

EFFECT OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE FIRST COMPANION BRAND IN SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE QUALITY OF BRAND-CONSUMER RELATIONSHIP IN IRANIAN PREMIER FOOTBALL LEAGUE

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Abstract: The purpose of this research was to investigate the effect of supporting the first financial brand in social media on the quality of the brand-consumer relationship and brand-consumer compliance in Iranian premier football league. The current thesis was used in terms of intent, and the data was collected using descriptive survey research. This study's statistical demographic included both Iranian Premier League fans and spectators. Standard questionnaires were used to evaluate the study theories, and structural equation simulation with SPSS and Smart pls applications was used to collect data. Following the determination of the coefficient, 40 questionnaires were spread to Premier League viewers and followers. There were 332 samples for the dependent variable's stability and volatility, as well as its location in Cochran's formula. To be sure, 400 questionnaires were circulated to the audience in a non-probable manner, and the data from 332 questionnaires were analyzed. The results showed that the financial support of Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media affects brand-consumer compliance. Considering the significance coefficient of Z in the relationship between the financial support of Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media with the brand-consumer adaptation, which is equal to 19.915, this hypothesis has been confirmed the effect is similar to 0.654. To sum up, as Hamrahe Aval brand sponsorship of sports activities in social media and brand-consumer compliance increase, the brand-consumer relationship quality will improve.

Keywords: sports, Iran, social media, consumer, brand.

INTRODUCTION

Football is a social phenomenon and a suitable way to form people's identity. Football is considered one of the most popular sports, in particular, it can be considered a collective performance in which the team, players and fans are the symbol of a community, city or region, and in this environment, people find meaning and identity widely (Arakelian et al., 2020). Sports brands use social media to strengthen the consistency of their relationships with clients and communicate more efficiently (Kunkel, Biscaia, 2020). According to some research findings, sports sponsorship can impact the sponsor brand's brand value, brand recognition, brand properties, desire to buy, and self-compatibility. In reality, brands can improve the appeal of their products and their name by taking this step (Hudson et al., 2015). Brand-consumer adaptation seems to affect the consistency of the brand-consumer relationship. The sponsorship of the Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities, especially football, is one of the things that must be tackled. A quick summary of the Premier League and FA Cup competitions can be seen in various forms (direct sponsorship of football clubs, commercial), promoting the Iranian football industry, and impacting a wide range of its target community. For example, during the draw ceremony for the 16th round of the Premier Football League (Persian Gulf Cup), Hamrahe Aval was announced as the Football Federation's most influential supporter and one of the league's most famous teams. Purpose of the study - clarify the critical question of whether the Hamrahe Aval brand's financial sponsorship influences the quality of brand-consumer relationship and brand-consumer compliance in sport.

METHOD

The current thesis was used in terms of intent, and data were collected using descriptive survey research. This study's statistical population included all spectators and followers of Iranian Premier League matches who followed

the league through stadium attendance or other media. Following the determination of the coefficient, 40 questionnaires were spread to Premier League viewers and followers. There were 332 samples for the dependent variable's stability and volatility, as well as its location in Cochran's formula. To be sure, 400 questionnaires were circulated to the audience in a non-probable manner, and the data from 332 questionnaires were analyzed. The following instruments were used to gather the necessary data (Do et al., 2015). Questions in the questionnaire: brand's sponsorship of sports activities on social media; brand-consumer compliance; brand-consumer relationship quality. The data collected from the questionnaire in this study is categorized after the study. Each variable's number or significance was calculated based on the data and scores obtained from the questionnaire to interpret the data and facts, following the proposed objectives. Then, by describing the details gathered in the form of descriptive tables and diagrams, a general picture of how they are distributed is created, which helps in various statistical patterns. The study hypotheses were then evaluated using the structural equation method in the following phase. This technique is most often used in multivariate data analysis, where multiple dependent variables are being evaluated simultaneously. Structural equation modelling is a multivariate and robust multivariate regression method and, more specifically, an extension of the general linear model that helps the researcher evaluate sets of regression equations simultaneously. Many of these tests were carried out using the SPSS24 and Smart Pls2 software packages.

RESULTS

This study aimed to investigate the effect of the Hamrahe Aval brand financial support of sports activities on social media affected brand-consumer relationship quality and brand-consumer compliance. Description of respondent's age, it can be seen that 51.5% of the respondents were under 25 years old, 37% were between 25 and 35 years old, 5.5% were between 35 and 45 years old, 1.2% were over 45 years old, and 8.4% did not answer this question. Description of respondent's education, it can be seen that the education's level of 35% of the respondents belongs to who didn't get their diploma, 30.4% diploma, 22% associate, 7.8% bachelor, 2.1% master, 0.3% doctoral and 2.4% did not answer this question. Description of Hamrahe Aval's history of using services, it can be seen that the rate of using Hamrahe Aval brand services is 0.6% of respondents under two years, 4.2% 2 to 3 years, 27.4% 3 to 4 years, 42.7% 5 Up to 6 years, 19.3% were 6 to 7 years old, and 2.4% were more than seven years old, and 3.4% did not answer this question. Number of games seen by Hamrahe Aval's respondents, it can be recognized that the number of games seen by Hamrahe Aval brand's respondents is 1.2% of the respondents fewer than five games, 44.8% 5 to 10 games, 48.8% 10 to 15 games 0.6% had played more than 15 games and 3.4% did not answer this question. For research hypotheses, the model is used as follows (Figure 1).

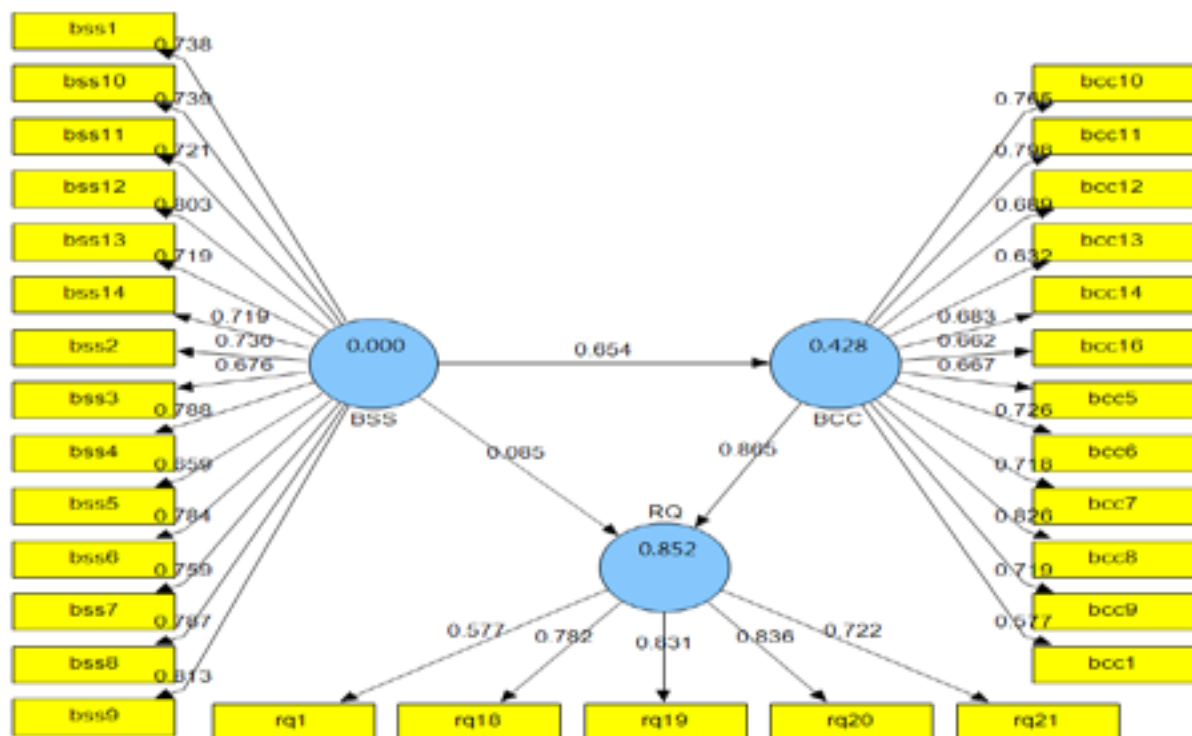


Figure 1. Structural equations' model in a significant state

According to the above figure can be obtained (Figure 2). Considering that the T-statistic in all cases is more than 1.96, so all the hypotheses of the present study were confirmed. The Hamrahe Aval brand financial support of sports activities on social media through brand-consumer adaptation affects the brand-consumer relationship quality. To test this hypothesis, the Sobel test and determining the intensity of the mediating effect should be used, which is discussed below.

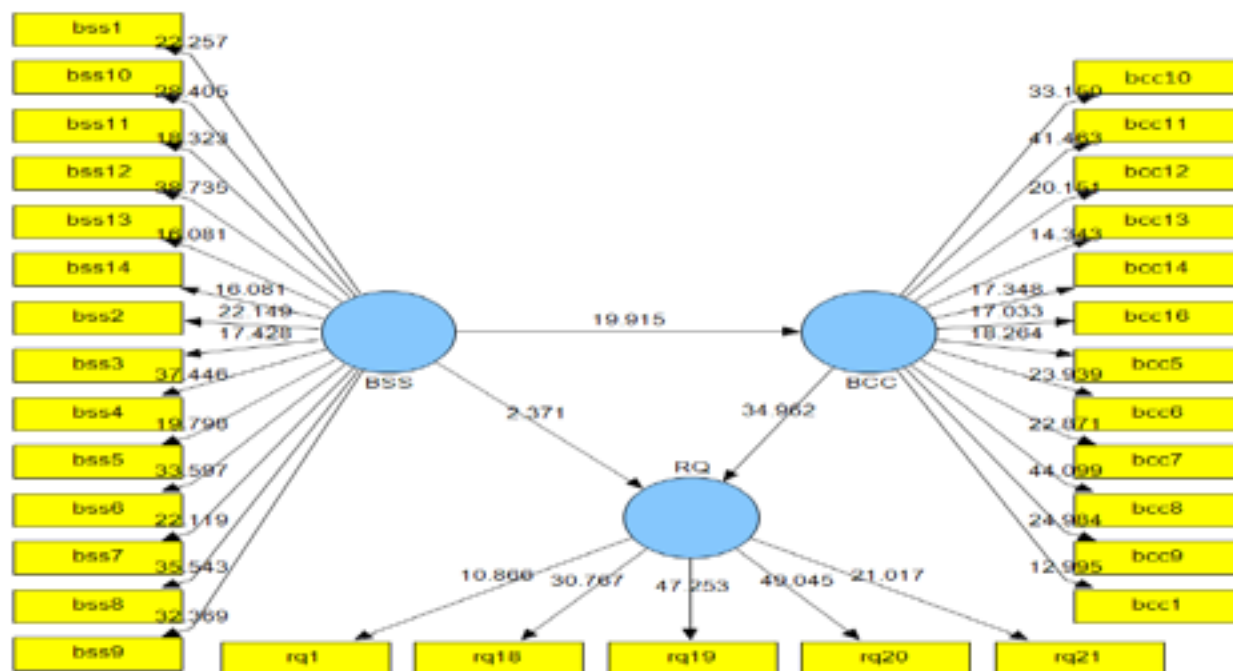


Figure 2. Structural equivalence modeling in standard mode

This test is used to examine the significance of one variable's mediating effect in the relationship between the other two variables.

$$Z\text{-value} = \frac{a \times b}{\sqrt{(b^2 \times s_a^2) + (a^2 \times s_b^2) + (s_a^2 \times s_b^2)}}$$

a - value of the path coefficient of the independent and mediating variables;

b - value of the path coefficient of the mediator and dependent variables;

Sa - standard error for independent and mediator variable path;

Sb - Standard error related to mediator and dependent variable path.

This value was calculated as 13401/17 about the role of partial mediation of brand-consumer compliance in the relationship between brand sponsorship of Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media and the quality of the brand-consumer relationship and at 95% confidence level can be said brand-consumer compatibility is confirmed in the relationship between brand-first support of sports activities on social media and the quality of the brand-consumer relationship.

The following information has been used to calculate this number:

$$S_b = 0.024765 \quad S_a = 0.033248 \quad b = 0.865 \quad a = 0.654$$

Beside the Sobel test, to determine the intensity of indirect effect through the mediating variable, a statistic called VAF is used, which is between 0 and 1, and the closer it is to 1, the stronger the effect of the mediating variable. The VAF formula is as follows:

$$VAF = \frac{a \times b}{(a \times b) + c^2}$$

a - value of the path coefficient of the independent and mediating variables; b - value of the path coefficient of the mediator and dependent variables; c - value of path coefficient of the independent and dependent variable.

This value was calculated to be 0.87 for the role of partial mediation of brand-consumer compliance in the relationship between brand sponsorship of Hamrahe Aval sports activity and the quality of the brand-consumer relationship, which means that approximately half of the total effect. The mediator variable of brand-consumer compliance indirectly explains Hamrahe Aval brand sponsorship of sports activities on social media and the quality of brand-consumer relationship.

DISCUSSION

The results showed that the financial support of Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media affects brand-consumer compliance. Considering the significance coefficient of Z in the relationship between the financial support of Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media with the brand-consumer adaptation, which is equal to 19.915, this hypothesis has been confirmed the effect is similar to 0.654. This finding is consistent with the results of (Do, Woodside, 2015; Segoro, 2013). This finding shows that the reflection of financial support for sports activities on social media affects the consumers of brand products and services, and in a way, a correlation is created between brand and sports activities image and athlete have received financial support; And consumers who feel there is a compliance between the image portrayed of the brand and the image they portray of themselves, a brand-consumer game is formed; Therefore, it can be told that there is a relationship between the financial support of Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media and brand-consumer compliance.

In another part of the study, the results showed that the financial support of Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media affects the brand-consumer relationship's quality. Considering the significance coefficient Z in the relationship between the financial support of Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media on the quality of the brand-consumer relationship, which is equal to 2.371, shows that this hypothesis has been confirmed and the effect is similar to 0.085. This finding is consistent with the results of (Tuškej et al., 2013; Fu et al., 2017). As in the previous hypothesis, it can be understood that with the brand's financial support of sports activities which is attractive for consumers, a good image of the brand is formed in the minds of consumers. When consumers feel their self image equal with their favorite brand image, the quality of brand-consumer relationship becomes stronger.

Also, part of the research results indicated that the Hamrahe Aval brand of brand-consumer adaptation affects the brand-consumer relationship's quality. Considering the significance coefficient of Z in the relationship between brand-consumer compliance with the quality of the brand-consumer relationship, which is equal to 34.962, shows that this hypothesis has been confirmed and the amount of this effect is similar to 0.865, which this finding the research of (Lee, Cho, 2017; Lou, Koh, 2017) is in line. According to this hypothesis, it can be concluded that when people feel that the image, they have in mind is in line with the idea of their favorite brand, they will establish a better relationship with the brand and, therefore, the quality of the brand-consumer relationship will be strengthened.

On the other hand, the results showed that the financial support of the Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media affects the quality of the brand-consumer relationship through brand-consumer adaptation. To test the hypothesis, the Sobel test and determination of the mediating effect's intensity were used. The Hamrahe Aval brand of sports activities on social media and the quality of the brand-consumer relationship was calculated to be 0.87, which is in line with the findings of (Yan et al., 2016). Considering the confirmation of the relationship between Hamrahe Aval brand sponsorship of sports activities on social media with the brand-consumer adaptation and the quality of the brand-consumer relationship, as well as the items related to the Hamrahe Aval brand sponsorship of sports activities on social media, It is suggested that the managers of Hamrahe Aval brand pay attention to other aspects in addition to the current sports support activities; For example, one of the things that can be more effective in the Hamrahe Aval is financial support in improving the province's sports infrastructure, such as the quality and quantity of sports facilities (stadiums, stadiums), which can increase the responsibility level.

Another factor that can effectively create a sense of brand-consumer compatibility is to provide an authentic and comprehensive brand image. Therefore, it is suggested that the managers of Hamrahe Aval brand try to present a clear idea of their brand so that the audience can communicate between the idea they know of themselves and the image of Hamrahe Aval brand formed in their minds, as well as sports managers by creating Personal traits in brand, attract customers and consumers to the brand so that they can make brands more attractive and desirable and improve the customers loyalty.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, as Hamrahe Aval brand sponsorship of sports activities in social media and brand-consumer compliance increase, the brand-consumer relationship quality will improve. By recognizing the importance of brand value and its influence on customer loyalty, sport managers investigate and invest in influencing factors such as social media advertising and creating brand awareness.

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