

The Role of Social and Digital Media on Sport Marketing in Iraq and Its Effect on Football

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Received: June 5, 2022

Received in Revised: June 24, 2022

Accepted: July 9, 20212

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand the role of social and digital media on sport marketing and its effect on football in Iraq. This study employed a quantitative approach, with data collected by a questionnaire. Questionnaire was sent to 200 people, and they were all contacted for responses. Most of the respondents use social media (SM) as their favorite over traditional media, which suggests that the influence of SM in the life of Iraqi people is more than traditional media. Maximum respondent use facebook for their social activities through SM. Almost all respondents like, comment or share the SM posts and active on posting messages, watching the ads on SM. SM also helps respondents to get more information and they feel more connected to the brand sponsoring football clubs. Respondents also inspiring SM campaigns of sponsoring football clubs and purchase the product of that company which is promoted by their favourite player or team or club. Thus, SM and digital media plays an important role in sports marketing strategies in Iraq for major retail brands, as it allows consumers to stay update with the latest products as well as their promotions and allows them to engage in a wide range of football events and even hear from their football sport idols.

Keywords: Social-Media, Sport Marketing, Football and Iraq

Introduction

Today due to increase in the number of users, SM become crucial than ever before in all sectors (Kapoor et al., 2018). SM not only help in connect with family or friends also support businesses around the world to market their brand and communicate with customers in a methodical way (Dwivedi et al., 2021). It's a new, more efficient, and less time-consuming way of expressing the brand's message and connecting with customers on a more personal level for businesses (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Sharing the brand's message and connecting on a personal level has never been easier or more successful than ever before due to SM or digital platforms (Appel et al., 2020). Businesses all over the world have access to a digital platform via which they can quickly communicate with their customers and gain a complete understanding of their needs and interests (Rangaswamy et al., 2020). SM and its networks have swiftly become the preferred medium for brand communication and promotion, as well as a variety of other marketing and advertising tactics (Nobre and Silva, 2014; Matteo and Zotto, 2015; Bocconcelli et al., 2017; Ahmad et al., 2018; Kapoor et al., 2018; Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; de Mooij, 2021; Dwivedi et al., 2021). Because of their huge reach, SM platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Snapchat have evolved into media destinations where businesses may advertise their products. Nike, Inc. is an example of a sports organisation that has taken SM marketing to a new level while developing an iconic brand image. Users of the SM platform have access to a variety of open areas and tools for discussion and engagement (Csordás et al., 2014). The introduction of SM tools has generated a new dynamic in sports marketing, and as other in sports, SM has to play a leadership role in

engaging supporters in football game too (Desbordes, 2006; Fillis and Mackay, 2014; Mintert and Pfister, 2015; Abeza et al., 2019; Pradhan et al., 2020). Iraq has recently aided technical advancement in a variety of ways. The use of sports marketing (for example like, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others) is constantly expanding in the sports sector and among Iraqis. Many young people in Iraq use SM as a way to connect with the press, corporations, managers, as well as businesses (Aljuboori et al., 2020). The majority of Iraqis utilise SM platforms like Facebook, Yahoo, YouTube, Google and others (Kemp, 2021). However, it is critical to emphasize the effective use of SM as a marketing tool for football teams in Iraq. Therefore, this research focus to understand the role of SM and digital media on sport marketing and its effect on football, particularly in Iraq.

Methods

A quantitative technique was used in this investigation. The objective of adopting a quantitative method is to collect numerical data from participants based on their set of options. The quantitative research technique aids in understanding how football sports club teams/players in Iraq use SM platforms to improve their interactions with supporters, resulting in a better MS. The questionnaire, which includes both open and closed questions, is being used to learn about participants' perceptions of the usefulness of sports marketing in helping football teams in Iraq build marketing plans. The questionnaire was sent out to over 200 people, who were all contacted to provide answers. The profession and frequency number of the respondent is given in table 1. When questionnaires were received from respondents, they were quantitatively analysed, summarised, and their overall responses shown in a graph, list, ratio, as well as percentage.

Table 1. Represent the frequency distribution of the respondents according to profession

Profession of respondents	Respondent Frequency
Baghdad football clubs' elite players	60
Coaches of Baghdad football clubs	20
Officers of the Iraq Sport	25
SM journalists	30
Founders, marketing executives, promoters and staff of the sport supporting firms	50
Sport teachers at the University and College in Baghdad	15
Total	200

Results and Discussion

According to Figure 1, most of the respondents (195 out of 200) use SM as their favorite over traditional media, which suggests that the influence of SM in the life of Iraqi people is more than traditional media. Figure 2 suggested that all have account of SM suggesting the penetrance level of SM among the respondents. Figure 3 suggested the frequency of SM uses by the respondent which suggested that maximum respondent use facebook for their social activities through SM. Except for this, almost all respondents like, comment or share the SM posts. Respondents are active on posting messages, watching the ads on SM. They feel that SM helps them to get more information and they feel more connected to the brand sponsoring football clubs. Respondents also inspiring SM campaigns of sponsoring football clubs (Table 2). Most of the respondents also feel that that they purchase the product of that company which is promoted by their favourite player or team or club. This help in understand the importance of marketing strategy of business houses for promoting any club, team or player (Table 3).

Most of the respondent like to do online shopping which also increase the chance that they like things promoted by their favorite team or player (Table 4). Overall, the sport industry has developed successfully for the marketing under SM platform. Sports franchises, unions, clubs and players take over full advantage of the resources that SM offers today and in this generation.

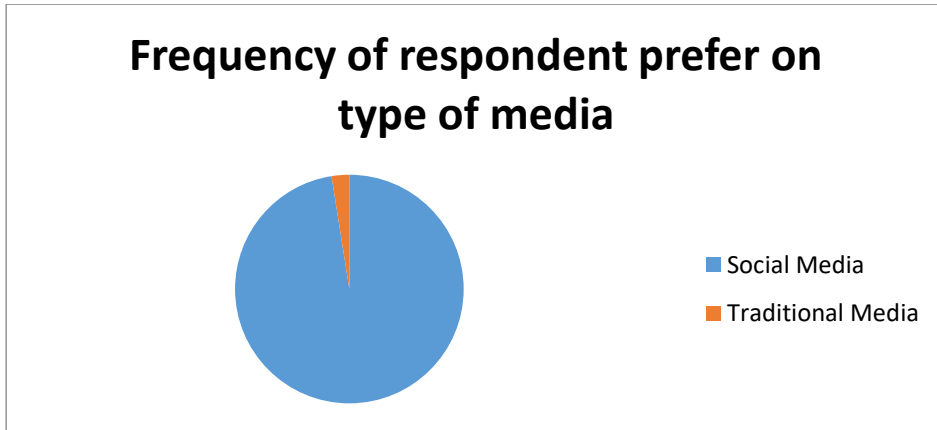


Figure 1. Frequency Distribution of the Favourite Media

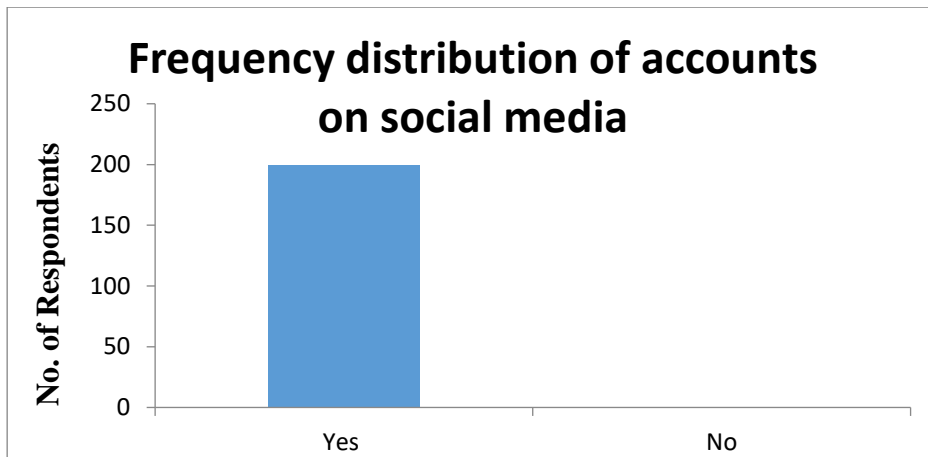


Figure 2. Frequency distribution of the account on favourite media

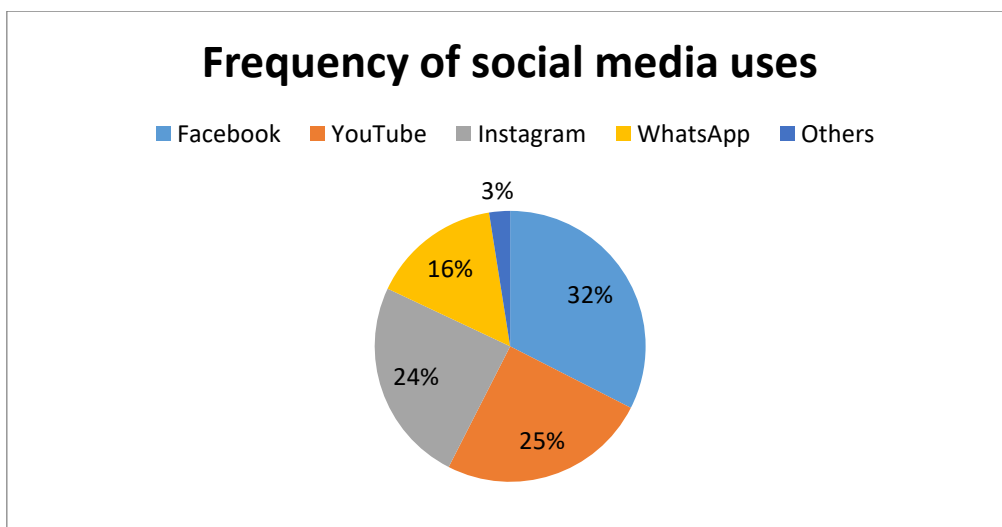


Figure 3. Frequency distribution in percentage of the favourite social network

Table 2. Frequency of response receive from respondent for different questions from respondent

S. No.	Question	Response “Yes”	Response “No”
1	Do you like, comment or share the SM posts	200	0
2	Are you active on posting message	200	0
3	Do you watch the ads on SM	124	76
4	Do you feel that SM helps you to get more information	200	76
5	Do you feel more connected to the brand sponsoring football clubs	200	0
6	Do inspiring SM campaigns of sponsoring football clubs	200	0

Table 3. Frequency distribution of favourite sports personality Bagdad’s football clubs’ teams

When your favorite sports personality Bagdad’s football clubs’ teams	Frequency
I will purchase the product because he/she is my favourite sports athlete	51
I will purchase the product only if I need it	149

Table 4. Frequency distribution of purchase sports related products

Where do you purchase sports related products	Frequency
Online shopping	149
Retail Sports	4
Retail Sports/Online shopping	1
Retail stores	46

Conclusion

The findings of the study help in conclude that most of the people in Iraq now prefer to use SM over traditional media. They like to do chatting, watching advertisement on SM. SM make them feel more connected with their favourite player or team and business houses take this advance and by sponsoring team or player they make profit from their fans. Thus, SM plays an important role in marketing strategies for major retail brands, as it allows consumers to stay up-to-date with the latest products and promotions and allows them to engage in a wide range of football events and even hear from their football sport idols.

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