

The background of the entire cover is an abstract, high-energy image. It features a blurred figure of a person, likely a runner, in motion. The figure is overlaid with vibrant, streaky light trails in shades of teal, blue, and orange, creating a sense of speed and dynamic movement. The overall composition is energetic and modern.

INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE COLLOQUIUM

i-SPEAK 2025^①

SPORTS AND PHYSICAL EXERCISE ASSEMBLY OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING

COLLOQUIUM PROCEEDINGS

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

EDITOR | ADAM LINOBY

THE EFFECT OF ATHLETE BRANDING ON ENDORSEMENT PERCEPTIONS AMONG MALAYSIAN ELITE ACADEMY FOOTBALL PLAYERS

Muhammad Shazril Hidayat Mohamed Rasid, Adam Linoby, Yusandra Md Yusoff, Amrun Haziq, Muhammad Zulqarnain, & Razif Sazali*

Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Negeri Sembilan Branch, Seremban Campus, Negeri Sembilan, MALAYSIA

*Corresponding author: razifsazali@uitm.edu.my

Keywords: Athlete branding, Endorsement opportunities, Sports marketing, Perception analysis, Quantitative descriptive study

I. INTRODUCTION

Athlete branding plays an important role in shaping endorsement opportunities particularly among emerging talents [1]. This study explores the perceptions of Johor Darul Takzim FC (JDT FC) academy players regarding athlete branding and its influence on potential endorsements. By addressing limited research on young athletes in elite academies and integrating branding factors with endorsement success [2]. This study highlights contextual insights critical for enhancing athletes' marketability in a competitive sports landscape.

II. METHODS

This quantitative descriptive study utilized surveys to examine athlete branding and endorsement perceptions among 80 purposively sampled JDT FC academy players. Participants were selected for their relevance to the research objectives. Data were analyzed using JAMOV (version 2.3.7) employing descriptive statistics and Pearson Correlation to identify key factors influencing perceptions and endorsement potential. The questionnaire was adopted and adapted from Athlete Personality model in the research of (Brad and Todd, 2013; Nguyen Minh HA, Cao Nhat Tuan, 2019).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Athlete branding

Athlete toughness emerged as the most significant branding factor influencing both identification and performance perceptions. This aligns with literature emphasizing toughness on prestige and distinctiveness, while factors such as expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness also played supporting roles.

TABLE I

RESULTS OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ATHLETE BRANDING VARIABLES AMONG THE ACADEMY PLAYERS.

	Mean	SD
Expertise	3.23	0.71
Trustworthiness	3.29	0.75
Attractiveness	3.12	0.69
Toughness	3.33	0.80
Transgression	3.24	0.75

B. Main perception of Potential Athlete Endorsement

Athlete toughness was also identified as the most influential perception for endorsements, confirming its critical role in branding. No unexpected findings were observed, affirming the consistency of these perceptions across the dataset.

TABLE II

RESULTS OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF POTENTIAL ATHLETE ENDORSEMENT VARIABLES AMONG THE ACADEMY PLAYERS.

	Mean	SD	Level
Potential Athlete Endorsement	3.33	0.722	Moderate

C. Effect of Athlete Branding Towards Potential Endorsement

This indicates that as athlete branding improves, the potential for athlete endorsements also increases significantly. The analysis was conducted with a degree of freedom (df) of 78, and the result is statistically significant with a $p < 0.001$. These findings confirm a meaningful and strong association, emphasising the importance of effective athlete branding in enhancing endorsement opportunities.

TABLE III

RESULTS OF PEARSON CORRELATION ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ATHLETE BRANDING ON ENDORSEMENT PERCEPTION AMONG THE ACADEMY PLAYERS.

	Athlete Branding	
Potential Athlete Endorsement	Pearson r	0.736
	df	78
	p -value	<0.001
	N	80

CONCLUSIONS

Athlete toughness significantly shapes branding and endorsement perceptions among JDT FC academy players with consistent influence observed across the study. Other factors, including expertise and trustworthiness, complement toughness's impact [3]. These findings provide valuable insights for optimizing branding strategies, emphasizing toughness to enhance endorsement potential for emerging athletes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author sincerely thanks Universiti Teknologi MARA Negeri Sembilan, Seremban Campus, Mordhiyati Abdul Rashid, colleagues, and JDT FC Academy players for their support.

REFERENCES

- [1] Antony, J., S.Namusonge, & Karanja. (2019). Effect of athlete credibility on brand endorsement in manufacturing companies in Kenya. 6(2), 214–223.
- [2] Frank, B., & Mitsumoto, S. (2023). An extended source attractiveness model: the advertising effectiveness of distinct athlete endorser attractiveness types and its contextual variation. *European Sport Management Quarterly* 23.4 (2023): 1091-1114.
- [3] Nguyen, H., & Cao, T. (2019). Constructing athlete identification and the effectiveness of athlete endorsement on customer's purchase intention. *Journal of Distribution Science*, 17(8), 87–97.