the definition of sport marketing given by Mullin et al (2007), my paper explored the second thrust of sports marketing: "the marketing of other consumer and industrial products or services through the use of sport promotions." Another way of looking at this concept would be to look at it as sponsorship.

Andre Buhler points out that there are three factors that have a positive influence on the quality of a relationship between the sponsors and a sponsee; especially in a professional football context. These factors are 'relationship compatibility', 'Long-term perspective' and 'collaborative behaviour'.

3.1 - Research Design

For this research, a qualitative approach was used. This research was qualitative because the purpose of this research was to discover how sponsorship in the Ghana Premier League is managed. I wanted to understand how sponsors are chosen, why they are chosen or dropped and what the money from sponsorship is used for. In order to achieve these aims, I conducted interviews. The participants of this interview will be:

- Ghana Premier League club official
- Ghana Football Association official
- Sponsors of the Ghana Premier
- Football Journalists with relevant information

The reason for interviewing GPL and GFA officials is because they are the people who have the relevant information to help answer my research questions. The GFA official was able to give me some insight as to how the league chooses its sponsors and the journalists were able to tell me a bit of history of the league and also give expert opinions on how sponsorship in the league can be improved.

Respondents were selected based on their official positions and were asked open ended questions to allow room for them to express themselves freely.

Before the interview, interviewees were given a consent form to sign. This form allowed me to use the information gathered from the interview for the paper and the identity of the interviewee will not be revealed at all, if they desire to remain anonymous. The interviewees were allowed to dismiss any of the questions if they liked and they were also allowed to end the interview at any point in time.

3.2 Study Population

The population for my paper was made up of sponsors of the Ghana Premier League, Ghana Football Association officials and Ghana Premier League club officials. Five people were interviewed in total. The reason for this size was that the people interviewed were the ones who had the relevant information needed for this paper. These people were limited in number such as the top officials of the league and the FA, as well as journalists who have worked in the league for years and football historians.

3.3 - Sampling Method

For the research, purposive sampling was used. This was because there was a specific group of people whom I needed to talk to in order carry out my research. Without these people, I would not have been able to do this research. Necessary information was needed from the officials of the Ghana Premier League and sponsors in order to carry out my research.

3.4 – Data Processing and Analysis

The data from the interviews was transcribed. After that, the data from the interviews with the GFA officials was analysed using content analysis and conclusions will be drawn based on whether the factors in the theoretical framework do exist in the Ghana Premier League.

Chapter 4

Introduction

This chapter is written to analyse the presented data from this study. The data was acquired from in-depth interviews and will be analysed using content analysis. The in-depth interviews conducted were with the Public Relations Officer of the GFA and GPL as well as with four journalists, one of whom is also a sports historian. The content of this thesis will be analysed under the following themes: relationship compatibility, long-term perspective and collaborative behaviour.

The interviews done were open-ended interviews. They were structured towards finding out about the history of the league and the management of sponsorship in the league.

4.1.1 Interview with Mr Sani Dara

In my interview with Mr Dara, he spoke about how the GPL and the GFA are not independent of each other. The league body (this means all the administrative positions of the Ghana Premier League in all the Divisions) is under the GFA. The reason for this is because "the football association (FA) has noticed that the model of the league being independent of the FA is not very successful. It has worked in a few countries but it has caused friction between the league and the FA and we don't want this in Ghana." – Ibrahim Sani Dara

Concerning whether the FA sends money to the league, Mr Dara said that since the GFA runs the league, they fund the league. This led to

the issue of the distribution of the monies gotten from sponsorship deals for the league. In answering this question, he said that not all the sponsorship money is given to the clubs. The money is also spent on league administration, paying referees, match officials, the people who organise the matches, security officials and venue media officers. He pointed out that even though the sponsorship money is shared amongst the clubs and other areas of the league, the FA does not impose a share of the money on the league. In other words, the FA proposes how much should be shared amongst the clubs to the clubs and then both parties negotiate a deal and decide how much the clubs should get. This means that the percentage of sponsorship money given to the clubs varies but in the end, 100% of the sponsorship money is invested back into the league as well as a few of the teams in the Division 1 who collect 10% of the sponsorship money.

About earning more money, Mr Dara believes that the league can earn more money. He states that firstly, there are many sponsorship holes left to be filled. Apart from First Capital Plus Bank (the title sponsors), the GPL has a water sponsor (Voltic Water). He suggests that the league could do with electronics, technology, vehicle, soft drink, hard liquor partners. These and many more partners can be gotten into the league. Secondly, the clubs should get their own sponsors. He mentions the main sponsor as an example and this is similar to what was mentioned in my literature review when I discussed the sponsorship

triangle and he also mentions the commercial sponsors who can advertise on the pitch panels on match-day. He continues by saying that the clubs should work on getting match fee revenue. He said that the match-day revenue has fallen and one of the key reasons for this is the invasion of foreign football being shown on television at the same time the GPL matches are being played. Other reasons include poor salaries and early exodus of players from the league to foreign leagues.

Addressing the issue of getting sponsors, Mr Dara points out that firstly, the GFA has a very small marketing team and this is the reason why they do not go out sourcing for sponsors by themselves. Secondly, big sports organisations like CAF (Confederation of African Football) and FIFA (Fédération International de Football Association) outsource the role of marketing and sponsorship searching to marketing companies. This is why the GFA allow marketing companies to search for sponsorship for the league. These marketing companies are given a commission of 10% or more, of the total sponsorship deal. The only role the GFA plays in sourcing for sponsorship is negotiating the price of the deal with the sponsors.

With regard to the sponsorship money being reinvested into the league in terms of developing academies and Mr Dara said that since the sponsorship money is not so much hence, the GFA is careful not to overly burden the clubs. The GFA is rolling out the Club Licensing System which would require every club to have a functioning office that

would handle marketing and other issues such as having academies for the clubs. Apart from the previously mentioned areas which the sponsorship money is invested, the GFA does not do any other thing with the money. This is because, the money gotten from sponsorship is not so much so the GFA has to be careful not to upset the clubs by diverting the money to many areas of the league.

4.1.2 Relationship Quality

Relationship Compatibility:

Relationship compatibility looks at understanding and fairness in a sponsorship relationship as well as trust. Mr Dara points out that the GFA is involved in getting a fair deal from the league sponsors. He does say that there are issues of trust between the sponsors and the sponsee for example "if you promise to give them 10 tickets for attending a match and you are not doing it, you are breaking the trust." However, Mr Dara does not mention much regarding understanding between the two parties. Both parties have a business-to-business relationship and they both respect that. Concerning the issue with GLO defaulting, Mr Dara said that the FA has learnt from the issue and when they were signing the contract with First Capital Plus bank, the FA drafted a document to ensure that there is no such occurrence again.

Long-term Perspective:

Long term perspective examines how committed both the sponsor and the sponsee are to having a long-term relationship with each other. This would be examines based on mutual commitment and satisfaction. Mr Dara points out that in the past and present, "the title sponsors of the league just invest in the league and go to sleep believing that the sponsorship will do the work for them." He said that "as a sponsor, you must have a budget for activation. The activation is, the onus lies upon you (the sponsor) to use the players for adverts." In other words, it is expected by the sponsor to make use of the league in order to market itself further rather than just believing that being called the title sponsor is enough. This shows that the GFA and GPL are not satisfied with their relationship with the sponsors because, they are not actively involved in advertising themselves via the players or clubs in the league and this means there is less awareness of the league. Furthermore, when looking at the issue between GLO Ghana defaulting in payment, Mr Dara points out that GLO Ghana were not committed to the agreement to the extent that GLO has had to be taken to court for refusing to pay the full sponsorship fee.

Collaborative Behaviour:

Collaborative Behaviour concerns cooperation and communication between the sponsor and the sponsee. Mr Dara said that the GFA is willing to cooperate with its sponsors concerning activation. He cites the example of how active Uni Bank is with the use of Black Stars (Ghana's male senior national football team) players in advertisement and that the GFA is willing to cooperate to do more with their sponsors.

4.2. Interview with Journalists

This section looks at the perspective of football journalists in the Ghana Premier League. I spoke with Mr James Oyedeji, who is both a sports journalist and a sports historian; Fiifi Anaman who writes exclusives on the Ghana Premier League and two other journalists who asked to remain anonymous.

4.2.1. History of the Ghana Premier League

The Ghana Premier League started in 1958. Then it was known as the First Division. In 1993, it became the Ghana Premier League. In 1956, there was an attempt to start a football league however things did not go according to plan because there was a falling out between the Ashanti Regional clubs and the Ghana Amateur Football Association (GAFA) which was headed by Richard Aquaye. Due to this issue, most of the clubs in the league pulled out due to the chaos and the trophy, known as the Tate & Lyle Trophy, was handed to Accra Hearts of Oak.

In 1957, an election was held to appoint a new head of the GAFA and Ohene Gyan won the election. Ohene Gyan formed the First Division league in 1958 comprising of 8 clubs from 4 regions.

Region	Team 1	Team 2
Accra	Accra Hearts of Oak	Accra Great Olympics
Kumasi	Kumasi Asante Kotoko	Kumasi Cornerstones
Sekondi	11Ys	Sekondi Asserters
Cape Coast	Venomous Vipers	Mysterious Dwarves

Table showing the Pioneering teams of the Ghana First Division

These clubs pioneered the Ghana First Division and the league title that year, was won by Accra Hearts of Oak.

4.2.2. Sponsorship in the Ghana Premier League

Concerning sponsorship in the Ghana Premier League, the journalists claimed that the GFA has been biased towards the Black Stars and that the league is not being marketed well. One of the journalists pointed out that the stadium attendance is falling and one of the reasons for this is because the league has to compete with foreign football on television and this is similar to what Mr Dara said. The journalists also agree that the Ghana Premier League can do better with its sponsorship.

When asked about what is being done with the sponsorship money, the journalists stated something similar to what Mr Dara mentioned: a bulk of the money goes to the clubs while the rest is used to pay the referees, security for the stadiums and salaries of the administrators of the league.

Finally, the journalists agree that the sponsors should follow through on their investments. It is not just about putting money in the league and walking away. The sponsors need to follow through to make sure that their brands are being well marketed. This is similar to what Mr Dara said on the issue of activation by the sponsors.

4.2.2 What has gone wrong and what can be done?

“The issues of the Ghana Premier League are a lot more than what meets the eye”. This was said by one of the journalists in my interviews. Concerning the problems of the league, one of the reasons why the league is not moving forward is because there are poor basic wages.

“I know players who earn 70 Cedis per month as basic salary” –Football Journalist

This is why players try to leave as soon as possible to countries like Kuwait and India in search of “greener pastures”. The journalists also argued that, the administration of the league is bad. There is no

marketing done by the GFA to organise press conference or hype matches. However, this point was made invalid by Mr Sani Dara. He said that the duty of hyping the matches was down to the clubs. Every club is supposed to have a media team that organises press conferences for the clubs and also these press conferences are supposed to serve as a spring board for the entertainment that is supposed to come on match day.

The final argument posed for why the league is doing badly is that the fans are not interested in watching matches in the stadiums. They would rather sit behind their televisions to watch the foreign leagues than pay 10 Cedis to watch Accra Hearts of Oak vs. Brekum Chelsea. There is a myth that the quality of football in the league is not good at all and this can be based on a comparison between the English Premier League and the Ghana Premier League. However, this is not a fair comparison because the quality of the league in England is far better given the level of infrastructure in the country. So it is important that the media finds a way to get the people involved and willing to come and watch football in the stadiums.

Looking at what can be done, the journalists argued that:

1. The league needs to be taken seriously by the administration.

There is the argument that the GFA does not have much regard

for the league because they are focused on the Men's National Team. There is a need for a change in attitude of the administration and the clubs as well. The league should not just be a springboard for teams to develop players and sell them off. There are other ways of making money. The leagues should also look for sponsors. Amongst the 16 clubs in the Ghana Premier League, less than 50% of them have shirt sponsors. The clubs need to be marketed so that they can earn more revenue and pay their players better.

It is also disappointing to note that none of the players in the national team play in the Ghana Premier League. This does not speak well of the league at all. Most of the best teams in the world have players playing in their own countries. The league that is looked up to (English Premier League) has all its players playing in England. The argument there is not about getting home-based players into the national team. Rather it is reducing the influx of foreign players to their league because it is reducing the number of English players playing in the top division. This should be the case in Ghana if the league is to be better. Foreign players should be rushing in to play in Ghana rather than the players leaving

2. Secondly, there is a low level of discipline in the Ghana Premier League. According to a football journalist, the football community

in Ghana does not know how to follow the dictates of institutions. People do what they want and can get away with it. For example, a coach can come out of a match and tell the media that he does not feel like talking because his team lost. This shows a lack of discipline and a lack of respect for the league. There is a need for orderliness and everyone should know what he has to do and make sure it is done properly.

3. Finally, there needs to be hype in the league. There is not enough excitement in the league. The media officers of the teams are not doing their jobs and this only affecting the league negatively. There needs to be more marketing done. Adverts about matches should be made. Teams should have partnerships with television stations to show the matches live.

Chapter 5

Introduction

This chapter seeks to draw a comparison between the findings and literature. It also looks at making recommendations based on findings as well as for further study and limitations.

5.1. Discussion of findings

My findings show that the GFA and the GPL are not independent of each other. This is contrary to my initial assumption. Given that the GFA does not want disputes with the GPL, it makes sense that the GFA does not allow the GPL to be autonomous. Also, the GFA does not have a team that goes and seeks for sponsorship. Instead, this is outsourced to marketing companies in Ghana and the GFA gives a certain percentage of the money out as commission to the external body.

Considering the relationship between the GPL and its sponsors, there is a bit of a lack of understanding between both parties. As pointed out by Mr Dara and the journalists, the sponsors should be following up on their investments and there should be more communication between the sponsors and the GPL in terms of marketing and planning efforts as stated by Andre Buehler.

I found that the sponsorship money is shared amongst a lot of bodies in the GPL and this is a problem because the GFA also funds the league and yet with the sponsorship money, there is still a little flow of money in the GPL. This raises a question of how much is actually flowing in the

league and whether there really is too little money or whether the money is being managed poorly.

5.2.1 Recommendations for GPL and GFA

1. I would recommend that the GPL clubs get more sponsors. Like Andre Buehler stated, it is possible to have as many sponsors as a club wants. Already, Mr Dara has stated that the league can earn more by getting more sponsors but the responsibility also lies on the clubs to get their own sponsors and not depend solely on the league.

2. I would also recommend that journalists get more involved in the league. The GFA cannot do all the media work. Mr Dara made a point that the GFA newspaper had to be stopped because it was making a loss of 10, 000 Cedis per week. The newspapers in Ghana hardly report on the league. When journalists have the opportunity to view GPL matches for free, they do not show up yet when it is a match for the men's national team they are arriving in their numbers and these journalists claim that the GFA is "Black Star-centric". The clubs should not be left out. As the GFA is making an effort to ensure that every team has media boxes in their stadiums, the clubs should also be involved in getting the league hyped.

3. Lastly, I would recommend that the GFA creates a model that can help achieve the short-term and long-term objectives of the league. This would make it easier to develop the league improve the standards for years to come. An improved league would mean more fans, which means more money for the league and more popularity as well.

5.2.2. Recommendations for further study

I would recommend that further study be done in the area of sponsorship in the GPL on a club level. It would be interesting to have the opinion of the clubs, the sponsors and the fans concerning how sponsorship can be improved in the league and how the league can get better.

5.3. Limitations

One limitation that I had was that I was not able to talk to the sponsors of the league because there were long bureaucratic processes involved in getting to the sponsors. This means that I did not get the opinion of sponsors in this study as I had initially planned and it also reduced my sample size. Their input to the study would have helped in getting another perspective of the sponsorship in the league, especially because they are stakeholders in the league.

It was also very difficult to schedule interviews with many journalists who write solely on the GPL. This was because I did not have enough time and finances to look for journalists all over the country. In addition

to that, I did not have enough connections to be able to get in touch with many journalists.

5.4 Conclusion

Sponsorship is one of the most important sources of revenue in football today. Apart from it making football lucrative, it has changed the scope of which the sport is being looked at.

“Football should not be looked at as just a sport anymore. It is now a source of entertainment”- Ibrahim Sani Dara

There is not much that cannot be done with football. Investors are looking for ways to use football to advertise their brands and leagues, teams and players all over the world are now advertisement images for companies. It is important that we do not limit ourselves in Africa and make good use of the opportunities provided to us by the sport.

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APPENDIX

Sample questions for Interviews

Interview Guidelines for Ghana Premier League official

1. What are your criteria for choosing sponsors?
2. How would you describe your relationship with your current sponsors?
3. How would you describe your relationship with your previous sponsors?
4. How do you spend your sponsorship money?
5. In what areas of the league is the sponsorship money invested if sponsorship money does go back into the league?
6. How much do you earn from sponsors annually?
7. How much does the GFA give the league annually?

Interview Guidelines for Ghana Football Association official

1. Is the Ghana Premier League independent of the GFA?
2. Does the GFA send money to the Ghana Premier League?
3. What is done with the sponsorship money given to the Ghana Premier League?
4. Do you think the league can earn more? If yes, how? If no, why not?

Interview Guidelines for sponsors of the Ghana Premier League

1. How would you describe your relationship with the Ghana Premier League?
2. How do you decide to sponsor an organization or event?
3. What would make you invest more in the league?
4. What would make you cancel your sponsorship deal?

Interview Guidelines for Football Journalists

1. Can you give me a brief overview of the Ghana Premier League?
2. How much of the Ghana Premier League do you know in regards to sponsorship?
3. In your opinion, is the Ghana Premier League being properly managed?
4. In your opinion, is the Ghana Premier League being properly marketed?
5. How can the Ghana Premier League be better marketed?

Interview Consent Form

I, Abiola Obiwole, would like to ask your permission to be part of my academic research paper.

The purpose of my study is to investigate the relationship between the Ghana Premier League and its sponsors. As a respondent, you will be asked a few questions in an interview that will be conducted by me (Abiola Obiwole) and this interview will be recorded for data retaining purposes.

If you do not want this interview to be recorded, you have the right to let me know before the start of the interview or at any point in time during the interview.

You are free to be part of this interview, and you are free to stop the interview at any moment during the interview.

The risk of being a part of this interview is that there is a possibility that your identity and views can be mentioned in this research paper. However, this risk can be eliminated if you request to be anonymous during the interview by tick the anonymity box attached below.

The benefit of being a part of this study is that you can make a big contribution to the research which can go a long way in influencing the decision making policies in the Ghana Premier League.

The information gathered in this interview will be published in an academic thesis paper.

If you have any questions, you can ask me (Abiola Obiwole).

You can contact me via

Email: Abiola.obiwole@ashesi.edu.gh

Phone: 233-54-18-36-416

For further information, you can contact my supervisor via

Email: kgraham@ashesi.edu.gh

Name of Respondent
DATE

Signature

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...../...../.....

.....

Please tick the attached box if you want to request anonymity throughout this interview.... []

THIS STUDY AND CONSENT FORM HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY ASHESI IRB FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE COMMITTEE THROUGH irb@ashesi.edu.gh