



Customer Behavior and Brand Promotion in Professional Sports Clubs: Developing Social Networks Marketing Model

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research has been conducted to develop a social network marketing model for Sepahan Sports Club based on customer behavior and brand promotion.

Methodology: The research was descriptive and conducted by a survey. The statistical population of this research includes the users and active members of the Sepahan sports club on social networks. Three hundred eighty-four people were selected by random sampling. Data collection was done using standard questionnaires, and data analysis was done using structural equation modeling using Smart PLS and SPSS software.

Findings: We showed that the antecedents of social network marketing include social business drivers, brand experience, and perceived values from branded web advertisements, which have a positive and significant effect on customer business relationships and brand health through customer brand engagement and brand attitude. Also, we showed that the customer's brand engagement and attitude lead to brand promotion. Making the right decision for clubs regarding social networks is very important.

Originality: We showed that social networks cause the message to reach a group of contacts and improve the attitude of customers towards the club and its services, raise the level of awareness of the customers about the club and improve the mental image of, increase customer loyalty and finally the value of the customer.

Keywords

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1. Introduction

Among the essential issues in business policy in recent years is promoting a sustainable brand for professional sports clubs (Colignatus, 2020). The growing trend of global trade has gained increasing momentum by taking advantage of active commercial strategies, the revolution in information and communication technology, and removing barriers at international levels. Therefore, an active presence in global trade does not need to be justified (Sohrabi et al., 2023).

The sports field constantly changes, and the business environment has become complex (Bonakdarchyan & Nazari, 2021). The world faces new and rapidly spreading "social media" phenomena in virtual space. Social media has transferred the power from the company to individuals and communities, or in other words, creative users, which has caused very successful or disastrous effects on famous brands. Effective organization in social media creates advantages for organizations (Gurău, 2008). Therefore, companies have recently turned to social media to attract customers (Arman & Javidfar, 2017). Interaction is essential in social business drivers for success, especially online communication (Park & Yoo, 2020). Therefore, previous research has defined the need for interaction as a level of social business drivers predicting the initial engagement with the brand in social network marketing. There is a concept worthy of attention concerning conflict, especially customer conflict with a brand in social networks. Engagement is the understanding of participation based on internal needs, values, and interests (McClure & Seock, 2020). It is worth mentioning that there is a need to determine the type of influence of social media on brands and the relationship between different variables to promote a brand. The customer must recognize the marketers' brand name and add to their previous knowledge about the brand.

Social networks are tools that companies can use to strengthen and complete marketing research techniques and processes (Vera & Trujillo, 2017). These networks have created an intelligent environment with countless connections and an infinitely wide participation capacity (Mohan & Sequeira, 2016). The rapid development of digital technology has changed people's lives in various fields (Prabowo et al., 2020). The Internet emerged as the most significant source of information in the new century. The emergence of the website has changed global business (Zubair et al., 2022). Social media networks represent new communication marketing networks for organizations to communicate with customers, especially virtual communication with customers. Businesses have started using social networks to help connect employees and customers, obtain information about their interests and characteristics, and provide services to customers in an attractive and attractive technology environment (Ismail, 2017).

Since sports clubs do not have governmental financial support (Mohammadian Moghadam & Nazari, 2023), for solve the problems, and pay attention to organizational strategies, including the development of a strategic plan for public participation in the sports clubs and the use of control and evaluation tools to ensure the effectiveness of teamwork (Azadi et al., 2023). The most important strategic factors include supporting public and private bodies, enhancing cultural and social responsibility, developing media awareness, managing systems and processes, developing appropriate infrastructure, improving

financial and environmental impacts, and security was identified as being consistent with the club's sustainable development (Nazari & Hajiheydari, 2021). As a result, it can be said that to develop the productivity of sport clubs, marketing, supportive propellants, and planning and talent development, practical factors that are both effective and influential should be on the agenda of sports managers (Yabalooie et al., 2022).

Companies create this relationship between brands and customers, who may become more loyal to the brand. However, today, businesses use social networks for brand management (Parsons & Lepkowska-White, 2018), consumer trust (Cooley & Parks-Yancy, 2019), e-commerce and social commerce (Tajvidi et al., 2020), new product development and innovation (Du et al., 2016), knowledge sharing (Leonardi, 2017). They use electronic word-of-mouth advertising (Wakefield & Wakefield, 2018), customer relationship management (Agnihotri et al., 2017), and sales growth (Kumar et al., 2017). Social networks and their increasing influence among users worldwide have made these networks suitable tools for advertising, e-commerce, and, most importantly, customer participation and engagement. Customers who engage more on social media are likely to increase brand loyalty. In general, one of the ways to earn money for professional football clubs is the brand (Smith et al., 2017).

As a result, professional football clubs should look for multiple methods and solutions for sustainable financing (Bonakdarchyan & Nazari, 2021). In the business world, leveraging has a far more surprising effect, one of the most essential principles to achieve financial freedom. Knowing "leverage" and using it in business (Aaker, 2010) is also based on this. The brand potentially leverages the product or service's value (Sudaryanto, 2015). The sports environment is one of the most essential environments with countless uncertainties and a very complex and constantly changing one (Nazari & Shahvali, 2022). In professional sports clubs, development is considered a fundamental issue, and the concept of development in sports is inextricably linked with the component of professional sports. Sustainability and progress in professional sports are two fundamental issues that depend on policymaking (Sohrabi et al., 2023).

In sports, globalization is described as related to economic considerations and more than anything else, although cultural elements also play a role in this area (Nazari & Hajiheydari, 2021). Despite the importance of culture in globalization discourses in sports, economic considerations play an essential role. The need to develop markets and earn more profit by clubs through the financial support of sports shows the place of economy in international sports. The economic impact of sports is felt in media, financial support of companies and influence, branding and credit culture, and the general sense of commercialization of sports (Bonakdarchyan et al., 2020). Changes have occurred in sports as managers seek diversification in assets, capital flows, and new markets to enter existing products or product alliances (Sohrabi et al., 2023). The recent official statistics show that Iran's professional clubs are constantly growing and developing because they have been financially profitable.

Globalization in recent years has required business companies to look for new opportunities in international markets in addition to their domestic and traditional markets (Chang & Fang, 2015). It seems that brands in sports are widely considered nowadays, so in the period of recession and crisis, these are potent brands that face the most negligible drop and problems due to gaining consumer trust. Building a strong brand is the ultimate

goal of many sports organizations and clubs. Brands are more valuable than all company assets and increase their owners' economic and strategic value. Therefore, according to the above topics and also referring to the crucial goals of sports marketers in retaining customers and promoting the brand and considering the high importance of social networks in today's society, the purpose of this research is to eliminate the existing gap (which has become widespread due to the vagueness of this issue) by explaining the model of relationships between social network marketing and customer behavior to promote the brand in the sports industry and to perform an experimental analysis. This research will attempt to analyze the various dimensions of capabilities and the impact of social networks on the behavior of customers and brands in the sports industry through document study. Since social media marketing enables organizations and private organizations to create a new channel for customer support, and this means competitive belief and insight and gaining more customers, this is one of the most effective ways to achieve and maintain a reputation on the web and the key to its success is establishing effective communication with customers and showing the amount of value that every business places on its customers.

2. Literature review

The higher the degree of customer regret, the more sensitive the customers' reactions are to mixed promotions, leading to a rapid increase in switching intentions among customers. This study expands sales promotion knowledge by offering ample evidence of customer behavior and provides sustainable insights for hospitality managers responding to member customers' demands (Zhi & Ha, 2023). Explores the boundary conditions of the sustainability marketing–responsible, sustainable consumer behavior link. Hotels can foster responsible consumer behavior by executing sustainability marketing and engaging in corporate social responsibility activities (Jia et al., 2023). Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of their purchases' environmental and social consequences. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into how attitudes toward green advertising and sponsorship affect various elements of green brand equity, green purchase intention to generate and manage green brand equity, and green purchase intention (Dinh et al., 2023).

The Internet, especially the broad network communication environment with uncertain infinities (Xiao et al., 2017). Research findings also show the role and influence of social networks and media on customer rights (Kim & Ko, 2012) and purchase intention (Park & Yoo, 2020). Still, they couldn't comprehensively examine the consequences of it, which leads to the promotion of a brand. The main difference between social media and other conventional media such as television, newspapers, magazines, and billboards are that social media provides two-way communication between the company and the customers, while traditional media establish one-way communication. Social media improved interaction among online brand communities by establishing a two-way relationship (Zollo et al., 2020).

Zubair et al. (2022) states that team branding is crucial in attracting corporate sponsorship for the multi-billion-dollar sports business. Branding can increase the probability of choosing a logo and brand (a special team) from among different brands, the desire to pay extraordinary and higher costs (such as buying a ticket for a team's game at a higher-than-average amount), the effectiveness of marketing communications and

increasing the team's popularity among fans and society. In fact, through a strong brand personality, opportunities can be created to expand sub-products beyond the main products. Because of the loyal and permanent fans of the clubs, even when the team does not get good results, they buy secondary products related to their groups, such as tickets and shirts (Bonakdarchyan et al., 2020). Consumer brand knowledge cannot be reliably determined; however, appropriate analytical measurements should be made. In this context, the most crucial factor is how the brand is recognizable to the audience. It depends on the marketer's effort to establish continuous brand communication to create brand awareness and involvement to promote the brand (Zubair et al., 2022). Some researchers have also shown the role and influence of social media in brand engagement and attitude (Park & Yoo, 2020).

In other research, it has been stated that social media use may influence customers' purchase intention (Toor et al., 2017). However, they have not investigated the effect of these factors on brand promotion. Today, people pay less attention to commercial advertisements. They are more interested in other people's opinions about the products and services offered to them (Izadi et al., 2019), which should be given a lot of attention in today's era. Social networks are a turning point in communication between customers in establishing communication and positively and negatively affecting their behavior. The issue of branding and brand management has attracted many fans in the marketing world today. Many theorists, managers, and researchers have called the future of marketing the world of brand management and branding activities. Perhaps no capital is more effective than a robust, credible, value-creating name for organizations. Less vulnerability in competitive market conditions, higher profit margins, stronger connections with the back and front links of the production chain, etc., are other benefits of brand development (Carlson & Donavan, 2013).

Due to the emergence and creation of a new structure and technology in the service provision sector, organizations have been competing to attract customers' attention and marketing. In the meantime, the needs of the sports industry require marketers in this field to use new methods and methods to sell products and provide services. In many cases, sports organizations, whether clubs or sports product stores, do not have proper sales or cannot retain their old customers. This issue has become more prominent with the development of social networks and various types of advertisements of different sports organizations through these media in sports marketing.

3. Methodology

The current research is of an applied type that was carried out with a descriptive-correlational survey method. The statistical population of the recent study includes users and active members of the Foad Mubarak Sepahan cultural and sports club in social networks. In this research, the size of the statistical population and the number of the population are not known. Three hundred eighty-four people based on Morgan's table were selected as samples. The samples were selected by random sampling method. A standard questionnaire containing 52 items with a 5-point Likert scale was used to collect information.

Table 1. The structure of the questionnaire.

Source	Objects	Components
Huang et al. (2013), Kang et al. (2016), Baum et al. (2019)	10	Social business drivers (engagement, marketing campaign, and personalization)
Prebensen and Rosengren (2016)	8	Previous experience (emotional value and social value)
Gan and Wang (2017), Hanaysha (2018)	7	Perceived importance of web brands
Kosiba et al. (2018)	9	Customer brand engagement (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral)
Lee et al. (2017)	5	Attitude towards brand position (attitude towards advertising, purchase intention)
Yazdanparast et al. (2016)	4	Business-customer relationships
Molinillo et al. (2017)	9	Brand health (brand awareness, brand connection, and brand loyalty)

Cronbach's alpha test was used to check the reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha reflects the internal correlation between the questions of an examination. For this purpose, 30 people from the statistical population of the research were randomly selected. The relevant questionnaires were distributed among them, and the obtained data were evaluated, and Cronbach's alpha value was calculated. The obtained results confirmed the reliability of the questionnaires, and the questionnaires were found to have good reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficient obtained for the questionnaires was reported to be more than 0.7. A preliminary questionnaire was prepared to assess the validity and given to university experts (doctoral professors of physical education majoring in sports management). They were asked to comment on the questions' appearance and the tools' content. The experts agreed on the validity of the questionnaire in 98% of cases. The preliminary study examined the validity of the content and form of this questionnaire (structure, clarity, and comprehension of the questions).

The data collection method was a survey. After the questionnaire was prepared, considering that the sample should be taken from people with social networks, it was given to the subjects through WhatsApp, Instagram, and Telegram. After completing the questionnaires, the data was extracted and prepared for statistical analysis. Also, the present research used library study and review to use information related to theses, research projects, books, publications, and other related documents. The Internet was also used to obtain information from domestic and foreign electronic books, journals, and other scientific papers. To analyze the data, descriptive indices (prevalence, mean, and standard deviation) and structural equation analysis (confirmatory factor analysis and path coefficient) were used, and the relationships between variables were investigated through SPSS and Smart PLS software.

4. Results

Statistics of frequency distribution of gender of respondents: 72.9% of respondents are male, and 27.1% are female.

Table 2. frequency and percentage of respondents to the questionnaire in terms of the type of social network.

Type of social network	Frequency	Frequency Percent
Instagram	298	77.6
WhatsApp	86	22.4
Total	384	100

Descriptive statistics of the kind of social network used by the respondents are shown in [Table 2](#). As can be seen, the most used social network by the respondents is equivalent to 77.6 percent of WhatsApp. For convergence validity, the AVE standard has been used. The results of the concurrent validity analysis in the current research are presented in [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Convergence validity results.

Variables	Convergent Validity (AVE)	Variables	Convergent Validity (AVE)
Interaction	0.776	Intention to Buy	0.825
Marketing Campaign	0.839	Customer Business Relationships	0.828
Personalization	0.870	Brand Awareness	0.797
Emotional Value	0.850	Communication with the Brand	0.873
Social Value	0.863	Brand loyalty	0.847
Perceived value of web-based Brands	0.750	Social Stimuli	0.661
Emotional	0.804	Previous Experience	0.830
Cognitive	0.743	Customer Brand Engagement	0.695
Behavioral	0.792	Attitude towards the Brand	0.722
Attitude to Advertising	0.806	Brand Health	0.737

Divergent validity is the third measure of validity in the PLS method. This matrix is shown in [Table \(4-7\)](#). This model has acceptable divergent validity if the numbers included in the primary diameter (AVE root) are more significant than their underlying values.

Table 4. Correlation matrix and divergent validity check.

	Interaction	Marketing Campaign	Personalization	Emotional Value	Social Value	Perceived value of web-based Brands	Emotional	Cognitive	Behavioral	Attitude to Advertising	Intention to Buy	Customer Business Relationships	Brand Awareness	Communication with the Brand	Brand loyalty	Social Stimuli	Previous Experience	Customer Brand Engagement	Attitude towards the Brand	Brand Health
Interaction	0.875																			
Marketing Campaign	0.614	0.916																		
Personalization	0.508	0.710	0.932																	
Emotional Value	0.690	0.624	0.663	0.922																
Social Value	0.609	0.624	0.570	0.538	0.929															
Perceived value of web-based Brands	0.609	0.664	0.652	0.607	0.665	0.866														
Emotional	0.474	0.724	0.614	0.666	0.597	0.647	0.897													
Cognitive	0.589	0.606	0.716	0.563	0.612	0.677	0.651	0.862												
Behavioral	0.485	0.699	0.677	0.610	0.545	0.534	0.664	0.624	0.517											
Attitude to Advertising	0.621	0.601	0.604	0.558	0.617	0.691	0.687	0.624	0.593											
Intention to Buy	0.642	0.762	0.666	0.639	0.653	0.638	0.645	0.664	0.475	0.558	0.617									
Customer Business Relationships	0.667	0.588	0.517	0.473	0.489	0.614	0.530	0.724	0.547	0.699	0.677	0.610								
Brand Awareness	0.618	0.550	0.593	0.629	0.695	0.683	0.660	0.606	0.716	0.563	0.612	0.558	0.617							
Communication with the Brand	0.565	0.572	0.475	0.479	0.517	0.611	0.570	0.699	0.677	0.610	0.545	0.601	0.601	0.677						
Brand loyalty	0.588	0.403	0.547	0.629	0.696	0.669	0.662	0.601	0.604	0.558	0.617	0.762	0.762	0.669	0.662					
Social Stimuli	0.890	0.474	0.479	0.909	0.729	0.604	0.724	0.762	0.666	0.639	0.653	0.588	0.588	0.558	0.617					
Previous Experience	0.526	0.898	0.696	0.547	0.475	0.666	0.606	0.588	0.517	0.473	0.489	0.550	0.550	0.699	0.677	0.610	0.724			
Customer Brand Engagement	0.508	0.604	0.909	0.696	0.479	0.593	0.601	0.572	0.475	0.479	0.517	0.669	0.662	0.629	0.669	0.662	0.691	0.687		
Attitude towards the Brand	0.475	0.469	0.696	0.437	0.570	0.555	0.934	0.403	0.547	0.629	0.696	0.629	0.558	0.617	0.699	0.677	0.610	0.645	0.662	
Brand Health																				

According to the results of the tables, it can be concluded that the convergent and divergent validity of the model is favorable.

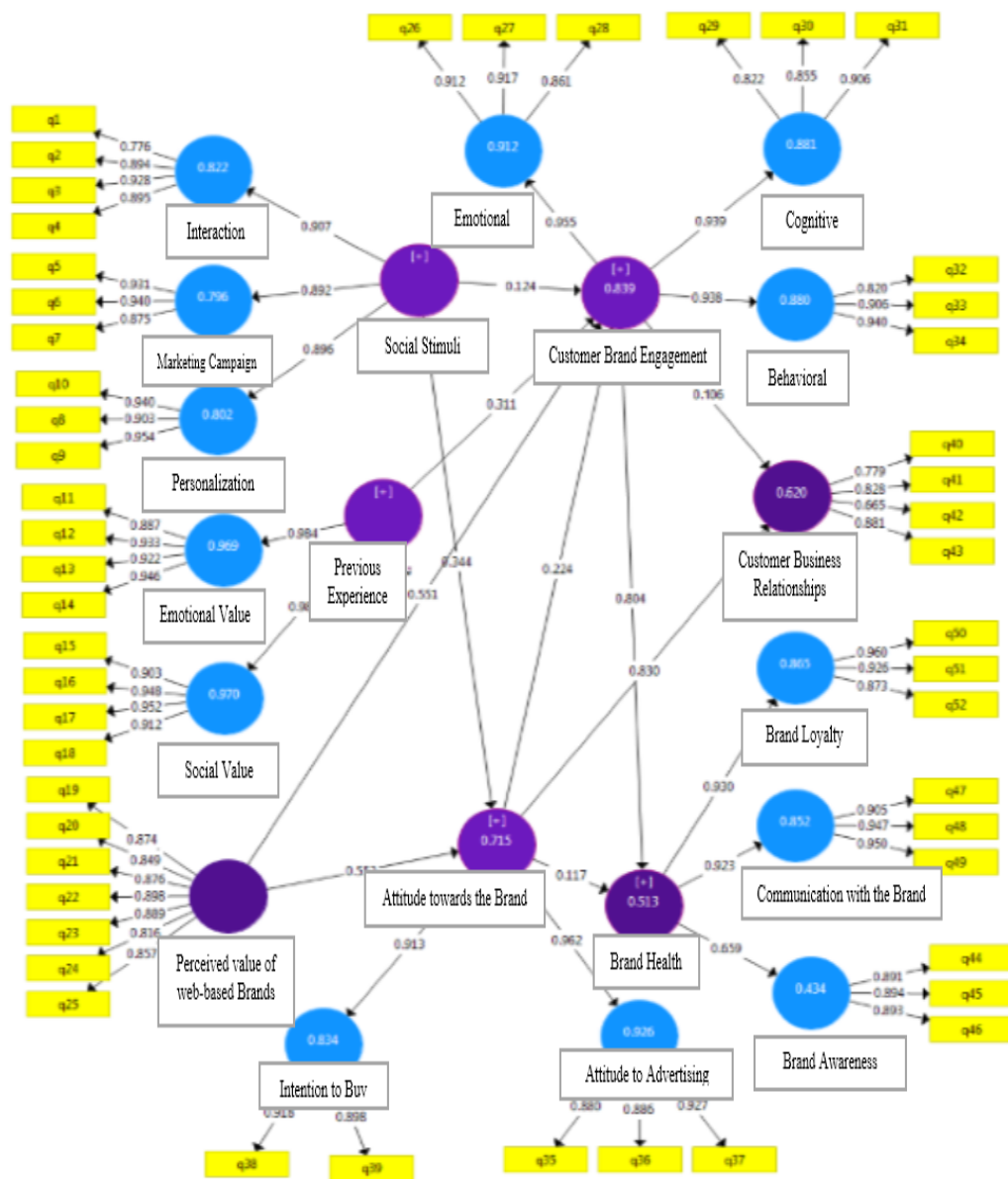


Figure 1. Path coefficients of the research model.

Figures 1 and 2. The coefficients in these charts are divided into two categories. The first category is the relationships between hidden variables (ellipses) and obvious variables (rectangles), called factor loadings.

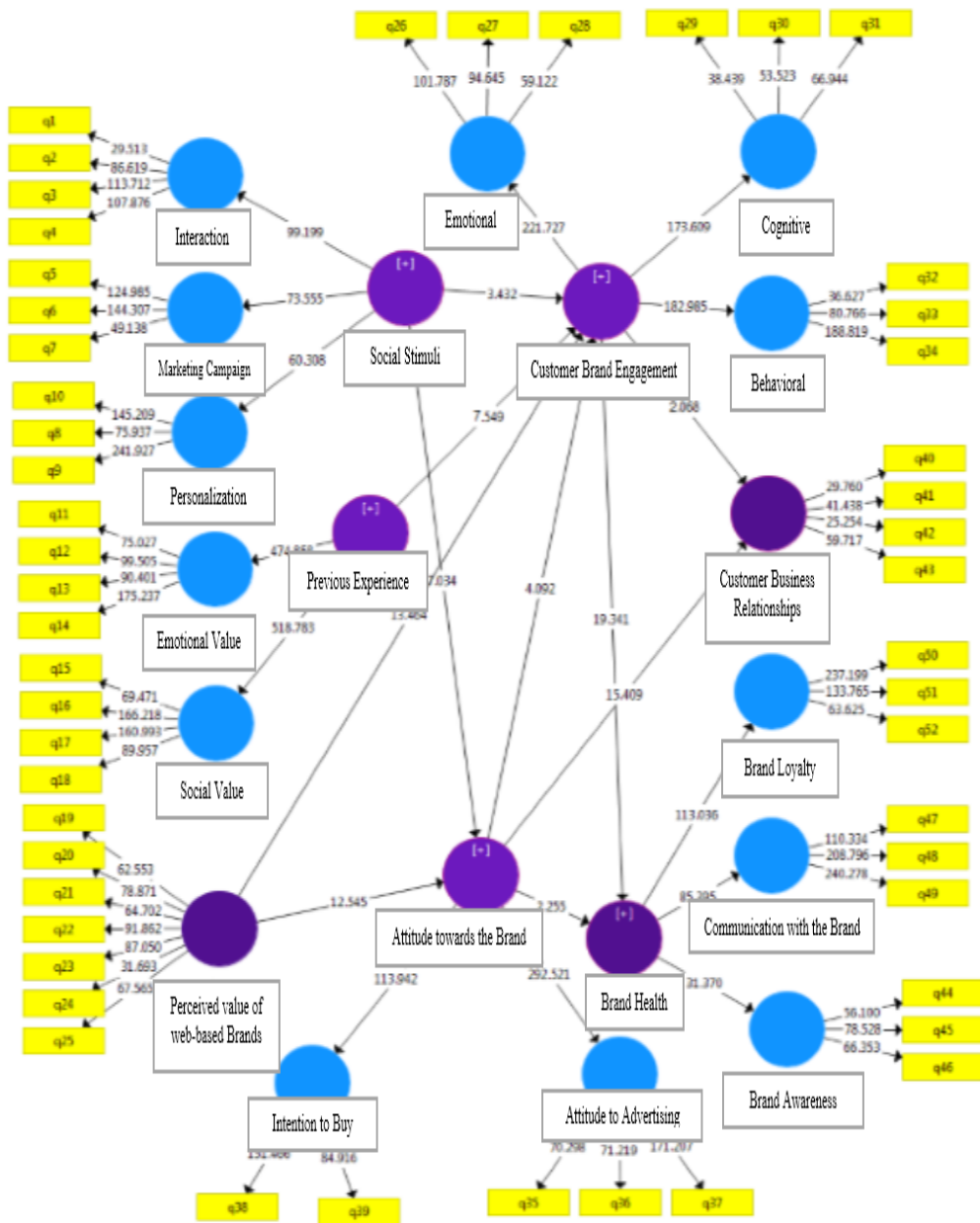


Figure 2. T Sobel model.

4.1. Determination coefficient and fit index of the first research model

Determination coefficient and fit index of the first research model by using the data explanation variance value (R²) for the dependent variables, the predictive power of the designed model is analyzed. In Table 6, the determination coefficient of the model is reported.

Table 5. Coefficient of determining the research model.

Variables	The coefficient of determination	Variables	The coefficient of determination
Interaction	0.822	Intention to Buy	0.834
Marketing Campaign	0.796	Customer Business Relationships	0.620
Personalization	0.802	Brand Awareness	0.434
Emotional Value	0.969	Communication with the Brand	0.852
Social Value	0.970	Brand loyalty	0.865
Emotional	0.912	Customer Brand Engagement	0.839
Cognitive	0.881	Attitude towards the Brand	0.815
Behavioral	0.880	Brand Health	0.513
Attitude to Advertising	0.926	-	-

The general criterion considered for the partial least squares method is called (Gof). The goodness of fit value is obtained from the following formula:

$$GOF = \sqrt{AVE * R^2}$$

$$GOF = \sqrt{0.785 * 0.802} = 0.793$$

The Q² criterion is used to check the model's prediction power. Suppose the value of Q² in the case of an endogenous construct (dependent variable) obtains three values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35. In that case, it indicates the weak, medium, and strong predictive power of the construct or related exogenous constructs, respectively (Table 6).

Table 6. Review of Q² criteria of the research model.

Variables	Q2 Coefficient	Variables	Q2 Coefficient
Interaction	0.593	Intention to Buy	0.659
Marketing Campaign	0.632	Customer Business Relationships	0.351
Personalization	0.659	Brand Awareness	0.320
Emotional Value	0.774	Communication with the Brand	0.702
Social Value	0.779	Brand loyalty	0.693
Emotional	0.696	Customer Brand Engagement	0.544
Cognitive	0.62	Attitude towards the Brand	0.485
Behavioral	0.660	Brand Health	0.351
Attitude to Advertising	0.708	-	-

In the effect of social and commercial stimuli on customer brand engagement, the path coefficient equals 0.124, a positive value, and the absolute value of the t statistic equals 3.432. As a result, social and commercial stimuli positively and significantly affect customer brand involvement. In the effect of social and commercial stimuli on the attitude towards the position (position) of the brand, the path coefficient is equal to 0.344, which is a positive value. The value of the t statistic equals 7.034, so social and commercial stimuli positively and significantly affect the attitude toward the brand's position. In the study of the impact of previous experience on brand involvement, the path coefficient is equal to 0.311, which is a positive value, and the absolute value of the t statistic is equal to 7.549, so previous experience has a positive and significant effect on brand involvement.

The path coefficient of the perceived value of branded websites on customer brand involvement is 0.551, which is a positive value, and the absolute value of the t statistic is equal to 13.464, so the perceived value of branded websites has a positive and significant effect on customer brand involvement. In the impact of the perceived value of branded websites on the attitude towards the brand, the path coefficient is equal to 0.552, which is a positive value, and the absolute value of the t statistic is equal to 12.545, so the perceived value of branded websites has a positive and significant effect on the attitude towards the brand.

The path coefficient impact of attitude towards position (brand position) on brand engagement is 0.224, which is a positive value, and the absolute value of the t statistic is equal to 4.092, so the attitude towards the position (brand position) has a positive and significant effect on brand involvement. In the impact of the attitude towards the situation (brand position) on the health of the brand, the path coefficient is equal to 0.117, which is a positive value, and the absolute value of the t statistic is equal to 2.255, so the attitude towards the position (brand position) has a positive and significant effect on the health of the brand. In the impact of attitude towards the situation (brand position) on business relationships, the path coefficient is equal to 0.830, which is a positive value, and the absolute value of the t statistic is equal to 15.409, so the attitude towards status (brand position) has a positive and significant effect on business relations. In investigating the impact of customer brand involvement on customer business relationships, the path coefficient is equal to 0.106, which is a positive value, and the absolute value of the t statistic is equal to 2.068, so customer brand involvement has a positive and significant effect on customer business relationships. In examining the impact of customer brand engagement on brand health, the path coefficient is 0.804, which is a positive value, and the absolute value of the t statistic is 19.341, so customer brand involvement has a positive and significant effect on brand health.

4.2. Determining the intensity of the effect of hidden variables

Defining the power of the impact of hidden variables states what contribution each variable has in predicting the dependent variable. In addition, F2 with three values of 0.35, 0.15, and 0.02 represents strong, medium, and weak effect sizes, respectively.

Table 7. The results of the effect intensity test.

Variables	The dependent variables				
	Customer Brand Involvement	Attitude towards Brand Authority	Business Relationships Customer	Brand Health	
Independent variables	Social stimuli	0.023	0.168	-	-
	Previous experience	0.153	-	-	-
	Perceived value of web-based brands	0.299	0.433	-	-
	Attitude towards the brand	0.77	-	0.700	0.011
	Customer brand engagement	-	-	0.10	0.513

The findings showed that the intensity of the variable effect of social stimuli on customer brand participation is weak, and the attitude towards the brand is average.

5. Discussion and conclusion

This research has been conducted with the aim of Customer Behavior and Brand Promotion in Professional Sports Clubs: Developing a Model of Social Networks Marketing in Sports Cultural Club in Sepahan. Based on the results, the path coefficient of social business drivers and customer brand engagement is a positive value. As a result, it can be said that social business drivers positively and significantly affect customer brand engagement. This result is in line with the findings of [Ul Islam and Rahman \(2017\)](#) and [Verhagen et al. \(2015\)](#). The coefficient of the path between social and commercial stimuli on the attitude towards the position (position) of the brand is a positive value. It can be said that social, commercial incentives positively and significantly affect the attitude towards the brand's position. This result is in line with the findings of [Kujur and Singh \(2017\)](#).

As a result, it can be said that previous experience has a positive and significant effect on brand involvement. This result is in line with the findings obtained from the research of [Simon and Tossan \(2018\)](#). The coefficient of the path between the perceived value of branded websites and customer brand involvement is positive. It can be said that the perceived value of branded websites has a positive and significant effect on customer brand engagement. This finding is consistent with the research results of [Chen \(2017\)](#).

The coefficient of the path between the perceived value of branded websites and the attitude towards the brand is positive. It can be said that the perceived value of branded websites has a positive and significant effect on the attitude towards brand status. This finding is consistent with the research results of [Peng et al. \(2019\)](#). The coefficient of the path between attitude towards the position (brand position) and brand involvement is a positive value. It can be said that the attitude towards the position (brand position) has a positive and significant effect on brand engagement. This finding is consistent with the research results of [Kujur and Singh \(2017\)](#). The coefficient of the path between attitude towards the position (brand position) and brand health is a positive value. This finding is consistent with the results of [Ahmad et al. \(2016\)](#).

The coefficient of the path between attitude towards position (brand position) and business relations is a positive value. It can be said that attitude towards status (brand position) positively and significantly affects business relationships. This finding is consistent with the results of [Ahmad et al. \(2016\)](#). The positive value is the path coefficient between customer brand involvement and customer business relationships. It can be said that customer brand involvement has a positive and significant effect on customer business relationships. This finding is consistent with the results of [Ismail \(2017\)](#). The path coefficient between customer brand involvement and brand health is positive. It can be said that customer brand involvement has a positive and significant effect on brand health. This finding is consistent with the results of [Lim et al. \(2015\)](#).

Analytical findings showed that social business drivers influence attitudes toward brand status (position) more than customers' brand involvement. The most important factor affecting social networks is their entertainment. People use social networks in their free time. In these networks, people follow their interests by forming groups. Also, consumers' taste is revealed based on people's interest in different entertainment. In the meantime, considering the enjoyment of social networks and attracting the attention of users, it is possible to create diverse and attractive entertainment to create awareness and particular value of the brand in the minds of consumers.

A well-known, trusted, famous, and well-accepted sports club or organization that can provide an excellent service experience for its customers by properly informing and advertising its page or channel in the natural and virtual space, such as employee word-of-mouth advertising, environmental advertising, advertising on the Internet, etc., can increase its number of followers and maintain its audience by creating desirable content and updating it. Also, the perceived value of branded webs has a positive effect on customer brand involvement and attitude towards brand authority, which is consistent with the findings of [Peng et al. \(2019\)](#).

According to the results, the higher the intensity of the attitude towards the position, the higher the level of conflict. Conflict can appear in the form of "cognitive," "emotional," and "behavioral," which, while increasing the user's attention and learning about the brand of the club or organization, also stimulate and change his feelings and accompany him with more activities. With the increase in the intensity of the attitude towards the brand, the level of brand health and customer business relations increases, which is in line with the research of [Ahmad et al. \(2016\)](#).

The more intense the customer's brand involvement is, the more the customer's business relationship and brand health will increase positively. This finding is consistent with the results of [Ismail \(2017\)](#). Therefore, perhaps the reason for this finding can be related to the fact that the intensive competition between companies, stores, and organizations has provided conditions that continuously seek to find a new way to communicate with customers and introduce their products, and in the meantime, the indescribable speed of technology growth has come to the aid of marketers. Every day provides new opportunities for them to communicate more and more directly with customers. On the other hand, social networks are an opportunity to create a mutual dependence with contacts and engage them on an almost personal level; social networks create an opportunity to introduce the club and its services. Therefore, clubs must make the right decision regarding social networks. Social

networks cause the message to reach a group of contacts and improve the attitude of customers towards the club and its services, raise the level of awareness of the club and improve its mental image, increase customer loyalty, and finally, the value of the customer.

Internet marketing capabilities only had a mediating role in the relationship between company characteristics and company performance. In explaining these results, it can be stated that for companies, factors such as the efficiency of the website and its design to create a long-term relationship with the fans and stimulate them to buy more are essential. Companies can bridge the gap between themselves and their fans through their websites, and these companies have also increased revenue in their companies by selling their products online. E-commerce improves overall performance and increases overall competition. Sports managers need to use interactive marketing media to communicate with customers in the present time. In addition, by integrating various elements of social media such as blogs, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, top professional teams enhance their presence in communities and create virtual forums that are effective in brand selection and engaging and interacting with fans.

Sports club managers should pay more attention to their company's effectiveness, considering the research results show that the company's characteristics are not related to the marketing ability. In marketing activities, they created visual appeals to increase the durability and effectiveness of the correct transmission of messages in cyberspace. Pay attention to the interests and tastes of customers in the Internet space. A suitable network should provide advertisements with the largest audience and sufficient societal influence. Internet marketing should be in line with the strategic planning of sports companies. The conditions for increasing the amount of internet audience should be considered. Finally, a suitable and happy environment for sports internet marketing should be considered. Professional club managers should create contests and incentive schemes on brand and service types and keep up with customers' changing needs by offering survey questions on WhatsApp and Instagram channels to improve.

Managers of social networks of professional clubs should pay more attention to the influence of attitudes in these networks to attract more customers. For example, they can pay valuable rewards for more cooperation and participation with the club by placing communication pages and practical and online offers for customers. Professional clubs can try to strengthen positive attitudes as much as possible by monitoring virtual spaces. If negative attitudes are observed, they can take action to find the root of this attitude and neutralize and change it.

6. Limitations and future research

Although this study provides meaningful findings for sport clubs, the study still has some limitations. There are other influential factors, such as Hidden behavior in social sports marketing. These variables should be included in future studies.

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رفتار مشتری و ارتقای برند در باشگاه‌های ورزشی حرفه‌ای: توسعه مدل بازاریابی شبکه‌های اجتماعی

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چکیده

هدف: این پژوهش با هدف ارائه مدل بازاریابی شبکه‌های اجتماعی در باشگاه فرهنگی ورزشی سپاهان مبتنی بر رفتار مشتری و ارتقای برند انجام شد.

روش: پژوهش حاضر توصیفی و به صورت پیمایشی انجام شد. جامعه آماری این تحقیق شامل کاربران و اعضای فعال باشگاه فرهنگی ورزشی سپاهان در شبکه‌های اجتماعی بودند که از بین آنها ۳۸۴ نفر به روش نمونه‌گیری تصادفی انتخاب شدند. جمع‌آوری داده‌ها با استفاده از پرسشنامه استاندارد و تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها با استفاده از مدل‌سازی معادلات ساختاری و نرم افزار Smart PLS و SPSS انجام شد. **یافته‌ها:** یافته‌های پژوهش نشان داد پیشایندهای بازاریابی شبکه‌های اجتماعی شامل محرک‌های کسب و کار اجتماعی، تجربه برند و ارزش‌های درک‌شده از تبلیغات اینترنتی برند است که تأثیر مثبت و معناداری بر روابط تجاری مشتری و سلامت برند از طریق برند مشتری دارد. تعامل و نگرش برند همچنین این تحقیق نشان داد که تعامل و نگرش مشتری به برند منجر به ارتقای برند می‌شود. همچنین، تصمیم‌گیری درست برای باشگاه‌ها در مورد شبکه‌های اجتماعی بسیار مهم است.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: ما نشان دادیم شبکه‌های اجتماعی باعث ارسال پیام‌های گروهی به مخاطبین شده و نگرش مشتریان را نسبت به باشگاه و خدمات آن بهبود می‌بخشد، سطح آگاهی مشتریان را نسبت به باشگاه بالا برده و تصویر ذهنی از آن را بهبود می‌بخشد، وفاداری مشتریان و در نهایت ارزش مشتری افزایش می‌یابد.

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درگیری مشتری

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