DEVELOPMENT OF A SCALE TO EVALUATE THE BRANDING EFFECT

OF MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL IN TAIWAN

A DISSERTATION

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BY

TUNG-WEI WU, B.A., M.S.

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To the Dean of the Graduate School:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Tung-Wei Wu entitled "Development of a Scale to Evaluate the Branding Effect of Major League Baseball in Taiwan." I have examined this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in Kinesiology.

Leslie Graham
Leslie Graham, Ph.D., Major Professor
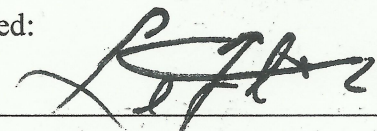
We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

David Rylander
Dr. David Rylander

Mary Palmer
Dr. Mary E. Palmer

Ronald French
Dr. Ronald French

_____
Interim Department Chair

Accepted: _____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my dearest Mother. You are the best mother, best friend, and best life mentor. Without your sacrifice, unconditional love, never-ending encouragement, and faith in me, anything in my life would not be possible. I am beyond fortunate to grow up and bathe in your wisdom and love. This dissertation is to glorify you.

To my beloved brother, this dissertation could not be completed without your full support. You have been the precious pillar of the family and have always supplied me with timely inspiration and technological savvy throughout this journey. With your presence in the family, I was able to stay calm, focused, and worry-free away from home. This dissertation is to salute you.

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ABSTRACT

TUNG-WEI WU

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The purpose of the present study was to develop a league brand association scale

from the perspective of Taiwanese toward Major League Baseball (MLB). A mixed

methods approach, including a qualitative pilot study (thought-listing and

semistructured interview) and an Interne survey, was used to explore brand

associations Taiwanese media consumers currently hold toward MLB. The entire

research followed the steps of multi-item scale development proposed by Hair Jr.,

Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006). The thematic analysis was conducted to

identify the underlying themes behind the interview in order to develop the potential

scale. The data collected through the Internet survey were analyzed through Principal

Component Analysis (PCA), item-to-total correlations, and inter-item correlations

(Cronbach's alpha coefficients) to ensure the validity and reliability of the scale.

Overall, this study targeted Taiwanese MLB media consumers (i.e., no in-person

MLB game experience) between 20 and 45 years old. Multiple criteria were set to

screen participants' eligibility on both data collections. In total, 699 participants met

the criteria. MLB Taiwanese Brand Association Scale (MLBTBA) with 12 brand

associations was constructed through Taiwanese media consumers whom were at least

team followers (i.e., medium consumers). A method of evaluating the involvement of

"satellite fans" was inferred. The scarce match between the MLBTBA and the league

brand associations of Kunkel, Funk, and King (2014) both revealed the uniqueness of

the MLBTBA and suggested the exclusivity of league brand associations. Through

Keller's (1993) Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model, 12 brand associations

of the MLBTBA were categorized into two types. A negative brand association

(Performance Enhancing Drugs) and a comparative brand association (League Role

Model) may both be discovered for the first time throughout the inquiry of brand

association in professional sport. The discovery of the negative brand association may

suggest a direction in expanding Keller's (1993) CBBE model. The discovery of the

comparative brand association may also add to the combined knowledge of Keller's

(1993) CBBE model and Kerr and Gladden's (2008) "satellite fan". Through MLB

Taiwan brand architecture, the MLBTBA was identified as a league-team scale.

Finally, three levels of MLB branding strengths in Taiwan were outlined.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the late 20th century, sport has been redefined as many professional

leagues and teams started to seek overseas markets (Fay, Velez, & Parks, 2011). Due

to this revolution and the availability of communication technology, the global market

is now more accessible for a sport organization. Such a circumstance has motivated

US professional sports leagues to list global expansion as one of their priorities (Barr

& Hums, 1998; Fullerton, 2007).

Global marketing and global outsourcing are the two characteristics of the

globalization of sports (Fay et al., 2011). The four US major professional sports

leagues, namely Major League Baseball (MLB), the National Basketball Association

(NBA), the National Hockey League (NHL), and the National Football League

(NFL), have all been involved in globalization. Although NFL is behind, all four

leagues have been seeking global participation and growth (Lizandra & Vail, 2005).

MLB is the oldest professional baseball league in North America and the

highest level of professional baseball around the world (Official site of MLB, 2016a).

Under the supervision of the Office of the Commissioner of Baseball, MLB has made

significant progress over the past two decades in launching Major League Baseball

International (MLBI) and initiating the World Baseball Classic (WBC) for global

expansion. Establishing MLB Advanced Media (MLBAM) and Major League

Baseball Network (MLB Network) as official media outlets also facilitate MLB's

global outreach.

Positioned as the top level of professional baseball, MLB is dedicated to

influencing the worldwide communities (Official site of MLB, 2016a). MLB's

mission statement clearly supports a global branding strategy. MLB keeps marketing

itself as a global brand through the continuation of global outsourcing and media

development (Lewis, 2010). In addition, MLBI promotes the brands of MLB and its

30 teams as well as demonstrates the world's best talents through international events

and campaigns (Official site of MLB, 2016b).

In the meantime, the WBC was initiated to get baseball better global exposure

(Lefton, 2006) by featuring the world's best players who represent their home

countries to compete for a world championship. The WBC is actually a marketing

platform (Jun & Lee, 2007) which allows MLB to brand itself on a greater

international level (Goss, 2009) through "global in form, but national in essence"

(Klein, 2006, p. 247) to introduce baseball to the world, to grow the game (Jun & Lee), and to maximize its global outreach (Lewis, 2010).

One area of attention for MLB has been East Asia. According to the US Department of State (n.d.), East Asia covers Taiwan, Japan, Republic of Korea (South Korea), Mongolia, China (including Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and Macau Special Administrative Region), North Korea, and others. In MLB's East Asia marketing strategy, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea are categorized as mature markets where baseball is popular and MLB is already famous with strong telecast and licensed merchandise presences, whereas China is a nontraditional market due to the fact that baseball is less favored and the MLB brand is not recognized in the region (Snyder, 2012).

Inherited from Japan, baseball has been embedded in Taiwanese history for over 100 years. Baseball matters greatly to the Taiwanese because it is Taiwan's most competitive sport on the international stages (Chao, 2003). Since 1971, Taiwan has not been recognized as an official nation in the international community. However, the dominance of Taiwanese baseball in Little League Baseball (LLB) throughout the 1970s and 1980s has formed a collective memory and a symbol of nation-making in the minds of Taiwanese from generation to generation (Wang, 2009). Further, baseball

even facilitates racial integration domestically while distinguishing Taiwan from China internationally (Yu & Bairner, 2008). Therefore, baseball is the national sport of Taiwan.

Since Hideo Nomo, the recent first Japanese-born MLB player, opened the MLB opportunity to Asian players, the number of Taiwanese players who chase this opportunity has been growing. There have been 11 Taiwanese players promoted to the major league. Each player is/was the focus of Taiwanese media and treated as a national hero, especially Chien-Ming Wang, the former pitcher of the New York Yankees who collected 19 wins in 2006 and 2007 seasons consecutively.

MLB has recognized that Taiwan is passionate for baseball, so it staged two exhibition series ("Dodgers to make," 2010; "MLB and MLBPA," 2011), a 2013 WBC qualifying round in 2012 (Fordin, 2012), and the first round for Pool B of the 2013 WBC ("WBC announces venues," 2012) in Taiwan over the past 6 years. While it did not occur, a 2015 season-opening game in Taiwan was seriously considered (Yeh, 2014). The MLB's frequent and recent presence in Taiwan signals the weight of the Taiwan market in the MLB's eyes. As Jim Small, the president of MLB Japan, pointed out, "Baseball is very important to Taiwan, and Taiwan has been very important to the MLB" (Huang, 2011, para. 8).

Despite the familiarity with MLB, the long distance between the US and

Taiwan leaves Taiwanese no other consumption options. Compared to US residents,

Taiwanese can only consume the MLB game and information through the media (i.e.,

television, newspaper, or the Internet) unless an MLB exhibition or seasonal game is

staged in Taiwan. Such a restricted consumption pattern may be categorized as

indirect or media consumers according to the escalator theory (Mullin, Hardy, &

Sutton, 2007). However, the escalator theory was originally initiated based on the

local consumer involvement (e.g., the frequency of game attendance), disregarding

the geographical constraint imposed on the overseas consumer. With the emergence of

new communication technologies and the recognition of global fans in professional

sports, these foreign fans, including Taiwanese consumers, are now labelled as

"satellite fan" (Kerr & Gladden, 2008, p. 61).

Part of the business of baseball has always been branding. "A brand is a

distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as a logo, trademark, or package design)

intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and

to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors" (Aaker, 1991, p.7).

So, branding begins with using a logo, a name, and a symbol to distinguish an

organization from its competitor. The goal of branding is to place positive feelings in

the minds of consumers (Mullin et al., 2007) and to "...make a brand more valuable

and meaningful" (Bedbury, 2002, p. 14). To achieve the goal, a consumer-based brand

management strategy is the key (Bedbury, 2002).

When successfully placing positive values in the consumer's mind, a

corporation establishes brand equity (Mullin et al., 2007). Brand equity refers to "...a

set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol, that add to or

subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's

customers" (Aaker, 1991, p. 15). A brand with a strong equity often translates into

customer loyalty, price elasticity, extending profits (Arens, 1996), upholding

franchises, and repelling competitors (Fill, 2002). However, Aaker (1996a) pointed

out that brand equity both benefits the corporation and the consumer.

Both Aaker (1996a) and Keller (1993) have conceptualized a brand equity

model. Aaker (1996a) noted that brand equity is the collective outcome of five

dimensions: brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, brand loyalty,

and other propriety brand assets. Keller's (1993) customer-based brand equity model

(CBBE) is based on brand knowledge which consists of brand image and brand

awareness. Four kinds of brand associations held by the consumer also contribute to

brand image.

In the genre of sport branding, a line of brand equity models was drawn on

Aaker's (1996a) framework. Gladden, Milne, and Sutton (1998) first proposed a

brand equity model on NCAA college sport. Gladden and Milne (1999) then extended

this model to the professional sport team setting. Recently, Kerr and Gladden (2008)

further outstretched this model to the influence of professional sport teams in overseas

markets.

There are investigators who have conducted empirical studies measuring

brand equity by financial outcomes (Biscaia, Correia, Ross, Rosado, and Maroco,

2013; Boone, Kochunny, & Wilkins, 1995; Gladden & Milne, 1999). However, since

consumers generate and hold the brand equity, some scholars believe it is important to

examine brand equity from the consumers' standpoint (Aaker, 1991; Gladden & Funk,

2001; Keller, 1993). Thus, CBBE has been incorporated or adapted to study the

consumer in the sport settings (Bauer, Sauer, & Schmitt, 2005; Bauer, Stokburger-

Sauer, & Exler, 2008; Eryigit, 2013; Funk & James, 2006; Gladden & Funk, 2001,

2002; Kunkel, Funk, & King, 2009, 2014).

According to Keller (1993), "Customer-based brand equity occurs when the

consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong, and unique

brand associations in memory" (p. 2). In other words, a brand must first be recognized

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by a consumer. Second, the consumer must bear a positive and unique image toward the brand in mind. Notably, this image is an accumulation of brand associations.

Brand associations are anything a consumer holds relevant to a specific brand in memory (Aaker, 1991), including the concepts to the brand (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). These associations can be categorized into groups of attributes, benefits, and attitudes (Keller, 1993). The associations are both the core component of CBBE and serve as consumption determinants (Aaker, 1996b), which make them crucial in brand management. Therefore, CBBE is usually assessed through brand associations.

Behavioral brand loyalty is an eligible consequence of CBBE (Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2013). Previous studies have shown that CBBE drives brand loyalty (Leone et al., 2006), and its differential effect may also cultivate a consumer's stronger behavioral loyalty (Keller, 1993; Keller, 2003a; Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2013). A reason for this is because associations serve as informational nodes to help retrieve a specific brand out of a consumer's mind in a decision-making situation (Romaniuk, 2003).

In professional sports, brand loyalty mitigates the sport product's unpredictable nature (Miloch, 2010) such as the team has a bad season or star players are on the disabled list. Brand loyalty may also secure a fan to constantly follow a

team through game attendance, media consumption, and merchandise purchase (Gladden & Funk, 2001). In addition, brand loyalty even goes beyond the border of a country. For example, Manchester United Football Club of the English Premier League claimed 80% of their fans lived overseas (Jarvis, 2004), and the club reached its 50 million followers on Facebook ("Reds hit 50m," 2014). Finally, overseas brand loyalty ensures additional revenues from telecast rights, merchandise sales, and licensing for a professional organization which echoes MLBI's Asian strategy: "...to find a local player and build on that" (Chow, 2011, para. 9).

All in all, brand loyalty determines the success of a professional sport organization. However, based on Keller's (1993) framework, a professional sport organization firstly needs to acquire what associations consumers hold toward the organization so that CBBE and even brand loyalty can be evaluated, realized, and managed. Therefore, an instrument in place to measure and establish CBBE is crucial.

Numerous consumer-based brand association scales have been developed or modified in the genre of professional sports recently (Bauer et al., 2005; Bauer et al., 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2001, 2002; Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014; Ross, James, & Vargas, 2006). Among these studies, Gladden and Funk (2001, 2002) laid the groundwork as their works were adapted by all the later versions except the team

brand association scale (TBAS) developed by Ross et al. (2006). Notably, most of

these studies focused on professional sport teams, leaving only two scales extended

into the league level of professional sports (Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014).

As mentioned above, MLBI handles the global growth of baseball, promotes

the brands of MLB and its 30 teams, and showcases the world's best talent through

international events (Official site of MLB, 2016b). It is evident the MLB governing

body centralizes the global business and markets itself to the world as a whole group

or as a league. Thus, how overseas consumers perceive MLB should also be captured

from a league standpoint in accordance with the MLB's global strategy. However,

before exploring Taiwanese consumers' perceptions of MLB, the league-team

relationship in professional sports needs to be justified.

One characteristic which makes professional sport leagues unique is the

governing role of the league office as no other industry has such entity within the

organizational structure (Gladden & Sutton, 2011). The governance covers various

league-wide businesses from game scheduling, record saving, financial management,

licensing, marketing, and to coordinating teams on publicity and advertising (Gladden

& Sutton, 2011). However, the major function of the league office is to regulate but

not fully control the players union and team owners (Gladden & Sutton, 2014) to

ensure the competitive balance on the field and a prosperous league.

Technically, in professional sports, the league sets the groundwork (e.g., game

schedule, regulations, and governance on all relevant parties) for the teams to produce

sport products (Kunkel et al., 2009) and simultaneously oversees and supports their

business throughout the entire production process. So, the game is the product, also

the league product, produced by the competition between two teams through arranged

seasonal series and ultimately leads to an annual championship (Gladden & Funk,

2002). The interrelationship between the league and the team can thereby be noticed.

From the marketing perspective, the league not only handles its brand but also

supplies a platform for the teams to develop their brands (Kunkel, Hill, & Funk, 2013)

and to cultivate the consumer. Besides, the league typically markets itself with the

team brands embedded in (Pitt, Napoli, & Van Der Merwe, 2003) or demonstrates the

team brands through the league branding. Given the facts above, team consumers are

also league consumers in nature (Kunkel et al., 2014).

The close relationship between the league and the team can be applied in the

concept of brand architecture (Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014; Kunkel et al., 2013). "Brand

portfolio includes all of the brands managed by the organization" (Aaker, 2004, p.

16), and brand architecture depicts the relationships between the brands perceived by

the consumer under an organizational brand portfolio (Aaker & Joachimsthaler,

2000).

The league serves as a brand roof over the teams (Kunkel et al., 2009), and the

interaction between the two indicates that a strong one is necessary for the success of

the other (Kunkel et al., 2014). For example, the consumer associates a national-scale

professional sport league with a level of quality and quality teams (Kunkel et al.,

2013). A successful league brand also carries the growth of the affiliated teams (Lock,

Darcy, & Taylor, 2009). In the contrary, popular teams with strong brand value (e.g.,

Manchester United Football Club and New York Yankees) can also strengthen the

league brand (Kunkel et al., 2013). Furthermore, star power, one of the team's

characteristics, both promotes the team brand (Bauer et al., 2008; Gladden & Funk,

2002; Kolbe & James, 2000) and the league brand eventually as it keeps the

consumers attached to the game.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to develop a league brand association

scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB. This league brand association

scale is expected to demonstrate the current branding effect of MLB in Taiwan or

what Taiwanese have currently been impressed with MLB.

Significance of the Study

Currently, three studies have examined league-level branding in professional

sports (Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014; Kunkel et al., 2013). However, only two of the

studies were related to constructing the league brand association scale (Kunkel et al.,

2009, 2014). The present study will strengthen the investigation in this area through

developing the third scale from the perspective of the "satellite fan" (Taiwanese media

consumers), followed by a construct review and a comparison with the existing league

scale (Kunkel et al., 2014). In addition, the difference among the league, team(s), and

player(s) in Taiwanese consumers' loyalty strength will be explored.

MLB has been involved in Asian marketing for years; however, little empirical

research evaluates MLB's branding in East Asia. This study will fill the void to

provide MLB with a specific understanding on the Taiwan market.

Since MLB has regarded Taiwan as a mature market (Snyder, 2012), its

marketing strategy will need to be more specific. Understanding how Taiwanese

perceive MLB will in return guide MLB with its unique characteristics to customize

efficient approaches to reinforce favorite brand associations or develop new ones,

deepen the relationship with Taiwan, and cultivate Taiwanese loyalty toward MLB.

Kunkel et al. (2009, 2014) suggested that league brand associations perceived

by consumers may vary from league to league, indicating league unique

characteristics. Such findings reinforce the rationale to tailor a consumer-based brand

association scale for MLB. First, there may not have a universal league brand

association scale, or it may be more appropriate to tailor a league brand association

scale for each league to capture comprehensive brand associations.

Second and following this train of thought, the existing consumer-based

league brand association scales may fail to capture the MLB's unique characteristics.

The two developed scales were woven based on either the previous team association

scale (Kunkel et al., 2009) or a thought-listing of participants' associations on their

favorite sport leagues (Kunkel et al., 2014). The former scale may not fit in the MLB

case as, for example, the team associations lack the attributes such as a global game

and the top league around the world, although this scale adopted form professional

team associations was reported fit in the league setting (Kunkel et al., 2009). The

latter scale which combined participants' thoughts on diverse sport leagues may dilute

the suitability and not be representable for MLB since every league has its unique

characteristics and only nine of twenty-six interviewees responded based on a sport

league (i.e., English Premier League) which has been involved in global business.

In the last 10 years, MLBI stressed marketing strategies in Asia need tailoring

by country (King, 2006). Since consumer knowledge forms CBBE, developing an

MLB brand association scale directly through the perspective of Taiwanese will be the

best method to examine and assist with MLB's branding strategies in Taiwan.

Furthermore, as the globalization of US professional sports assisted by

communication technology, consumers nowadays can be at every corner of the world.

These "satellite fans", like Taiwanese MLB consumers, are a newborn category in

professional sport research, so the present study intends to be a groundbreaker in this

realm.

Finally, developing a scale serves as a basis for the follow-up research. With a

customized brand association scale in place, the outcome variables of the MLB

branding (e.g., investigating the relationship between brand associations and brand

loyalty) in Taiwan can be more accurately measured.

Research Questions

Q1. What brand associations do Taiwanese media consumers ("satellite fans")

currently hold toward MLB?

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Q2. Do brand associations Taiwanese hold toward MLB match the league brand

association scale built by Kunkel et al. (2014)?

Q3. Does loyalty strength of Taiwanese differ for MLB versus individual

team(s) or individual player(s)?

Definition of Terms

1. Taiwanese: Taiwanese citizens who reside in Taiwan.

2. East Asia: The area covers Taiwan, Japan, the Republic of Korea

    (South Korea), Mongolia, China (including Hong Kong Special

    Administrative Region and Macau Special Administrative Region), North

    Korea, and others (US Department of State, n.d.).

3. Satellite fans: "The fans, despite lacking a shared geography, have

    forged an emotional bond with a foreign-based team" (Kerr & Gladden,

    2008, p. 61).

4. Brand: "A distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as a logo,

    trademark, or package design) intended to identify the goods or services

    of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods

    or services from those of competitors" (Aaker, 1991, p. 7).

5. Brand equity: "A set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol, that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers" (Aaker, 1991, p. 15).

6. Consumer-based brand equity: "The differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (Keller, 1993, p. 1).

7. Brand associations: Anything a consumer holds relevant to a specific brand in memory (Aaker, 1991).

8. Consumer-based league brand associations: Any thought, concept, or image held in consumer memory with respect to a professional sport league, such as MLB in the present study.

9. Brand architecture: The relationships between brands perceived by the consumer under an organizational brand portfolio (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

10. Thought-listing technique: An open-response method to capture and categorize mental objects (Cacioppo & Petty, 1981), including "An individual's thoughts, feelings, ideas, expectations, appraisals, and

images" (Cacioppo, Hippel, & Ernst, 1997, p. 929). Through the process,

"an individual is asked to list everything about which he or she is (or

was) thinking" (Cacioppo et al., 1997, p. 928).

Limitations

1. The customer-based brand association scale developed in the present

    study may only represent the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB.

2. The Internet survey participants' degree of honesty may drive the quality

    of the scale.

Delimitations

1. In order to efficiently reach the nationwide Taiwanese "satellite fans",

    convenience sampling on the Internet survey was used. However, it may

    hinder the generalization and the quality of the scale.

2. The brand association scale toward the MLB developed in the present

    study will only represent the perspective of Taiwanese between 20 to 45

    years old. This age range was selected because they were likely the major

    MLB consumers based on the previous studies.

This chapter outlined the background of the MLB, the background of

Taiwanese baseball, and the relevant frameworks of branding to the present study.

With the direction and the significance of the study defined, the next chapter further

discusses the previous, relevant literature.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of the present study is to develop a league brand association scale

from the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB. Since the global branding of MLB is

the theme throughout the study, understanding the globalization of US professional

sports, particularly MLB, is fundamental.

Globalization of US Professional Sports

Since 1990, sports have received unprecedented growth on the international

stage, mainly in North America, Europe, and regions of Asia (Fay et al., 2011). During

the expansion of international sports, the globalization of US professional sports is

prominent and significant.

Globalization is currently the top concern for US professional sports (Barr &

Hums, 1998; Fullerton, 2007). Prompted by the advanced communication

technologies (Westerbeek & Smith, 2003), targeting the unsaturated worldwide

markets has become more accessible and possible for the US professional sport

leagues (Gladden & Lizandra, 1998). In addition to satellite TV, the evolving digital

and Internet technologies serve as a hotbed for the US professional sport leagues'

global cultivation.

The globalization of sports reflects on global outsourcing and global

marketing (Fay et al., 2011). Below exemplifies the global efforts of US professional

sports through the case of MLB.

Global Outsourcing of US Professional Sports

MLB has devoted to global talent pools for the expansion of the league,

quality players, and marquee talents (Fay et al., 2011). On 2014 MLB Opening Day,

224 players (26.3%) born outside the US from 16 countries were on the 25-man

rosters and inactive lists ("2014 opening day," 2014).

Global Marketing of US Professional Sports

Since overseas markets are more approachable, the US professional sports

leagues have started to seek global participation and growth (Lizandra & Vail, 2005)

by nurturing the live audience size, developing media viewership, and increasing sales

of merchandise and licensed items (Fullerton, 2007). The global marketing maneuvers

adopted by MLB can generally be classified into six categories:

Firstly, launching international offices is to direct regional marketing business.

MLB has set international offices in Australia, China, Japan, United Kingdom

(Official site of MLB, 2016c), and an extension of the central office in Dominican

Republic (Official site of MLB, 2016d).

Secondly, a department or a set of departments is assigned to specifically

handle the global business concerning trademarks and copyrights, broadcasting,

licensing, sponsorship initiatives, and marketing. MLBI supervises these global

businesses, and the MLB games are currently available in 233 countries and territories

and re-transmitted in 17 different languages on worldwide telecast (Official site of

MLB, 2016b).

Third, regional grassroots programs have been consistently implemented to

cultivate overseas markets which compliment branding efforts. MLBI has been active

in worldwide baseball development programs designed for players and coaches from

grassroots to elite levels (Official site of MLB, 2016b). Since 1994, the "Play Ball!"

school-based youth program has been adopted in nine countries across Africa, Asia,

Europe, Oceania, and Latin America ("MLB International invites," 2007). Also,

Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI) program currently has directed 300 programs

in roughly 200 cities worldwide ("Texas Rangers to," 2014). MLB has also set

academies in Dominican Republic, Europe, Australia (Lewis, 2010), and China

(Snyder, 2012) to develop future regional stars.

Fourth, digital media and its effect on branding have been essential in global communication and marketing. MLB has integrated its official website, MLB.com, with six social media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) and portable device applications into global communication. Furthermore, MLB has separate, multilingual websites to specifically communicate with Japanese (MLB.jp), Taiwanese (MLB.tw), South Korean (MLBKorea.com), Latin/Hispanic population (LasMayores.com), and Dominican Republican (MLB.com DR) in addition to the original, English MLB.com (Official site of MLB, 2016c, 2016d).

Fifth, the leagues market international star players on new consumers locally while growing their brands overseas through the sales of broadcasting rights, merchandise, and other business (Fay et al., 2011). Signing regional stars boosts MLB's regional and international appeal (Lewis, 2010), and the recent Japan-born MLB stars Hideo Nomo and Ichiro Suzuki are the best examples.

Sixth, showcasing games out to the world has become more frequent. One MLBI mission is to demonstrate the best baseball players through international events around the world (Official site of MLB, 2016b). Exhibition games, overseas regular-season opening games, All-Star tour, and WBC are the ways MLB brands itself to the globe. Since 2006, MLB has staged an event overseas almost every year.

Overseas Sport Consumers

The present study intends to develop a league brand association scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB. Below discusses overseas consumers such as of MLB Taiwanese media consumers in the present study.

Sport Consumer Escalator

The sport consumer escalator is a concept of the frequency/involvement for sport attendance and sport participation (Mullin et al., 2007). Figure 1 shows that there are three levels of consumers: nonconsumers, indirect consumers, and direct consumers.

Nonconsumers. Nonconsumers include nonaware nonconsumers, aware nonconsumers, and misinformed nonconsumers. Nonaware nonconsumers are unaware of the existence of the sport product, so they do not attend. Aware nonconsumers are aware of the sport product but choose not to attend. Misinformed nonconsumers are aware of the sport product and wish to consume it directly but are driven away from doing so due to misinformation like cost of attending, the availability of tickets, or safety concerns from friends and relatives. Usually, misinformed nonconsumers remain as media consumers.

Indirect consumers. The media or indirect consumer is aware of the sport product and consumes through media but does not attend the game in person. The sport marketer would target this segment and move them up to the category of direct consumers.

Direct consumers. Direct consumers include light, medium, and heavy consumers based on the levels of involvement. Light consumers are media consumers and attend a couple of games per year. Medium consumers attend half of the season games a year. Heavy consumers are highly involved fans who are the major revenue source for the sport organization. So, maintaining the heavy consumers is key to a sport organization.

The escalator concept provides sport marketers with an idea how to develop the segment over time. The rule of thumb is to increase the levels of sport product involvement while minimizing consumers falling off or going down the escalator. A sport organization should develop different marketing plans to target all segments along the escalator. However, it is generally suggested that a sport organization put more effort on cultivating the existing consumers to move them up the escalator than attracting new ones due to the 80/20 rule where 80% of your sales come from 20% of your clients (Schwarz & Hunter, 2008).

However, the escalator theory was originally initiated based on the local

consumer involvement (e.g., the frequency of game attendance), disregarding

overseas consumers who are geographically constrained. Therefore, it may not be

appropriate to apply the escalator theory to describe the overseas consumer behavior.
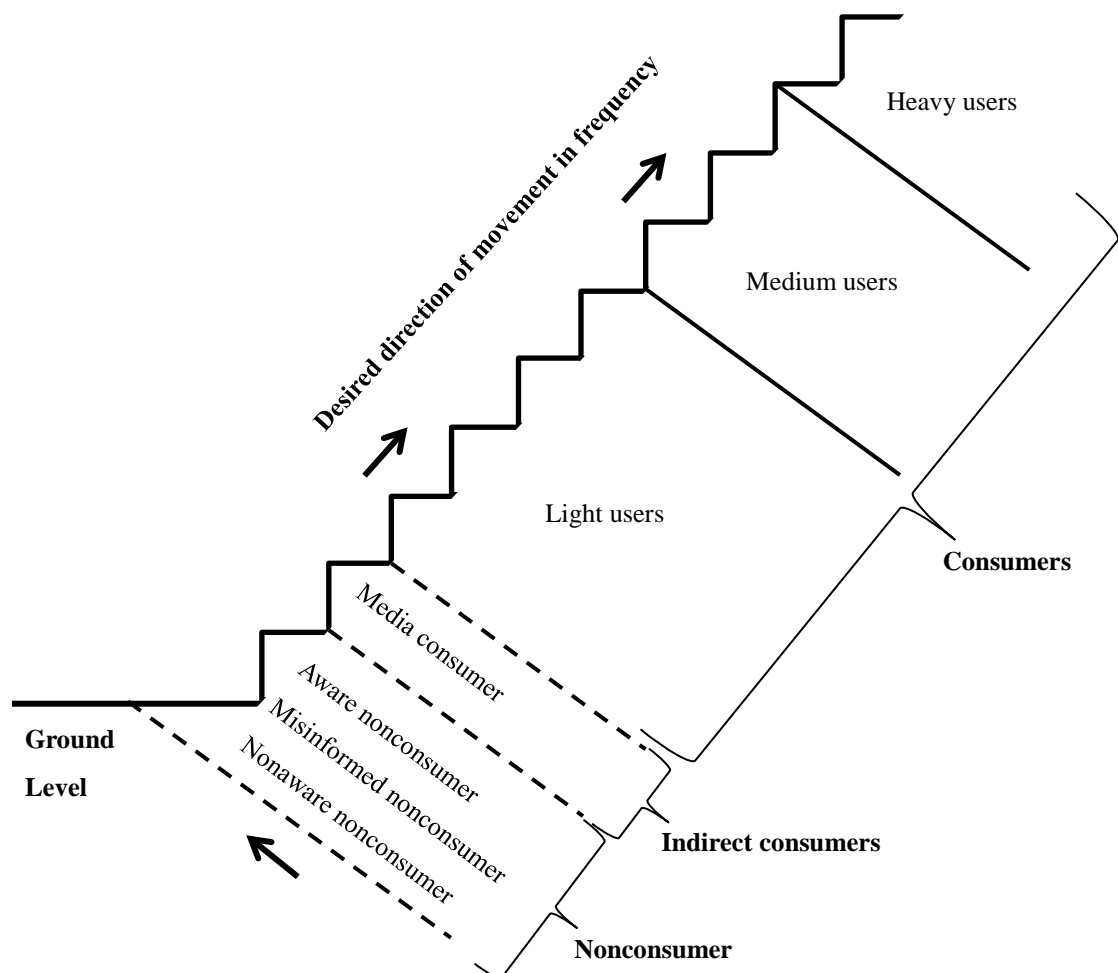
Figure 1. Sport consumer escalator. *"Sport Marketing,"* by B. J. Mullin, S. Hardy, and
W. A. Sutton, 2007. Reprinted with permission.

Take the Taiwanese consumer for example. Despite the familiarity with MLB, the long distance between the US and Taiwan leaves Taiwanese no other consumption options. Compared to the US residents, Taiwanese can only consume the MLB game and information through media (e.g., television, newspaper, or the Internet) unless MLB stages exhibition or season games in Taiwan. Such a consumption pattern may be categorized as indirect or media consumers according to the escalator theory (Mullin et al., 2007), but the restricted situation extremely hinders the Taiwanese consumer to move upward on the escalator.

Satellite Fan

Echoing the consumer escalator theory, Wann, Melnick, Russell, and Pease (2001) defined two kinds of sport spectator: one who attends the game (direct consumption), and the other who watches the game through media (indirect consumption). Between the two ends, a variety of reasons such as time or affordability drives local fans away from direct consumption to watch sports games through media instead. Compared to local fans, overseas fans usually fall into the category of media consumer due to their geographical locations.

In fact, Doyle, Lewis, and Malmisur (1980) once conceived the term "media fan region" (p. 56) to describe the increase of sports media consumers and suggested

to develop a consumption model which integrates geography and media consumption. Although the model has never been developed, the situation overseas fans have fits in this category. For example, most Taiwanese consumers cannot afford to travel to the US to see their heroes play; even if the MLB event is staged in Taiwan, a sold-out game attendance would only account for a small proportion of the entire Taiwanese population. Thus, the majority of Taiwanese consumers follow MLB through media.

Wann et al. (2001) also discussed the "displaced fan" (p. 7): A fan continues following his former home team after relocating out of the team's geographical market. From the perspective of the overseas fan, the term describes the expatriate fan but fails to explain a growing number of fans who reside and grow up overseas, such as Taiwanese MLB consumers in the present study.

Given a need to define the existing overseas fan completely, Kerr and Gladden (2008) proposed "satellite fan: The fans, despite lacking a shared geography, have forged an emotional bond with a foreign-based team" (p. 61). Drawn from the planetary system, some planets (fans) revolve around the central star (team) interacting with and being influenced by it occasionally, while others keep the orbit closer to the influence of the central star and interact with it regularly. The interaction happens when the fan checks news about their team via media, watch games via

media, purchase licensed merchandise, or talk about the game with other counterparts. Due to the evolution of communication technologies (i.e., the Internet and satellite TV), the distance which impeded the growth of overseas fandom in the past has greatly been lessened.

There are two types of "satellite fan" (Kerr & Gladden, 2008). First, there are expatriate fans who grow up rooting for a home team in their home country but now have to continue following the team from overseas. Second, there are those who live in one country but follow a team located in another country for some reason.

"People care most about the players who come from their country" (King, 2006, para. 15) exactly captures why Taiwanese follow MLB. Such a phenomenon drives MLBI's Asian strategy: "to find a local player and build on that" (Chow, 2011, para. 9). However, Japan's regional influence (Lewis, 2010) and the success of Japanese MLB players also catch Taiwanese attention. Therefore, the Taiwanese consumer in the present study fits in the second type of the "satellite fan."

From the next section, brand theories will be introduced along with examples retrieved from MLB marketing to showcase how these theories relate to the present study. Also, the relationship between the league and 30 teams of MLB will be elaborated.

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Brand Management

The brand has become both a crucial marketing element to corporations

(Motameni & Shahrokhi, 1998; Murphy, 1990) and a source of information to the

consumer (Aaker & Biel, 1993). A brand is "a distinguishing name and/or symbol

(such as a logo, trademark, or package design) intended to identify the goods or

services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or

services from those of competitors" (Aaker, 1991, p. 7).

Compared to tangible goods where the product is the major brand, Berry

(2000) stresses the organization (e.g., sports teams/leagues) is the major brand for

services. Such a concept echoes corporate branding (Ross et al., 2006) as the

corporation markets itself as a brand (Argenti & Druckenmiller, 2004). Therefore,

MLB, the league, is a brand.

Branding is meant to create differences in images, meanings, and

associations by managing tangible and intangible facets of a brand (Kaynak, Salman,

& Tatoglu, 2008). Branding begins with using a logo, a name, and a symbol to

distinguish an organization from its competitor. The goal of branding is to place

positive feelings in the minds of consumers (Mullin et al., 2007) and to "make a brand

more valuable and meaningful" (Bedbury, 2002, p. 14). To achieve the goal, a

consumer-based brand management strategy is the key (Bedbury, 2002).

Brand Equity

When successfully placing positive values in a consumer's mind, an

organization establishes brand equity (Mullin et al., 2007). Brand equity is usually

utilized to assess the value a brand creates (Bauer et al., 2008).

Farquhar (1990) describes brand equity as value added onto a product through

merit of a brand's name. Wood (2000) regards brand equity as corporations' attempt to

build a long-lasting relationship with consumers. Nicolino (2000) refers brand equity

to a totality of various values which consumers link to a brand. Aaker (1991) also

defines brand equity as "a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name

and symbol, that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to

a firm and/or to that firm's customers" (p. 15). Applying Aaker's (1991) definition in

the present study, MLB is apt to hold brand equity developed through the

accumulation of positive and negative values/meanings which the overseas consumer

(i.e., Taiwanese consumers) attaches to the name and logo of MLB.

Brand equity results from the marketing effects specifically due to a brand and

would only occur with that brand name (Keller, 1993). Aaker (1996a) points out brand

equity both benefits the corporation and the consumer. A brand with strong equity

often translates to customer loyalty, price elasticity, extending profits (Arens, 1996),

upholding franchises, and repelling competitors (Fill, 2002). It may also raise

efficiency and effectiveness of marketing programs and brand extensions (Aaker,

1991). In professional team sports, a team with strong equity is often able to maintain

steady revenue influx despite the team record (Gladden & Funk, 2001). From the

perspective of the consumer, brand equity increases consumers' information

processing, purchase assurance, and use satisfaction (Aaker, 1991).

Brand Equity Model

Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) conceptualized the two most prominent brand

equity theories. Aaker (1996a) noted that brand equity is the collective outcome of

five dimensions: brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, brand

loyalty, and other propriety brand assets. Although he did not advise any measure to

evaluate brand equity, he suggested that the major four components could straightly

create brand equity: Brand Awareness refers to a consumer's recognition, recall, and

remembrance of a brand. Perceived Quality is a consumer's assessment on the overall

quality of a product relative to its intended purpose. Brand Associations are any

memory relevant to a brand. Brand Loyalty is a brand's capability of attracting and

retaining customers. Notably, brand awareness is the fundamental throughout the whole branding process.

Drawing on Aaker's framework, Keller (1993) emphasizes the essential of customer knowledge through the formation of brand equity. Keller's customer-based brand equity model (CBBE) is built based on brand knowledge which consists of brand awareness and brand image (see Figure 2):
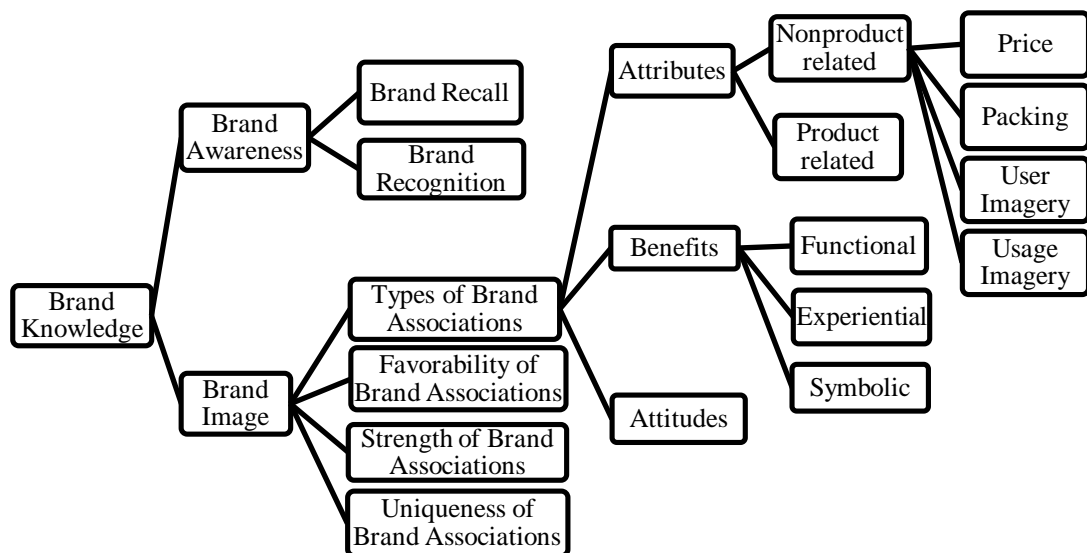
Figure 2. Brand knowledge. "Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity," by K. L. Keller, 1993, *Journal of Marketing, 57*(1), p. 7. Reprinted with permission.

Brand awareness, which refers to a consumer's ability to recognize and recall a brand, serves as an essential role in the creation of brand image as it forms brand associations affixed to the brand node in memory. In other words, no brand

awareness, no brand associations, no brand image, let alone purchase intentions of a brand.

Brand image is the major structure in this model. Brand image relates to "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory" (Keller, 1993, p. 3). This image is an accumulation of brand associations over time, and four brand associations (i.e., types, favorability, strength, and uniqueness) held by the consumer contribute to the formation of brand image. To attain high brand equity, the presence of favorability, strength, and uniqueness is required (Bauer et al., 2005).

Attributes, benefits, and attitudes are three types of brand associations. Attributes are what characterizes a product or service noticed by the consumer throughout purchase or consumption, including product-related attributes and nonproduct-related attributes. Product-related attributes relate to the components required to carry out the function(s) of a product or service anticipated by consumers. Nonproduct-related attributes are the components of a product or service irrelevant to the basic function(s) but still influence consumption.

Benefits are the meaning and value the consumer affixes to the product or service attributes, including functional, experiential, and symbolic values. In other

words, benefits are what consumers believe they can get from the product or service.

According to Park, Jaworski, and MacInnis (1986), functional benefits result from the

product-related attributes which provide internal advantages to meet basic needs,

solve problems, and avoid problems. Experiential benefits relate to the product-related

attributes which provide experiential pleasure and stimulation to meet sensory needs.

Symbolic benefits come from the nonproduct-related attributes which provide

external advantages to satisfy needs for self-expression, self-esteem, and social

acceptance.

Finally, attitudes are the consumer's overall evaluations on a brand and rely on

the performance of attributes and benefits of the brand. Brand attitude also serves as

the fundamental which triggers consumer behavior (Keller, 1993). The performances

of attributes, benefits, and attitudes depend on their favorability, strength, and

uniqueness. Favorability of brand associations is what consumers think attributes and

benefits of a brand meet their needs and wants to generate positive brand attitude.

Strength of brand associations refers to how the marketing message converts into

consumer memory and how it is stored as part of the brand image. Strength serves as

a function of the degree and the way a consumer thinks about the message when

encoding the message. Finally, attributes and benefits may make a brand unique to consumers through marketing communication.

Customer-based Brand Equity

Customer-based brand equity (CBBE) refers to "the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (Keller, 1993, p. 3). CBBE contains differential effect, brand knowledge, and consumer reaction to marketing (Keller, 1993, 2003b): Differential effect lies in the comparison of consumer response to the same marketing between a named and an unnamed product/service. Brand knowledge is comprised of brand awareness and brand image and heavily depends on the characteristics and relationships of brand associations mentioned above. Consumer reaction to marketing is shown on consumer's perceptions, preferences, and behaviors to all facets of the marketing of the brand.

CBBE occurs due to consumers' different responses to their experiences about the brand, which accumulate consumers' brand knowledge over time. So, brand knowledge is the core and the consumer perspective is the focus of the CBBE model.

Further, Keller (1993) also mentions that "customer-based brand equity occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong, and unique brand associations in memory" (p. 2). In other words, a brand must firstly be

recognized by a consumer. Second, the consumer must bear a positive and unique

image toward the brand in mind. Third, CBBE is thereby assessed through brand

associations.

Brand Management in Professional Sports

Branding has been a salient topic in the genre of sport marketing. In

accordance to the two mainstream brand theories described previously, the branding

research in sports generally follows either Aaker's (1991) framework or Keller's

(1993) model.

Brand Equity Models in Sports

Built on Aaker's (1991) framework, Gladden et al. (1998) firstly proposed a

brand equity model in NCAA Division I college athletics (see Figure 3). The model is

divided into antecedent of brand equity, brand equity, and consequences of brand

equity. Antecedents (i.e., team-related, organization-related, and market-related)

create brand equity which later leads to consequences in the market (e.g., national

media exposure, merchandise sales, and ticket sales). The consequences then affect

marketplace perception which in return influences the antecedents of brand equity to

form a loop.

Antecedents	**Brand Equity**	**Consequences**
Team-Related Success Head coach Star player		National media exposure Merchandise sales
Organization-Related		
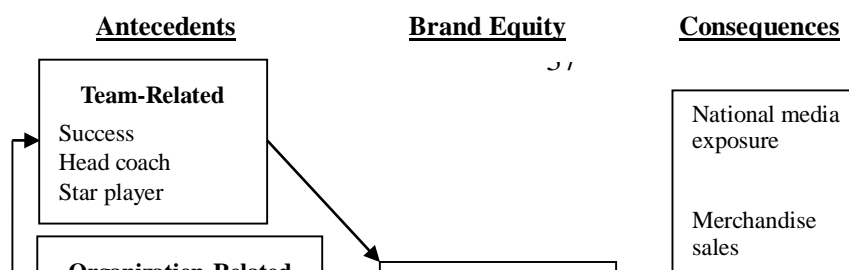
Figure 3. Brand equity model in NCAA Division I college athletics. "A Conceptual framework for assessing brand equity in Division I college athletics," by J. M. Gladden, G. R. Milne, and W. A. Sutton, 1998, *Journal of Sport Management, 12*, p. 1-19. Reprinted with permission.

Gladden and Milne (1999) then modified this model to fit in the professional team sport setting. Team's logo design and stadium/arena were added to the antecedents (organization related) while replacing individual donations with additional revenues in consequences of brand equity (see Figure 4).

Antecedents	**Brand Equity**	**Consequences**

Team-Related

Success
Head coach
Star player

Organization-Related

Tradition
Conference/schedule
Product delivery
Logo design
Stadium/arena

Market-Related

Local/regional media coverage
Geographic location
Competitive forces
Team support/following

Brand Awareness

Perceived Quality

Brand Associations

Brand Loyalty

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National media exposure

Merchandise sales

Additional revenues

Corporate support

Atmosphere

Ticket sales

Marketplace perception

Figure 4. Brand equity model in professional sport team. "Examining the importance of brand equity in professional sport," by J. M. Gladden and G. R. Milne, 1999, *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 8*, p. 21-29. Reprinted with permission.

Kerr and Gladden (2008) further extended the previous models (Gladden & Milne, 1999; Gladden et al., 1998) to the influence of professional sport team in overseas markets. The model elaborates the brand equity of "satellite fans" (see Figure 5). In the antecedents of brand equity, star player is divided into Ambassador, Magician, and Icon (team-related) and the league concept and sponsor alignment were added (organization-related) while existing brand community was included (market-related). Additionally, media and corporate factors are on a global scale. Finally, team support/following (market-related) and product delivery and logo design (organization-related) that appeared in Gladden and Milne's (1999) model were

removed.
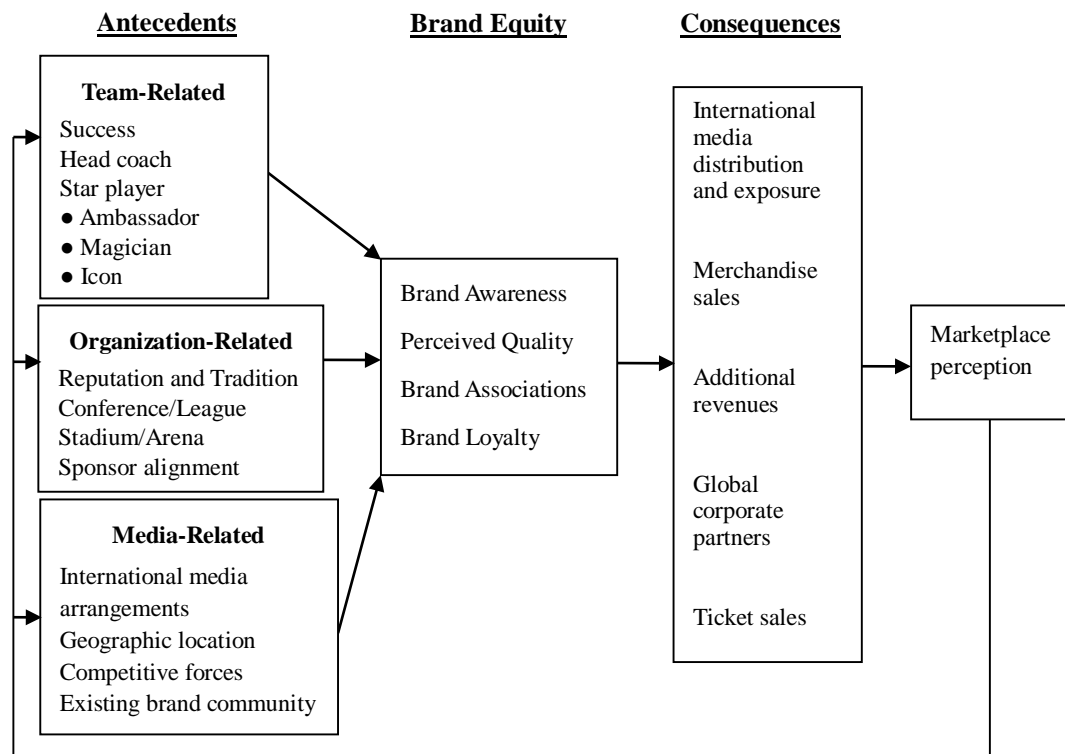
Figure 5. Brand equity model of satellite fans. "Extending the understanding of professional team brand equity to the global marketplace," by A. K. Kerr and J. M. Gladden, 2008, *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing, 3*(1/2), p. 58-77. Reprinted with permission.

Given that spectator sport was generally interpreted as an intangible product with the void of applying service marketing concepts and the unique features of team sport in sport brand equity models, Ross (2006) proposed a spectator-based brand equity model (SBBE) which is a conglomerate of three frameworks. First, the structure including antecedents, brand equity, and consequences is similar to the previous models (Gladden & Milne, 1999; Gladden et al., 1998). Second, service

brand equity initiated by Berry (2000) was used to stress customer's service

experiences. Third, Ross (2006) furthered marketing communication and customer

experiences with a brand into direct and indirect antecedents than Keller's (1993)

model (see Figure 6).

| Antecedents | Spectator-based Brand Equity | Consequences |

Organization induced
Marketing mix (seven P's)

Market induced
Word-of-mouth
Publicity

Experienced induced
Actual consumer experience

Brand Awareness

Brand Associations

Team loyalty

Media exposure

Merchandise sales

Revenue solicitation

Ticket sales
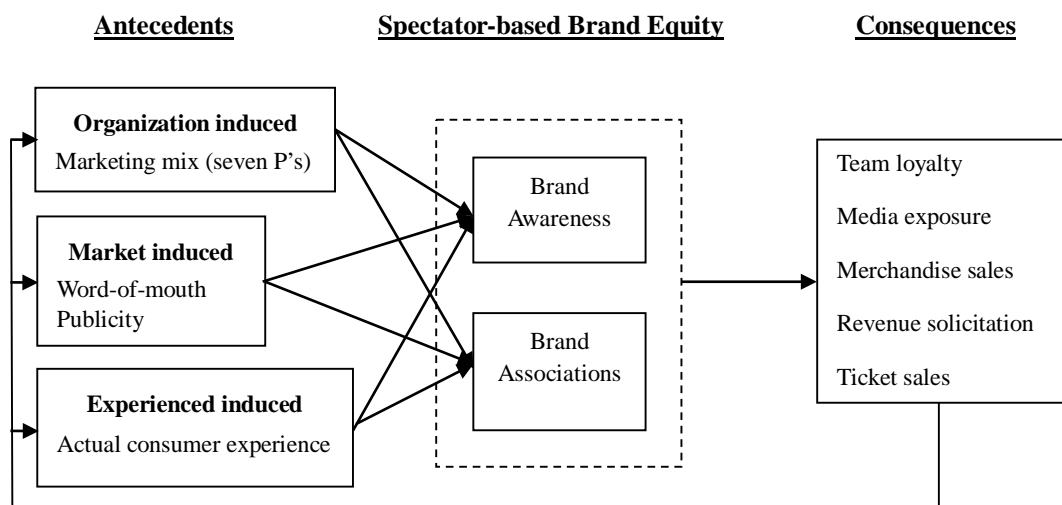
Figure 6. Spectator-based Brand Equity in Team Sport. "A conceptual framework for understanding spectator-based brand equity," by S. D. Ross, 2006, *Journal of Sport Management, 20*, 22-38. Reprinted with permission.

The attributes of spectator sport are the central through three antecedents (i.e.,

organization induced, market induced, and experience induced) which create brand

awareness and brand associations respectively. Then, the overall brand equity leads to

five consequences. Notably, compared to Aaker's (1991) framework, brand loyalty

here is regarded as a consequence of equity (team loyalty) while perceived quality is

seen as a part of brand associations (Ross, 2006).

Later, Ross, Russell, and Bang (2008) examined SBBE model on an NBA team. Although the results supported the model, they only examined the relationship between brand awareness and brand associations.

Recently, Biscaia et al. (2013) not only modified the SBBE scale developed by Ross et al. (2008) but also examined the revised SBBE model to fit to the setting of European professional soccer. The results found the revised SBBE model a legitimate tool to measure brand equity in professional soccer teams.

Besides the extended frameworks derived from Aaker's (1991) and two SBBE models, Boone et al. (1995) once suggested that brand equity of an MLB team should be assessed on various revenue inflows and assets. That is, a club's brand equity should be parallel to its franchise values built on financial outcomes.

A common ground among the five models above is the financial inflows (consequences) of a sport organization are heavily utilized to quantify brand equity. Several empirical studies have actually measured brand equity through financial outcomes (Biscaia et al., 2013; Boone et al., 1995; Gladden & Milne, 1999). However, since consumers generate and hold the brand equity, some scholars believe it is important to examining brand equity from consumers' standpoint (Aaker, 1991; Gladden & Funk, 2001; Keller, 1993). Thus, Keller's (1993) CBBE model has also

been incorporated or adapted to study on the consumer in the sport settings (Bauer et al., 2005; Bauer et al., 2008; Eryigit, 2013; Funk & James, 2006; Gladden & Funk, 2001, 2002; Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014).

The CBBE model has been applied diversely in the field of professional sport. Previous research either extends (Gladden & Funk, 2002; Kaynak et al., 2008) or refines the CBBE model (Bauer et al., 2005; Bauer et al., 2008) to fit to the setting of professional team sport. Additionally, researchers develop or modify brand association scales (Bauer et al., 2005; Bauer et al., 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2001, 2002; Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014) or examine the relationship between brand associations and other variables (Bauer et al., 2008; Eryigit, 2013; Funk & James, 2006; Gladden & Funk, 2001; Kunkel et al., 2014). Carrying great weight in the CBBE model, brand associations are often the focal point among the CBBE studies of professional sport.

The present study intends to explore how Taiwanese consumers currently perceive MLB as a global brand and develop a league brand association scale from the perspective of Taiwanese consumers toward MLB. Therefore, it is more appropriate to adopt Keller's (1993) CBBE model in the present study. However, the

nature of brand associations and the importance of having a brand association scale in place for MLB need further discussion.

Brand Associations

Brand associations are anything a consumer holds relevant to a specific brand in memory (Aaker, 1991), including the concepts to the brand (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Keller (1993) further stressed that "brand associations are the other informational nodes linked to the brand node in memory and contain the meaning of the brand for consumers" (p. 3).

As mentioned above, Keller (1993) categorized brand associations into attributes, benefits, and attitudes. In his framework, the associations are the core component of CBBE. In addition, brand associations are crucial in brand management as these serve as consumption determinants (Aaker, 1996b). Therefore, CBBE is usually assessed through brand associations.

Necessity of a Brand Association Scale to MLB

Behavioral brand loyalty is an eligible consequence of CBBE (Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2013). Previous literature shows CBBE may drive brand loyalty (Leone et al., 2006), and its differential effect may also cultivate a consumer's stronger behavioral loyalty (Keller, 1993; Keller, 2003a; Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel,

2013). A reason is because the informational nodes brand associations play help

retrieve a specific brand out of a consumer's mind in a decision-making situation

(Romaniuk, 2003).

In professional sports, brand loyalty mitigates the sport product's

unpredictable nature (Miloch, 2010) such as a team has a bad season or its star players

are on the disabled list. Brand loyalty may also secure a fan to constantly follow a

team through game attendance, media consumption, and merchandise purchase

(Gladden & Funk, 2001). In addition, brand loyalty even goes beyond the border of a

country. For example, Manchester United Football Club of the English Premier

League claimed 80% of their fans live overseas (Jarvis, 2004), and the club just

reached its 50 million followers on Facebook recently ("Reds hit 50m," 2014).

Finally, overseas brand loyalty ensures additional revenues from telecast rights,

merchandise sales, and licensing for a professional organization which echoes

MLBI's Asian strategy: "to find a local player and build on that" (Chow, 2011,

para. 9).

All in all, brand loyalty determines the success of a professional sport

organization. However, based on Keller's (1993) framework, a professional sport

organization firstly needs to acquire what associations consumers hold toward the

organization so that CBBE and even brand loyalty can be evaluated, realized, and

managed. Therefore, an instrument in place to measure and establish CBBE for MLB

is crucial.

As discussed later, MLBI has recognized that marketing strategies in Asia

need tailoring country by country (King, 2006). Therefore, a league brand association

scale from the standpoint of Taiwanese consumers toward MLB will assist MLB to

recognize where it currently is regarding the branding in Taiwan (what MLB had done

has not impressed Taiwanese consumers and what associations MLB has built in the

minds of Taiwanese consumers) and, most importantly, what aspects of branding it

can do better or differently in Taiwan. In order to get to that point, the close league-

team relationship in MLB needs justifying.

Brand Architecture

In order to develop a league brand association scale from the perspective of

Taiwanese consumers toward MLB, the interrelationship between the league of MLB

and its 30 teams as well as the theory of brand architecture need discussing.

League-Team Relationship in MLB

One characteristic which makes professional sport leagues unique is the

governing role of the league office as any other industry has no such entity within the

organizational structure (Gladden & Sutton, 2011). Given the nature which two teams

jointly stage the product (i.e., the game), the league office of a professional sport

typically governs all aspects of the game to stabilize and sustain a platform where all

teams can compete but also grow together.

Fairly, the governing function of the league office lays the groundwork where

all affiliated teams perform. The league office handles the constituents of a game such

as game scheduling, discipline and fine(s), and record keeping (Gladden & Sutton,

2011). In addition, to ensure the sustainability of the league or the groundwork, the

league supervises the competitive and business components of the game by (1)

regulating but not totally controlling the players union and the team owners; (2)

representing the league (joined by all teams) to collectively bargain with the players

union over issues like salary (minimum and maximum), luxury tax, discipline

procedures, and drug testing; (3) establishing revenue-sharing pools for teams; and (4)

designing and implementing player draft system (Gladden & Sutton, 2014). These

duties briefly depict how the league office of MLB, the Office of the Commissioner of

Baseball, constructs and maintains a healthy league-wide stage for its 30 affiliated

teams.

Kunkel et al. (2014) parallels the league-team relationship to a franchiser-

franchisee relationship as the league supports teams to ensure their prosperity. Such

support can be the utilization and coordination of marketing campaigns (Pitt et al.,

2003), or the league strategically directs all teams in joint league-wide marketing

activities. This description echoes the responsibility of the league office for

"marketing and promotional activities, developing and managing special events, and

other functions such as coordinating publicity and advertising on behalf of the teams

as a whole" (Gladden & Sutton, 2014, p. 221).

Led by MLB, most community programs of MLB are supported and

implemented by the 30 teams on the local level. On the field, MLB directs and

coordinates all 30 teams in various league-wide charitable campaigns and themed

days: MLB and all teams jointly raise awareness for diseases and raise funds for

research to fight those diseases (e.g., Autism, ALS, breast cancer, and skin cancer).

They also jointly commemorate Jackie Robinson's legacy (break the color barrier),

Lou Gehrig's legacy and disease (ALS), and the philanthropic spirit of Roberto

Clemente on Jackie Robinson Day (April 15), July 4 (Lou Gehrig's farewell speech),

and Roberto Clemente Day respectively in addition to the annual Mother's Day and

Father's Day.

One pivotal responsibility of the league office is to represent the league in collectively negotiating contracts and agreements with external stakeholders such as television networks and corporate sponsors (Gladden & Sutton, 2014). Then, the teams share part of the revenue from national broadcast and league sponsorship deals (Kunkel et al., 2013). However, what the Office of the Commissioner of Baseball has achieved is beyond the national deals: MLB centralizes league-wide Internet/digital business (including licensing) under its media arm, Major League Baseball Advanced Media (MLBAM, "Era Digital Media," 2008). Further, MLB centralizes its global business focusing on the development of the game and the worldwide brand promotion of MLB and its 30 teams through MLBI (Klein, 2008; Official site of MLB, 2016b). These two league-level entities not only explore additional revenues shared by all 30 teams (Brown, 2005; Guevara & Fidler, 2002) but also represent MLB and its 30 teams in both digital and global branding as a whole.

MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture

As mentioned above, MLB sets the groundwork (e.g., game schedule, regulations, and governance on all relevant parties) for its 30 teams to produce sport product (Kunkel et al., 2009) while simultaneously oversees and supports their business throughout the entire production process. So, the game is the product, also the league product, produced by the competition between two teams through arranged seasonal series and ultimately leads to an annual championship (Gladden & Funk, 2002). Furthermore, the teams will always link to or be endorsed by MLB every time consumers think of them. The interrelationship between MLB and the 30 teams along with the role of MLB in the game suggest a system similar to brand architecture.

"Brand portfolio includes all of the brands managed by the organization" (Aaker, 2004, p. 16), and brand architecture depicts the relationships between the brands perceived by the consumer under an organizational brand portfolio (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000). Thus, brand architecture is a brand's relationship with other brands perceived and assessed by a consumer from a broad view of brand portfolio.

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) proposed a brand relationship spectrum which includes four strategies to inquire into the brand architecture of an organization: A branded house and a house of brands are on two extreme ends of the spectrum with two mixed strategies, subbrands and endorsed brands, in-between.

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In a branded house strategy (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000), a single master

brand (organization) is utilized with descriptive subbrands to extend into dimensional

businesses (e.g., Virgin Airlines, Virgin Radio, Virgin Express, and Virgin Rail). The

master brand in a branded house strategy has a dominant driver role over the

subbrand's description-only role.

On the opposite end of the brand relationship spectrum is a house of brands

strategy which the master brand and the subbrands are visually independent (e.g.,

Procter & Gamble's products such as Tide, Head & Shoulders, and Bounty). Such a

strategy totally separates the relevance between the master brand and its subbrands

(Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

Between the branded house strategy and the house of brands strategy are

mixed branding strategies, namely endorsed brands strategy and subbrands strategy

(Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000):   Endorsed brands strategy refers to an independent

brand endorsed by its organizational brand (e.g., Courtyard by Marriott, Universal

Pictures, A Sony Company, and Simply Home from Campbell's). Subbrands strategy

is brands which not only link to a master brand but also intensify, add, or alter the

associations of the master brand (e.g., Microsoft Office, Nike Force, and Dodge

Viper). A characteristic of the subbrands strategy (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000) is

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that of a co-driver situation where the master brand and the subbrand weigh equally is

possible despite the master brand usually serves as a primary driver role. Furthermore,

in the codriver case, the master brand has commonly built credibility prior to the

subbrand's launch in the market. For instance, consumers purchase Gillette Fusion

Proglide® both because the Fusion Proglide is the cutting-edge razor and Gillette has

already been credited as a strong brand associated with innovation in the razor

category.

Kunkel et al. (2013) indicated the mixed branding strategies give insight into

the relationship between a professional sport league and its affiliated teams because

consumers may be interested in a certain team (team is the primary driver but is still

endorsed by the league), a league (league is the primary driver), or a league and a

certain team equally (league and team are the codriver). Thus, the endorsed brands

strategy and the subbrands strategy will be adopted to further describe the

interrelationship between the league brand and the 30 team brands in MLB.

In line with Aaker and Joachimsthaler's (2000) mixed branding strategies,

Figure 7 illustrates MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture adapted from sport league brand

architecture model proposed by Kunkel et al. (2014) to match the current branding of

MLB in Taiwan. The vertical trapezoid elaborates the hierarchy of the master brand

(MLB) and the subbrands (30 MLB teams). The master brand has broader range of

brand management as opposed to the subbrands because MLB directs the 30 teams in

league-wide marketing and management and represents the teams as a whole to deal

with various stakeholders (Gladden & Sutton, 2014), digital business ("Era Digital

Media," 2008), and global business (Klein, 2008; Official site of MLB, 2016b).

On the left of MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture are the functions of the two

brand levels which may generate brand associations held in Taiwanese consumer's

mind respectively. At the master brand level, the major function of MLB is to lay the

groundwork for all 30 teams, including governance of all relevant parties, game

schedule, setting and modifying rules and regulations, and record keeping. In

addition, from the aspect of the entire league's sustainability, MLB also directs

multiple programs, digital businesses, a television network, and international

businesses to ensure elite player supply, maintain and deepen the relationship with the

community, enhance global brand awareness, and generate extra revenue influx

overseas. At the subbrands level, the function of the teams is to present the core

product, or the game, and form points of attachment to Taiwanese consumers.

Although Taiwanese are media consumers, they may still be impressed with certain

team images such as players and stadiums, and they still can purchase team

merchandise on the MLB flagship clubhouse store in Taiwan ("Major League

Baseball," 2007b) and on MLB.com shop.

In the center, four entities under MLB (i.e., MLBAM, MLB Network, MLB

International, and WBC) are incorporated because these either deal with MLB global

business or may have indirect influence on Taiwanese consumers (e.g., Taiwanese

media use MLB Network's program to publish news). The double-headed arrow

indicates the intense interaction between the master brand and the subbrands (Aaker

& Joachimsthaler, 2000) and the mixed branding between MLB and all its 30 teams.
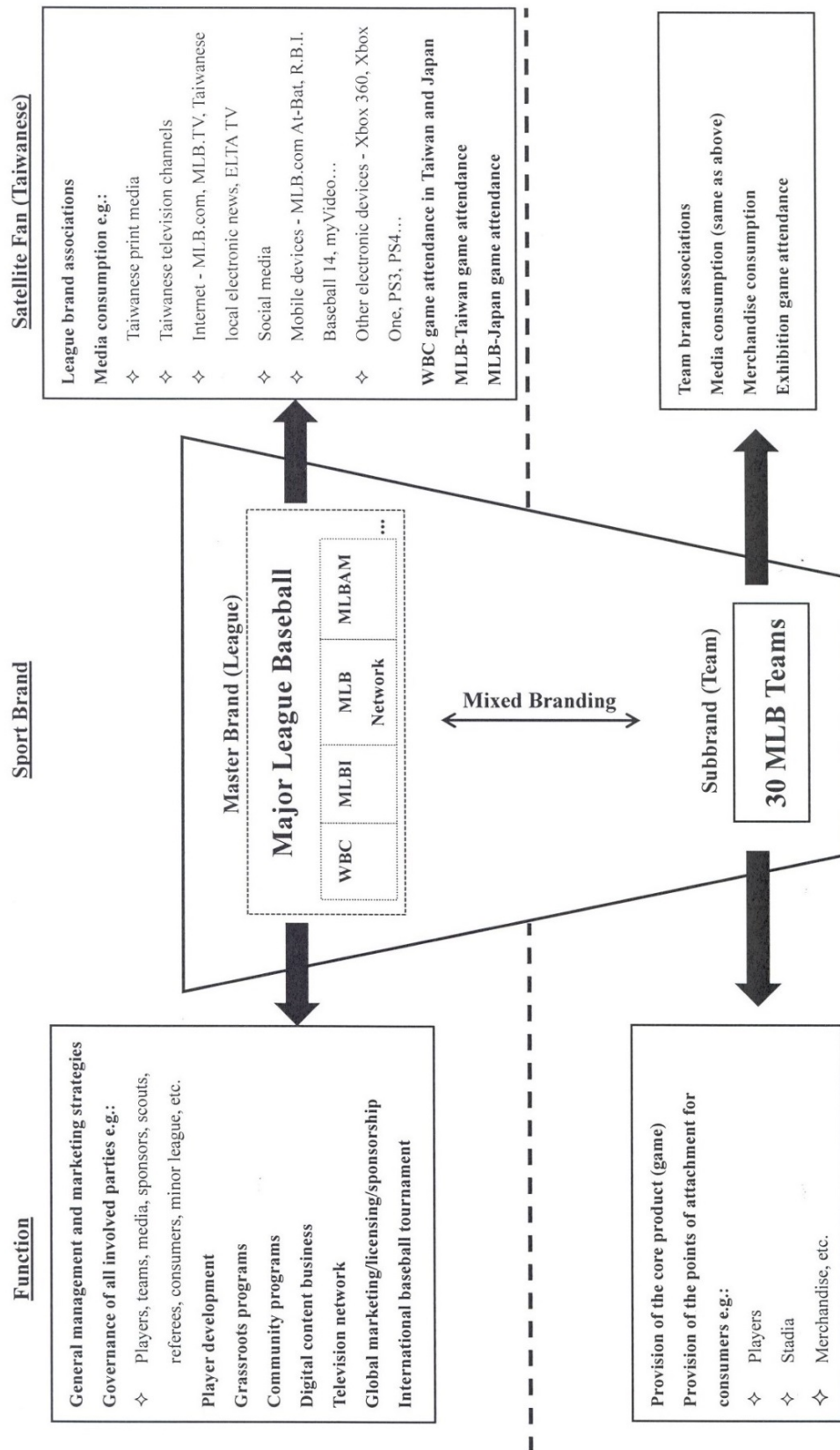
Figure 7. MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture. Adapted from "Developing a conceptual understanding of consumer-based league brand associations," by T. Kunkel, D. Funk, and C. King, 2014, *Journal of Sport Management, 28*, pp. 49-67.

On the top right of MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture shows Taiwanese

consumers may hold brand associations toward MLB. In Taiwan, people can consume

MLB information through diverse media platforms categorized into MLB-operated

and Taiwanese media (discussed in the later sections). In addition, Taiwan was one of

the four host countries for the first round of the 2013 WBC ("International venues,"

2012), and Japan has also been the host countries for three straight WBC tournaments,

so Taiwanese consumers could also attend WBC games in Taiwan and Japan managed

by MLB. Similarly, MLB recently presented two exhibition series in Taiwan

("Dodgers to make" 2010; "MLB and MLBPA," 2011), but MLB has regularly staged

its game in Japan for years. Thus, Taiwanese can also attend any MLB exhibition or

overseas season game whether it is staged in Taiwan or Japan. At the subbrands level,

brand associations toward the teams may generate in Taiwanese consumers' minds

through media consumption and MLB exhibition game attendance (e.g., Los Angeles

Dodgers visited Taiwan in 1993 and 2010).

Overall, MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture portrays the league both handles its

brand and supplies a framework for its teams to develop their brands (Kunkel et al.,

2013). Additionally, the league also directs and coordinates its teams in marketing

campaigns (Pitt et al., 2003) or special events (Gladden & Sutton, 2014) such as

community programs. That being said the mixed branding arrow echoes that the

league typically markets itself with the team brands embedded in (Pitt et al., 2003) or

demonstrates the team brands through the league branding. In other words, league

branding and team branding carry each other. Therefore, team consumers are league

consumers in nature (Kunkel et al., 2014).

Based on the mixed branding strategies (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000), MLB

and its 30 teams may experience three kinds of interrelationships. These are: a team is

the primary driver but is still endorsed by a league; a league is the primary driver; and

a league and a team are the codriver. Notably, the perceived relationship between the

two brands may vary from a consumer to another as each consumer assesses the brand

relationship differently (Kunkel et al., 2013).

The endorsed brand strategy applies in a situation where consumers are mainly

interested in a certain team. Such a team-dominant brand architecture may be

attributable to popular teams with strong brands such as New York Yankees or Boston

Red Sox (Kunkel et al., 2013). In addition, from the perspective of MLB global

branding, "people care most about the players who come from their country" (King,

2006, para. 15) best exemplifies the fact Taiwanese consumers currently follow

Florida Marlins because of their fellow pitcher Wei-Yin Chen.

A league may play a dominant role in the brand architecture as a kind of subbrands strategy. Due to the league lays the foundation and maintains this platform's functionalities for all involved parties, a successful, strong league brand may also carry the team brands (Lock et al., 2009). For example, a sport league is usually associated with a certain quality (the bigger-scale a league is, the higher quality it is perceived) which may further translate to its affiliated teams (Kunkel et al., 2013). Additionally, sport teams affiliated with a high quality league are more favorable than the ones affiliated with a lower quality league (Kunkel et al., 2013). MLB is the oldest professional baseball league in North America and the highest level of professional baseball around the world (Official site of MLB, 2016a), it is likely that some Taiwanese consumers may be more familiar with MLB than a certain MLB team or watch a game between two less familiar teams on TV because "it is an MLB game." However, if a league malfunctions, then it will also bring disaster to its teams. For example, the 1994 MLB strike resulted in lost money for team owners and an attendance decline by 20% in the 1995 season (Staudohar, 1997).

When a league and a team weigh equally in the brand architecture, they form a codriver role representing the other kind of subbrands strategy. In this scenario, Taiwanese consumers may both follow a certain team and MLB as a whole at the

same time. They may generally watch MLB games and news the Taiwanese

corporations broadcast on TV and the Internet, check any information on MLB.com,

MLB.tw, or other electronic news platforms, but particularly follow a certain team.

A professional sport league serves as a brand roof over the teams (Kunkel et

al., 2009), and the interaction between the two indicates that a strong one is necessary

for the success of the other, so a league and a team are mutually dependent (Kunkel et

al., 2014). Similarly, from the aspect of brand architecture, the master brand and the

subbrand also carry each other in the codriving situation (Devlin, 2003). In the

contrary of how a league boosts its affiliated teams discussed previously, a popular

team with strong brand value (e.g., New York Yankees, Los Angeles Dodgers, and

Baltimore Orioles in Taiwan) in turn can also strengthen the league brand (Kunkel et

al., 2013). Furthermore, star power, one of the team's characteristics, both promotes

the team brands (Bauer et al., 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2002; Kolbe & James, 2000)

and the league brand eventually as it keeps the consumers attached to the game. Given

the mutual dependence considered, the codriving model is deemed as the ideal brand

relationship between a sport league and a team in terms of the sustainability (Kunkel

et al., 2013).

No matter which kind of interrelationship MLB and its 30 team are perceived

and evaluated to have by Taiwanese consumers, the significance of the league in the

MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture cannot be overestimated as it involves in all

situations. Thus, a strong MLB league brand is crucial to the growth of MLB team

brands. Besides, the nature of the interrelationship between MLB and its teams

depicted in the MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture suggest that they not only contribute

to the prosperity of the entire league together but may share a certain brand

associations (Kunkel et al., 2014).

Link Team Brand Associations to League Brand Associations

Consumer-based league brand associations relates to any thought, concept, or

image held in consumer memory with respect to a professional sport league, such as

MLB in the present study. Numerous consumer-based brand association scales have

been developed or modified in the genre of professional sports (Bauer et al., 2005;

Bauer et al., 2008; Gladden & Funk, 2001, 2002; Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014; Ross et

al., 2006). Among these studies, Gladden and Funk (2001, 2002) based on Keller

(1993) laid the groundwork as their works were adapted by all the later versions but

the TBAS by Ross et al. (2006).

Appendix D compiles Gladden and Funk's (2001, 2002) and the follow-up

scales (Bauer et al., 2005; Bauer et al., 2008; Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014). Noticeably,

most of these studies focused on professional sport teams, leaving only two scales

stretched into the league level of professional sports (Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014).

Additionally, in line with Keller's (1993) CBBE model, brand associations in these

scales were measured through the types of attributes, benefits, and attitudes.

While attitudes, the overall evaluation of a brand, are a component of brand

associations in Keller's (1993) CBBE model, not all studies in professional sports

measured it. One reason is that attitudes are very conceptual from a managerial aspect

(Gladden & Funk, 2001). Further and fundamentally, Keller (1993) did point out

attributes and benefits may determine or influence attitudes. In other words, attitudes

generate from the evaluation of attributes and benefits (Keller, 1993). In the present

study, to include attitudes or not will depend on the result of the statistical analyses

which will further discuss in the method section.

As each sport consumer perceives and evaluates sport brand architecture

differently (Kunkel et al., 2013) and league brand associations may vary due to each

league's characteristics (Kunkel et al., 2014), it may not be appropriate to just adopt

the scales by Kunkel et al. (2009, 2014) for the present study since the differences in

culture and consumer attribute (i.e., local fans vs. "satellite fans") exist between

Australians and Taiwanese along with the business scope and depth gaps between

MLB (global brand) and Australian leagues (local brands). However, the two league

brand association scales both support the notion that some associations toward teams

may transfer to a league based on brand architecture (Kunkel et al., 2009, 2014).

Given the intention to develop a league brand association scale from the

perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB, the backgrounds about MLB, Taiwanese

baseball, and the current branding of MLB in Taiwan will be discussed next to

complete research information.

Major League Baseball

Major League Baseball (MLB) refers to the oldest professional baseball league

in North America. MLB is considered as the top level and the central among all global

professional baseball leagues. Comprised of 30 member clubs, 29 teams in the United

States and one in Canada, MLB is divided into American League (AL) and National

League (NL). The AL and the NL are further divided into Eastern, Central, and

Western divisions with five teams each. The MLB annual season structure consists of

spring training, 162 regular season games per team, an All-Star Game, postseason

games, and the World Series championship.

The Office of the Commissioner of Baseball, created and funded by MLB's 30 clubs, is the league office of MLB in supervising all facets of the game (Klein, 2008). The governing function of the league office lays the framework where all 30 teams perform as it handles the constituents of the game such as game scheduling, discipline and fine, and record keeping (Gladden & Sutton, 2011). In addition, the league office also supervises the competitive and business components of the game to ensure the prosperity of the league and the teams (Gladden & Sutton, 2014).

MLB has made significant progress over the past 17 years led by Allan H. (Bud) Selig, the ninth Commissioner, toward the introductions of interleague play, the Wild Cards and the expanded postseason format, on-field competitive balance, revenue increase, revenue sharing system among the clubs, and the continuation of growing baseball as a global game (Official site of MLB, 2016a). MLB is also known for its groundbreaking fan engagement, including the feats of MLB Advanced Media (MLBAM) and MLB Network.

League-level Entities and Branding Implication

The eight league-level entities founded and enforced by MLB are introduced

below. These entities support or promote MLB's brand through the global MLB brand

architecture and the potential league brand associations.

Arizona Fall League serves as the off-season league for developing future

major league players, managers, coaches, and umpires (Official site of MLB, 2016e).

Major League Baseball Properties (MLBP) represents 30 clubs to deal with marketing

and trademark licensing, advertising, and sponsorship issues (Official site of MLB,

2016f). Major League Baseball Scouting Bureau (MLBSB) is a central scouting entity

focusing on amateur prospects in North America and Puerto Rico to assist MLB clubs

with the annual player draft (Official site of MLB, 2016g). Commissioner's Blue

Ribbon Panel on Baseball was initiated in 2000 to investigate the causes of

competitive imbalance and suggest remedies to improve the overall health of the

league (Levin, Mitchell, Volcker, & Will, 2000). MLB Urban Youth Baseball

Academy is a nonprofit organization which "aims to set the standard for baseball and

softball instruction, teach and educate in Urban America, and enhance the quality of

life in the surrounding communities" (Official site of MLB, 2016h, para. 1). The MLB

Fan Cave was once a marketing initiative of MLB which features player personalities

and demonstrates the passion of baseball fans through social media (Office of the

Commissioner, 2014). Located in New York City, the MLB Fan Cave was dedicated

to providing fans with on-site, novel, and interactive experiences of the game while

showcasing the fusion of baseball and popular culture online (Official site of MLB

Fan Cave, 2014).

With regard to global branding, World Baseball Classic (WBC), Inc., directed

by MLB and the Major League Baseball Player Association (MLBPA), is an entity

established for operating the WBC tournament (Official site of MLB, 2016i). The

WBC tournament features the assembling of active major league players and other

worldwide professional baseball players to compete for their home countries.

MLB International (MLBI), founded in 1989 (Rovell, 2002), is a division

centralizing MLB's global business (Klein, 2008). The business focuses on the

development of global baseball and the worldwide promotion of MLB and club

trademarks and copyrights through events, market development, licensing, the sales of

telecast rights, and sponsorships (Official site of MLB, 2016b).

Recognizing the immense opportunity in the foreign market, MLB has sought

the growth of the game and new money influx for the 30 clubs through the operations

of MLBI (Guevara & Fidler, 2002). Since its launch, MLBI has staged numerous

exhibition games, regular season games, or All-Star Series in Cuba, Puerto Rico,

Dominican Republic, Mexico, Venezuela, Japan, Taiwan, China, and Australia

(Biertempfel, 2007; "Dodgers to make," 2010; Guevara & Fidler, 2002; "MLB and

MLBPA," 2011; "MLB announces 2014," 2013).

MLBI has also involved in international grassroots operations: Envoy

Program was initiated in 1991 to send qualified coaches to countries around the world

to teach baseball (Chetwynd, 2008; "MLB International Envoy," 2006), and the

program has reached over 60 countries (Nagel, Brown, Rascher, & McEvoy, 2010).

"Training with the Pros" baseball camp and clinics was conducted to instruct young

players in Australia and New Zealand ("MLB Ambassador and," 2012). Pitch, Hit,

and Run (PHR) program is the curriculum MLBI developed and has been promoted to

the physical education classes in Australia, Germany, Italy, Korea, Mexico, Puerto

Rico, South Africa and the United Kingdom (Nagel et al., 2010). Similarly, MLBI has

also infused "Play Ball Programme" into physical education curriculum of the youth

school in China and Europe (Chetwynd, 2008; Snyder, 2012). On the further purpose

of star development, MLBI established baseball academies in Dominican Republic,

China, Europe, and Australia (Lewis, 2010; Snyder, 2012). In the meantime, MLBI

presented baseball festivals to the baseball-developing regions like China and Europe

(Lewis, 2010; Snyder, 2012).

To deal with the regional business, supported by the central office in New York City, MLBI further set international offices in Australia (Australia and Oceania), United Kingdom (Europe, Middle East, and Africa), China, Japan (Official site of MLB, 2016c), and an extension of the central office in Dominican Republic (Official site of MLB, 2016d). Opening international offices enables MLBI to not only better translate local stars into local sponsorship deals but better seize every opportunity in each region (King, 2006). MLB Japan best exemplifies this value: Multiyear sponsorship deals boosted from 20 to 60% of total contracts between before and after opening the office.

Community Involvement of MLB and Branding Influence

As the former Commissioner of MLB, Allan H. (Bud) Selig, said that "Baseball is a social institution with significant social responsibilities…" (Newman, 2014, para 13), MLB has been committed to making the community a better place through a variety of charitable actions. MLB has founded 19 community programs/initiatives (see Appendix E). Led by MLB, the 30 teams have supported most programs/initiatives.

On the field, MLB and its 30 teams often raise awareness and funds for important causes linked with charitable initiatives and MLB partners (e.g., Autism,

ALS, prostate cancer, breast cancer, and skin cancer). In addition, pregame or in-game ceremonies are often arranged to pay tribute to individuals who set inspirational examples to others (e.g., cancer survivors and Roberto Clemente Award winners) or groups dedicated to the community (e.g., Boys & Girls Clubs, Habitat for Humanity, Baseball Tomorrow Fund, and Stand Up To Cancer).

League-wide themed days are always associated with humanitarian or charitable significances. For instance, Jackie Robinson Day (April 15), July 4 (Lou Gehrig's farewell speech), and Roberto Clemente Day are to commemorate Jackie Robinson's legacy (break the color barrier), Lou Gehrig's legacy and disease (ALS), and the philanthropic spirits of Roberto Clemente respectively. Aside from the celebrations on Mother's Day and Father's Day, breast cancer and prostate cancer are also brought to public attention in the meantime.

Showcasing community care particularly through the international, high-profiled stages like World Series or All-Star Game has become a tradition for MLB. Since 2008, MLB has been dedicating the first four games of the World Series each year to raising global awareness for important causes. Holding up the signs by all team personnel, umpires, and fans at an in-game moment, the Stand Up To Cancer

(SU2C) campaign has also endowed the enormous global audience with a special

inspiration and encouragement during the World Series and 2014 All-Star Game.

Overseas fans now can notice MLB's community service through global

telecast and access the information through news and the official website of the MLB

community (MLBcommunity.org). Noticeably, four community programs/initiatives

also cover the international community, including Baseball Tomorrow Fund, Breaking

Barriers, MLB Charities, and Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI).

Community relations where sport organizations involve to generate goodwill

in the community (Stoldt, Dittmore, & Branvold, 2006) and to maintain positive

relationships with the community are vital to the marketing accomplishment (Blann &

Armstrong, 2011). From the perspective of the MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture,

whatever marketing maneuvers the league has conducted would leave impressions on

consumers. By the same token, the league-wide community programs with marketing

implication would lead to both league and teams brand associations.

Media Maneuvers of MLB and Global Branding

Extending business into the field of media, particularly digital media, MLB

further boosts its brand on the local, national, and even international level. Below

introduces two media arms of MLB which amplify MLB's global accessibility,

publicity, cultivation, and branding:

Major League Baseball Advanced Media (MLBAM). In 2000, Major

League Baseball Advanced Media, L.P., the interactive media and Internet subsidiary

of MLB ("Era Digital Media," 2008), was funded by all 30 MLB clubs (Brown,

2005). The launch of MLBAM has two meanings (Official site of MLB, 2016j):

First, MLB extends its operations into the realm of the Internet. Second, MLB

centralizes league-wide Internet operations/rights under MLBAM ("Era Digital

Media," 2008) as all 30 MLB team websites are now unified under the official league

site MLB.com or controlled under an umbrella (MLBAM). Noticeably, the centralized

Internet business has been expanding with the scope of MLBAM amplified.

Since the inaugural year, the climbing yearly revenues imply the success and a

promising future of MLBAM's. MLBAM is expected to reap $800 million on 2014

while this number may hit one billion by 2016 (Brown, 2014). Financially, the weight

of MLBAM is getting more significant as all 30 teams share the online revenue

equally (Brown, 2005). Each team is likely to receive 7 to 8 million dividends for

2014 (Brown, 2014) leaping from two million of 2010 (Hutton, 2010).

The diversified MLBAM products reflect MLB's aggressive online strategy.

MLBAM is no longer just a website-managing division but the industry leader in

sports online and mobile streaming services (Hutton, 2010). Over the past 15 years,

MLBAM has expanded its business, including online ticket sales, sales and auctions

of licensed merchandise and collectibles, live streaming audio and video, archived

games, fantasy baseball, and mobile applications. In addition to creating and

managing websites for all league-level entities, MLBAM's product portfolio also

includes: MLB.com (comprehensive MLB league-wide information and the

foundation of MLB online commerce), MLB.com Shop (merchandise and collectibles

store), MLB.tv (online live video telecast on over 400 devices, like computer, mobile

devices, TV, Google's Chromecast, Sony PS3, Sony PS4, XBOX 360, and XBOX

One), MLB.com Gameday (online instant game information), MLB.com Fantasy

Baseball, MLB.com At-Bat (the integration of MLB.Com Gameday and MLB.tv on

mobile devices), MLB.com At the Ballpark (mobile ticket service and upgraded

ballpark experience), and R.B.I. Baseball 14 (MLBAM's first console game on the

gaming consoles and mobile devices).

Major League Baseball Network (MLB Network). Launched on New

Year's Day of 2009 and currently covering 57 million US households, MLB Network,

the official network of MLB, was the first baseball channel featuring live broadcast,

highlights, in-depth analysis, and original programming all year around (Official site

of MLB, 2016k). In addition to extra revenue inflow, MLB network also offers

additional publicity for MLB (Ourand, 2010). For example, as the broadcasting rights

of WBC have been withdrawn in-house to MLB Network since 2013 (Dittmeier,

2012), the logo of MLB Network has frequently appeared in both national and

international telecasts during the 2013 WBC tournament.

The current distribution of MLB network only covers the US territory.

However, overseas MLB consumers can watch video highlights of the programming

on the official website of MLB Network (m.mlb.com/network) or on MLB.com.

Social Media Usage of MLB and Global Branding

MLB currently adopts multiple social media platforms into local, national, and

global marketing communication on both league and team levels. The usage of social

media usually links to the existing websites of MLB's multidimensional entities and

business (33 websites/webpages and MLB.com and 30 team sites). In fact, social

media serves as the extension and the support of the websites as MLB utilizes social

media to lead consumers to diverse official websites. Besides, utilizing YouTube™

amplifies MLB's product demonstration and branding to the world.

Directed by MLBAM, MLB and its 30 teams have all extended the presences

beyond official websites into official pages on Facebook, Twitter, Google+,

Instagram, Tumblr, and Pinterest (McGee, 2012). On the contrary, MLB primarily

relies on Facebook and Twitter to promote its league-level business and websites.

Noticeably, four of the five extended websites of MLB.com (Official site of MLB,

2016c, 2016d), including three subcontracted websites (i.e., MLB.jp, MLB.tw,

MLBKorea.com) and MLB.com Español (LasMayores.com), all connect with social

media.

Currently, MLB manages 11 official channels on YouTube™ (see Appendix

F). The presence on YouTube™, the world's No. 2 search engine (Rosensteel, 2013),

empowers MLB to market its game/product and brand itself to the world more

efficiently.

To cultivate and explore more regional consumers, MLBAM created the

official YouTube™ channel of MLB.jp (MLBglobal) in 2010 ("YouTube™ in Japan,"

2010). Since 2013 the former Commissioner Bud Selig declared to grow the game as

a true global sport (App, 2013), MLBAM has expanded the official video content

packages onto YouTube™, including two live regular-season games per day outside

the "core live video distribution territories" (e.g., North America, Japan, Taiwan, and

South Korea) and the video highlights of in-season past games accessible worldwide.

Noticeably, the classic full-game archives have now been made viewable worldwide from Game 6 of the 1952 World Series to Game 7 of the 2008 American League Championships on the MLB Classics channel of YouTube™. From 2009 forward, selected regular-season, postseason, and World Series games are also available worldwide on YouTube™ channels under different but official MLB IDs.

Fans around the world now can watch in-season highlights; classic moments of past regular-season, All-Star; and postseason games, and a variety of MLB.com programming on the official MLB.com channel on YouTube™. The function of playlists enables viewers to further focus solely on a certain star player (e.g., Tony Gwynn, Derek Jeter, Albert Pujols' Cardinals Milestones, Mariano Rivera), a certain team (e.g., Seattle Mariners), a certain series (e.g., Opening Series Sydney Australia, 2011 World Series, 2012 All-Star Game), and even a certain theme (e.g., classic plays, 2013 walk-offs, the Brawls) through time. A hyperlink of MLB.tv embedded in the official MLB.com YouTube™ channel reveals MLB's intention to seek more global subscribers through the demonstration of the archived clips.

Additionally, MLB Network, MLB Fan Cave, and MLB.com Digital Academy have all adopted YouTube™ for amplifying global marketing communication. The

three entities all upload their program highlights, videos, or service instructions on

their respective YouTube™ channels.

MLB's Strategy in East Asia

Positioned as the top level of professional baseball, MLB is dedicated to

influencing the worldwide communities (Official site of MLB, 2016a). On one hand,

MLB keeps marketing itself as a global brand through the continuation of global

outsourcing and media development (Lewis, 2010). On the other hand, MLBI

promotes the brands of MLB and its 30 clubs as well as demonstrates the world's best

talents through international events and campaigns (Official site of MLB, 2016b).

Additionally, MLBAM which handles MLB's worldwide digital business, including a

variety of e-commerce and content licensing, also fuels MLB's global branding.

In the 1990s, MLB forged a global strategy aiming at exploring new talent

sources and fostering new markets in regions other than the established neighboring

Latin America (Lewis, 2010). MLB later opened an office in Japan in 2003, but MLB

does not simply eye on the Japanese market but the entire Asian market, especially

East Asia.

According to US Department of State (n.d.), East Asia covers Taiwan, Japan,

the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Mongolia, China (including Hong Kong Special

Administrative Region and Macau Special Administrative Region), North Korea, and

others. Notably, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, and China are the four major countries

in East Asia where MLB has targeted with various marketing efforts. However,

Japan's influence in Asian baseball needs depicting before any further discussion.

Japan: The Center of Asian Baseball

In his book, Lewis (2010) analyzed Japan's role in MLB's East Asian

expansion. Although Asians typically show more interest in American culture, Japan's

mediating, translating, and catalytic functions in East Asia cannot be underestimated.

Historically, Japan not only fuels the popularity of baseball to its neighbor countries

but boosts the baseball appeal in East Asia because it adapts and translates American

baseball in a form which other regional countries can easily accept. This "Japanese

game" is a model which has affected Taiwan, South Korea, and, to some degree,

China more deeply than MLB has, so the baseball style of these three countries are

more Japanese-oriented than American-oriented. Furthermore, Nippon Professional

Baseball (NPB) is the top and the oldest professional baseball league in East Asia.

Even competing with MLB for Asian talents recently, NPB remains intriguing to

Asian players partially because the players are comfortable and familiar with the

Japanese game. In addition, to date, more than 700 non-Japanese players, including

over 400 American players, have participated in NPB; on the contrary, Japan has also

been the major MLB Asian star supplier which always catches the attention of Asian

baseball due to its regional influence. Therefore, the facts above have made and kept

strengthening Japan's status as the center of Asian baseball.

MLBI's Targets in East Asia

Over the past 20 years, East Asia has remained a focus to MLB. In MLBI's

eyes, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea are categorized as mature markets where

baseball is popular and MLB is already famous with strong telecast and licensed

merchandise presences, whereas China is a nontraditional market due to baseball is

less favored and the MLB brand is not recognized in the region (Snyder, 2012).

Since extending the presence into Japan, MLBI has learned of two facts about

Asia. First, most East Asian countries are with developed economies and also familiar

with baseball, but the time difference between East Asia and the US hinders the sales

of MLB telecast products (King, 2006). Secondly, Asia consists of diverse countries

where people speak different languages, live in different cultures, and also have

different sport consumption patterns ("60-second interview," 2012). So, Asia should

not be considered as one market; marketing strategies need to be tailored country by

country, even the countries are in close proximity like Japan and South Korea (King, 2006).

Although MLBI has been enlightened with the characteristics of the Asian market, one strategy MLBI believes is still universal: star power (Chow, 2011). This belief was firstly conceived by the recent Japanese-born MLB pioneer: Hideo Nomo of the LA Dodgers.

The baseball exchange between MLB and Japan dates back to 1908, but MLB did not recruit any Japanese player until the emigration of Hideo Nomo in 1995 (Lewis, 2010). Nomo's initial, stellar performance ignited Nomomania across the Pacific Ocean suggesting that good Japanese pitcher could also succeed in MLB. However, Nomo's legacy did not only favor Japanese players but opened the MLB door to all Asian players. Since then, the number of Asian-born players knocking on MLB's door has been increasing.

The same phenomenon repeated in 2001 as Ichiro Suzuki joined Seattle Mariners representing the first Asian-born MLB position player. His versatile talents again triggered the second exporting wave of Asian position players to MLB and reaffirmed MLBI's belief. Similarly but in a smaller scale, regional MLB stars like Chien-Ming Wang (Taiwan) and Chan Ho Park (South Korea) later also served as role

models and spurred the player movement to MLB and popularized MLB in both

countries.

From experience, MLBI assumed that finding a local player empowers itself to

take the best shot in a new market (Chow, 2011). To be more precise, what MLBI

envisions is the chain reaction of star power:　It raises overseas interest in MLB

which can translate to greater audience size, more broadcast rights, as well as more

licensing and sponsorship opportunities (King, 2006). Therefore, star power, media

presence, sponsorship, licensing, and events are the targets MLB pursues in East Asia

(Chow, 2011). With two full-time offices (MLB Japan and MLB China) in East Asia,

MLBI's recent revenue generated from East Asia has been five times greater than the

one made before the Nomomania (Chow, 2011).

Taiwanese Baseball and MLB

Inherited from Japan during the colonization period, the history of Taiwan has

interwoven with baseball for over 100 years. This relationship leads Taiwanese

baseball to follow the Japanese game closely.

Baseball serves unique significance to Taiwanese. Taiwan and China used to

complete for "the legitimate China" in the international community for years. Since

1971, Taiwan has not been recognized as an official nation in the international

community due to a political issue. However, the dominance of Taiwanese baseball in

LLB with 13 titles between 1969 and 1982 has formed a collective memory and a

symbol of nation-making in the minds of Taiwanese from generation to generation

(Wang, 2009):   On one hand, the common memory and the symbol of nation-making

formed a tie and break the barrier between Taiwanese (people who originally live in

Taiwan) and mainlanders (Chinese who fled to Taiwan with General Chiang Kai-Shek

in 1949). On the other hand, Taiwan is proud of itself on its outstanding performance

compared to China's record on the international baseball stage. In other words,

baseball triggers racial integration domestically and distinguishes Taiwan from China

internationally (Yu & Bairner, 2008).

Baseball matters greatly to Taiwanese because it is Taiwan's most competitive

sport on the international stages (Chao, 2003). It is baseball which allows slight

awareness of Taiwan in the international community. The weight of baseball to

Taiwan can also be found on the new version of New Taiwan Dollar 500 banknote

which features a youth baseball team celebrating a win, replacing the portrait of

Chiang Kai-Shek of the old version. While Japan and the United States both claim

baseball as their national game, baseball is more than that in Taiwan: Baseball is

The National Sport of Taiwan.

Taiwanese MLB Players

Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL), the sole professional baseball league in Taiwan, has entered its 25th year. However, CPBL now constantly feeds baseball talents (both Taiwanese players and foreign players) to NPB and MLB. On the amateur level, NPB and MLB are also the two primary leagues which elite Taiwanese players are exported to. Therefore, baseball strengthens Taiwan's political ties with Japan and the United States (Lewis, 2010).

To date, there have been 11 Taiwanese MLB players ever promoted to the major league (see Appendix G). The notable players are Chin-Feng Chen (the first Taiwan-born MLB player), Chin-Hui Tsao (the first Taiwan-born MLB pitcher), Chien-Ming Wang (the most successful Taiwan-born MLB player to date), and Wei-Yin Chen (currently the third starting pitcher of the Baltimore Orioles).

MLB Information in Taiwan

Although MLB inked the first broadcasting contract with Public Television Service, a Taiwanese nonprofit television corporation, in 2005 to air one to two games a week (King, 2006), MLB games had already been accessible in Taiwan on ESPN Star Sports (ESS) since 1995 ("Major League Baseball," 2010).

ESS owned 14 networks and customized worldwide sports games to 24

countries in Asia ("Major League Baseball," 2007a). In Taiwan, ESS aired up to seven

MLB games per week on two channels of cable TV (ESPN Taiwan and STAR Sports

Taiwan) during the season centering on Taiwanese players. Currently, ESPN Taiwan

and STAR Sports Taiwan has been replaced by FOX Sports and FOX Sports 2 due to

the buyout of ESPN's stake in ESS by News Corporation ("News Corp to," 2012). In

the 2014 season, FOX Sports and FOX Sports 2 broadcasted up to 10 MLB games a

week featuring not only Taiwanese but Japanese MLB players.

On the other hand, Formosa Television (FTV) has been the MLB's exclusive,

over-the-air broadcaster in Taiwan since 2007 ("Major League Baseball," 2007a). In

the 2014 season, FTV broadcasted a MLB game on every game day nationally.

Whether it is in or out of the season, FTV also edits daily MLB news for its satellite

TV channel and cable news channel. Meanwhile, licensed from MLBAM, ELTA TV

covered three MLB games per game day via online streaming and mobile phone

during the 2014 season and edited daily MLB news year-round. Additionally, the four

major daily newspapers in Taiwan, namely Apple Daily, Liberty Times, China Times,

and United Daily News, and their electronic news as well as other electronic

newspapers all publish MLB news on a daily basis. Again, all MLB telecast, webcast,

and news in Taiwan are generally league-wide but center more on Taiwanese players (i.e., Chien-Ming Wang, Wei-Yin Chen) followed by Japanese players (i.e., Ichiro Suzuki, Yu Darvish, Masahiro Tanaka). Such the behavior pattern of MLB telecast and news reflects the demand of Taiwan market.

As mentioned above, all online/digital contents supervised by MLBAM are accessible in Taiwan, including all dimensions of official websites/webpages (e.g., MLB and 30 clubs, MLB Network, community programs/initiatives, MLB Fan Cave, WBC) and e-commerce (e.g., MLB.com Shop, MLB.tv, MLB.com Gameday, MLB.com At-Bat, MLB.com Fantasy Baseball, R.B.I. Baseball 14). Additionally, social media adopted by MLB and its 30 teams, MLBAM, MLB Network, MLB Fan Cave, and MLB.com Digital Academy (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, Tumblr, Pinterest, YouTube™) are also available to Taiwanese. Furthermore, Taiwanese can also log on to MLB.tw and join its affiliated Facebook group.

MLB Presence in Taiwan

The relationship between Taiwan and MLB started with the Los Angeles Dodgers ("A history of," n.d.):   In 1993, LA Dodgers played against CPBL All-Stars in a historic, three-game Friendship Series. LA Dodgers then partnered with the Sinon Bulls of the CPBL in 1996 to host the Bulls to train in the Dodgers' facility in

Dominican Republic in 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2003. The Chinese Taipei Baseball

Association (CTBA), the official baseball association of Taiwan, also sent a national

team to train at Dodgertown in Vero Beach, FL in 1998.

Since 1993, MLB has not staged any games in Taiwan until recent years. The

LA Dodgers again made the trip to Taiwan to compete in two games against CPBL

All-Stars in 2010 ("Dodgers to make," 2010). Then, MLB sent its All-Stars for the

first time to play against the Taiwanese national team in five games of the 2011

Taiwan All-Star Series ("MLB and MLBPA," 2011). Furthermore, MLB entitled

Taiwan to host a qualifying round of the 2013 WBC in 2012 (Fordin, 2012) and the

first round for Pool B of the 2013 WBC ("WBC announces venues," 2012). While it

did not occur, a 2015 season-opening game in Taiwan had been seriously considered

(Yeh, 2014). Evidently, MLB has recognized that Taiwan is passionate for baseball,

and its frequent and recent presence in Taiwan signals the weight of the Taiwan

market in the MLB's eyes. As Jim Small, the president of MLB Japan, pointed out,

"Baseball is very important to Taiwan, and Taiwan has been very important to the

MLB" (Huang, 2011, para. 8).

Besides the game presence, MLB has also brought grassroots program,

baseball clinic, and community care to Taiwan. The LA Dodgers have assigned many

coaches to work with Sinon Bulls and CTBA for years. In 2009, two former

Taiwanese Dodgers, Hong-Chih Kuo and Chin-Lung Hu, also conducted a two-day

youth clinic in their high school ("A history of," n.d.). In 2010, youth clinics were

presented along with two games between LA Dodgers and CPBL All-Stars (Henson,

2010). During the 2011 Taiwan All-Star Series, MLB stars participated in youth

baseball clinics ("Kaohsiung city baseball," 2011; "Taiwan baseball clinic," 2011),

Robinson Cano, the former New York Yankees second baseman, visited kids in

Taichung's China Medical University Hospital (Miller, 2011), and Jeremy Guthrie, the

former Baltimore Orioles pitcher, joined the career week of Morrison Academy in

Taichung to talk to students about his life goals and how to accomplish them

("Guthrie speaks to," 2011).

Generally, MLB conducts business in Taiwan through either MLBI or

MLBAM. MLBAM directs online/digital business in any form, whereas MLBI deals

with the rest of the business. Currently, MLB has not established an international

office in Taiwan, so MLB Japan also supervises the business in Taiwan.

Although Taiwanese can purchase MLB merchandise via MLB.com Shop,

MLBI partnered with Pegasus Taiwan Corporation to opens flagship clubhouse store

which sells officially-licensed products in Taiwan ("Major League Baseball," 2007b).

Meanwhile, MLBAM has ever licensed to Cayenne Tech., Era Digital Media, and

ELTA TV in the businesses of online baseball game ("Cayenne Tech., MLBAM,"

2008), MLB-focused website ("Era Digital Media," 2008), and online streaming

("ELTA, MLBAM sign," n.d) in Taiwan.

Influence of World Baseball Classic on Taiwan

World Baseball Classic (WBC) is an international baseball tournament

sanctioned by the International Baseball Federation (IBAF) and supported by MLB

and Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA), Nippon Professional

Baseball (NPB), the Korea Baseball Organization (KBO), their respective players

associations, and other leagues and players from around the world ("World Baseball

Classic," 2006). The inaugural WBC was held in 2006 with 16 participated countries.

The qualifying round was introduced since the 2013 WBC, so the total number of

participating countries has expanded to 28 ("WBC announces venues," 2012).

The purpose of WBC is to "build a platform where the best players in the

game could play on behalf of their countries and get baseball better global exposure"

(Lefton, 2006). WBC is the first international baseball tournament which features

active MLB players and other world professional baseball players to represent their

home countries and compete for a world championship. The spread of MLB stars not

only boosts the global appeal but intensifies the overall competition of WBC. In other words, WBC is a marketing strategy by MLB to brand itself on a greater international level (Goss, 2009). Through "global in form, but national in essence" (Klein, 2006, p. 247), MLB hopes to introduce baseball to the world, to enhance the growth of baseball games (Jun & Lee, 2007), and to maximize its global outreach (Lewis, 2010).

In the 2013 WBC, Taiwan was one of the four host countries for the first round ("International venues," 2012). On the team Chinese Taipei (Taiwan) roster, there were eight players who had ever signed with or played for MLB or Minor League (MiLB), including national heroes Chien-Ming Wang and Hung-Chih Kuo. With this great appeal, the WBC combined TV broadcasting and online streaming ratings hit high throughout the first round in Taiwan ("WBC Chinese Taipei," 2013). Finally, team Chinese Taipei advanced into the second round for the first time since the inauguration of WBC, and this achievement reignited the passion for baseball all over the country (Lin, 2013).

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Considering the uncertain fit of the two existing league brand associations and

the definition of consumer-based league brand associations, the researcher adopted a

mixed methods approach, including a qualitative pilot study (thought-listing and

semistructured interview) followed by an Internet survey, to develop a league brand

association scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB.

Participants

Due to the geographical limitations, the participants in the present study were

generally defined as the Taiwanese citizen who resides in Taiwan and consumes the

MLB games or information on television or via the Internet. Thus, a pure MLB media

consumer's perspective was fundamental and ensured throughout the present study.

Public Television Service discovered that broadcasting MLB in Taiwan

extended its viewership to the male between 15 and 45 years old, who are considered

mainstream consumers (Chen, 2008). Such an age category can be

further separated into 15-24 (9.4%), 25-34 (22.9%), and 35-44 (24%) with a 4-to-1

ratio between men and women according to a Taiwan AGB Nielsen survey later

reported (Hu & Tang, 2010). However, Gau's (2011) on-site survey showed the

majority of game attendees of 2011 Taiwan All-Star Series ("MLB and MLBPA,"

2011) were between 21 and 30 years old (47.8%) and between 31 and 40 years old

(23.4%) with an approximate 4-to-1 ratio between men and women. This implies the

young Taiwanese MLB consumers were not necessarily the TV consumers but may

still be heavy MLB media consumers. Students are also an important consumption

segment of sport (Ross et al., 2008), and the age of majority is 20 in Taiwan. All in all,

the population of the present study was formulated as Taiwanese consumers between

the ages of 20 and 45 which approximately translate to 9,323,000 people by 2014

(National Development Council, 2014). All research studies involving human

participants were approved by the Texas Woman's University Institutional Review

Board.

Thought-listing and Semistructured Interview

In the qualitative pilot study, a mixed purposeful sampling approach was used.

Although Patton (1990) listed 15 purposeful sampling approaches, it was stressed that

purposeful sampling can be conducted in a combining fashion to select information-

rich cases because each approach serves a distinct purpose and research often bears more than one purpose.

Criterion sampling, convenience sampling, snowball sampling, and critical case sampling were simultaneously applied in the pilot study. Based on Keller's (1993) CBBE model, brand awareness is essential to develop brand image as it forms brand associations attached to the brand node in memory. Thus, the ability to recall and recognize MLB was the criteria for sampling participants in the present study. If a participant failed either awareness or recall test prior to the interview, he/she was not included in the pilot study (see Appendix A).

With the criteria in place, the process of recruiting participants was twofold. First, the researcher started with a friend/family member who follows MLB (convenience sampling) and asked him/her to refer a qualified participant (snowball sampling) after the interview. The referred participant again referred another participant and so forth. Second, "logical generalizations" (Patton, 1990, p. 175) occur from the findings of critical participants. Thus, the researcher also invited and interviewed two Taiwanese journalists whom report MLB news on a daily basis as "...if some MLB brand associations they do not have, no other Taiwanese will have" (critical case sampling). Then, each journalist was also requested to recommend a

91

qualified participant (snowball sampling) after the interview. Each referred participant

again referred another participant and so forth. The mixed purposeful sampling was

terminated when the total number of participants reached 12, explained next.

It is said qualitative inquiry has no principles for sample size (Patton, 1990).

However, data collection in qualitative research usually ends when reaching

theoretical saturation or the point where no new information emerges in the data

(Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) suggested underlying

themes of data may emerge as early as six interviews while the saturation could

happen within the first 12 interviews if participants are relatively homogeneous. As

the validity of the qualitative inquiry relies more on the information-rich cases than

sample size (Patton, 1990), the researcher interviewed 12 qualified Taiwanese MLB

consumers (10 men and 2 women) between 20 and 45 years old filtered from the

mixed purposeful sampling.

Instrument

Thought-listing and Semistructured Interview

In the qualitative pilot study, the investigator was the instrument to collect and

analyze the data (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2011). Based on Keller's (1993)

framework, the interview started with brand awareness assessment:　The researcher

showed a preprinted paper with multiple logos of baseball leagues to examine a

participant's ability to recognize the MLB logo (see Appendix A). Then, "What is the

English acronym of Major League Baseball (asked in Chinese term)?" and "What

does MLB stand for?" were used to ensure a participant's ability to recall MLB. The

interview continued only if a participant answered all three screening questions

correctly without any other assistance.

Drawn from the definition of brand associations (Aaker, 1991), a preprinted

MLB logo with "When you see/hear of MLB, what thoughts come to your mind?"

was then used to facilitate the participant to jot down his/her thoughts about MLB

(Thought-listing). The Thought-listing technique is "an open-response method to

capture and categorize mental objects (Cacioppo & Petty, 1981), including "an

individual's thoughts, feelings, ideas, expectations, appraisals, and images"

(Cacioppo, et al., 1997, p. 929).

Then, the researcher continued asking "How would you explain/introduce the

thoughts to someone who has never heard of MLB?" or "Could you expand on the

thoughts you wrote?" based on Bryman's (2008) work to further explore the

participant's brand associations toward MLB (semistructured interview). A

semistructured guide both keeps the interview in the frame of the study and ensures

pertinent themes to surface (Kunkel et al., 2014). The whole interview was conducted

in Chinese (see Appendix A).

Thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is "a systematic approach to the

analysis of qualitative data that involves identifying themes or patterns of cultural

meaning; coding and classifying data, usually textual, according to themes; and

interpreting the resulting thematic structures by seeking commonalties, relationships,

overarching patterns, theoretical constructs, or explanatory principles" (Mills,

Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010, pp. 925-926). Themes in this analysis can be identified

based on theoretical constructs or emerged from/grounded in the data, so thematic

coding can either go deductively or inductively (Mills et al., 2010).

The researcher conducted a thematic analysis on QSR International NVivo 10

software starting with transcribing the interviews verbatim in Chinese. The transcript

was then reviewed by each participant to ensure all thoughts were accurately

captured. To identify common themes over transcripts, two-step coding sequence

comprising opening coding and axial coding was implemented. The researcher

examined the data to locate common themes. Some comprehensive brand associations

toward MLB were expected to be identified based on MLB Taiwan Brand

Architecture and existing league and team brand associations while others may

emerge from the data due to the MLB's characteristics and the perception of

Taiwanese.

During the open coding process, a codebook was developed as initial codes

were assigned to the identified themes to convert the data into categories. Each

category was presented with a definition of a brand association and direct quotes

retrieved from the transcripts as recommended by Ryan and Bernard (2000). In

addition, each participant was assigned a code name for confidentiality.

Two Taiwanese assistants with coding experience then reviewed the codebook.

After the majority of the researcher and the assistants agreed with the identified

themes, the codebook was translated into English and submitted to a panel of two

dissertation committee members who are considered as experts in sport branding. The

experts were requested to evaluate the accuracy of the themes as brand associations of

MLB. Any suggestions from the experts were taken to revise both English and

Chinese versions of the codebook. Then, axial coding was conducted to reexamine the

data again and review and/or recode the initial codes in accordance to the revised

codebook.

Trustworthiness. Trustworthiness encompassing credibility, transferability,

dependability, and confirmability often determines the rigor of qualitative research

(Guba, 1981; Shenton, 2004; Sinkovics, Penz, & Ghauri, 2008). Throughout the

qualitative pilot study, these four criteria were fulfilled as follows:

Credibility means researchers present a true picture derived from the

participants' views (Silverman, 2005). The pilot study included 12 data

sources/participants; each participant was asked to check the accuracy of the

transcript. The codebook was agreed upon by two assistants and then reviewed by an

expert, and the results were also assessed on the congruency with previous studies of

team and league brand associations. Therefore, triangulation, member checks,

debriefing sessions, and examination of previous research findings suggested by

Shenton (2004) were used to ensure credibility of the pilot study.

Transferability refers to the researcher's responsibility to provide thorough

information about the fieldwork so that a reader can judge whether the findings are

insightful in a new but similar setting (Shenton, 2004). In this pilot study, the detail

about the fieldwork was provided in the method section (Chapter III) and the results

section (Chapter IV) for potential readers to judge on transferability.

To address dependability, researchers should provide readers with sufficient

information on the research process so that a future researcher will be able to repeat

the study (Shenton, 2004). Sinkovics et al. (2008) further stressed the logical flow of

the process to ensure dependability. In addition to detailed documentation mentioned above, the dependability in the pilot study was supported through the compatibility among the frameworks of CBBE and MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture and purposeful sampling, thought-listing, and semistructured interview.

Confirmability emphasizes the findings emerge from the data (Shenton, 2004) and could be confirmed by others whom repeat the same study (Silverman, 2005). Objectivity or reducing researcher bias is the major concern to confirmability (Shenton, 2004). Since Gray (2005) stated that confirmability can be fulfilled by demonstrating credibility, conducting credibility strategies mentioned above also established confirmability of the pilot study.

Internet Survey: From Online Questionnaire to Developing the Scale

To build a league brand association scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB, the present study complied with the steps of multi-item scale development suggested by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006). The detail is as follows:

1. Define the construct theoretically: The construct of the Internet survey questionnaire was defined based on the brand associations of MLB emerged from the pilot study. Each theme/brand association represented a construct of the scale.

2. Develop potential scale items which match the constructs: Partial items of the questionnaire may be adapted from the existing team/league scales if any brand association of MLB echoes previous literature. The researcher would select the items with high factor loadings from the existing team/league scales into the questionnaire followed by wording modification to fit the present study (if applicable). For new brand associations, the items of the construct(s) were retrieved from the codebook.

3. Judge the items for content: The draft of the Internet survey questionnaire was then submitted to the same expert in the pilot study to judge the match between the construct and each scale item (face validity). A branding expert was also asked to sort items by matching them with the proper constructs and to examine redundant items. Each construct had three to five items as Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallm, and Strahan (1999) suggested for exploratory factor analysis.

After the revision to enhance face validity, the questionnaire was translated into Chinese. Then, to detect misunderstandings, ambiguities, or other difficulties participants may encounter with Chinese items of questionnaire, a sample size of 30 participants who fell in the range of the defined population were recruited for a pretest as Perneger, Courvoisier, Hudelson, and Gayet-Ageron (2015) suggested.

The online questionnaire was finalized by adopting a 7-point Likert scale

anchored from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. The online questionnaire

started with the three identical screen questions used in the qualitative interview

regarding the ability to recall and recognize MLB based on Keller's (1993) CBBE

model and ended with demographic questions, including gender, age, residence

region, education level, marital status, household income, years of following MLB,

and loyalty strength to MLB, team(s), and player(s).

4. Conduct a test to evaluate the items: An online questionnaire was

administered through unrestricted self-selected survey of convenience sampling.

Online sampling is cost efficient to reach samples in a large geographic region (Bauer

et al., 2005). The Internet survey was supported and promoted via survey invitation

posts on two Facebook groups of two Taiwanese MLB anchormen, two private MLB

Facebook groups, and the MLB group of PTT, the largest Taiwanese Bulletin Board

System (online forum) which has attracted over 1.25 million members between 20

and 40 years old ("1.25 million members," 2011).

The sample size for the Internet survey required at least 300 valid cases as

Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggested for exploratory factor analysis. Valid cases

were ensured through data screening, including incomplete case, inconsistent

response on the reversed question, and "careless responses" (Meade & Craig, 2011, p.

1), and three screening questions regarding the ability to recall and recognize the

MLB logo based on Keller's (1993) CBBE model. In addition, only participants

between 20 and 45 years old were recruited in accordance to the population. Further,

anyone who has ever attended any MLB games in person or has ever lived in the

United States was deleted from the dataset to ensure the finding of the research will

be from a pure MLB media consumer's perspective.

To evaluate the items, the assumptions of exploratory factor analysis were

firstly tested. Then, exploratory factor analysis (principal component analysis) was

calculated to justify the construct validity of the scale (Bornstedt, 1977; Rattray &

Jones, 2007). Finally, item-to-total and inter-item (Cronbach's alpha coefficients)

correlations were analyzed for reliability of the scale (Field, 2009).

5. Scale modifications based on the statistical results: Based on the statistical

results, the researcher checked the scale and ensured three items by minimum for each

construct (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Procedures

The qualitative pilot study consisting of thought-listing and semistructured

interview was conducted between May 10th and June 10th, 2015. Before each

interview, the researcher explained the interview guide, including the procedure and

rules, voice recording of interview, confidentiality, and data protection to each

participant. An informed consent form was provided for each participant to sign/agree

to join the interview. To facilitate the thematic coding, a voice recorder and thought-

listing sheets were used during the interview.

The researcher started seeking approvals from two targeted Taiwanese MLB

anchormen, two private MLB Facebook groups, and the MLB group of PTT in April

2015 to post a tailored survey invitation and a hyperlink of the Internet survey given

by the researcher on respective Facebook group and PTT MLB board in the early

September 2015. The post led a participant to the Internet survey page designed on

PsychData Surveys, a professional Internet survey platform. The Internet survey

began with an inform consent statement which included research purpose,

confidentiality, and voluntary statement. A participant had to "agree" to begin the

survey. The Internet survey ran from September 1st, 2015 till September 30th, 2015.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the Internet survey were analyzed through the statistical

software program SPSS 19.0. Prior to the statistical analyses, valid participants were

ensured through data screening, age criterion, and five screening questions. Then, the

assumption of exploratory factor analysis was tested. The present study intends to

develop a league brand association scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward

MLB, so exploratory factor analysis (principal component analysis), item-to-total

correlations analysis, and inter-item correlations analysis (Cronbach's alpha

coefficients) were calculated to justify the validity and reliability of the scale.

This chapter depicts the research design of the qualitative interview and the

Internet survey for the present study to develop a league brand association scale from

the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB. The next chapter chronicles the

implementation of the research design.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher adopted a mixed

method approach, including a qualitative interview (thought-listing and

semistructured interview) followed by an Internet survey, to develop a league brand

association scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB. This chapter

records and depicts the entire procedures of developing an MLB Taiwanese Brand

Association scale (MLBTBA).

Qualitative Interview

Descriptions of Participants

In total, 12 participants (10 men and 2 women) in the defined population of

the present study were interviewed. Ten participants are currently living in Northern

Taiwan whereas the remaining two are living in Southern Taiwan and on one of the

affiliated islands of Taiwan respectively. They were all between 20 and 45 years old.

They had never attended any MLB games and had never lived in the United States.

The 12 participants included 1 male and 1 female sports reporter.

From Thematic Analysis to the Codebook

Although the theoretical saturation occurred at the eighth interview, the four

additional interviews were still completed for closure confirmation. On average, each

interview lasted for 20 min.

While the 12 interviews were underway, thematic analysis was also in

progress. Each Chinese transcript was completed 3 to 5 days right after each

interview. Then, the accuracy of each transcript was checked by its relevant

interviewee. After receiving approvals from all 12 interviewees, thematic analysis

entered the coding process.

To identify common themes over transcripts, QSR International NVivo 10

software was used for data analysis. Initially, 77 categories or potential themes were

coded. As more reviews conducted, the connections among 77 categories started to

emerge. So, the coding reexamination merged linked categories but eliminated the

categories quoted from less than three interviewees. Such a move had some categories

renamed to unveil 58 themes (4 with subthemes).

Since that moment, the researcher began to develop the codebook. While

organizing the codebook, further connections among 58 themes emerged after

scanning over transcripts repeatedly. So, the second recode was conducted to merge

and rearrange themes to drop the number of themes to 27 (10 with subthemes).

The codebook was later reviewed by two Taiwanese assistants who both

agreed with the identified themes. Thus, the researcher translated the codebook into

an English version followed by submitting it to a Taiwanese professional interpreter

for examining translation accuracy. After correcting typing errors and revising

wordings suggested by the interpreter, the English codebook was ready for a review

by a dissertation committee member specialized in branding.

After the review, the committee member advised that integrating themes was

still necessary to encourage the Internet survey participation. Therefore, the researcher

again reviewed all 12 transcripts and the Chinese codebook. The third recode resulted

in 21 themes after merging and renaming themes. Any changes resulting from the

third recode also led to the revision on both Chinese and English codebooks.

Afterwards, the English codebook was submitted to the same committee

member for the second review. After reexamining the themes, the committee member

approved the quality of the codebook (see Appendix H). Getting the approval from the

dissertation committee member specialized in branding, the researcher moved on to

develop the Internet survey.

The Construction of the Internet Survey

The potential scale was built from the constructs which were the themes/brand associations in the codebook. Notably, some brand associations in the codebook share same names with the ones in the existing team/league scales, but the items of the potential scale all originated from the codebook. The items were either retrieved from the quotes or designed based on the logics of the quotes in the codebook followed by wording modifications. Then, the draft of the Internet survey questionnaire, including survey recruitment letter, potential scale, and demographic section, was submitted to the same committee member for a review.

After the review, the committee member suggested that the items of the potential scale avoid fact questions but test the perception and attitude of the consumer. Following the guidance, the researcher completed the items revision 4 days later. As a result, the committee member specialized in branding was satisfied with the edited potential scale regardless of minor wording problems at the second review.

With the approval from the committee member, the researcher fixed the wording problems followed by translating the Internet survey from English into Chinese. The Chinese version of the Internet survey was then checked by the same professional interpreter for translation accuracy. After correcting typing errors and

revising the wording suggested by the interpreter, the Chinese Internet survey was

ready for the pretest.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, 30 pretest participants fallen in the range of

the defined population were recruited to detect misunderstandings, ambiguities, or

other difficulties participants of the formal survey may encounter. After collecting and

checking the 30 responses, the researcher revised 33 items of the potential scale and

three demographic questions. Before any wording changes, the researcher always

checked the original English questions first to ensure that each revised Chinese item

would still carry its original meaning. Then, the items of the potential scale were

randomized followed by setting the 71st item as a reversed question. At that moment,

the Internet questionnaire was finalized (see Appendix I).

Internet Survey

After uploading the Internet survey to PsychData, the researcher went through

and trialed the Internet survey to ensure the platform was free from problems and

glitches. With everything in place, the researcher notified the PTT MLB board

manager, two Taiwanese MLB anchormen, and two managers of two private MLB

Facebook groups that the Internet survey was ready. Each of them then posted a

tailored survey invitation and a hyperlink of the Internet survey given by the

researcher on PTT MLB board and respective Facebook group to officially begin the

Internet survey. The second post on all platforms was also requested and conducted 2

weeks later as a survey reminder. The Internet survey lasted for 30 days. In total, the

Internet survey collected 1363 responses.

<div align="center">**Data Screening**</div>

As planned in Chapter Three, multiple criteria were implemented to retrieve

valid participants during the data screening. The screen criteria included incomplete

case, inconsistent response on the 71st question (reversed question), "careless

responses", age of participant, and five screening questions.

The total 1363 responses included 151 incomplete cases. While screening on

the reversed question (i.e., the world's top baseball league is not the MLB.), the

researcher also checked the 66th to 70th questions and 72th to 76th questions in each

case to eliminate those cases with inconsistent responses. If one chose 5 to 7 on the

reversed question while also constantly answering 5 to 7 on the neighboring

questions, then that case was considered invalid. Checking the reversed question

resulted in removing 103 cases. "Careless responses" are likely to reduce correlations

and increase the possibility of Type II errors in statistical hypothesis testing (Meade &

Craig, 2011), so two participants were deleted from the dataset because they strongly

<div align="center">108</div>

disagreed with all brand association questions. Further, 237 respondents were eliminated due to their ages outside the range between 20 and 45 years.

The five screening questions were the brand awareness assessment (three questions), "Have you ever attended any MLB games in person?", and "Have you ever lived/studied in the US?" Participants who failed any of the three questions or had experiences beyond the MLB media consumption were excluded from the dataset. Altogether, 168 participants were eliminated here as 29 participants failed the brand awareness assessment, 123 participants had attended MLB games in person, and 16 participants had lived/studied in the United States.

After the preliminary data screening, the total number of valid cases was down to 699 with 692 participants who have used MLB.com and 307 participants who have used MLB.tv. Given the valid cases were determined, the demographics of the present study are depicted next.

Demographics

The remaining cases were considered as the pure Taiwanese MLB media consumers. Totally, 12 demographic questions were designed on the Internet survey, but only 9 questions are reported here as "Have you ever attended any MLB games in person?" and "Have you ever lived/studied in the US?" only served for screening

purposes. Additionally, the last question was for email contact information for the drawing. The demographics are displayed in Table 1 below.

Among 699 participants were 661 males (94.6%) and 38 females (5.4%). The majority of the participants were between 20 to 25 years old (54.5%) followed by 26 to 30 years old (23.6%) and 31 to 35 years old (15.2%). Six hundred thirty-one participants were single (90.3%) whereas 68 participants were married (9.7%).

With regards to residence, northern Taiwanese accounted for 54.9 % of the overall participants followed by southern Taiwanese (22.9%) and central Taiwanese (20.7%). As for the education level, 70.0 % of the participants claimed a university/college degree while 190 graduated from graduate school (27.2%). Most of the participants were students (40.9%), but the ratios among the service industry (11.7%), veterans/government officials (8.9%), commercial (10.2%), industrial (12.0%), and unemployed (9.4%) were quite close. Although 205 participants (29.3%) had no stable income, monthly income under (NT = New Taiwan Dollar) NT $15,000 (18.3%), NT $15,001 to NT $30,000 (15.0%), and NT $30,001 to NT $50,000 (26.9%) totally accounted for 60.0% of the overall participants.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentage for Demographic

	Demographics	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	661	94.6
	Female	38	5.4
Age	20-25	381	54.5
	26-30	165	23.6
	31-35	106	15.2
	36-40	33	4.7
	41-45	14	2.0
Marital Status	Single	631	90.3
	Married	68	9.7
	Divorced	0	0
	Separated	0	0
	Other	0	0
Residence	Northern Taiwan	384	54.9
	Central Taiwan	145	20.7
	Southern Taiwan	160	22.9
	Eastern Taiwan	4	0.6
	Affiliated Islands of Taiwan	6	0.9
Education Level	Junior High School and Under	0	0
	Senior High School/Vocational School	18	2.6
	University/College	489	70.0
	Graduate School	190	27.2
	Other	2	0.3

(continued)

Table 1 cont'd

Demographics		Frequency	%
	Student	286	40.9
	Service Industry	82	11.7
	Veterans/Government Officials	62	8.9
	Commercial	71	10.2
Occupation	Industrial	84	12.0
	Unemployed	66	9.4
	Homemaker	3	0.4
	Retired	0	0
	Other	45	6.4
	No Stable Income	205	29.3
	Under NT$15,000	128	18.3
	NT $15,001 – NT $30,000	105	15.0
Monthly Income	NT $30,001 – NT $50,000	188	26.9
	NT $50,001 – NT $70,000	52	7.4
	NT $70,001 – NT $100,000	14	2.0
	Over NT $100,000	7	1.0
	Less than 1 year	2	0.3
	1-5 years	108	15.5
	6-10 years	385	55.1
	11-15 years	140	20.0
Years of Following MLB	16-20 years	47	6.7
	21-25 years	15	2.1
	26-30 years	2	0.3
	More than 30 years	0	0
	The League of the MLB	388	55.5
Type of Following MLB	Specific Team(s)	208	29.8
	Specific Player(s)	103	14.7

Note: Only target participants (20-45 years old) are included.

In regards to the consumption pattern of the participants, 385 participants

(55.1%) have followed MLB for 6 to 10 years, followed by 140 for 11 to 15 years

(20.0%) and 108 for 1 to 5 years (15.5%). The majority of the participants (55.5%)

followed the entire MLB whereas the rest followed specific teams (29.8%) or specific

players (14.7%) respectively. Next, the dataset was submitted to assumption testing of

exploratory factor analysis.

Exploratory Factor Analysis: Assumption Testing

To perform an exploratory factor analysis, some conditions were required.

First, the data were freed from univariate and multivariate outliers (Field, 2009).

Second, univariate and multivariate normality were necessary with the dataset (Child,

2006). Third, the absence of multicollinearity and singularity needed ensuring (Field,

2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). In addition, the influence of missing data on factor

analysis was evaluated (Field, 2009).

Univariate Outliers and Multivariate Outliers

To detect univariate outliers, the researcher checked the data through

standardized values (z-scores) suggested by Field (2009). All values larger than the

absolute value 3 within 644 cases were deleted. Despite the removal, some

standardized values between three and four were still detected at the second

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screening. However, with a large sample size ($N = 699$) in the present study, leaving

standardized values less than the absolute value 4 in the dataset should not be a

problem (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black,1995).

To detect multivariate outliers within the dataset, the researcher checked the

data through standardized values (Mahalanobis distances) suggested by Hair et al.

(1995) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). Probability estimation was a way to identify

multivariate outliers if a case's Mahalanobis distances value was at $p < .001$

(Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Based on the result, no multivariate outliers were

detected as the probability was larger than .001 for all Mahalanobis distance values.

Thus, the assumption testing proceeded to normality testing.

Univariate Normality and Multivariate Normality

The present study did not actually test these assumptions of univariate and

multivariate normality for two reasons. First, with a sufficient sample size (larger than

30 or 40), violating normality assumption should not lead to critical problems

(Pallant, 2007). Further, with hundreds of samples, the data distribution can be

disregarded (Altman & Bland, 1995). Therefore, the present study ($N = 699$)

exempted from univariate normality testing. As for the multivariate normality, it

cannot be examined on SPSS. However, a practical way of assessing multivariate

normality was to check through univariate normality as the latter was a required

condition for the former (Field, 2009). Since univariate normality was presumed

within the dataset, multivariate normality was also likely obtainable.

Multicollinearity and Singularity

Guided by Field (2009), the researcher examined multicollinearity (variables

that highly correlated) and singularity (variables that perfectly correlated) within the

data. The correlation matrix and Barlett's Test of Sphericity produced in the output of

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) were checked.

The correlation matrix presented the intercorrelation between variables. To

perform a factor analysis, our variables should correlate well but not perfect, so the

researcher scanned the matrix for variables with few or no correlations larger than .3

while looking for variables with correlation coefficients above .9 (Field, 2009). This

scan resulted in removing Q2, Q9, Q17, Q32, Q33, Q41, Q47, Q52, and Q72 from the

dataset because each variable had no correlations larger than .3 with any other

variables. Also, despite the PCA was exempted from multicollinearity (Field), no

variable with correlations greater .9 was found.

After the removal of nine variables, the correlation matrix was recalculated for

reexamination. Based on the result, all variables noticeably correlated with other

variables ($r > .3$) but had no extreme correlation coefficients ($r > .9$). Finally, Barlett's

Test of Sphericity (significant level of $p < .05$) showed highly significant χ^2 (2628) =

7685.08, $p < .001$, indicated this correlation matrix was not an identity matrix (Field,

2009), so overall, the dataset was appropriate for PCA.

Missing Data

Generally, cases with missing data are removed to avoid overvaluation

(Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). In addition, sample size and the distribution of missing

data (random or nonrandom) should be evaluated if the dataset has missing data

(Yong & Pearce, 2013).

Abnormally, the missing data in the present study was developed by the

researcher in two ways. First, during the Internet survey, participants who have never

used MLB.com were led to skip four questions (Q54 to Q57) while ones who have

never used MLB.tv were also led to skip Q59.

Second, the researcher deleted some data during screening univariate outliers.

Given that 644 out of 699 cases had at least one outliner(s), removing all 644 cases

with missing values was not applicable. Fortunately, the missing data were not in

nonrandom pattern in addition to the large sample size ($N = 699$) in present study

(Yong & Pearce, 2013). SPSS also allowed the researcher to exclude only missing

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values when calculating the PCA. Thus, keeping missing data with the present study

should not cause a problem.

Exploratory Factor Analysis: Principal Component Analysis

Principal Component Analysis (PCA), a solid psychometric analysis, is often

used to construct a questionnaire to assess an implicit variable (Field, 2009). PCA was

a data reduction approach (Yong & Pearce, 2013), where a large number of variables

were clustered into a small chunk of factors/components (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

PCA contained a serial procedure, including a check on correlations patterns, factor

extraction (number of factor to extract), factor rotation, and factor interpretation.

The challenge of conducting the PCA was twofold. First, determining the

number of factor, choosing factor rotation method, and interpreting factors were

interrelated (Hair et al., 1995). Thus, trials followed by comparisons must be

undertaken until a factor structure can be interpreted well. Second, rerunning PCA to

recheck everything was required if any variable was removed from the dataset

throughout the entire process (Field, 2009). In other words, back and forth trials were

inevitable to reach the best factor structure. Here only records the procedures to the

chosen factor structure for a concise purpose.

Preliminary Analysis

The preliminary PCA was conducted with the varimax of orthogonal rotation

selected to ensure the data appropriateness followed by determining the number of

factor extraction and the type of factor rotation. The researcher first examined the

dataset through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin message of sampling adequacy (KMO) and the

diagonal of Anti-Image Matrix to determine its appropriateness (cutoff above .50 for

both) for factor analysis (Field, 2009). The KMO value of the dataset was .94, which

fell in the range of being superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999), indicating

correlations patterns were relatively compact, so factor analysis should produce

distinct and reliable factors (Field). In addition, all diagonal values of Anti-Image

Matrix were greater than .50. Consequently, the dataset was suitable for PCA.

The researcher adopted eigenvalues together with scree test suggested by Yong

and Pearce (2013) to determine the number of factor extraction. The eigenvalues

signify the magnitude of variation explained by a factor (Field, 2009), and an

eigenvalue of 1 was regarded as a substantial degree of variation (Kaiser, 1960). The

scree test was shown in a graph (scree plot) where each eigenvalue was arranged on

Y-axis against its associated factor on *X*-axis (Cattell, 1966). The scree plot visualized

the importance of each factor (Field, 2009), and the cut-off point on factor retention

was the point of inflexion where "the slope of the line changes dramatically" (Field, 2009, pp. 639-640).

The preliminary eigenvalues indicated 16 factors to extract as their values were larger than one (Kaiser, 1960). On the other hand, the output of the scree plot might suggest nine factors (see Appendix J). Notably, the eigenvalue criterion often guides researchers to retain too many factors (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Hair et al., 1995), so the best factor structure may fall in a number between eight factors and 17 factors which were one above and below the projected numbers (Costello & Osborne, 2005).

Before rotation, most variables gathered at the first factor, so choosing a rotation is necessary. Generally, correlation among factors was no surprise in the social sciences, so oblique rotation should, theoretically, be a more precise solution (Costello & Osborne, 2005). In fact, this assumption was supported by the factor transformation matrix in the preliminary output. The matrix was not symmetrical suggesting that orthogonal rotation was likely inappropriate for the dataset (Field, 2009). Therefore, the researcher chose oblique rotation to explore the best factor structure depicted next.

Explore the Best Factor Structure

In order to search for the best factor structure, the researcher trialed back and forth among 10 versions through removing problematic variables, manipulating the number of factor extraction, rerunning PCA, and/or comparing with all the other factor structures. To avoid redundancy, this section only recorded the way to the best factor structure.

Usually, the best factor structure cannot be obtained without removing problematic variables from the analysis (Costello & Osborne, 2005). Below are the criteria the researcher used to delete problematic variables: (a) communality $< .40$ (Costello & Osborne, 2005), (b) factor loading $< .32$ if sample size is above 300 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), (c) cross loading $\geq .32$ (Costello & Osborne, 2005), except one variable shares the underlying nature of the other (Yong & Pearce, 2013), (d) several adequate crossloaders (.50 or better) on each factor (Costello & Osborne, 2005), and (e) a factor with less than three items, unless the two variables highly correlate with each other $(r > .70)$ but uncorrelated with other variables (Yong & Pearce, 2013). These criteria guided the researcher throughout the PCA attempts to capture the cleanest factor structure or the most interpretable structure with the fewest criteria violations.

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First attempt. PCA was conducted with the direct oblimin of oblique rotation

selected. The researcher first examined the dataset through KMO and the diagonal of

Anti-Image Matrix to determine its appropriateness (cutoff above .50 for both) for

factor analysis (Field, 2009). The KMO value of the dataset was .94, which fell in the

range of being superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999), indicating the correlations

patterns were relatively compact, so factor analysis should have produced distinct and

reliable factor (Field, 2009). In addition, all diagonal values of Anti-Image Matrix

were greater than .50. Consequently, the dataset was suitable for PCA.

The researcher adopted eigenvalues together with scree test suggested by Yong

and Pearce (2013) to determine the number of factor extraction. The eigenvalues still

indicated 16 factors to extract as their values were larger than one (Kaiser, 1960).

Similarly, the output of the scree plot might suggest 9 factors (see Appendix J). As

mentioned above, the eigenvalue often suggests too many factors (Costello &

Osborne, 2005; Hair et al., 1995), so the best factor structure under oblique rotation

may fall in a number between eight factors and 17 factors (one above and below the

projected numbers; Costello & Osborne, 2005).

The exploration of the best factor structure started with a 17-factor structure

because it was the cleanest among the initial 10 versions. However, problematic

variables were then identified and removed from the analysis due to the factor loading

< .32 (Q24, Q34, Q60, Q68, and Q80) and a factor with less than three items (Q15,

Q67, Q4, and Q40).

Second attempt. PCA was conducted with the direct oblimin of oblique

rotation selected. The KMO and the diagonal of Anti-Image Matrix were first

examined to determine its appropriateness (cutoff above .50 for both) for factor

analysis (Field, 2009). The KMO value of the dataset was .94, which fell in the range

of being superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). Also, all diagonal values of Anti-

Image Matrix were greater than .50. Thus, the dataset was suitable for PCA. The

rotated structure suggested an improved 15-factor structure. However, Q84 and Q27

were then removed (factor loading < .32).

Third attempt. PCA was conducted with the direct oblimin of oblique

rotation selected. The KMO and the diagonal of Anti-Image Matrix were first

examined to determine its appropriateness (cutoff above .50 for both) for factor

analysis (Field, 2009). The KMO value of the dataset was .93, which fell in the range

of being superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). All diagonal values of Anti-Image

Matrix were also greater than .50. Thus, the dataset was suitable for PCA. The rotated

structure suggested a 15-factor structure. However, Q43 and Q70 (factor loading < .32) along with Q8 and Q73 (a factor < 3 items) were removed.

Fourth attempt. PCA was conducted with the direct oblimin of oblique rotation selected. The KMO and the diagonal of Anti-Image Matrix were first examined to determine its appropriateness (cutoff above .50 for both) for factor analysis (Field, 2009). The KMO value of the dataset was .93, which fell in the range of being superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). All diagonal values of Anti-Image Matrix were also greater than .50. Thus, the dataset was suitable for PCA. The rotated structure suggested a 13-factor structure. However, Q28 was still removed (factor loading < .32).

Fifth attempt. PCA was conducted with the direct oblimin of oblique rotation selected. The KMO and the diagonal of Anti-Image Matrix were first examined to determine its appropriateness (cutoff above .50 for both) for factor analysis (Field, 2009). The KMO value of the dataset was .93, which fell in the range of being superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). Also, all diagonal values of Anti-Image Matrix were greater than .50. Thus, the dataset was suitable for PCA.

The rotated structure suggested a 13-factor structure. This time, no problematic variables were identified. However, three factors bore more than five

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questions along with the difficulty in factor interpretation, so the researcher decided to manually extract 14 factors on the next trial.

Sixth attempt. PCA was conducted with the direct oblimin of oblique rotation selected. The researcher set the number of factor extractions at 14. The KMO and the diagonal of Anti-Image Matrix were first examined to determine its appropriateness (cutoff above .50 for both) for factor analysis (Field, 2009). The KMO value of the dataset was .93, which fell in the range of being superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). Also, all diagonal values of Anti-Image Matrix were greater than .50. Thus, the dataset was suitable for PCA.

This 14-factor structure was temporarily chosen as it is by far the cleanest and the most interpretable model since exploration started. The researcher assigned themes to all factors at this moment (see Appendix K), but the reliability of this temporary scale still needed to be determined.

<div align="center">

Reliability Analysis

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The temporary scale was submitted to reliability analysis, including inter-item correlations analysis (Cronbach's α coefficients) and item-to-total correlations analysis. Notably, each factor represented a subscale, so Cronbach's α should be

applied separately by subscale (Field, 2009). Appendix L displays the reliability of the temporary scale.

Appendix L shows that, in terms of Cronbach's α value, two subscales were larger than .8 (Watchability and Advanced Media), five subscales were between .7 and .8 (World Class, Performance Enhancing Drugs, Quality Tangibles, Hollywood, and Advanced Player Business Model), three subscales were between .6 and .7 (Nostalgia, Atmosphere Energizer, and League Role Model), two subscales were between .5 and .6 (The MLB Brand and Broadcast Experience), and two subscales were lower than .5 (Must-do and Untraditional Move).

Generally, Cronbach's α of .7 to .8 was deemed acceptable (Field, 2009). However, Kline (1999) stressed that values of psychometric constructs lower than even .7 were also understandable due to the assessment diversity. Therefore, only the subscales with Cronbach's α below .5 were removed (Must-do and Untraditional Move).

As for item-to-total correlations, a value less than .3 was deemed problematic indicating "...it does not correlate very well with the scale overall" (Field, 2009, p. 678). From Appendix L, five problematic items were located in the two problematic subscales (Must-do and Untraditional Move). Thus, Q83, Q21, Q63, Q42, and Q37

were deleted from the temporary scale. The removal of variables then led to rerun

PCA to ensure the factor structure again (Field, 2009).

MLB Taiwanese Brand Association Scale

Prior to dealing with the five problematic items of reliability analysis, two

additional items were removed to improve factor accuracy and conciseness. Q79 (I

follow MLB All-Star players, so I remember the teams they play/played with.) did not

match well in the theme of Watchability. Q31 (The MLB gathers star players from all

over the world.) and Q29 (The MLB gathers the best baseball players from around the

world.) also share a similar meaning. Thus, seven items in total were deleted from the

analysis.

Return to Principal Component Analysis

Seventh attempt. PCA was conducted with the direct oblimin of oblique

rotation selected. The researcher manually set to extract 12 factors. The KMO and the

diagonal of Anti-Image Matrix were first examined to determine its appropriateness

(cutoff above .50 for both) for factor analysis (Field, 2009). The KMO value of the

dataset was .93, which fell in the range of being superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou,

1999). All diagonal values of Anti-Image Matrix were greater than .50. Thus, the

dataset was also suitable for PCA.

This recalculation produced an even better factor structure than the previous 14-factor structure. This refined structure was almost identical to the last one except the removal of the two problematic subscales (Must-do and Untraditional Move) which altered Q25 to associate with the subscale of Atmosphere Energizer. With the addition of Q25, the Cronbach's α of Atmosphere Energizer increased to .66, and no problem on item-to-total correlations was found.

Given the pass through PCA and reliability analysis, the researcher unveiled this 12-factor structure as MLB Taiwanese Brand Association Scale (MLBTBA). The MLBTBA is presented in Appendix M. Appendix N displays the reliability of MLBTBA while Appendix O displays the PCA results of MLBTBA. Below summarizes Appendix O.

Summary of the PCA Results of MLBTBA

Guided by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), only factor loadings over .32 were deemed significant and thereby included in Appendix O. In terms of assigning meaning to factors, the rule of thumb was that variables with larger factor loadings were more influential to represent a factor (Hair et al., 1995). The following is the rationale behind the 12 themes.

The first factor was labeled "Watchability" because its items generally depict

the enjoyment of watching MLB. The second factor included all four items regarding

the issues of "Performance Enhancing Drugs". The third factor "Quality Tangibles"

involves quality products Taiwanese MLB media consumers have perceived of or can

feel by touch (i.e., merchandise). Echoing the brand of MLB Advanced Media,

"Advanced Media" was chosen for the fourth factor as all five questions touched the

superb digital services of MLB. The "Atmosphere Energizer" came from a concept

that marketing themes, the MLB All-Star Game, the sideline activities during 7th

inning stretch, and the MLB mascots were all meant to boost the game atmosphere.

The sixth factor was "Nostalgia" as all three items extended from the US baseball

tradition. "World Class" included items generally related to "the world's best" while

suggesting MLB's superiority.

Although a factor with three items was recommended (Tabachnick & Fidell,

2007), the researcher still retained the eighth factor, Hollywood, for two reasons.

First, the two items were highly correlated ($r > .70$) but barely correlated with other

variables (Yong & Pearce, 2013). Second, initially, the researcher only designed two

"Hollywood" items in order to control the length of the Internet questionnaire. If there

was a third item, "Hollywood" would likely have been a complete factor.

The ninth factor "Advanced Player Business Model" was named based on the

items' relevance to player business model of MLB. "The MLB Brand" covered the

three levels of the MLB brand: player, team, and league. The 11th factor, Broadcast

Experience, described the firsthand viewing experience of Taiwanese MLB

consumers and their imagination derived from the broadcast. The last factor "League

Role Model" covered three items suggesting MLB has become a role model to any

other baseball league in the world.

Finally, one crossloading item was located in Appendix N. Yong and Pearce

(2013) indicated that a crossloader can be retained if one can justify its underlying

nature. The 14th question (The MLB is the business role model for any other

professional baseball leagues in the world.) linked to "Nostalgia" because, from a

foreign perspective, learning from the MLB experience, it was impossible to separate

the MLB's business from its 147-year history. Especially, as the oldest professional

baseball league, each step the MLB made toward its current prosperity bears a historic

meaning to the world of professional baseball.

Summary

The MLBTBA was developed in this chapter through the interview, thematic

analysis, the Internet survey, and then two statistical analyses (PCA and reliability

analysis). In total, 12 brand associations Taiwanese consumers currently hold toward

MLB were discovered. In the next chapter, the findings in the MLBTBA are

discussed.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to develop a league brand association

scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB. Considering the uncertain fit of

the two existing league brand associations and the definition of customer-based

league brand associations, the researcher adopted a mixed methods approach,

including an Interview study (thought-listing and semistructured interview) and an

Internet survey, to explore the impressions Taiwanese "satellite fans" currently hold

toward MLB.

The interview was conducted through a mixed purposeful sampling to develop

a potential scale in preparation for the Internet survey. Each transcript was checked by

its interviewee, and then the thematic analysis was conducted on NVivo 10 software

to identify the underlying themes and develop a codebook. The codebook was

reviewed by two Taiwanese coding assistants, a professional interpreter, and a

branding expert to ensure trustworthiness of the interview study. The codebook with

themes and quotes served as foundation of the potential scale.

The entire investigation followed the steps of multi-item scale development

suggested by Hair et al. (2006). The English Internet survey was reviewed by the same expert (face validity), and its Chinese version was then examined by the same professional interpreter followed by a pretest of 30 participants.

The Internet survey was conducted through an online convenience sampling on five popular Taiwanese MLB online groups. Prior to the PCA on SPSS 19.0, the data screening and assumption testing were calculated to ensure a clean dataset to capture accurate brand associations. After PCA, item-to-total and inter-item correlations (Cronbach's alpha coefficients) were calculated to justify the reliability of each subscale.

Overall, this study targeted at Taiwanese MLB media consumers (i.e., no in-person MLB game experience) between 20 and 45 years old, so multiple criteria were set to screen participants' eligibility on both data collections. In total, 699 valid participants were submitted to statistical analyses. MLBTBA was established in the present study. Provided in this chapter are (a) demographics; (b) answers to three research questions; (c) discussions and implications toward theory; (d) conclusions; and (e) recommendations for further research.

Demographics

Prior to interpreting any marketing reports, knowing the demographics was essential. The MLBTBA was constructed through the eyes of Taiwanese "satellite fans" whom were the followers of the PTT MLB board, two Facebook groups of two Taiwanese anchormen (Formosa TV and Fox Sports), and two private MLB Facebook groups. Outlined below are descriptions of these MLBTBA participants (see Table 1).

Although the escalator theory (Mullin et al., 2007) may not be an appropriate approach to evaluate the overseas fan involvement, MLBI's Asian strategy: "...to find a local player and build on that" (Chow, 2011, para. 9), the league-team level of MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture (see Figure 7), and the result of the three levels of MLB following type may suggest how the involvement of the "satellite fans" could be assessed: player, team, and then league. On the type of following MLB, 388 participants (55.5%) followed the entire MLB while 208 participants (29.8%) followed specific team(s). The MLBTBA was primarily constructed through the impressions of the Taiwanese "satellite fans" whom at least have been involved in the MLB on a team level (85.3%) or whom are at least medium consumers.

The major contributors to the MLBTBA were well-educated, young male singles whom reside in western Taiwan. Half of the participants were students

combined with the unemployed, but the ratio of the employed was also considerable

(42.8%). Nearly half of the participants had a fair monthly income (49.3%), including

a well-paid group who earned NT $30,001 (US $917.94) to NT $70,000 (US

$2141.79) per month (34.3%). Although the participants who have followed MLB for

1 to 5 years were notable (15.5%), the distribution skewed toward 6 to 20 years

(81.8%). Coincidentally, the skewness also translates to the distribution of the MLB

following type: the percentage between participants who only followed a specific

MLB player(s) to at least an MLB team follower is 14.7% to 85.3%. The

characteristics of the demographics should be kept in mind in the following

interpretations and suggestions as the MLBTBA reflects this group's collective

impressions.

<div align="center">**Answers to Research Questions**</div>

Q1. What Brand Associations do Taiwanese media consumers ("satellite fans")

currently hold toward MLB?

The MLBTBA established in the present study includes 12 brand associations.

The 12 brand associations Taiwanese media consumers ("satellite fans") currently

hold toward MLB were Watchability, Performance Enhancing Drugs, Quality

Tangibles, Advanced Media, Atmosphere Energizer, Nostalgia, World Class,

Hollywood, Advanced Player Business Model, The MLB Brand, Broadcast

Experience, and League Role Model.

Q2. Do Brand Associations Taiwanese hold toward MLB match the League

Brand Association Scale Built by Kunkel et al. (2014)?

The league brand associations of Kunkel et al. (2014) and the MLBTBA are

compared in Table 2. The MLBTBA scarcely matched the league brand associations

of Kunkel et al. (2014). Only Nostalgia of the MLBTBA completely fit in the league

brand association Tradition as defined by Kunkel et al. (2014). Further, five

associations of the MLBTBA partially connected to the league brand associations of

Kunkel et al. (2014) depicted below. Finally, brand association Star Player of Kunkel

et al. (2014) was also found embedded in the MLBTBA after reverse coding discussed

later.

Five slightly shared associations. The brand association Atmosphere in

Kunkel et al. (2014) partially connected to the brand association Atmosphere

Energeizer of the MLBTBA because both related to stadium atmosphere. The brand

association Atmosphere in Kunkel et al. (2014) focused on the atmosphere created by

on-site fan cheering and interactions whereas the brand association Atmosphere

Energeizer in the MLBTBA was mainly created and driven by the league and the 30

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MLB teams. The brand association Atmosphere Energeizer was explicitly a league-

wide, managerial product. On the other hand, due to the nature of "satellite fans",

Taiwanese MLB media consumers would never experience on-site fan atmosphere

and interactions. This may be why the brand association Atmosphere in Kunkel et al.

(2014) did not appear in the MLBTBA. In addition, the brand association Atmosphere

in Kunkel et al. (2014) was an output of the combined impressions on three soccer

leagues (i.e., two Australian leagues and English Premier League) plus an Australian

rugby league, and those leagues were likely to share a similar culture of on-site fan

cheering. The on-site cheering atmosphere may be an association the MLBTBA

misses, even though the organized cheering in the MLB is generally not prominent.

The brand association Competition in Kunkel et al. (2014) was partially

connected to the brand association Watchability of the MLBTBA because both are

related to the unpredictability of the game. However, in addition to the

unpredictability of the game, the Watchabilty brand association further covers

additional components which together enhance the enjoyment of the MLB game,

including athleticism, aesthetics, sacredness, relaxation in baseball, and large-scale

management and campaign. In other words, the brand association Watchability of the

MLBTBA in the perception of Taiwanese "satellite fans" carries a broader, league-

wide spectrum than only game competition.

Table 2

MLBTBA and the League Brand Association Scale of Kunkel et al. (2014)

Brand Associations of Kunkel et al. (2014)	Brand Associations in MLBTBA
Tradition	Nostalgia
Atmosphere	Atmosphere Energizer*
Competition	Watchability*
Logo Design	Quality Tangibles*
Management	League Role Model*
Player Development	Advanced Player Business Model*
Star Player	Advanced Player Business Model[#]
	The MLB Brand[#]
Community Pride	
Diversion	
Education	
Excitement	
Game Representation	
Nostalgia	
Performance	
Rivalry	
Socialization	
Specific Team	
	Performance Enhancing Drugs
	Advanced Media
	World Class
	Hollywood
	The MLB Brand
	Broadcast Experience

Note: * = Slightly related; [#] = Literally related; for more, Kunkel et al. (2014) provided definitions of their brand associations.

The brand association Logo Design by Kunkel et al. (2014) was partially

connected to the Quality Tangibles of the MLBTBA because both are related to the

appeal of merchandise. However, the brand association Quality Tangibles of the

MLBTBA also covered the appeal of the ballpark food. This reflects the impression of

Taiwanese "satellite fans" on the auxiliary products of the MLB.

The brand association Management of Kunkel et al. (2014) partially

overlapped with brand association League Role Model of the MLBTBA because both

related to the influence of the league's management on consumer's perception.

However, brand association League Role Model of the MLBTBA was further because

the MLB was also seen as a management role model to world professional baseball.

Additionally, a sense of comparison was detected in the items of the League Role

Model as Taiwanese "satellite fans" compared the MLB management with any other

professional baseball leagues in the world. In other words, Taiwanese "satellite fans"

may have judged the MLB through comparison.

The brand association Player Development of Kunkel et al. (2014) partially

overlapped with brand association Advanced Player Business Model of the MLBTBA

because both related to the ability in developing talents. However, brand association

Advanced Player Business Model of the MLBTBA further reflected a broader and

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comprehensive picture in overall player business, from signing worldwide talents, an advanced training system, and a sound job security.

One literally embedded brand association. The brand association Star Player of Kunkel et al. (2014) was embedded in the brand association Advanced Player Business Model and The MLB Brand in the MLBTBA when checking the reversed coding below. However, the brand association Advanced Player Business Model and The MLB Brand both mentioned a broader description of "international star player." Further, the definition of the brand association Star Player of Kunkel et al. (2014) did not match at all with the brand association Advanced Player Business Model and The MLB Brand by meaning. The three brand associations only literally shared the words "star player." Notably, the brand association Performance Enhancing Drugs was excluded from this group as its items did not mention star players at all.

Unconnected league brand associations. The league brand associations of Kunkel et al. (2014) which did not share any meanings with the MLBTBA were Community Pride, Diversion, Education, Excitement, Game Representation, Nostalgia, Performance, Rivalry, Socialization, and Specific Team. In particular, brand association Nostalgia of Kunkel et al. (2014) was completely different from the brand association Nostalgia of the MLBTBA in definition.

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One-of-a-kind brand associations to the MLB. The rest of the brand

associations of the MLBTBA demonstrate the characteristics of MLB, including

Performance Enhancing Drugs, Advanced Media, World Class, Hollywood, The MLB

Brand, and Broadcast Experience. The characteristics below make the MLBTBA one-

of-a-kind to MLB.

The Performance Enhancing Drugs scandals have disgraced the MLB for ages,

and PED thereby appeared in the MLBTBA as a negative brand association.

Advanced Media appeared in the MLBTBA supported the success of MLBAM, the

league-wide industry leader in sports online and mobile streaming services (Hutton,

2010). The brand association World Class of the MLBTBA echoes (a) the top level of

professional baseball which MLB has positioned itself to the world (Official site of

MLB, 2016a); (b) a global brand which MLB continues marketing itself to the world

(Lewis, 2010); and (c) the gathering of the world's best talents which the MLBI has

demonstrated through international events and campaigns (Official site of MLB,

2016b). The brand association Hollywood of the MLBTBA reflected a great fusion in

branding MLB through the movies. The brand association The MLB Brand of the

MLBTBA with the levels of player, team, and league suggested a codriving situation

which the master brand and the subbrand carry each other from the aspect of brand

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architecture (Devlin, 2003). Such an ideal brand relationship (Kunkel et al., 2013) explains the prosperity and the maturity of the MLB. Finally, the brand association Broadcast Experience of the MLBTBA demonstrated the unique experiences only Taiwanese MLB media consumers had, even including the broadcast behavior pattern of Taiwanese TV corporations.

Overall, the uniqueness of the MLBTBA may have explained the mismatch between the MLBTBA and the league brand associations with Kunkel et al. (2014). First, the MLBTBA projected a "satellite fan" perspective whereas the league brand associations of Kunkel et al. reflected a conventional fan perspective. The brand association Atmosphere Energizer, League Role Model, and Broadcast Experience of the MLBTBA all carried the "satellite fan" perspective. Second, the tailored MLBTBA was MLB-particular compared to the general league brand associations of Kunkel et al. as the brand association Performance Enhancing Drugs, Advanced Media, World Class, Hollywood, Advanced Player Business Model, Broadcast Experience, and League Role Model were MLB-only characteristics.

Third, each of the five slightly overlapped brand associations and brand association The MLB Brand within the MLBTBA carried a broader meaning in scope than the professional sport leagues did in Kunkel et al. (2014). It may be to do with

the business scope and depth as the MLB was the oldest professional baseball league

in North America and the highest level of professional baseball around the world

(Official site of MLB, 2016a). It may also have related to the fact that Kunkel et al.

did not go through exploratory factor analysis instead directly used the identified

themes of the qualitative interview to construct their league scale. Finally, in contrast

to Kunkel et al. whom used existing brand and spectator motive scales to weave their

scale, constructing a psychometric scale (i.e., the MLBTBA) based on the quotes

retrieved from the codebook followed by the data extraction through PCA was more

legitimate and true to the market.

Q3. Does Loyalty Strength of Taiwanese differ for MLB versus individual

team(s) or individual player(s)?

According to the demographic results of the type of person following the

MLB, the answer is yes. Three hundred eighty-eight participants (55.5%) followed the

entire MLB. The participants who followed specific team(s) were roughly 25% less

than the ones who followed the league of the MLB in term of loyalty strength. The

participants who follow specific player(s) were roughly 40% shy of the loyalty

strength of the league of the MLB. The proportion of the loyalty strength of the league

even surpasses the combined loyalty strength (44.5%) of specific team(s) or individual player(s).

Discussion and Implications toward Theories

Based on Keller's (1993) CBBE model and MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture adapted from sport league brand architecture model proposed by Kunkel et al. (2014), the MLBTBA was constructed through the perspective of Taiwanese MLB media consumers ("satellite fans"). This section examines the MLBTBA through the theoretical frameworks.

Review MLBTBA through CBBE

The summary of CBBE was as follows (Keller, 1993). Brand knowledge and a consumer perspective were the two focal points in the formation of CBBE. Brand knowledge, comprised of brand awareness and brand image, heavily depended on the characteristics and relationships of brand associations. Given that brand image, the aggregation of brand associations over time, served as the backbone of the CBBE, the CBBE was thereby assessed through brand associations.

The CBBE framework guided the entire MLBTBA development in the present study. The three screening questions used in both the qualitative interview and Internet survey were designed to ensure each participant's eligibility of brand

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awareness so that brand associations toward MLB could be accurately determined. As

shown in the CBBE model (see Figure 2), the types of the MLBTBA's 12 brand

associations are discussed below.

     Types of the MLBTBA's 12 brand associations. The 12 brand associations

of the MLBTBA were categorized by type in Table 3. As noted previously, Attributes,

Benefits, and Attitudes are the types of brand associations which together make up the

Brand Image (Keller, 1993).

     Attributes are "...descriptive features that characterize a product or service"

(Keller, 1993, p. 4), and 11 of the 12 brand associations of the MLBTBA thereby fall

in this category, including Watchability, Performance Enhancing Drugs, Quality

Tangibles, Advanced Media, Atmosphere Energizer, Nostalgia, Hollywood, Advanced

Player Business Model, The MLB Brand, and Broadcast Experience, and League Role

Model.

     Benefits were "...the personal value consumers attach to the product or service

attributes" (Keller, 1993, p. 4). The results showed that none of the 12 brand

associations of the MLBTBA related to this category. Noticeably, the brand

association Nostalgia was not included in this category because its items collectively

depicted characteristics (i.e., America's pastime, long history, and function of family

engagement) other than personal values.

Table 3

Types of 12 Brand Associations in MLBTBA

Type of Brand Association	Brand Association
	Watchability
	Performance Enhancing Drugs
	Quality Tangibles
	Advanced Media
	Atmosphere Energizer
Attributes	Nostalgia
	Hollywood
	Advanced Player Business Model
	The MLB Brand
	Broadcast Experience
	League Role Model
Benefits	
Attitudes	World Class

Attitudes, consumers' general evaluations on a brand (Wilkie, 1986), serves as

the fundamental which triggers consumer behavior (Keller, 1993). The brand

association World Class of the MLBTBA was assigned to this category as it was the

overall evaluation of Taiwanese "satellite fans" on the MLB.

One negative brand association in the MLBTBA. Kunkel et al. (2014)

pointed out the void of negative brand associations in the existing league and team

brand association scales by the end of the study. In fact, none of negative brand

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associations had ever been found (see Appendix D) until the brand association

Performance Enhancing Drugs was determined in the MLBTBA. The discovery of

Performance Enhancing Drugs not only supports the research direction Kunkel et al.

(2014) encouraged but also echoes Aaker's (1991) definition of brand equity: "...a

set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol, that add to or

subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's

customers" (p. 15). Given that Keller's (1993) CBBE model does not include any

negative aspects of a brand, the discovery of the negative brand association in the

present study may suggest a direction in expanding Keller's (1993) CBBE model.

One comparative brand association in the MLBTBA. Stressed in the CBBE

is the importance of a consumer perspective, but the MLBTBA was constructed from

not only a consumer perspective but a "satellite fan" perspective. This "satellite fan"

perspective resulted in one interesting finding: A comparative form of brand

association.

This comparative tone appeared in the brand association League Role Model,

Q49 ('The MLB player gets the most comprehensive contract and job security than

the ones in any other baseball leagues.'), and Q66 ('The logo of the MLB is very

recognizable, even though many similar logos are used by other professional baseball

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leagues.'). Evidently, Taiwanese "satellite fans" formed the brand association of

League Role Model through a comparative lens between the overall MLB experience

and any other professional baseball league in the world, especially the one in Taiwan.

Similarly, Taiwanese "satellite fans" also compared MLB with other professional

baseball leagues over different facets of the business. This implies that "satellite fans"

may compare a league to another in the formation of a league brand association.

Further, the discovery of the comparative form of brand association resonates

with (a) the definition of the brand: "… to differentiate those goods or services from

those of competitors" (Aaker, 1991, p. 7), (b) the function of branding: to create

differences in images, meanings, and associations by managing tangible and

intangible facets of a brand (Kaynak et al., 2008), and (c) the definition of customer-

based brand equity: "...the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer

response to the marketing of the brand" (Keller, 1993, p. 3). To date, two items in the

comparative form do exist in two brand associations of Gladden and Funk's (2002)

Team Association Model (TAM). However, discovering a sole brand association in the

comparative form may be the first time ever throughout the inquiry about brand

association in professional sport. Such a breakthrough implied that, opposed to local

fans, the differential effect of a professional sport league (i.e., MLB) seemed more

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apparent in the minds of "satellite fans" as "satellite fans" may judge an external

professional sport league by comparing it with its counterpart(s). Therefore, the

discovery of comparative brand association may also add to the combined knowledge

of Keller's (1993) CBBE model and Kerr and Gladden's (2008) "satellite fan".

Review MLBTBA through MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture

As noted previously, brand architecture refers to the relationships between

brands perceived by the consumer under an organizational brand portfolio (Aaker &

Joachimsthaler, 2000). The interrelationship between MLB and its 30 teams along

with the role of MLB in the game suggest a system similar to brand architecture.

MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture (see Figure 7), the brand architecture on the

current branding of MLB in Taiwan, portrayed the league both manages its brand and

supplies a stage for its teams to develop their brands in the meantime (Kunkel et al.,

2013). The mixed branding arrow also indicates the league typically markets itself

with the team brands embedded in (Pitt et al., 2003) or demonstrates the team brands

through the league branding. Therefore, team consumers were league consumers in

nature (Kunkel et al., 2014). This nature of the interrelationship between MLB and its

teams further suggested that they may share a certain brand associations (Kunkel et

al., 2009, 2014). The MLBTBA was examined in two ways here (see Table 4).

Table 4 demonstrated the progress of brand associations throughout the three research stages, namely MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture, the pilot interview, and MLBTBA. Under MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture (see Figure 7) listed MLB's league-wide functions and the points of attachment (team) which may have contributed to the formation of brand associations Taiwanese "satellite fans" held toward MLB. In the middle were the themes identified in the pilot interview. Themes and subthemes were assigned by meaning in accordance to the categories of MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture. On the right were the brand associations of the MLBTBA. Each item of the 12 brand associations was converted back to its original theme (with subtheme) in order to match its identical theme and subtheme in the middle column (the pilot interview) to further fit the categories of MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture. This reverse coding and compilation enabled the link between MLB functions/team attachments and the associations Taiwanese "satellite fans" held toward MLB to be visible, specific, and comparable.

Table 4

Relevance of MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture, Pilot Interview, and MLBTBA

MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture	Brand Associations/Themes in Pilot Interview (codebook)	Brand Associations in MLBTBA
General Management	▲ Peak of the World: (1) Assembly of worldwide elite players, (2) The top baseball stage, (3) Elite symbol ▲ MLB Festivity: (2) All-Star Game, (3) World Series ▲ Game Features: (1) Power Ball, (2) Pace of Game, (3) Competition, (4) Call Challenge ▲ Dream Stage: (1) Ultimate Stage, (2) Player Benefits ▲ Performance-Enhancing Drugs (PED) ▲ League Feature: (1) Large Scale, (2) Diversity, (3) Long History, (4) Commercialism, (5) Complete Database △ Business Role Model ▲ Merchandise ▲ Logo	● World Class - Peak of the World: (1) Assembly of worldwide elite players, (2) The top baseball stage, (3) Elite symbol - Dream Stage: (1) Ultimate Stage - MLB Festivity: (3) World Series ● Watchability - Game Features: (3) Competition - Dream Stage: (1) Ultimate Stage - League Feature: (1) Large Scale ● PED ● Quality Tangibles ● Atmosphere Energizer - MLB Festivity: (2) All-Star Game ● Nostalgia - League Feature: (3) Long History ● Advanced Player Business Model - Dream Stage: (2) Player Benefits - League Feature: (3) Long History ● The MLB Brand - Logo ● Broadcast Experience - MLB Festivity: (3) World Series - League Feature: (5) Complete Database

Table 4 cont'd

MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture	Brand Associations/Themes in Pilot Interview (codebook)	Brand Associations in MLBTBA
General Marketing Strategies	▲ MLB Festivity: (2) All-Star Game, (3) World Series ▲ Dream Stage: (1) Ultimate Stage ▲ Marketing Dimensions: (1) Marketing Campaigns- ① Diverse, novel ideas	● Watchability - Dream Stage: (1) Ultimate Stage ● Atmosphere Energizer - MLB Festivity: (2) All-Star Game - Marketing Dimensions: (1) Marketing Campaigns- ①Diverse, novel ideas
Player Development	△ WBC: (3) MLB's overseas tryout ▲ Player Development: (1) Farming System, (2) Division of Work, (3) Systematic Training ▲ League Feature: (5) Complete Database	● Advanced Player Business Model - Player Development: (2) Division of Work, (3) Systematic Training
Grassroots Programs	▲ Marketing Dimensions: (1) Marketing Campaigns- ② International move	
Community Programs	▲ Marketing Dimensions: (2) Community Relations- ①Kid Friendly, ②Tribute to soldier/patriotism	

Table 4 cont'd

MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture	Brand Associations/Themes in Pilot Interview (codebook)	Brand Associations in MLBTBA
MLBAM	▲ MLB Advanced Media ★	● Advanced Media ★
- MLB.com	▲ League Feature: (5) Complete Database	League Feature: (5) Complete Database
- MLB.com Shop	★	
- MLB.tw		
- MLB.tv	★	★
- MLB Fantasy Baseball	★	
- MLB.com At-Bat (Mobile)		
- R.B.I. Baseball (Mobile)	★	
- myVideo (Mobile)		
- Game unit (e-device)	★	
- Social media		
MLB Network		
Taiwanese Print Media	▲ Behavioral pattern of Taiwanese media	
Taiwanese Television Channels	▲ Behavioral pattern of Taiwanese media	● Broadcast Experience
Taiwanese Local e-news	▲ Behavioral pattern of Taiwanese media	

Table 4 cont'd

MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture	Brand Associations/Themes in Pilot Interview (codebook)	Brand Associations in MLBTBA
MLBI		
	▲ Peak of the World: (1) Assembly of worldwide elite players, (2) The top baseball stage, (3) Elite symbol	● Watchability - Dream Stage: (1) Ultimate Stage ● Atmosphere Energizer - MLB Festivity: (2) All-Star Game
- Global Marketing, Licensing, or Sponsorship	▲ MLB Festivity: (2) All-Star Game, (3) World Series ▲ Dream Stage: (1) Ultimate Stage ▲ Marketing Dimensions: (1) Marketing Campaigns- ② International move	
- Exhibition Games in Taiwan or Japan	▲ Marketing Dimensions: (1) Marketing Campaigns- ② International move	
WBC	▲ WBC: (1) The MLB, the organizer, (2) The highest level of international baseball tournament ▲ Dream Stage: (1) Ultimate Stage ▲ Marketing Dimensions: (1) Marketing Campaigns- ② International move	

Table 4 cont'd

MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture	Brand Associations/Themes in Pilot Interview (codebook)	Brand Associations in MLBTBA
	Indirect meanings	
	- Aesthetics	● Watchability ● World Class
	- Game Representation	● Watchability - American Culture: (1) Baseball Culture
	- American Culture: (1) Baseball Culture, (2) Hollywood Movie	● Nostalgia - American Culture: (1) Baseball Culture ● Hollywood - American Culture: (2) Hollywood Movie
	- Business Role Model	● League Role Model
Provision of Attachments/ Team Brand Association		
- Team logo	▲ *Logo*	● *The MLB Brand* *- Logo*
- Owner		
- Player	▲ *International star player* △ *Performance-Enhancing Drugs (PED)* ▲ *League Feature: (2) Diversity*	● *PED* ● *Advanced Player Business Model* *- International star player* ● *The MLB Brand* *- International star player*
- Head coach		
- Rivalry	▲ *MLB Festivity: (1) Rivalry*	
- Mascot	▲ *Bleachers Atmosphere: (2) Fan Engagement- ③ Mascot*	● *Atmosphere Energizer*

Table 4 cont'd

MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture	Brand Associations/Themes in Pilot Interview (codebook)	Brand Associations in MLBTBA
- Stadium	▲ *Stadium: (1) Big ballpark, (2) Beautiful ballpark, (3) Ballpark Feature* ▲ *League Feature: (3) Long History*	● *World Class* - *Stadium: (2) Beautiful ballpark*
- Game entertainment	▲ *Bleachers Atmosphere: (2) Fan Engagement- ① 7-inning Stretch, ② Kiss Cam, ③ Mascot*	● *Atmosphere Energizer* - *Bleachers Atmosphere: (2) Fan Engagement- ① 7-inning Stretch, ③ Mascot*
- Tradition/History	▲ *League Feature: (3) Long History*	
- Management	△ *Business Role Model*	
- Fans	▲ *Bleachers Atmosphere: (1) Fan behavior*	
- Merchandise	▲ *Merchandise*	
- Concession	*Bleachers Atmosphere: (3) Food*	● *Quality Tangibles* - *Bleachers Atmosphere: (3) Food*
- Team	▲ *Known Team*	

Note. Team-level attachments/associations appear in italic; ▲ = match MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture; △ = partially match MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture; ★ = service ever mentioned; (1)/(2)/(3)= first level of subtheme; ①/②/③= second level of subtheme.

Is MLBTBA a league-team scale? Yes. As MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture and Kunkel et al. (2009, 2014) suggested, Table 4 showed the MLBTBA did include both league and team brand associations. Seven MLBTBA brand associations linked to Team logo, Player, Mascot, Stadium, Game entertainment, and Concession of the team brand associations. The findings supported the notions of interrelationship (Kunkel et al., 2013) and the mixed branding (Pitt et al., 2003) between league and team depicted in MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture. In other words, the MLB's branding did impress Taiwanese "satellite fans" with both league and team brand associations.

How is the current MLB branding in Taiwan? According to MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture, both MLB league-wide functions and the points of attachment (team) may have led to generate associations toward the MLB in the minds of Taiwanese "satellite fans." Three branding strength levels were also identified in Table 4.

On the lowest strength level, some MLB functions and the points of attachment (team) have never been mentioned by Taiwanese "satellite fans" throughout the research, including MLB.tw, MLB.com At-Bat, myVideo, social media, and MLB Network. Thus, the MLBAM may tailor campaigns in cooperation

with MLBI to promote MLB.com At-Bat app and design an effective digital licensing

model to the Taiwan market. The MLB may start with a joint operation by MLBI and

MLBAM to boost MLB Network's awareness and accessibility in the Taiwan market

through global broadcast and digital business.

Owner and Head coach were the only two team brand associations never noted

by Taiwanese "satellite fans." The lack of impressions on owner and head coach of

team brand associations may be because "...people care most about the players who

come from their country" (King, 2006, para. 15). However, MLBI's Asian strategy:

"...to find a local player and build on that" (Chow, 2011, para. 9) was still encouraged

but could strategically be implemented. For example, the relationship and interaction

between a Taiwanese player and his head coach could be particularly and consistently

portrayed in the broadcast. By the same token, a Taiwanese player in an MLB team

could attract and encourage Taiwanese to know everything about the team, including

the owner.

On the intermediate strength level, some MLB functions and the points of

attachment (team) were once noted by Taiwanese "satellite fans" but not retained later

in the MLBTBA, including Grassroots Programs, Community Programs, MLB.com

Shop, MLB Fantasy Baseball, R.B.I. Baseball, Game unit (e-device), Exhibition

Games in Taiwan or Japan, WBC, Taiwanese Print Media, and Taiwanese Local e-news. The items of themes/subthemes corresponding to these functions and points of attachment were later excluded from the chosen factor structure which best explained the data.

Taiwanese "satellite fans" currently have not considerably been impressed by the MLB Grassroots Programs and Community Programs as Taiwan was not covered in the two MLB programs. The MLB.com Shop, MLB Fantasy Baseball, R.B.I. Baseball, and MLB's video games also primarily focus on the US market with few specific strategies to the Asian market. Thus, MLB may consider expanding these business components and specify marketing strategies to grow the Taiwan market.

It was surprising that overseas exhibition games and WBC in Taiwan were not mentioned in the MLBTBA. So, MLB, together with MLBI and WBC, may reexamine and revise the two global marketing practices for a better branding purpose. Especially, the attributes of the Taiwan market need to seriously consider since the importance of marketing customization by country in Asia was recognized by MLBI (King, 2006). Interestingly, the behavior of the two Taiwanese media categories was also associated with MLB by Taiwanese "satellite fans." Though, the impression fell short from retention.

Rivalry, Tradition/History, Management, Fans, Merchandise, and Team of the team brand associations did not end up remaining in the MLBTBA. The elimination of the brand association Rivalry and Fans may have related to the nature of the "satellite fan"; Taiwanese "satellite fans" were not strongly impressed as they did not and will never experience on-site rivalry atmosphere and fan behaviors in person. From the pilot interview, most Taiwanese "satellite fans" discussed the league instead of a specific team in terms of MLB's management and Tradition/History. In the MLB case, merchandising was actually a centralized business, so it will be discussed next on the top strength level. As for the brand association Team, Taiwanese "satellite fans" remembered an MLB team mainly because it was a famous team but not because they followed a certain player(s).

On the top strength level, some MLB functions and the points of attachment (team) were retained in the MLBTBA but in different forms (i.e., 12 brand associations) due to the nature of PCA. General Management, General Marketing Strategies, Player Development, MLBAM (MLB.com and MLB.tv), MLBI (Global marketing, licensing, or sponsorship), and Taiwanese Television Channels were the categories MLB had considerably impressed Taiwanese "satellite fans." In addition, Aesthetics, American Culture, and Business Role Model were the indirect meanings

Taiwanese "satellite fans" currently carry toward the MLB. Finally, Team logo,

Player, Mascot, Stadium, Game entertainment, and Concession were the team brand

associations currently embedded in the minds of Taiwanese "satellite fans" toward

MLB. Overall, all MLB functions and the points of attachment (team) reached this

strength level were considered as actual branding effect.

Through the reverse coding of MLBTBA's 12 brand associations, the

relevance between MLB functions/team attachments and the associations Taiwanese

"satellite fans" held toward MLB could be easier and further interpreted. Table 4 also

provided an outline of the up-to-date branding condition in Taiwan for MLB to

evaluate or adjust its present marketing strategies to Taiwan.

Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to develop a league brand association

scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward MLB. Through a mixed methods

approach, MLBTBA with 12 brand associations was constructed. Previously in this

chapter, the MLBTBA not only answered three research questions but also was

examined through two frameworks. Below concludes the present study.

The Game Involvement of "Satellite Fan"

From MLBI's Asian strategy: "to find a local player and build on that" (Chow, 2011, para. 9), the league-team structure in the MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture (see Figure 7), and the survey result of the MLB following type may together suggest that player, team, and then league could be a way to assess the involvement of "satellite fans." Such an inference may extend the knowledge of "satellite fans."

Significance behind MLBTBA

The MLBTBA was primarily constructed through Taiwanese "satellite fans" whom were well-educated, young single males. The majority of them have followed the MLB for 6 to 20 years which further translated to their loyalty strength toward the MLB: They are at least medium consumers (team followers).

Twelve brand associations were uncovered in the MLBTBA, namely Watchability, Performance Enhancing Drugs, Quality Tangibles, Advanced Media, Atmosphere Energizer, Nostalgia, World Class, Hollywood, Advanced Player Business Model, The MLB Brand, Broadcast Experience, and League Role Model. However, the MLBTBA's brand associations scarcely match the league brand associations of Kunkel et al. (2014) with only one matched and five slightly matched.

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The scarce match between the MLBTBA and the league brand associations of

Kunkel et al. (2014) revealed the uniqueness of the MLBTBA: (a) The MLBTBA

was built from a "satellite fan" perspective, (b) the MLBTBA was an MLB-only

scale, (c) the MLBTBA carried a broader spectrum, especially shown in the four

slightly matched brand associations, and (d) the MLBTBA was true to the market.

The second point supported the "general" league brand association scale of Kunkel et

al. (2014) which may fail to capture MLB's unique characteristics as the researcher

questioned previously. The last three points together also supported the researcher's

previous concern that there may not be a universal league brand association scale, or

it may be more appropriate to tailor a league brand association scale for each league

to capture comprehensive brand associations.

Through the lens of Keller's (1993) CBBE model, 12 brand associations of the

MLBTBA could be categorized into two types (i.e., attributes and attitudes).

Performance Enhancing Drugs, echoed Aaker's (1991) definition of brand equity, may

be the first negative brand association ever discovered throughout the inquiry of brand

association in professional sport.

From not only a consumer but a "satellite fan" perspective, a comparative

brand association, (i.e., League Role Model) may also be discovered for the first time.

This breakthrough implied that (a) "satellite fans" may compare one league to another in the formation of a league brand association, and (b) opposed to local fans, the differential effect of a professional sport league (i.e., MLB) seemed more apparent in the minds of "satellite fans" as "satellite fans" may judge an external professional sport league by comparing it with its counterpart(s).

The discovery of the negative brand association may suggest a direction in expanding Keller's (1993) CBBE model. Further, the discovery of the comparative brand association may also add to the combined knowledge of Keller's (1993) CBBE model and "satellite fan" of Kerr and Gladden (2008).

Through the lens of MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture, the MLBTBA was identified as a league-team scale. Seven brand associations of the MLBTBA linking to team brand associations indicated that Taiwanese "satellite fans" currently hold both league and team brand associations toward the MLB. Further, three levels of MLB branding strength in Taiwan also emerged after comparing the MLBTBA's 12 brand associations, themes of the pilot interview, and MLB's functions and team attachments. The three levels of MLB branding strength also outlined the MLB branding condition in Taiwan at the time of this study.

Condition of Taiwan Market to the MLB

According to the demographics of the present research, Taiwanese "satellite fans" of the MLB, also the PTT MLB Board users and MLB Facebook followers, between 20 and 45 years old are primarily well-educated, male singles. Most of them had followed the MLB for 6 to 20 years and were at least medium consumers (team followers), so they were deemed as loyal MLB fans. Financially, nearly half of them had a fair monthly income (49.3%), including a well-paid group (34.3%) who earned NT $30,001 (US $917.94) to NT $70,000 (US $2141.79) per month. All in all, this segment of the media consumers could be the primary target to the MLB on the Taiwan market.

The MLB involvement of these loyal Taiwanese "satellite fans" may have already been beyond MLBI's "to find a local player and build on that" (Chow, 2011, para. 9) for two reasons: First, they were at least team followers as noted above. Second, Q17, Q47, and Q79 of the brand association Known Team (theme in the pilot interview) designed in a format of "remember an MLB team(s) because of a certain player(s)" ended up all being eliminated from the MLBTBA. This indicated the loyal Taiwanese "satellite fans" may not mainly follow the MLB for the player or any Taiwanese MLB player(s).

The brand association MLB Brand of the MLBTBA with all levels of player, team, and league demonstrated MLB had been perceived as a mature brand in the minds of these loyal Taiwanese "satellite fans." Such a codriving situation under brand architecture will be advantageous to the MLB's future cultivation in Taiwan.

Currently, MLB has garnered 12 brand associations on the Taiwan market. The 12 brand associations could be seen as indicators and approvals for MLB to continue fostering the Taiwan market. The reversed breakdown of the 12 brand associations also could guide MLB to its corresponding functions which produced the brand associations.

As the brand image was the aggregation of brand associations over time, 11 positive brand associations were what MLB should reinforce in Taiwan, especially the expansion of Advanced Media. MLB.com and MLB.tv, the Internet platforms which carry the MLB branding and commerce messages to the world, have both gained high awareness and approval on the Taiwan market, so expanding MLBAM service to Taiwan will be highly beneficial to MLB. By contrast, MLB.tw does not seem effective in promoting the brand of MLB in Taiwan, so this kind of partnership model may need revision. On the other hand, the negative brand association Performance

Enhancing Drugs was what MLB needs to relieve, erase, or reverse right away on the

Taiwan market.

Additionally, some MLB functions not retained in the MLBTBA indicated

directions of improvement for the MLB branding on the Taiwan market. Overall,

Table 4 may guide MLB with its future branding in Taiwan.

Recommendations for Further Study

The present study developed an MLB brand association scale from the

perspective of Taiwanese "satellite fans." Although the MLBTBA has filled voids or

extended the knowledge in the fields of league brand associations, "satellite fan",

CBBE, and brand architecture, some research areas still remain to be explored. Below

are the recommendations for future study.

First, examining MLBI's statement that marketing strategies in Asia need

tailoring by country (King, 2006) through duplicating the present study in other Asian

countries for comparison is suggested. Second, with the MLBTBA in place, the

outcome variables of the MLB branding (e.g., the relationship between brand

associations and brand loyalty) in Taiwan can be accurately measured. Third, the

present study conducted an Internet survey for the accessibility of the target

consumer. If possible, the present study could be repeated by using an onsite survey

instead during any MLB exhibition game or WBC game in Taiwan for a cross-examined purpose. Finally, mainly exploring league brand associations, the present study did not specifically assess the Japan's regional influence (Lewis, 2010) on Taiwan amongst the MLB branding. Since Japan has not only exported the most Asian players but also has consistently exported its players to the MLB over the past 20 years, does and how the presence of MLB Japanese players affect MLB viewership and MLB branding in Taiwan could be explored.

In this final chapter, the MLBTBA first answered the three research questions. Then, the implications behind the MLBTBA were revealed through the lens of CBBE and MLB Taiwan Brand Architecture. Finally, the conclusion of the present study and recommendation for future study were also addressed.

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APPENDIX A

Screening Questions and Qualitative Interview Questions

Screening Questions

1. MLB Recognition Assessment

(1)   Please point out the logo of MLB:

(A) **Logo of** **Korean Baseball Organization**	**(E)** **Logo of** **Liga Venezolana de Béisbol** **Profesional**
(B) **Logo of** **Minor League Baseball**	**(F)** **Logo of** **Liga de Béisbol Profesional de la** **República Dominicana**
(C) **Logo of** **Nippon Professional Baseball**	**(G)** **Logo of** **Australian Baseball League**
(D) **Logo of** **Major League Baseball**	**(H)** **Logo of** **Chinese Professional Baseball League**

2. MLB Recall Assessment

(1)   What is the English acronym of Major League Baseball (asked in Chinese term)?

(2)   What does MLB stand for?

Qualitative Interview Questions

1. Thought-Listing

```
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│                                 │
│                                 │
│   Logo of Major League Baseball │
│                                 │
│                                 │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
```

(1)   When you see/hear of MLB, what thoughts come to your mind? You may jot down your thoughts.

2. Semistructured Interview

(2)   How would you explain/introduce the thoughts to someone who has never heard of MLB?

(3)   Could you expand on the thoughts you wrote?

Note: The whole qualitative interview was conducted in Chinese.

APPENDIX B

Consent Forms: Qualitative Interview and Internet Survey

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title: Development of a Scale to Evaluate the Branding Effect of MLB in Taiwan

Investigator: Tung-Wei Wu, M.S...................................TWu1@twu.edu (940) 898-2585
Advisor: Leslie Graham, Ph.D...........................lgraham3@twu.edu (940) 898-2584

Explanation and Purpose of the Research

You are being invited to participate in a research study for Tung-Wei Wu's dissertation at Texas Woman's University (TWU). The purpose of this study is to develop a league brand associations scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward Major League Baseball (MLB).

Description of Procedures

The investigator will conduct a face-to-face interview consisting of free-thought listing and semistructured interview. You will firstly be tested the ability to recall and recognize the brand of MLB. You will then be asked to write down any impression you may have toward MLB. Finally, you will be asked to explain the impressions toward MLB you just wrote down. The investigator will outline and explain the interview script as well as provide opportunities for clarification of terms and procedures. This interview will be done at a time and location agreed upon by you and the investigator. You will be audio-recorded during the interview. The purpose of the audio recording is to ensure the accuracy of the interview transcripts for later analysis. The face-to-face interview may take up to 30 minutes.

Potential Risks

A potential risk you participate in the interview is the loss of confidential information. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. Your name will not appear on any hard copy materials. Instead, a code name will be assigned to you. A digital voice recorder will be taken to record the interview. The digital files (recordings and transcripts) will be saved and encrypted in a flash drive. The flash drive and hard copies of the transcripts will then be locked in a cabinet in the investigator's apartment. Only the principal investigator will have access to the identifiable files. Both kinds of digital files and hard copies of transcripts will be deleted or shredded within three years of the completion of the study. It is anticipated that the results of this study will be published in the principal investigator's dissertation as well as in other academic publications. However, no names or other identifying information will be included in any publication.

The researcher will try to prevent any problem that could happen because of this research. You should let the researcher know at once if there is a problem and they will help you. However, TWU does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are taking part in this research.

_____
Participant Initials

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Participation and Benefits

Your involvement in this research study is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue your participation in the study at any time without explanation and without penalty. Your signature indicates your willingness to participate in the study. In signing this form, you agree to allow the investigator to use all materials from your interviews for professional use. In signing this form, you are also assuring the investigator that you will make no financial claims on the investigator for the use of the material in your interviews.

Questions Regarding the Study

You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. If you have any questions about the research study you should ask the researchers; their phone numbers are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact the Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title: Development of a Scale to Evaluate the Branding Effect of MLB in Taiwan

Investigator: Tung-Wei Wu, M.S.…………………………TWu1@twu.edu (940) 898-2585
Advisor: Leslie Graham, Ph.D…………………....lgraham3@twu.edu (940) 898-2584

Explanation and Purpose of the Research

You are being invited to participate in a research study for Tung-Wei Wu's dissertation at Texas Woman's University (TWU). The purpose of this study is to develop a league brand associations scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward Major League Baseball (MLB). Conducting this study will provide MLB with a specific understanding on its current branding situation in the Taiwan market. Gaining how Taiwanese perceives MLB will in return guide MLB with its unique characteristics to customize efficient approaches to create/reinforce favorite brand associations (impressions) and deepen the relationship with Taiwan.

Description of Procedures

The Internet survey includes three sections. Firstly, three questions will be used to examine your ability to recall and recognize MLB. Second, you will answer an MLB brand associations scale based on your impressions on MLB. Finally, completing a demographic questionnaire is also required for further analysis. Individuals deciding to complete the Internet survey need to allow time to fully complete it at once, as they will not be able to save their responses for a later date. Please note that your participation in the Internet survey is anonymous and will take 10-15 minutes to complete.

Potential Risks

There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, and internet transactions. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. Otherwise, your confidentiality will be protected because your identity will remain anonymous. Throughout your participation in this study, you will not be asked to provide any personal identifying information, such as your name, address, or contact information. The information collected in this survey will be used for research purposes only. No person other than the principal investigator will have access to the responses given to the survey questions. It is anticipated that the results of this study will be published in the principal investigator's dissertation as well as in other academic publications. However, no identifying information will be included in any publication.

_____
Participant Initials

Page 1 of 2

The researcher will try to prevent any problem that could happen because of this research. You should let the researcher know at once if there is a problem and they will help you. However, TWU does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are taking part in this research.

Participation and Benefits

Participants will choose the time and location to take the Internet survey. Your involvement in this research study is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue your participation at any time by exiting the online survey without explanation and without penalty. Your click on the "I Agree" button on the bottom of each webpage indicates that your willingness to participate in this study, that the study has been described to you, that you have been given the time to read the document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You can print this page for your records before you proceed. Please read the instructions for completing the survey carefully. Please do not use your browser's "Back" button at any time.

Questions Regarding the Study

You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. If you have any questions about the research study you should ask the researchers; their phone numbers are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact the Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

APPENDIX C

Sample Letter of Survey Posting Request

Sample Letter of Survey Posting Request

Date:

Dear [Company name],

My name is Tung-Wei Wu. I came from Taiwan and am currently a doctoral candidate in Sport Management at Texas Woman's University in Denton, TX. I am writing this letter to ask for your help in supporting and promoting a nation-wide, online survey of my dissertation research entitled *Developing a scale to evaluate the branding effect of Major League Baseball in Taiwan* through posting an online survey banner on your official website of MLB TV program and sending email of survey invitation to all followers of your official MLB Facebook group.

The present study can provide valuable insights about how Taiwanese currently perceive MLB or how MLB has impressed Taiwanese. In other words, this study will provide MLB with a specific understanding on the Taiwan market. Gaining how Taiwanese perceive MLB will in return guide MLB with its unique characteristics to customize efficient approaches to create/reinforce favorite brand associations, deepen the relationship with Taiwan, and cultivate Taiwanese loyalty toward MLB. By the same token, as an MLB message disseminator, [Company name] may also utilize the findings to strategically boost the MLB broadcast popularity and viewership loyalty.

The Internet survey is expected to start from July 15th, 2015 till August 15th, 2015. A hyperlink to the Internet survey will be ready by then. If [Company name] is willing to assist my study, I'll share the results with you as soon as I have analyzed the data. Please inform me with your decision via my email address below. If you need further explanation about my study, I am willing to discuss it on phone or visit [Company name] between May and June, 2015.

Thank you for your support and help.

Sincerely,

Tung-Wei Wu, M.S.
Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX
TWu1@twu.edu

APPENDIX D

League and Team Brand Associations

League and Team Brand Associations

Brand Associations	League Scale		Team Scale			
	Kunkel et al. (2009)	Kunkel et al. (2014)	Gladden & Funk (2001)	(2002)	Bauer et al. (2005)	Bauer et al. (2008)
Attributes						
Success			●	●	●	●
(Specific) Team		●				●
Star player	●	●	●	●	●	●
Organizational attributes	●					
Head coach			●	●	●	●
Management	●	●	●	●	●	
Player development		●				
Logo design	●	●	●	●	●	●
Stadium/arena			●	●	●	●
Product delivery			●	●	●	
Performance		●				●
Competition		●				
Stadium atmosphere		●			●	
Excitement	●	●				
Tradition/history	●	●	●	●	●	●
Regional importance					●	
Rivalry	●	●				
Fans						●

(continued)

Brand Associations	League Scale		Team Scale			
	Kunkel et al. (2009)	Kunkel et al. (2014)	Gladden & Funk (2001)	(2002)	Bauer et al. (2005)	Bauer et al. (2008)
Benefits						
Game representation		●				
Escape/diversion	●	●	●	●	●	●
Fan/league Identification	●		●	●	●	●
Peer group acceptance	●		●	●	●	●
Interest of family and friends					●	
Nostalgia	●	●	●	●	●	●
Pride in place	●	●	●	●		
Socializing	●	●				●
Emotions						●
Entertainment						●
Education		●				
Attitudes						
Importance				●		
Knowledge				●		
Affect				●		
Unique						●
Trustworthy						●
Positive						●
Likable						●
Commitment	●					

Note: ● = *the scale includes such brand associations.*

APPENDIX E

MLB's Community Programs/Initiatives

MLB's Community Programs/Initiatives

Community Programs/Initiatives	Operations
4ALS	●
Autism Awareness	●
Baseball Assistance Team	○
Baseball Tomorrow Fund	●
Boys and Girls Clubs of America	●
Breaking Barriers	○
Commissioner's Community Initiative	●
Drug Free Campaign	○
Father's Day	●
Jackie Robinson Day	●
MLB Charities	○
MLB Greening Program	●
Mother's Day	●
Pitch Smart	●
Play Sun Smart	●
Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI)	●
Roberto Clemente Day	●
Stand Up to Cancer (SU2C)	●
Welcome Back Veterans	●

Note: ● = Joint by the league and 30 teams; ○ = Operated/sponsored by the league only

APPENDIX F

MLB's Official YouTube™ Channels

MLB's Official YouTube™ Channels

YouTube™ Channel	Official Website
MLB Network	●
MLBFanCave	●
MLB.com Digital Academy	●
MLB.com	●
MLBClassics	
MLB.com's 2009 Highlights	
MLBglobal	●
MLB 2010 Postseason	
MLBGlobal11	
MLB.com's 2012 Highlights	
MLBGlobal13	

Note: *● = Channel links to an official website*

APPENDIX G

Taiwanese Players in MLB

Taiwanese Players in MLB

Year of MLB Debut	Player Name
2002	Chin-Feng Chen
2003	Chin-Hui Tsao
2005	Chien-Ming Wang
2005	Hong-Chih Kuo
2007	Chin-Lung Hu
2009	Fu-Te Ni
2012	Wei-Yin Chen
2012	Che-Hsuan Lin
2013	C. C. Lee
2013	Chia-Jen Lo
2014	Wei-Chung Wang

APPENDIX H

Codebook (Example)

Codebook (Example)

Theme	Definition	Sub-theme	Quote
世界棒球經典賽 World Baseball Classic (WBC)	美國職棒大聯盟主辦的國際棒球錦標賽 MLB's international baseball tournament	大聯盟主辦 The MLB, the organizer	#09 我覺得它在亞洲的行銷…辦經典賽啊…經典賽它是主辦單位啊… MLB's marketing in Asia…hosting WBC…MLB is the organizer of WBC. #11 Researcher:還有其他它在國際上的動作你有印象嗎? M#9: 世界棒球經典賽啊! Researcher: Do you have any other impressions about MLB's global moves? M#9: World Baseball Classic! #12 世界棒球經典賽是美國大聯盟主導的一個賽事。 World Baseball Classic is a championship organized by the MLB.
		世界棒球最高層級的盃賽 The highest level of international baseball tournament	#01 經典賽算是…他等於說是…他的強度比奧運還要強,所以它是真正的世界盃,所以我對他的想法是…它是全世界棒球賽事等級最高的… The competition in WBC is more intensive than the competition in the Olympic Games. So WBC is the true World Cup. I say WBC is the top international baseball tournament.

Note: This is the first page of the codebook. For more, please contact the author.

APPENDIX I

Online Questionnaire

General Instruction
問卷調查說明

Title: Development of a Scale to Evaluate the Branding Effect of MLB in Taiwan
研究主題：量表編製：評估美國職棒大聯盟在台灣的品牌效果。

Purpose: The purpose of the study is to develop a league brand associations scale from the perspective of Taiwanese toward Major League Baseball (MLB).
研究目的：蒐集台灣球迷的集體印象來編製美國職棒大聯盟的品牌聯想量表。

Time Commitment: 10-15 minutes.
填寫問卷所需時間：10-15 分鐘。

Notes of Participation: Please read each question thoroughly and choose answers that best represent your personal opinion. Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue your participation at any time. No identifying information will be collected, please be as truthful as possible. There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading and Internet transactions.
參與須知：請仔細閱讀題目並選擇最符合您個人意見的選項來回答題目。您參與本研究具完全的自主性，所以您可以隨時停止填寫本問卷。本研究不會問及個人身份資料等問題，所以請放心並真實地回答所有問題。唯一需提醒您的是，任何藉由網路傳輸的工具皆有資料洩漏的可能性。

Incentive: All valid participations will have a chance to enter a drawing to win one out of 30 e-gift cards for the MLB.com shop.
有效問卷抽獎：所有有效問卷將有機會獲得美國職棒大聯盟官方線上商店的電子禮券（共 30 個中獎名額）。

Consent: The return of your completed survey constitutes your informed consent to act as a participant in this research.
同意書：成功收到您的完整作答即視同您已了解並同意參與本研究。

Thank you for your participation.
感謝您的參與。

Tung-Wei Wu, M.S.

Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX
美國德州女子大學
人體運動學研究所運動管理組
博士候選人 吳東威
Email: TWu1@twu.edu

Section I: Screening Questions
第一部分：問卷資格篩選問題

Brand Awareness Assessment/品牌知名度檢測

MLB Recognition Assessment/美國職棒大聯盟品牌認知檢測

1. Please select the logo of Major League Baseball (asked in Chinese term)
1. 請選出美國職棒大聯盟的商標

(A) **Logo of** **Nippon Professional Baseball** 	**(E)** **Logo of** **Major League Baseball**
(B) **Logo of** **Liga de Béisbol Profesional de la** **República Dominicana** 	**(F)** **Logo of** **Korean Baseball Organization**
(C) **Logo of** **Liga Venezolana de** **Béisbol Profesional** 	**(G)** **Logo of** **Chinese Professional Baseball** **League**
(D) **Logo of** **Minor League Baseball** 	**(H)** **Logo of** **Australian Baseball League**

MLB Recall Assessment/美國職棒大聯盟品牌回想檢測

2.　　What is the English acronym of Major League Baseball (asked in Chinese term)?

2.　　請填入美國職棒大聯盟的英文簡稱?

3.　　What is Major League Baseball (asked in Chinese term) in English?

3.　　請填入美國職棒大聯盟的英文全名?

Section II: Brand Associations toward MLB
第二部分：美國職棒大聯盟的品牌聯想

Please answer the questions based on your impressions on MLB:
請根據您對美國職棒大聯盟的印象回答下列問題：

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree,

4 = Neither Agree or Disagree, 5 = Somewhat Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

(1=非常不同意，2=不同意，3=有點不同意，4=無意見，5=有點同意，6=同
意，7=非常同意)

Questions		Level of Agreement
1. When seeing the logo of the MLB, I think of MLB star players with diverse nationalities.	2 當看到美國職棒大聯盟的商標時，我會聯想到不同國籍的大聯盟球星。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. WBC is MLB's strategy of global expansion.	2. 世界棒球經典賽(WBC)是美國職棒大聯盟擴張全球的市場策略。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. The MLB is a symbol of the world elite baseball.	3. 美國職棒大聯盟是世界菁英棒球的象徵。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. The Minor League Baseball system/farm system ensures the supply of the elite MLB players.	4. 小聯盟培育選手的『農場系統』提供了源源不絕的大聯盟菁英。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. The MLB ballparks look splendid on the broadcast.	5. 美國職棒大聯盟的球場看起來都很漂亮。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. It is enjoyable to follow the ball movements of MLB pitches.	6. 觀賞大聯盟投手的球路變化是很過癮的。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. The World Series is the ultimate series in baseball.	7. 美國職棒大聯盟的世界大賽是棒球界裡的終極系列戰。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Questions		Level of Agreement
8. The MLB games demonstrate that body figure is not a major factor in player performance.	8. 美國職棒大聯盟的比賽說明了身材並不是影響棒球場上表現的主要因素。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
9. The pace of the MLB game is flowed and quick.	9. 美國職棒大聯盟的比賽節奏流暢、明快。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
10. The MLB is the most challenging stage for all baseball players to reach and survive.	10. 對所有棒球選手而言，美國職棒大聯盟是挑戰難度最高的舞台。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
11. The PED has been a very negative impression with the MLB.	11. 禁藥問題一直是美國職棒大聯盟給人的負面印象。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
12. Baseball is America's pastime.	12. 棒球是美國的國家娛樂。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
13. The long history has added nostalgic attraction on the MLB.	13. 美國職棒大聯盟因其悠久歷史而有著一股懷舊的魅力。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
14. The MLB is the business role model for any other professional baseball leagues in the world.	14. 美國職棒大聯盟是其他職棒聯盟的經營典範。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
15. Wearing T-shirts/Jerseys with a Taiwanese player's name on it is the mainstream in Taiwan.	15. 在台灣，穿上印著台灣球員名字的大聯盟 T 恤或球衣是種主流文化。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
16. The sideline activities during the 7th inning stretch bring fans lots of fun.	16. 大聯盟在『第七局伸展』（7th inning stretch）的場邊活動中帶給了球迷很多歡樂。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
17. Chien-Ming Wang is key to the popularity of the New York Yankees in Taiwan.	17. 王建民是紐約洋基隊在台灣普遍受歡迎的關鍵。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7

Questions		Level of Agreement
18. The MLB always can come up with diverse, fresh marketing ideas/themes.	18. 美國職棒大聯盟總能想出新穎、與眾不同的行銷點子或主題。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
19. I can easily relate some MLB team logos when seeing the logo of the MLB.	19. 看到美國職棒大聯盟的商標，我能輕鬆地聯想到一些大聯盟球隊的商標。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
20. In Taiwan, the broadcasted MLB games are typically selected because of the appearance of the Taiwanese players.	20. 在台灣，電視台會優先轉播有台灣球員上場的比賽。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
21. The MLB is a business league established primarily to make a profit.	21. 美國職棒大聯盟是一個以賺錢為主要目標的商業聯盟。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
22. People may doubt about some MLB records due to the PED scandal.	22. 人們可能會懷疑一些大聯盟的紀錄是靠禁藥達成的。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
23. Thinking of the MLB, I think of Hollywood baseball movies.	23. 想到美國職棒大聯盟，我會聯想到好萊塢的棒球電影。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
24. The MLB is featured with power baseball.	24. 『強力棒球』*是美國職棒大聯盟的特色。（*註：強調力量與速度，進而產生較多速球、長打、盜壘的球風。）	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
25. The MLB All-Star Game is the annual festival of the MLB.	25. 明星賽是美國職棒大聯盟每年的盛事。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7

Questions		Level of Agreement
26. MLB players' on-field moves are athletic, artful, and smooth.	26. 大聯盟球員的身手矯健、動作如藝術般地流暢。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
27. The MLB pays its players the best in world's professional baseball.	27. 美國職棒大聯盟給予球員的薪資條件是所有職棒聯盟中最優渥的。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
28. The MLB demonstrates the essence of the baseball game.	28. 美國職棒大聯盟詮釋了棒球運動的本質。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
29. The MLB gathers the best baseball players from around the world.	29. 美國職棒大聯盟集結了全世界最好的棒球選手。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
30. The MLB players have all been trained regularly and systematically.	30. 大聯盟球員都受過長期、系統性的訓練。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
31. The MLB gathers star players from all over the world.	31. 美國職棒大聯盟集合了世界各國的明星球員。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
32. Each MLB ballpark is huge.	32. 美國職棒大聯盟的球場都很大。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
33. Taiwanese media focus more on reporting Taiwanese and Japanese MLB players.	33. 台灣媒體多偏向報導大聯盟的台灣及日本球員。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
34. The diversity of the MLB is shown in 30 affiliated team logos, team histories, and team characteristics, players, as well as marketing campaigns.	34. 美國職棒大聯盟的多元性可見於 30 個球隊商標、隊史、球隊特徵、球員組成以及行銷手法。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
35. The MLB mascots are full of characteristics and fun energy.	35. 大聯盟的吉祥物都充滿了特色與喜感。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7

Questions		Level of Agreement
36. The MLB set a system model for Taiwanese professional baseball to consult and follow.	36. 美國職棒大聯盟的制度是台灣職棒學習、效法的模範。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
37. The MLB often demonstrates its patriotism during the game.	37. 美國職棒大聯盟經常在比賽中展現其愛國情操。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
38. The MLB teams serve delicious food at the ballparks.	38. 大聯盟球場販賣的食物看起來很美味。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
39. The MLB sells fancy merchandise.	39. 美國職棒大聯盟販賣的商品很炫。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
40. As a traditional team and the rival to the New York Yankees, many Taiwanese know the Boston Red Sox.	40. 很多台灣人知道波士頓紅襪隊不僅因為它是支傳統球隊，而且因為它是紐約洋基隊的世仇。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
41. WBC is the MLB's overseas tryout for talents.	41. 世界棒球經典賽(WBC)是美國職棒大聯盟的海外球員測試賽。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
42. Instant replay ensures the quality of the MLB game.	42. 『電視輔助判決』提升了大聯盟比賽的品質。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
43. Kiss cam spreads fun and engages fans with the game.	43. 『玩親親 Kiss Cam』*散播了許多歡樂也同時連結了球迷與球賽。〔*註：當現場大螢幕的鏡頭照到球迷（情侶、夫妻）時，他們就得親吻。〕	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
44. The MLB specifically and completely records the game in its database and can retrieve any records at any time.	44. 美國職棒大聯盟不只完整、仔細地記錄所有比賽的過程，還可以隨時找出各式各樣的紀錄。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7

Questions		Level of Agreement
45. In the US, baseball serves as a tool to engage family members.	45. 在美國，棒球是維繫家庭情感的一種媒介。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
46. In MLB, player development is very advanced and professional.	46. 美國職棒大聯盟的球員養成是非常先進、專業的。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
47. It is easier to remember the MLB teams that have/had Taiwanese or Japanese star players.	47. 我比較容易記得有台灣或日本球員的大聯盟球隊。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
48. It must be an interesting experience to attend the World Series in person.	48. 親臨現場觀賞世界大賽一定是個有趣的經驗。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
49. The MLB player gets the most comprehensive contract and job security than the ones in any other baseball leagues.	49. 比起其他的職棒聯盟，美國職棒大聯盟的球員享有最完整的合約與工作保障。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
50. In addition to the United States of America, other international countries are also major suppliers of MLB star players.	50. 除了美國外，全球其他國家也是大聯盟球星的主要供應者。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
51. Instilled by experiences of 100+ years, the MLB's governing system is mature.	51. 百年的經驗累積造就了今日美國職棒大聯盟的成熟體制。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
52. The New York Yankees are the most frequently broadcasted team in Taiwan.	52. 台灣最常轉播的球隊是紐約洋基隊。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

53. Have you ever visited MLB.com?
請問您是否曾經瀏覽過 MLB.com?

☐ Yes/有
☐ No/沒有

Questions		Level of Agreement
54. MLB.com, the official website of the MLB, is professionally constructed.	54. MLB.com 是個專業架設的美國職棒大聯盟官網。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
55. A variety of data along with information can be found and well-interpreted on MLB.com.	55. 在 MLB.com 上可以找到很多完整的數據與資訊。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
56. MLB.com facilitates the fan to better follow, review, and enjoy the game.	56. MLB.com 讓粉絲更容易追蹤、回顧、享受大聯盟的比賽。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
57. There are diverse digital products/services which fans can access on MLB.com.	57. MLB.com 提供了多元的數位產品（服務）。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7

58. Have you ever used MLB.tv?
請問您是否曾經使用過 MLB.tv?

☐ Yes/有
☐ No/沒有

Questions		Level of Agreement
59. MLB.tv is a fantastic online streaming platform.	59. MLB.tv 是一個很棒的線上直播平台。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7

Questions		Level of Agreement
60. I think the MLB has been more involved in international marketing lately.	60. 美國職棒大聯盟近年來在國際上有較多的行銷動作。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
61. It is enjoyable to follow MLB batters' smooth swings.	61. 觀賞大聯盟球員流暢的揮擊是很爽快的。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
62. If a baseball league hopes to grow its games, it should copy the MLB experience.	62. 任何想成長的職棒聯盟都應向美國職棒大聯盟看齊。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
63. WBC is the top international baseball tournament.	63. 世界棒球經典賽(WBC)是最頂級的國際棒球錦標賽。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
64. Thinking of steroid, I think of many MLB players who have ever been involved in steroid scandals.	64. 提到類固醇，我會聯想到很多曾經陷入類固醇醜聞的大聯盟球員。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
65. Hollywood movies enhance the appeal of the MLB.	65. 好萊塢的棒球電影增添了美國職棒大聯盟的魅力。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
66. The logo of the MLB is very recognizable, even though many similar logos are used by other professional baseball leagues.	66. 美國職棒大聯盟的商標很好辨認，即使其他職棒聯盟的商標跟它類似。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
67. It is a popular culture wearing MLB caps in Taiwan.	67. 台灣很流行穿戴大聯盟球隊的球帽。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7
68. The rivalry matchups in MLB excite fans with additional entertainment.	68. 美國職棒大聯盟裡，部分球隊間的世仇情節增添了額外的看球樂趣。	1　2　3　4　5　6　7

Questions		Level of Agreement
69. You will never know who will win an MLB game until the last out.	69. 在大聯盟的比賽中，不到最後一個出局數，你永遠不能確定輸贏。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
70. The MLB is kid-friendly and cares about the youth.	70. 美國職棒大聯盟很重視小球迷，也對小球迷很友善。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
71. The world's top baseball league is not the MLB.	71. 世界最頂級的職業棒球聯盟不是美國職棒大聯盟。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
72. The MLB fans usually sit quiet and laidback while watching the game.	72. 大聯盟的現場球迷通常都是安靜、放鬆地看球。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
73. The MLB games demonstrate baseball fits anybody with any physical qualities.	73. 美國職棒大聯盟的比賽說明了棒球是適合任何身體素質的運動。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
74. The MLB sells quality merchandise.	74. 美國職棒大聯盟販賣的商品很有質感。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
75. It is a visual feast to watch a variety of nice plays in the MLB games.	75. 觀賞大聯盟球賽裡的各種精彩美技可說是視覺的饗宴。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
76. Even we, merely fans, long for and revere the MLB, the ultimate, sacred stage in baseball.	76. 即使僅僅是球迷，我們也會嚮往、景仰美國職棒大聯盟這個終極神聖的殿堂。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
77. In the US, watching a ball game is a relaxing activity.	77. 在美國，看棒球是很輕鬆的休閒活動。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
78. Everything in the MLB is large-scale.	78. 整體而言，美國職棒大聯盟的經營規模與行銷規模是很龐大的。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Questions		Level of Agreement
79. I follow MLB All-Star players, so I remember the teams they play/played with.	79. 我因為追蹤大聯盟的球星而因此記得他們所屬的球隊。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
80. Each logo of the MLB and its affiliated teams is unique and distinguishable.	80. 美國職棒大聯盟與其每支球隊的商標都是獨特、容易區別的。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
81. The MLB apparels are appealing and trendy.	81. 美國職棒大聯盟販賣的服飾很有吸引力、很新潮。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
82. People may feel many MLB players are steroid users.	82. 人們可能會覺得很多大聯盟球員都有使用禁藥。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
83. The MLB All-Star Game event is the must-see every summer.	83. 美國職棒大聯盟明星賽是每年暑期必看的活動。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
84. Each MLB stadium has its unique feature(s).	84. 每座大聯盟球場都各有特色。	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Section III: Demographic Questions
第三部分：基本資料

1. What is your gender?
    請問您的性別?
    □ Male 男性　　　□ Female 女性

2. What is your approximate age?
    請問您的年齡?

    □ Under 20　20 歲以下　□ 51-55　51-55 歲
    □ 20-25　20-25 歲　　　□ 56-60　56-60 歲
    □ 26-30　26-30 歲　　　□ 61-65　61-65 歲
    □ 31-35　31-35 歲　　　□ Over 65　65 歲以上
    □ 36-40　36-40 歲
    □ 41-45　41-45 歲
    □ 46-50　46-50 歲

3. Please indicate your marital status.
    請問您的婚姻狀況?

    □ Single 未婚　　□ Married 已婚　　□ Divorced 離婚
    □ Separated 分居
    □ Other _____ (Please Specify) 其他 _____ (請說明)

4. Where do you reside?
    請問您目前的居住地?

    □ Northern Taiwan 北部地區（台北市、新北市、基隆市、宜蘭縣、桃園市、新竹縣、新竹市）
    □ Central Taiwan 中部地區（苗栗縣、台中市、彰化縣、南投縣、雲林縣）
    □ Southern Taiwan 南部地區（嘉義縣、嘉義市、臺南市、高雄市、屏東縣）
    □ Eastern Taiwan 東部地區（花蓮縣、台東縣）
    □ Affiliated Islands of Taiwan 離島地區（澎湖、金門、馬祖）

5. What is your education level?
    請問您的教育程度?

    ☐ Junior High School and Under 國中(含)以下
    ☐ Senior High School/Vocational School 高中職
    ☐ University/College 大專院校
    ☐ Graduate School 研究所以上
    ☐ Other _____ (Please Specify) 其他_____ (請說明)

6. What is your occupation?
    請問您的職業?

    ☐ Student 學生   ☐ Unemployed 自由業
    ☐ Service Industry 服務業   ☐ Homemaker 家管
    ☐ Veterans/government Officials   ☐ Retired 退休人士
       軍公教
    ☐ Commercial 商業   ☐ Other _____ (Please Specify)
                                              其他_____ (請說明)
    ☐ Industrial 工業

7. Indicate your approximate monthly household income.
    請問您的月收入?

    ☐ No Stable Income   ☐ NT $50,001 – NT $70,000
       無固定收入   50,001 - 70,000 元
    ☐ Under NT $15,000   ☐ NT $70,001 – NT $100,000
       15,000 元(含)以下   70,001 - 100,000 元
    ☐ NT $15,001 – NT $30,000   ☐ Over NT $100,000
       15,001 - 30,000 元   100,000 元以上
    ☐ NT $30,001 – NT $50,000
       30,001 - 50,000 元

8. Indicate how many years you have been following MLB.
請問您關注美國職棒大聯盟多久了?

    ☐ Less than 1 year　1 年以下
    ☐ 1-5 years　1-5 年
    ☐ 6-10 years　6-10 年
    ☐ 11-15 years　11-15 年
    ☐ 16-20 years　16-20 年
    ☐ 21-25 years　21-25 年
    ☐ 26-30 years　26-30 年
    ☐ More than 30 years　30 年以上

9. Do you primarily follow the entire league of the MLB, specific team(s), or specific player(s)? (Please choose one)
請問您主要追蹤美國職棒大聯盟的整體聯盟動態、特定球隊動態,還是特定球員動態呢? (請選一個選項回答)

    ☐ The League of the MLB　整體聯盟的動態
    ☐ Specific Team(s)　特定球隊的動態
    ☐ Specific Player(s)　特定球員的動態

10. Have you ever attended any MLB games in person?
請問您是否曾親自到美國職棒大聯盟的現場看過比賽?

    ☐ Yes/有
    ☐ No/沒有

11. Have you ever lived/studied in the US?
請問您是否曾經居住美國(不含出差、旅遊)或留學美國過?

    ☐ Yes/有
    ☐ No/沒有

12. Please leave your Email address for the drawing: _____
請留下您的 Email 信箱(抽獎聯絡用):_____

APPENDIX J

Scree Plot

Scree Plot

237
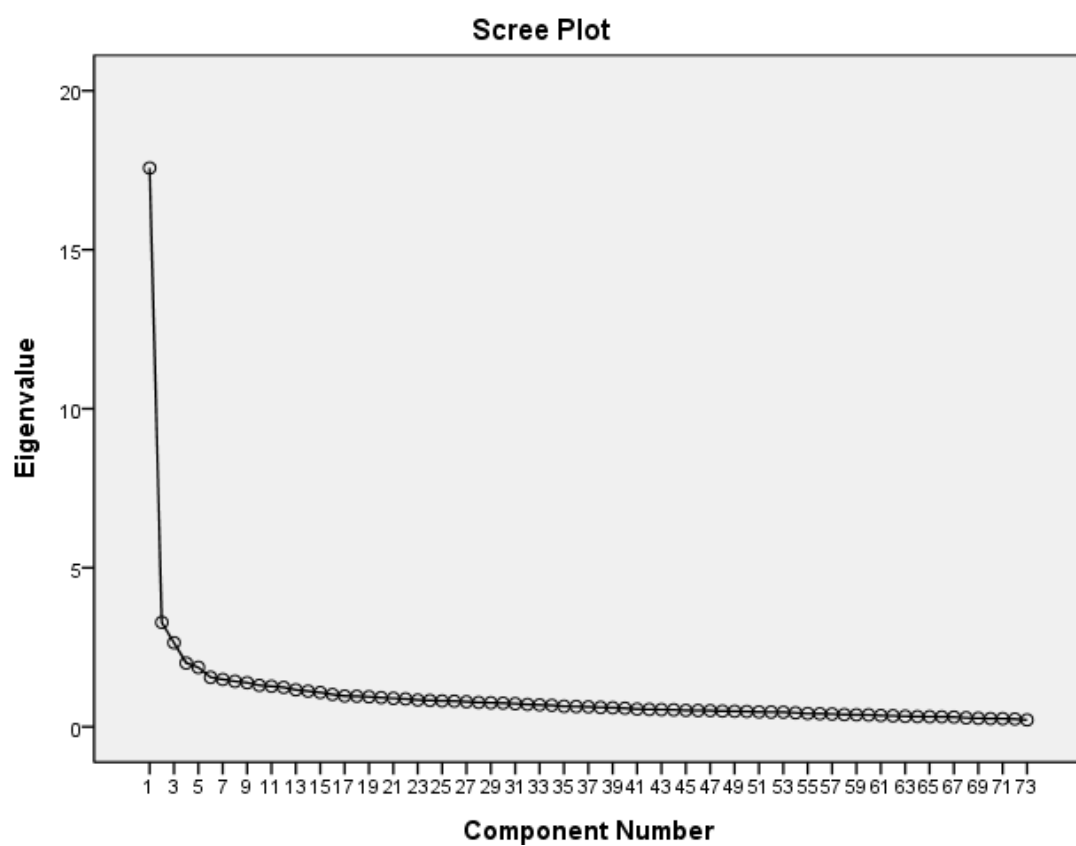
APPENDIX K

Temporary Scale Prior to Reliability Analysis

Temporary Scale Prior to Reliability Analysis

Theme	Item in Questionnaire
Watchability	69. You will never know who will win an MLB game until the last out.
	76. Even we, merely fans, long for and revere the MLB, the ultimate, sacred stage in baseball.
	75. It is a visual feast to watch a variety of nice plays in the MLB games.
	77. In the US, watching a ball game is a relaxing activity.
	78. Everything in the MLB is large-scale.
	61. It is enjoyable to follow MLB batters' smooth swings.
	79. I follow MLB All-Star players, so I remember the teams they play/played with.
World Class	10. The MLB is the most challenging stage for all baseball players to reach and survive.
	29. The MLB gathers the best baseball players from around the world.
	3. The MLB is a symbol of the world elite baseball.
	7. The World Series is the ultimate series in baseball.
	6. It is enjoyable to follow the ball movements of MLB pitches.
	71. The world's top baseball league is not the MLB. (Reversed question)
	5. The MLB ballparks look splendid on the broadcast.
	31. The MLB gathers star players from all over the world.
	26. MLB players' on-field moves are athletic, artful, and smooth.
Performance Enhancing Drugs	11. The PED has been a very negative impression with the MLB.
	82. People may feel many MLB players are steroid users.
	64. Thinking of steroid, I think of many MLB players who have ever been involved in steroid scandals.
	22. People may doubt about some MLB records due to the PED scandal.
Must-do	25. The MLB All-Star Game is the annual festival of the MLB.
	83. The MLB All-Star Game event is the must-see every summer.
	21. The MLB is a business league established primarily to make a profit.

(continued)

Theme	Item in Questionnaire
Quality Tangibles	39. The MLB sells fancy merchandise.
	74. The MLB sells quality merchandise.
	38. The MLB teams serve delicious food at the ballparks.
	81. The MLB apparels are appealing and trendy.
Nostalgia	12. Baseball is America's pastime.
	13. The long history has added nostalgic attraction on the MLB.
	45. In the US, baseball serves as a tool to engage family members.
Untraditional Move	63. WBC is the top international baseball tournament.
	42. Instant replay ensures the quality of the MLB game.
	37. The MLB often demonstrates its patriotism during the game.
Advanced Media	55. A variety of data along with information can be found and well-interpreted on MLB.com.
	56. MLB.com facilitates the fan to better follow, review, and enjoy the game.
	54. MLB.com, the official website of the MLB, is professionally constructed.
	57. There are diverse digital products/services which fans can access on MLB.com.
	59. MLB.tv is a fantastic online streaming platform.
Hollywood	23. Thinking of the MLB, I think of Hollywood baseball movies.
	65. Hollywood movies enhance the appeal of the MLB.
The MLB Brand	1. When seeing the logo of the MLB, I think of MLB star players with diverse nationalities.
	19. I can easily relate some MLB team logos when seeing the logo of the MLB.
	66. The logo of the MLB is very recognizable, even though many similar logos are used by other professional baseball leagues.

Theme	Item in Questionnaire
Advanced Player Business Model	50. In addition to the United States of America, other international countries are also major suppliers of MLB star players. 49. The MLB player gets the most comprehensive contract and job security than the ones in any other baseball leagues. 51. Instilled by experiences of 100+ years, the MLB's governing system is mature. 30. The MLB players have all been trained regularly and systematically. 46. In MLB, player development is very advanced and professional.
Broadcast Experience	20. In Taiwan, the broadcasted MLB games are typically selected because of the appearance of the Taiwanese players. 48. It must be an interesting experience to attend the World Series in person. 44. The MLB specifically and completely records the game in its database and can retrieve any records at any time.
Atmosphere Energizer	16. The sideline activities during the 7th inning stretch bring fans lots of fun. 18. The MLB always can come up with diverse, fresh marketing ideas/themes. 35. The MLB mascots are full of characteristics and fun energy.
League Role Model	36. The MLB set a system model for Taiwanese professional baseball to consult and follow. 62. If a baseball league hopes to grow its games, it should copy the MLB experience. 14. The MLB is the business role model for any other professional baseball leagues in the world.

APPENDIX L

Reliability of Temporary Scale

Reliability of Temporary Scale

Theme	Cronbach's α	Question #	Item-to-total Correlation
Watchability	.82	Q69	.44
		Q76	.67
		Q75	.68
		Q77	.63
		Q78	.63
		Q61	.58
		Q79	.44
World Class	.78	Q10	.51
		Q29	.63
		Q3	.53
		Q7	.41
		Q6	.43
		Q71	.45
		Q5	.34
		Q31	.49
		Q26	.52
Performance Enhancing Drugs	.71	Q11	.49
		Q82	.45
		Q64	.53
		Q22	.54
Must-do	.20*	Q25	.35
		Q83	.19*
		Q21	-.12*
Quality Tangibles	.78	Q39	.71
		Q74	.60
		Q38	.47
		Q81	.61

(continued)

Theme	Cronbach's α	Question #	Item-to-total Correlation
Nostalgia	.60	Q12	.53
		Q13	.46
		Q45	.50
Untraditional Move	.32*	Q63	.22*
		Q42	.23*
		Q37	.11*
Advanced Media	.82	Q55	.63
		Q56	.64
		Q54	.62
		Q57	.63
		Q59	.53
Hollywood	.72	Q23	.57
		Q65	.57
The MLB Brand	.53	Q1	.34
		Q19	.44
		Q66	.35
Advanced Player Business Model	.78	Q50	.55
		Q49	.55
		Q51	.62
		Q30	.47
		Q46	.60
Broadcast Experience	.57	Q20	.36
		Q48	.40
		Q44	.39
Atmosphere Energizer	.65	Q16	.48
		Q18	.47
		Q35	.44
League Role Model	.67	Q36	.49
		Q62	.52
		Q14	.44

Note. * = low correlation coefficient to delete.

APPENDIX M

MLB Taiwanese Brand Association Scale (MLBTBA)

MLB Taiwanese Brand Association Scale (MLBTBA)

Theme	Item
Watchability	69. You will never know who will win an MLB game until the last out.
	69. 在大聯盟的比賽中，不到最後一個出局數你永遠不能確定輸贏。
	76. Even we, merely fans, long for and revere the MLB, the ultimate, sacred stage in baseball.
	76. 即使僅僅是球迷，我們也會嚮往、景仰美國職棒大聯盟這個終極神聖的殿堂。
	75. It is a visual feast to watch a variety of nice plays in the MLB games.
	75. 觀賞大聯盟球賽裡的各種精彩美技可說是視覺的饗宴。
	78. Everything in the MLB is large-scale.
	78. 整體而言 美國職棒大聯盟的經營規模與行銷規模是很龐大的。
	77. In the US, watching a ball game is a relaxing activity.
	77. 在美國，看棒球是很輕鬆的休閒活動。
	61. It is enjoyable to follow MLB batters' smooth swings.
	61. 觀賞大聯盟球員流暢的揮擊是很爽快的。
Performance Enhancing Drugs	82. People may feel many MLB players are steroid users.
	82. 人們可能會覺得很多大聯盟球員都在使用禁藥。
	11. The PED has been a very negative impression with the MLB.
	11. 禁藥問題一直是美國職棒大聯盟給人的負面印象。
	64. Thinking of steroid, I think of many MLB players who have ever been involved in steroid scandals.
	64. 提到類固醇，我會聯想到很多曾經陷入類固醇醜聞的大聯盟球員。
	22. People may doubt about some MLB records due to the PED scandal.
	22. 人們可能會懷疑一些大聯盟的紀錄是靠禁藥達成的。
Quality Tangibles	39. The MLB sells fancy merchandise.
	39. 美國職棒大聯盟販賣的商品很炫。
	74. The MLB sells quality merchandise.
	74. 美國職棒大聯盟販賣的商品很有質感。
	38. The MLB teams serve delicious food at the ballparks.
	38. 大聯盟球場販賣的食物看起來很美味。
	81. The MLB apparels are appealing and trendy.
	81. 美國職棒大聯盟販賣的服飾很有吸引力、很新潮。

Theme	Item
Advanced Media	55. A variety of data along with information can be found and well-interpreted on MLB.com.
	55. 在 MLB.com 上可以找到很多完整的數據與資訊。
	56. MLB.com facilitates the fan to better follow, review, and enjoy the game.
	56. MLB.com 讓粉絲更容易追蹤、回顧、享受大聯盟的比賽。
	54. MLB.com, the official website of the MLB, is professionally constructed.
	54. MLB.com 是個專業架設的美國職棒大聯盟官網。
	57. There are diverse digital products/services which fans can access on MLB.com.
	57. MLB.com 提供了多元的數位產品(服務)。
	59. MLB.tv is a fantastic online streaming platform.
	59. MLB.tv 是一個很棒的線上直播平台。
Atmosphere Energizer	18. The MLB always can come up with diverse, fresh marketing ideas/themes.
	18. 美國職棒大聯盟總能想出新穎、與眾不同的行銷點子或主題。
	25. The MLB All-Star Game is the annual festival of the MLB.
	25. 明星賽是美國職棒大聯盟每年的盛事。
	16. The sideline activities during the 7th inning stretch bring fans lots of fun.
	16. 大聯盟在『第七局伸展』(7th inning stretch)的場邊活動中帶給了球迷很多歡樂。
	35. The MLB mascots are full of characteristics and fun energy.
	35. 大聯盟的吉祥物都充滿了特色與喜感。
Nostalgia	12. Baseball is America's pastime.
	12. 棒球是美國的國家娛樂。
	13. The long history has added nostalgic attraction on the MLB.
	13. 美國職棒大聯盟因其悠久歷史而有著一股懷舊的魅力。
	45. In the US, baseball serves as a tool to engage family members.
	45. 在美國，棒球是維繫家庭情感的一種媒介。

Theme	Item
World Class	7. The World Series is the ultimate series in baseball.
	7. 美國職棒大聯盟的世界大賽是棒球界裡的終極系列戰。
	29. The MLB gathers the best baseball players from around the world.
	29. 美國職棒大聯盟集結了全世界最好的棒球選手。
	3. The MLB is a symbol of the world elite baseball.
	3. 美國職棒大聯盟是世界菁英棒球的象徵。
	10. The MLB is the most challenging stage for all baseball players to reach and survive.
	10. 對所有棒球選手而言,美國職棒大聯盟是挑戰難度最高的舞台。
	71. The world's top baseball league is not the MLB. (Reversed question)
	71. 世界最頂級的職業棒球聯盟不是美國職棒大聯盟。
	6. It is enjoyable to follow the ball movements of MLB pitches.
	6. 觀賞大聯盟投手的球路變化是很過癮的。
	26. MLB players' on-field moves are athletic, artful, and smooth.
	26. 大聯盟球員的身手矯健、動作如藝術般地流暢。
	5. The MLB ballparks look splendid on the broadcast.
	5. 美國職棒大聯盟的球場看起來都很漂亮。
Hollywood	23. Thinking of the MLB, I think of Hollywood baseball movies.
	23. 想到美國職棒大聯盟,我會聯想到好萊塢的棒球電影。
	65. Hollywood movies enhance the appeal of the MLB.
	65. 好萊塢的棒球電影增添了美國職棒大聯盟的魅力。

Theme	Item
Advanced Player Business Model	50. In addition to the United States of America, other international countries are also major suppliers of MLB star players. 50. 除了美國外，全球其他國家也是大聯盟球星的主要供應者。 49. The MLB player gets the most comprehensive contract and job security than the ones in any other baseball leagues. 49. 比起其他的職棒聯盟，美國職棒大聯盟的球員享有最完整的合約與工作保障。 30. The MLB players have all been trained regularly and systematically. 30. 大聯盟球員都受過長期、系統性的訓練。 51. Instilled by experiences of 100+ years, the MLB's governing system is mature. 51. 百年的經驗累積造就了今日美國職棒大聯盟的成熟體制。 46. In MLB, player development is very advanced and professional. 46. 美國職棒大聯盟的球員養成是非常先進、專業的。
The MLB Brand	1. When seeing the logo of the MLB, I think of MLB star players with diverse nationalities. 1. 當看到美國職棒大聯盟的商標時，我會聯想到不同國籍的大聯盟球星。 19. I can easily relate some MLB team logos when seeing the logo of the MLB. 19. 看到美國職棒大聯盟的商標，我能輕鬆地聯想到一些大聯盟球隊的商標。 66. The logo of the MLB is very recognizable, even though many similar logos are used by other professional baseball leagues. 66. 美國職棒大聯盟的商標很好辨認，即使其他職棒聯盟的商標跟它類似。
Broadcast Experience	20. In Taiwan, the broadcasted MLB games are typically selected because of the appearance of the Taiwanese players. 20. 在台灣，電視台會優先轉播有台灣球員上場的比賽。 48. It must be an interesting experience to attend the World Series in person. 48. 親臨現場觀賞世界大賽一定是個有趣的經驗。 44. The MLB specifically and completely records the game in its database and can retrieve any records at any time. 44. 美國職棒大聯盟不只完整、仔細地記錄所有比賽的過程，還可以隨時找出各式各樣的紀錄。

Theme	Item
	36. The MLB set a system model for Taiwanese professional baseball to consult and follow.
	36. 美國職棒大聯盟的制度是台灣職棒學習、效法的模範。
League Role Model	62. If a baseball league hopes to grow its games, it should copy the MLB experience.
	62. 任何想成長的職棒聯盟都應向美國職棒大聯盟看齊。
	14. The MLB is the business role model for any other professional baseball leagues in the world.
	14. 美國職棒大聯盟是其他職棒聯盟的經營典範。

APPENDIX N

Reliability of MLB Taiwanese Brand Association Scale (MLBTBA)

Reliability of MLB Taiwanese Brand Association Scale (MLBTBA)

Theme	Cronbach's α	Question #	Item-to-total Correlation
Watchability	.83	Q69	.44
		Q76	.67
		Q75	.66
		Q78	.62
		Q77	.61
		Q61	.57
Performance Enhancing Drugs	.71	Q82	.45
		Q11	.49
		Q64	.53
		Q22	.54
Quality Tangibles	.78	Q39	.71
		Q74	.60
		Q38	.47
		Q81	.61
Advanced Media	.82	Q55	.63
		Q56	.64
		Q54	.62
		Q57	.63
		Q59	.53
Atmosphere Energizer	.66	Q18	.50
		Q25*	.39
		Q16	.50
		Q35	.43
Nostalgia	.60	Q12	.39
		Q13	.44
		Q45	.40

Theme	Cronbach's α	Question #	Item-to-total Correlation
World Class	.75	Q7	.41
		Q29	.58
		Q3	.52
		Q10	.51
		Q71	.45
		Q6	.45
		Q26	.51
		Q5	.35
Hollywood	.72	Q23	.57
		Q65	.57
Advanced Player Business Model	.78	Q50	.55
		Q49	.55
		Q30	.47
		Q51	.62
		Q46	.60
The MLB Brand	.53	Q1	.34
		Q19	.44
		Q66	.35
Broadcast Experience	.57	Q20	.36
		Q48	.40
		Q44	.39
League Role Model	.67	Q36	.49
		Q62	.52
		Q14	.44

Note. * = new correlation item.

APPENDIX O

Summary of Principal Component Analysis Results for
MLB Taiwanese Brand Association Scale (MLBTBA)

Summary of Principal Component Analysis Results for MLBTBA

Theme	Item #	Rotated Factor Loadings											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Watchability	Q69	.62											
	Q76	.58											
	Q75	.54											
	Q78	.47											
	Q77	.47											
	Q61	.35											
Performance Enhancing Drugs	Q82		.73										
	Q11		.73										
	Q64		.72										
	Q22		.72										
Quality Tangibles	Q39			-.85									
	Q74			-.73									
	Q38			-.72									
	Q81			-.69									
Advanced Media	Q55				-.80								
	Q56				-.77								
	Q54				-.75								
	Q57				-.74								
	Q59				-.47								
Atmosphere Energizer	Q18					-.50							
	Q25					-.47							
	Q16					-.45							
	Q35					-.44							
Nostalgia	Q12						-.76						
	Q13						-.69						
	Q45						-.51						

Theme	Item #	Rotated Factor Loadings											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
World Class	Q7							**.61**					
	Q29							**.59**					
	Q3							**.56**					
	Q10							**.56**					
	Q71							**.48**					
	Q6							**.47**					
	Q26							**.40**					
	Q5							**.33**					
Hollywood	Q23								**-.87**				
	Q65								**-.85**				
Advanced Player Business Model	Q50									**-.70**			
	Q49									**-.61**			
	Q30									**-.55**			
	Q51									**-.54**			
	Q46									**-.46**			
The MLB Brand	Q1										**.79**		
	Q19										**.65**		
	Q66										**.39**		
Broadcast Experience	Q20											**.68**	
	Q48											**.60**	
	Q44											**.51**	
League Role Model	Q36												**.74**
	Q62												**.63**
	Q14						-.41						**.44**
Eigenvalues		4.79	2.41	5.75	7.10	2.24	4.45	4.66	2.88	5.80	3.38	3.66	4.11
α		.83	.71	.78	.82	.66	.60	.75	.72	.78	.53	.57	.67

Note: Only factor loadings over .32 are included. Loadings of 12 factors appear in bold.

APPENDIX P

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APPENDIX Q

IRB Approval Letter

TWU
EXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
DENTON   DALLAS   HOUSTON

DATE: April 20, 2015

TO: Mr. Tung-Wei Wu
             Kinesiology

FROM: Institutional Review Board - Denton

Re: *Exemption for Development of a Scale to Evaluate the Branding Effect of Major League
       Baseball in Taiwan (Protocol #: 18134)*

The above referenced study has been reviewed by the TWU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and was determined to be exempt from further review.

If applicable, agency approval letters must be submitted to the IRB upon receipt PRIOR to any data collection at that agency. Because a signed consent form is not required for exempt studies, the filing of signatures of participants with the TWU IRB is not necessary.

Although your protocol has been exempted from further IRB review and your protocol file has been closed, any modifications to this study must be submitted for review to the IRB using the Modification Request Form. Additionally, the IRB must be notified immediately of any adverse events or unanticipated problems. All forms are located on the IRB website. If you have any questions, please contact the TWU IRB.

cc. Dr. Charlotte (Barney) Sanborn, Kinesiology
     Dr. Leslie Graham, Kinesiology
     Graduate School