

Presenting a Model of Social Media Marketing with the Behavior of Sports Store Customers with the Mediating-Role of Communication Literacy

Mahdi Aliyari¹

1.Management Department, Business Management major, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Iran

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: *Social media, Customer Behavior, Sports Marketing, Communication Literacy*

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to present a model of the relationship between social media marketing and the behavior of customers of sports stores with the mediation of communication literacy. This research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-correlational in terms of type, which was conducted in a field method. The statistical population of the study ... The number of them is unlimited. According to Morgan's table, the sample size is 384 people, and to ensure the return of the questionnaire, 400 questionnaires have been distributed among them by simple random sampling. The data obtained through a questionnaire using pls software have been analyzed with the help of structural equations. The results obtained from the path analysis using structural equation modeling showed that social media marketing with the behavior of customers of the city's sports clubs ... It has a significant relationship and communication literacy plays a mediating role in this relationship. Therefore, due to the quantitative increase in sports media, as well as the pervasiveness of the category of sports in society and the attraction of a wide audience through these media, the need to institutionalize sports media literacy among the recipients of sports marketing messages based on scientific and theoretical foundations in the field of media and sports is undeniable.

Introduction

The benefits of social media are numerous, including the fact that social media platforms have provided new opportunities to interact and maintain relationships with friends and loved ones (Should & Ellison, 2007; Chang et al., 2011; Deere et al., 2018; Gannarro & Dutton, 2007). In addition, social media has provided connections with new types of digital friends: This new type of relationship companion can include social media influencers—bloggers, YouTubers, TikTok celebrities—who are close friends or even family members of followers (Berriman & Kauka, 2017; Renikkanen et al., 2020), as well as brands (Farnier, 1998). That can be strong personal relationships with the brand (Tan et al., 2019) or It even evokes feelings of love (Batra et al., 2012) in interested individuals. This effect can be severe in younger people, who are often enchanted by well-known brands (Deere et al., 2016:427).

New developments in the field of information technology have led to the emergence of attractive virtual spaces such as social networks that are expanding day by day and provide an arena for the promotion of products and services of manufacturers. With the advancement of Internet technology, firms use social networking sites to promote and they use it to spread information about their brand. Social media has changed traditional marketing communications. Internet users are gradually forming business communications, which are in the traditional form.were formed by marketers (Eschiwinski & Dabrowski, 2015). In most of the developed countries of the world, social networks have become widely used and almost all aspects of people's lives and the organizers of these networks have been able to make the best use of this tool, and the manufacturers of products and services have been able to take into account the information that they have received from theThese networks gain to foster trust and brand loyalty in the customer (Brody et al., 2013) Social networks provide new ways to communicate to customers. Enterprises and consumers can make a difference by creating a public space on the Internet where users can interact with each other. Consumers are overcoming the geographical constraints. Nowadays, brand communities have expanded heavily on social media. Among social networks, Instagram and Twitter have the most users, although recent polls have predicted that this number will decline in the near future. Twitter is the second largest social network in terms of the number of users, but it is still a network that can connect with the community. to create a brand and have the highest growth rate among social networks (Vazakhah, 2021). In the present era, sports as a revenue-generating industry in the economic sector plays a fundamental role in one of the It is one of the most effective factors affecting national economic growth and one of the most income-generating industries in the 21st century (Gholami, 2014). With the increase in people's interest in sports, sports clubs and organizations have become interested in attracting as many customers as possible to use stadiums. Organizations should try to maintain their customers' market by making timely decisions and with sufficient knowledge of customers and market needs by offering good products at a reasonable price in using desirable distribution methods, using informative and directional advertising, identifying competitors, opportunities and threats of the environment, in addition to increasing their market share and creativity, adapting to the needs and demands of customers (Brown & Nagel, 2002).Traditional marketing is no longer able to meet the needs of the new world, especially in the field of sports. Social media has provided new tools for marketing in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing communications. Social networks have become an important tool for social marketing (Zhang et al., 2017). With the expansion of social media communication, people's social interaction has also been extended to cyberspace, and virtual communication is a major part of the reason why users use this space. Social networks due to their unique capabilities and capabilities, including informing, Awareness, strengthening the expansion of communication between individuals, and mobilizing power in various social, cultural, political, and other fields play a very important and undeniable role. Accordingly, a social network refers to a group of people who communicate with each other in groups and share things such as their information, needs, activities, and thoughts (Kordlou et al., 2020).

Unlike traditional media that sends a one-way message to customers, social media is an ideal tool for continuous, two-way conversations with customers (Abreza, 2013). This characteristic of social media has made them a suitable platform for all kinds of conversations, negotiations, and daily transactions; hence, most businesses are turning to advertising and marketing through social media. Social media marketing forces organizations to use social media applications to complement traditional business practices (Dahnil et al., 2014) and offers them a new way of relational marketing (Eagleman, 2013). The advent of social media marketing has confronted organizations and sports marketers with new technological innovations and challenges. Many sports organizations are striving to take advantage of this unique marketing in the virtual world, seeking to build long-term relationships with stakeholders and strengthen engagement with their fans in this way (Thompson et al., 2014).

Social media marketing is one of the new ways that the growth of electronic communication and information systems and the virtual world has opened up for organizations. Social networks, which are a gathering place for people with common interests and activities, have become powerful channels for corporate marketing activities. Websites, blogs, virtual networks, Internet banners, sharing various articles and news, etc., are some of the different ways of entering and operating on social networks, which leads to increasing customers' awareness of the company's brand and products and increasing the number of target customers. Dealing with thousands or even millions of potential customers on social networks creates suitable opportunities for companies to attract potential markets and many customers with their vigilance and correct behavior, at a low cost, and by communicating with them continuously, they will be loyal to them in the long run (Dashti & Mirzaei, 2018). Eagleman (2013) stated that the relatively low cost and lack of the need for a lot of financial investment is the reason for using social media as a communication and marketing tool in sports. Argan et al. (2018) showed that the use of Facebook by football clubs leads to the encouragement and ease of sending messages by fans on the club's page, increases fan loyalty, and increases the club's profits through the sale of licensed products, game tickets, etc. (Argan et al., 2018).

Cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors have many effects on consumer behavior. The customer is the most important party in the business and companies must know the customer well for their success (Elahi et al., 2011). Increasing competition in the marketing environment causes the organization to understand the customer's behavior and analyze his decision-making process in order to gain competitive advantages. Knowing the customer gives the organization a competitive advantage. In open economic systems, which have free competition, the life of organizations relies on the customer. Companies try to understand the customer, adapt their products to their needs, and provide good satisfaction. What keeps the customer satisfied keeps the company alive and active. Therefore, organizations should focus on the customer to analyze his behavior about what, where and which brand he likes to buy (Cutler et al., 2011). The closer the relationship between the customer and the company, the more mutual trust and customer satisfaction increases, and therefore the issue of customer satisfaction has a special priority. Then, in the virtual business world, with Establishing relationships with the customer should strengthen their trust and loyalty to the company (Omidbakhsh, 2016).

Communication literacy has been defined by UNESCO as one of the essential literacies, the ability to communicate with others and recognize social operations. An overview of the types of literacy prevalent in the world specifies that the key to all desired literacy is to optimize the understanding and application of communication in specific areas (Gale & Adams, 2022:110). Communication literacy is the ability to understand and apply communication concepts to carry out daily activities in human life. In the context of cyberspace, a part of media literacy is mentioned (Ghasemi & Kashgar, 2018). Communication literacy has been proposed as a suitable platform for conducting many business exchanges and customers in today's virtual world have different needs that cannot be addressed through traditional methods, currently electronic management of customer communication requires media literacy and communication that It puts the benefit of a new season in front of the eyes of organizations that consider themselves obligated to provide the best for their customers (Babapour & Shafiei Kakhki, 2018). Karmalek and Riazada (2020) conducted a study titled Social Media Marketing in Sports: Increasing Fan Engagement Through Instagram. They state that the rapid growth of social media has profoundly impacted the way sports are consumed by fans around the world, and the emergence of social media platforms such as Instagram, which has become increasingly a popular tool for sports organizations to use to share visual content, has increased fan engagement among users. The findings provide significant insights into how Instagram is more engaged compared to Facebook and YouTube, with more engagement on Instagram, and more attention paid to clubs' brand and sports purchases. Valle and Fernandez (2018) also conducted a study titled Social Media Marketing and Sports: Fan Engagement with Football Clubs on Facebook. The results show that access to information, buying sports products, and love for the brand are shaped through Facebook. The study contributes to emerging research on the use of social media in the sports marketing literature, thus showing more opportunities for managers to engage their fans online. Felix et al. (2016) also conducted a study titled Elements of Strategic Social Media Marketing: A Comprehensive Framework. The present study employs a qualitative theorizing approach to develop a strategic framework in order to elaborate on the four general dimensions of strategic social media marketing. The scope of social media marketing encompasses a range of advocates and revelations, the social media marketing culture includes the poles of conservatism and modernism, social media marketing structures are located between hierarchies and networks, and social media marketing monitoring is based on the Tyranny encompasses disorder. On the other hand, with the popularity of social commerce and the rapid growth of diverse social commerce markets, marketers need to look for a variety of

strategies to adapt to the tight competitive conditions in these networks and gain market share. Social media marketing is a powerful way for businesses of all sizes to reach prospects and customers. Customers are now engaging with brands through social media. They are engaging, and if you don't connect with your audience directly through social platforms, they will be lost. Social media provides significant opportunities for marketers to reach consumers in social communities and build more personal relationships with them, and the ways in which they distribute, consume, and convey power have shifted to shaping brand images for marketers to communicate with consumers online. are also not out of these problems, and sports equipment stores in this city have also faced a decrease in demand. Also, the use of social networks and low communication literacy of these stores has played an important role in reducing the use of customers' products by these stores. Accordingly, in this study, we seek to answer the question whether social media marketing has a significant relationship with the behavior of sports club customers in the presence of the mediating variable of communication literacy.

2- Research Methodology

The research method of this study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-correlational in terms of type, which has been done in the field. The statistical population of the study ... The number of them is unlimited. According to Morgan's table, the sample size is 384 people, and to ensure the return of the questionnaire, 400 questionnaires have been distributed among them by simple random sampling. Data collection in this research is a combination of library and field methods. In this research, the researcher has used Persian and Latin library sources, articles, required books, and the World Wide Web to collect the literature and records of the subject

Social media marketing actions are measured by Kim and Kuo's (2012) questionnaire. This scale has 11 five-choice questions, and the scoring method of this questionnaire is based on a five-point Likert scale with 5 dimensions (entertainment, interaction, up-to-date, customization, word-of-mouth).

The online customer purchase questionnaire is a researcher-made questionnaire that was developed by Borjian in 2013 and has been developed to measure the purchasing behaviors of online customers. This questionnaire has 13 questions and 2 components

(Purchase behavior, purchase motivation). To measure the variable of communication literacy, questions 1-15 of the standard questionnaire of Siamak and Davarpanah (2009) were used. It is based on the five-point Likert scale and has 5 dimensions of the ability to determine the scope and nature of information, the ability to effectively access information, the ability to critically evaluate information, the ability to use information purposefully, and the ability to understand the legal and economic issues of information use. Face, content, and structural validity were approved by experts.

Cronbach's alpha is a classic measure for measuring reliability and a suitable measure for evaluating internal stability. One of the things that is used to measure the reliability of the structural modeling method is the internal stability of the measurement models. The internal stability indicates the degree of correlation between a structure and its related indicators. Table (1) shows the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the mentioned research variables.

Table 1: Results of Cronbach's Alpha Survey

Cronbach's alpha coefficient	Number of Questions	Variable
801/0	11	Social Media Marketing
909/0	15	Communication Literacy
967/0	13	Customer Behavior

To analyze the research data, first, the data of the questionnaire were entered into SPSS software. Then, descriptive analyses were performed to describe the sample and the research variables, and the necessary tables and graphs were drawn and descriptive indices of the central tendency as well as dispersion indices were calculated. A number of variables were used to analyze the research hypotheses. And for the effect of the mediating variable, the structural equation method with PLS software has been used.

3- Research findings

The respondents to the questionnaire were 50% female and 50% male. Among the respondents in terms of age, 40% were between 20 and 35 years, 20% were between 36 and 50 years old, and 40% were over 50 years old.

According to Table (2), the descriptive statistics of all the research variables in terms of statistical indicators are as follows.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

strain	stoicism	Standard Deviation	Average	Sub-criteria	Research Variables
319/0-	041/0-	52604/0	9232/3	Entertainment	Social Media Marketing
038/1	800/0-	72803/0	009/4	Interaction	
112/0-	084/0	53161/0	8703/3	Up-to-date	
164/1	109/0-	53127/0	8203/3	Customization	
901/0	720/0-	68901/0	1133/4	Word-of-mouth advertising	
329/1	621/0-	44888/0	9356/3	Social Media Marketing	
732/0	549/0-	47462/0	9193/3	Ability to determine the extent and nature of information	Communication Literacy
455/0	203/0-	45614/0	8707/3	Ability to access information effectively	
863/0	297/0-	56373/0	9679/3	Ability to critically evaluate information	
123/0	081/0-	48692/0	8186/3	Ability to use information purposefully	
010/0-	126/0-	50813/0	8325/3	Ability to understand the legal and economic issues of information use	
517/1	302/0-	40394/0	8818/3	Communication Literacy	
596/0	261/0-	52510/0	9840/3	Buying Behavior	Customer Behavior
141/1	347/0-	43353/0	9359/3	Purchase Motivation	
882/1	358/0-	43636/0	9600/3	Customer Behavior	

As shown in the table above, the average scores are shown in the second column, and since the average scores obtained are variables (range of scores 1-5), it shows that the amount of all variables is at the optimal level. In the next row, the dispersion of the obtained scores around the mean is shown.

The skewness in the statistics indicates the extent of the asymmetry of the probable distribution. The elongation of the data distribution simply refers to the height of the data distribution. If the data are symmetrical to the mean, the skewness and elongation will be zero. In general, if the skewness and elongation are in the range (-2, -2), the data have a normal distribution, according to the results of the relevant rows, the distribution of the variables is normal.

The following table shows the results of the normality test of the research variables.

Table 3: Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Significance level	Z Statistic	Research Variables
115/0	195/1	Social Media Marketing
211/0	066/1	Communication Literacy
097/0	201/1	Customer Behavior

Considering that the significance level of the test for the variables is more than the error rate of 0.05. The null assumption of the test is accepted for all variables. As a result, the distribution of research variables is normal. Due to the normality of research variables in the research process, parametric statistics tests are

used.

In order to investigate the significant correlation between the research variables, Pearson correlation analysis has been used.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis of Research Variables

Significance level	Pearson correlation coefficient	Variables
000/0	698/0	Social Media Marketing – Communication Literacy
000/0	801/0	Social Media Marketing – Customer Behavior
000/0	923/0	Communication Literacy – Customer Behavior

According to the results of the table, there is a significant correlation between the research variables. Considering the significance level of the test (0.001), which is smaller than α (0.05), and the direction of the relationship between the variables is positive.

In order to answer the main hypothesis of the research, linear regression test has been used.

Table 5: Correlation coefficient and multivariate determination coefficient

Significance level	Statistic F	Watson Camera	Determination Coefficient	Multiple correlation coefficient	Model
000/0	533/255	-	722/0	878/0	First
000/0	508/818	435/2	956/0	978/0	Second

According to the results of the study, the problem of multiple correlation coefficient and the coefficient of determination of this study according to Table (5) is as follows: The coefficient of determination of the first model before considering the role of the mediating variable of communication literacy (0.722) indicates the amount of changes in customer behavior by social media marketing. In the second model, after considering the mediating role of communication literacy, the coefficient of determination of 0.956 indicates the amount of changes in customers' behavior by media marketing Social media is associated with the mediating variable of literacy. Also, the Camera-Watson statistic shows the phenomenon of self-correlation between variables. Considering that the obtained statistic of the regression line equation (2.435) is between 1.5 and 2.5, it indicates the absence of self-correlation in the regression line equation. Also, the analysis of variance in the F test, due to the fact that it is lower than the error rate of 0.05, indicates the appropriate validity of the statistical model.

Table 6: Results of Regression Analysis

Significance level	T Statistic	Standard beta coefficient	Non-standard coefficient	Predictive Variable	Model
000/0	199/12		286/1	Fixed number	First
000/0	796/10	367/0	305/0	Entertainment	
000/0	233/16	552/0	331/0	Interaction	
001/0	495/3-	111/0-	091/0-	Up-to-date	
000/0	630/3	119/0	098/0	Customization	
150/0	442/1	049/0	031/0	Word-of-mouth advertising	
362/0	912/0		052/0	Fixed number	Second
293/0	053/1	021/0	018/0	Entertainment	
000/0	110/8	191/0	114/0	Interaction	
008/0	684/2	041/0	034/0	Up-to-date	
037/0	206/2	033/0	023/0	Customization	
000/0	463/8	176/0	112/0	Word-of-mouth advertising	
000/0	683/5	129/0	118/0	Ability to determine the extent and nature of information	
002/0	055/3	059/0	057/0	Ability to access information effectively	
000/0	477/12	338/0	261/0	Ability to critically evaluate information	
000/0	403/15	472/0	423/0	Ability to use information	

				purposefully	
000/0	140/6	168/0	144/0	Ability to understand the legal and economic issues of information use	

According to the results of the regression table in the second model, after considering the mediating variable of communication literacy, the dimensions of social media marketing interaction with a value of 0.191, updating with a weight of 0.041, being customized with a weight of 0.033, and word-of-mouth advertising with a weight of 0.176 (positively and directly) have an effect on predicting customer behavior, because their SIG value is less than 0.05. Also, due to the low level of SIG from the error rate, it can be concluded that all dimensions of communication literacy, the ability to determine the extent and nature of information (0.129), the ability to access information effectively (0.059), the ability to critically evaluate information (0.338), the ability to use information purposefully (0.472), and the ability to understand the legal and economic issues of information use (0.168) have an impact on customers' behavior.

In order to investigate the situation and determine the amount of research variables, a one-sample t-test was used.

Table 7: Determining the Extent of Social Media Marketing

Difference in Averages	Significance level	T Statistic	Component
92318/0	001/0	390/34	Entertainment
00087/1	001/0	940/26	Interaction
80729/0	001/0	758/29	Up-to-date
82031/0	001/0	257/30	Customization
11328/1	001/0	663/31	Word-of-mouth advertising
93559/0	001/0	843/40	Social Media Marketing

As shown in the table above, due to the fact that the value of the t-statistic is greater than the critical value of 1.96 and the level of significance related to the t-test is less than the error rate of 0.05, and due to the positivity of the difference in the means, it is concluded that the amount of social media marketing and its dimensions are in a desirable state and above the average.

Table 8: Determining the Level of Communication Literacy

Difference in Averages	Significance level	T Statistic	Component
91927/0	001/0	955/37	Ability to determine the extent and nature of information
87066/0	001/0	404/37	Ability to access information effectively
96788/0	001/0	645/33	Ability to critically evaluate information
81858/0	001/0	943/32	Ability to use information purposefully
83247/0	001/0	104/32	Ability to understand the legal and economic issues of information use
88177/0	001/0	776/42	Communication Literacy

As shown in the table above, due to the fact that the value of the t-statistic is greater than the critical value of 1.96 and the level of significance related to the t-test is less than the error rate of 0.05, and due to the positivity of the difference in the means, it is concluded that the level of communication literacy and its dimensions are in a desirable situation and are higher than the average.

Table 9: Determining the Extent of Customer Behavior

Difference in Averages	Significance level	T Statistic	Component
98405/0	001/0	723/36	Buying Behavior
93594/0	001/0	305/42	Purchase Motivation

95999/0	001/0	111/43	Customer Behavior
---------	-------	--------	-------------------

As shown in the table above, due to the fact that the value of the t-statistic is greater than the critical value of 1.96 and the level of significance related to the t-test is less than the error rate of 0.05, and due to the positive difference in the averages, it is concluded that the amount of online customers' shopping behavior and its dimensions are in a desirable situation and above the average.

The evaluation of the fit of the conceptual model is done in three parts: the fit of the measurement models, the fit of the structural model, and the fit of the general model. The measurement model is related to a part of the general model that includes a variable along with its related questions. According to the model analysis algorithm in the PLS method, three criteria of reliability, convergent validity, and divergent validity are used to investigate the fit of the measurement models. Table (10) The results of reliability, convergent validity and divergent validity of the measurement tool are presented in full.

Table 10: The results of Cronbach's alpha three criteria, composite reliability and convergent validity of the measurement tool

Results	Combined mean variance (AVE>0.5)	Composite reliability coefficient (Alpha>0.7)	Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Alpha>0.7)	Variable
Approved	571/0	840/0	793/0	Social Media Marketing
Approved	657/0	793/0	716/0	Up-to-date
Approved	703/0	823/0	730/0	Word-of-mouth advertising
Approved	701/0	875/0	783/0	Interaction
Approved	521/0	760/0	719/0	Ability to understand the legal and economic issues of information use
Approved	621/0	764/0	738/0	Purchase Motivation
Approved	521/0	864/0	812/0	Buying Behavior
Approved	739/0	879/0	847/0	Customer Behavior
Approved	631/0	823/0	921/0	Customization
Approved	731/0	863/0	823/0	Entertainment
Approved	640/0	881/0	856/0	Information Literacy
Approved	521/0	815/0	788/0	Ability to access information effectively
Approved	565/0	795/0	775/0	Ability to critically evaluate information
Approved	559/0	791/0	735/0	Ability to use information purposefully
Approved	625/0	908/0	888/0	Ability to determine the extent and nature of information

Considering that the appropriate value is 0.7 for Cronbach's alpha, 0.7 for composite reliability, and 0.5 for AVE, and according to the results of the outputs of SMART-PLS software in Table (10), all these criteria have adopted an appropriate value for the research variables and it is possible to confirm the appropriateness of the reliability and validity of the research convergence. As a result, the research tool uses the validity (content, convergence) and reliability (factor load, compound reliability coefficient, coefficient Cronbach's Alpha) has a decent advantage.

Also, in the following table (11), the indicators of the model's suitability are shown.

$$GOF = \sqrt{\text{Communalities}} \times R^2 = \sqrt{0.230 \times 0.649} = 0.386 \quad (1)$$

Considering that 0.25 and 0.36 are introduced as moderate and strong values for GOF , obtaining a value of 0.386 for GOF for the conceptual model of the research confirms the appropriate fit of its overall model.

Table 11: Model Fit Index

Results	Amount	Index
Ok	089/0	SRMR Index
Ok	370/1199	Cay Square
Ok	908/0	NFI

The SRMR value should be less than 0.08 and the NFI value should be above 0.9. Therefore, the final model has the necessary fit.

In the test of the desired relationships using structural equation modeling, the output of the software indicates the suitability of the fitted structural model for testing the model relationships. The obtained coefficients and parameters show the relationships of the model. The obtained coefficients are significant when their significant test value is greater than 1.96.

As can be seen, the significance coefficient of social media marketing with the behavior of customers of sports stores is equal to 6.441. Therefore, the structural model shows that social media marketing has a significant relationship with the behavior of customers of sports stores. Also, in Figure 2, the numbers on the paths show that social media marketing has a positive and direct effect on customer behavior by 0.529.

As can be seen, the significance coefficient of social media marketing with the communication literacy of sports stores is equal to 5.822. Therefore, the structural model shows that social media marketing has a significant relationship with the communication literacy of sports stores. Also, in Figure 2, the numbers on the paths show that social media marketing has a positive and direct effect on communication literacy by 0.703.

Also, the significant coefficient of communication literacy with the behavior of customers of sports stores is equal to 5.367. Therefore, the structural model shows that communication literacy has a significant relationship with the behavior of customers of sports stores. Also, in Figure 2, the numbers on the paths show that communication literacy with a level of 0.498 has a positive and direct effect on the behavior of customers of sports stores.

The mediating variable of communication literacy has a significant relationship between social media marketing and the behavior of customers of sports stores. In order to determine the mediating role of variables, the online Sobel test was used.

$$Z - \text{Value} = \frac{a * b}{\sqrt{(b^2 * s_a^2) + (a^2 * s_b^2) + (s_a^2 * s_b^2)}} \quad (2)$$

As shown, the coefficient of the path of social media marketing with communication literacy is 0.703, and the coefficient of communication literacy path with customer behavior is 0.498. The standard error rate (dividing the factor load by the t-statistic) of social media evaluation with communication literacy was 0.120, and the standard error of the relationship between communication literacy and customer behavior was 0.092. The score obtained from the Sobel test is 3.9757. If the result of the Sobel test exceeds 1.96, it can be confirmed that the mediating effect of the communicative literacy variable is significant at the 95% confidence level. Therefore, it is concluded that communication literacy plays a mediating role in the relationship between social media marketing and the behavior of customers of sports stores.

4- Discussion and conclusion

There are different types of social media, which include blogs, social networks that are Facebook abroad and Facebook inside the country, microblogs (Twitter abroad and Twitter inside Iran), photo and video sharing sites (YouTube abroad and Aparat inside the country), wikis and podcasts. Businesses and government agencies are connecting and using them as communication tools. Unlike individual users of social networks, these organizations actively use social media for advertising and marketing, which enables integrated marketing activities without time, spatial, and media constraints at a much lower and more cost-effective cost than before. A significant percentage of people transmit information to others through social media. Social media has also become one of the channels through which consumers receive information about the

goods or services they need in order to make a final purchase through these social media platforms. Therefore, companies need to know their purchase intent and motivations, as well as the impact of social media on these factors. Have. Nowadays, customers use different types of technology, especially the Internet, as an effective tool to meet their needs and make online purchases. Nowadays, customers use different types of technology, especially the Internet, as an effective tool to meet their needs and make online purchases. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the impact of the behaviors of users of virtual social networks so that the use of social media can be determined, studied and analyzed, and the industry suppliers can benefit from it for planning and marketing. The purpose of this study is to investigate The relationship between social media marketing and the behavior of customers of sports stores and the mediating variable of communication literacy. In order to investigate the situation and determine the amount of research variables, a one-sample t-test has been used. Considering that the value of the t-statistic is greater than the critical value of 1.96 and the level of significance related to the t-test is less than the error rate of 0.05, and according to the positive difference of the means, it is concluded that the amount of social media marketing, communication literacy and customers' buying behavior and its dimensions in the city ... They are in a favorable situation and above average. In other words, it concludes that sports companies and organizations use social media marketing to a greater extent than the average population, and sports customers in this city have higher-than-average levels of communication literacy and online shopping behavior.

In the structural equation model test, the significance coefficient of social media marketing with the behavior of customers of sports stores is equal to 6.441. Therefore, the structural model shows that social media marketing has a positive and direct effect on customer behavior by 0.529. Social media has a greater impact on the way consumers behave and their satisfaction through active and aggressive participation. This type of marketing will affect the quality of the organization's brand in the thinking of customers, and a company that has the ability to create positive thinking on customers through social media will be able to positively affect the quality of its brand, and this is a very important issue in today's markets where social media has a huge impact. It has a special advantage over the behavior of the customers and benefits the organization. Also, the results obtained from this hypothesis are in line with Yun (2016) and Ghafourian Shagaredi et al. (2017). These results show that the use of social media tools has accelerated and facilitated various stages of marketing research in the field of consumer buying behavior, so that social networks, as one of the latest technological achievements and a new approach in marketing, have been able to have reciprocal and rapid effects on the users of these networks, and as a result, affect the attraction and purchase intention of these users. Also, the results obtained from this hypothesis are in line with the research of Cha et al. (2015).

The reason for this alignment is that in the current situation, with the spread of social media and the extent of its influence on the youth, especially the sports customers of the city... , the use of social media has increased compared to traditional media, and sellers of goods and services are making more use of advertising and marketing by social media through mobile and website due to this trend. Since the cost of this type of marketing is lower than other methods, it is widely used by companies, stores, and organizations in this city, which leads to the improvement of customers' shopping behavior due to its greater availability and greater impact on the minds of the audience.

- Also, in the structural equation model test, the significance coefficient of social media marketing with the communication literacy of sports stores is equal to 5.822. Therefore, the structural model shows that social media marketing has a positive and direct effect on communication literacy by 0.703. Social media users, like users of any other media, suffer damages by being equipped with media literacy. There will be less on the part of these media and the society will also be more immune to the social, cultural, political, and economic problems of cyberspace. Presence on social media by observing the correct communication principles and using media literacy can be an important factor in improving economic activities in the sports arena. The results of Dima's (2018) research have shown the success of social media marketing in the field of sports, the results of which have been to create awareness, increase sales, and increase customer loyalty to sports stores. The findings of the study of Zakaei et al. (2021), Nematifar et al. (2018) show that social media marketing has a significant relationship with media literacy in terms of its dimensions, awareness of the hidden goals of the media, the level of power to perceive the content of the media message, and the level of the skill of conscious message selection. Nowadays, having communication literacy in cyberspace, or media literacy, which is the ability to understand and apply the concepts of communicating favorably with mass media, has been proposed as a suitable platform for conducting many business exchanges, and customers in today's virtual world have different needs that cannot be addressed through traditional methods. It is a relationship that puts this new season advantage in front of the eyes of organizations that consider themselves obligated to provide the best for their customers.

The reason for the alignment of the results is that the use of the Internet, virtual social networks, and satellites has become more rational and purposeful in recent years, and sports companies and organizations have been able to use social media in the city. and customers have been able to get out of the passive state and useless use of social networks and enter into a mutual and active relationship that ultimately benefits them. Companies and Organizations Operating in the City... They have been able to present a very good model and a positive image of themselves to the sports audience through sports media. The media can follow different approaches such as paying attention to championship and public sports, informing and relieving tensions, appropriate sports culture, developing ethics, and ultimately the growth and development of sports, which has led to an increase in media literacy in the society under study.

In the structural equation modeling test, the significant coefficient of communication literacy with the behavior of customers of sports stores is equal to 5.367. Therefore, the structural model shows that communication literacy has a positive and direct effect on the behavior of customers of sports stores by 0.498. The results of this study are in line with the research of Mohammadi and Fazelian Dehkordi (2016). How to communicate in cyberspace requires special knowledge for both the customer and the seller. The issue of communication literacy in cyberspace and social networks is an effective factor in the issue of trust in e-commerce. The growth of new communication technologies has changed the meaning of literacy in today's world, and in the new century, it is no longer only a person who knows how to read and write with literacy, but also the ability to interpret and write. The interpretation of media messages is considered as much as literacy as reading and writing. In other words, media literacy leads to gaining awareness and recognition from media creators, their goals of producing programs, knowledge, a critical look at the media messages section, analysis and processing of messages, and the acquisition of cognitive skills. Despite media literacy, the audience suffers from serious harms such as Consumerism and confinement to the media and social networks are prevented as a passive choice, and this requires media literacy education and media audience awareness as much as possible. The reason for this alignment among the youth and athletes of the city ... It is that the diversity and multiplicity of information received from different sports media, due to the breadth of the category of sports and various sports pages and websites, requires information processing and separation of concepts, which in short, having the distinct power of sports news, decoding and following up on the reasons for success and failure, as well as identifying the hidden layers of the content of sports messages. This skill requires sports media literacy. Since the youth and athletes in the city ... They have above-average media literacy, and have been able to reinforce their motivation and shopping behavior based on their athletic needs.

In the main hypothesis of the research, it was claimed that the mediating variable of communication literacy has a significant relationship between social media marketing and the behavior of customers of sports stores. In order to determine the mediating role of variables, the online Sobel test was used. The score obtained from the Sobel test was 3.9757. If the result of the Sobel test exceeds 1.96 at the 95% confidence level, it confirmed the significance of the mediating effect of the communication literacy variable. Therefore, it is concluded that communication literacy plays a mediating role in the relationship between social media marketing and the behavior of customers of sports stores. In other words, today's audience, who do not show much interest in traditional education, will be more alert and capable when receiving messages by taking advantage of the media industry. Sports communication literacy can be a valuable tool for developing critical thinking skills in the field of sports, and this can be used in the development of product marketing through social media to influence the purchasing behavior of customers in the city. to play a significant role. Due to the quantitative increase in sports media, as well as the pervasiveness of the category of sports in the society and the attraction of a wide audience through these media, the need to institutionalize sports media literacy among the recipients of sports marketing messages based on scientific and theoretical foundations in the field of media and sports is undeniable.

Consumer behavior plays a vital role in boosting product marketing activity. It is by knowing how the audience behaves that we can choose the appropriate media and message. Also, the study of consumer behavior can help us to understand the factors related to the social sciences that affect human behavior. Accordingly, the analysis of consumer behavior in cases such as marketing mixed design, market segmentation, and product positioning and differentiation is also necessary and vital. All aspects of behavior are affected by the type of participation in the virtual space, and this issue can be used to attract the audience with scientific and expert methods and by using experts and experts in behavioral, social and psychological affairs and provide the reasons for the promotion of the organization. In order to improve sports marketing, it is necessary to use different potentials. Improving the level of access to cyberspace has led to the use of social networks as an executive strategy to improve the sports industry. The development of the Internet and

the formation of online social media have created a suitable infrastructure for mass relations. These media were initially used for the purpose of communicating between people. Today, with the expansion of the popularity and use of social media, many companies are using this communication infrastructure to achieve goals such as marketing, advertising, culture-building, etc. Social media has had a huge impact not only on individuals, but also on various brands in industries, as they develop strategies to engage their audiences and gain their loyalty.

The quality of customer communication and loyalty to organizations, including organizations and sports stores, occurs when customers strongly feel that the organization in question can best meet their needs, so that the organization's competitors get out of the total customer considerations and buy exclusively from the organization and communicate with a specific organization. Researchers emphasize that the presence of social media by observing the correct principles of communication and using media literacy can be an important factor in improving economic activities in the field of sports. Hajeli (2014) believes that social media affects the creation of awareness and information literacy in them and the intention of customers to buy beyond facilitating interactions between consumers. Information literacy through social media plays a major role in The increase in market share is beneficial for brands and sports stores, as social media is an effective means of replicating shopper behavior. Communication literacy is an essential skill that helps people to process media messages by maintaining independence, avoiding passivity, avoiding critical thinking, and increasing their skills and abilities. They should raise their level of information and awareness so that they are not easily influenced by certain values and views of media information, and they should not use the media out of habit and only for entertainment and passing time, but with the necessary insight and knowledge to produce and Interpret the messages.

In order to improve the quality of media literacy among the city's customers... Sports store owners can plan and implement their social media marketing programs in line with the needs and tastes of their customers by promoting the information literacy of users on the platforms in which they operate. One of the strategies to create sports media literacy in the city ... Understanding the needs of the audience and the use of new techniques of content production , cartoons, 100-second films, infographics, motion graphics and new media in the field of sports.

Sports Shops in the City... They should use social networks to introduce their various products and introduce them to customers, which is one of the most important strategies to be more known for that store and its accessories due to the advancement of technology in the present era. Also, the role of interaction is one of the marketing components of social networks, the customer follows his sports needs in that store after buying from that store by following the social networks of that store And as soon as he finds the product he wants in the store, he plans to buy and visit that store again. Also, according to the results, it is suggested that holding meetings, meetings, and conferences during which by inviting successful people in the field of marketing, the marketing managers of companies can get acquainted with objective examples and patterns in this field and better and more know the ups and downs, ways and complexities of this field . Holding marketing workshops by experts and expert professors in universities During which the professors are practically acquainted with the dimensions, aspects, ways and methods of improving sports marketing, and acquire the necessary skills, which is another way to promote social media marketing.

Sporting Goods and Markets in the City... Classify and offer products and services based on the type of target population, age group, their characteristics in terms of their interests, tastes, and preferences, and provide advertisements that are appropriate for each group. Advertisements that correspond to the characteristics of that target community and are fruitful in attracting them. Shopping malls and sports organizations in the city... In the case of media users, they should note that a very important part of social media is users. Considering that the use of social media among people is highly and progressive, users should also increase their level of familiarity with social media so that they do not fall behind the advantage of using social media. Users connect with previous customers by getting acquainted with social media and learn about the disadvantages and advantages of different brands in cyberspace. This will help them make a better decision when choosing the desired brand based on the comparisons made on social media. Another recommendation is that users should have an active presence on social media, which is a sales factor, and express their opinions without bias towards a specific brand, so that the advantage of using social media and sports marketing includes all customers and a better and more cost-effective purchase.

Resources

- Abreza, G., O'Reilly, N., & Reid, I. (2013). Relationship marketing and social media in sport. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 6, 120–42.
- Alam, Z., Seyed Ameri, M. H., Khabiri, M., & Amiri, M. (2018). Designing Social Media Marketing Model of Iran's Pro League Football Clubs. *Sport Management Studies*, 10(50), 125-144. (in persian)
- Argan M., Argan M.T., Köse, H., & Gökulp, B. (2018). Using facebook as a sport marketing tool: A content analysis on Turkish soccer clubs. *bs. Journal of Internet Applications and Management*, 4 (1), 25-35.
- Babapour, A. and Shafiei, M. (2017). Investigating the influence of effective factors on the choice of online shopping, *National Conference of New Approaches in Management, Economics and Accounting*. Tehran, Institute of Higher Education. (in persian)
- Brodie, R.J., Ilic, A., Juric, B., & Hollebeek, L. (2013). Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(8), 105–114.
- Brown, M., Nagel, M. (2002). "The size of the sport industry in the united states". *Congress of Future of Sport Management Proceeding*, Firenze, Italy, pp: 43-66.
- Cha, Y. J., Lee, J. H., Choi, J. E., & Kim, H. W. (2015). A Topic Modeling Approach to Marketing Strategies for Smartphone Companies. *Knowledge Management Research*, 16(4), 69-87.
- Cutler, F., Armstrong, G. (2016). *Marketing principles*. Translated by Ali Parsaian. Tehran Publication of Jahaneno-Adbestan. (in persian)
- Dashti, J. & Mirzaei, A (2018). Investigating the effects of social media marketing on the behavior of online customers of Bank Saderat in Bushehr. *Marketing Management*, 13(38), 65-85. (in persian)
- Eagleman, A. N. (2013). Acceptance, motivations, and usage of social media as a marketing communications tool amongst employees of sport national governing bodies. *Sport Management Review*, 16, 488–97.
- Elahi, M. Hamdan, A.R. Hassanzadeh, (2009). A Survey on the Relationship Between E-Commerce and Customer Behavior, *Journal of Daneshvar Behavior*, 16(35), 27. (in persian)
- Felix, R.; Rauschnable, P.A. and Hinsch, C. (2016), Elements of strategic social media: A holistic framework. *Journal of Business Research*, 70, 118-126.
- Ghafourian Shagerdi, A., Daneshmand, B., & Behboodi, O. (2017). The Impact of Social Networks Marketing toward Purchase Intention and Brand Loyalty. *New Marketing Research Journal*, 7(3), 175-190. (in persian)
- Ghasemi, H. Rasekh, N. (2020). Identifying Dimensions of Communication Literacy: Thematic Analysis Approach, *Journal of Health Literacy*, 4(4), 18-29. (in persian)
- Ghasemi, H; Kashkar, S. (2017). *Advertising and sports*. Tehran: Andisheh Ara Publications. (in persian)
- Gholami, M. (2013). Investigating the effect of service quality, relationship satisfaction, customer trust and loyalty (case study: National Bank customers in Babol city). Master's thesis, Islamic Azad University, Tehran Branch, pp. 64-70. (in persian)
- Hajli, M. N. (2014). A study of the impact of social media on consumers. *International journal of market research*, 56(3), 387-404.
- Hosseini, S.A., Amirnejad, S. Sarkeshik, M. (2016). An Investigation of the Factors Influencing Purchasing Behavior of Customers of Sport Facilities in Region 2 of Tehran; 4 (14) :23-35. (in persian)
- Kharmalki, G.W., & Raizada, S. (2020). Social Media Marketing in Sports: The Rise of Fan Engagement through Instagram. *Annals of Tropical Medicine and Public Health*, 23.
- Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business Research*, 65 (10), 1480-1486.
- kordlu, H., ali mohammadi, H., Moharram Zadeh, M., & Azizian Kohan, N. (2021). The relationship between social media marketing and customer satisfaction of sports recreation centers. *Sports Marketing Studies*, 1(4), 133-116. (in persian)
- López, M., Sicilia, M., Alejandro, A., Carabaza, M. (2017). Creating identification with brand communities on Twitter: The balance between need for affiliation and need for uniqueness. *Internet Research*, 27 (1), 21–51.

- Mohammadi, A. Fazelian Dehkordi, M. (2016). Studying the Effects of Media Literacy on Mental Consumption of Cultural Goods in Women of 15-39 Years of Age (Case Study of Shahre-Kord City) Asghar Mohammadi, Mehri Fazelian Dehkordi. *Rasaneh*, 27(1), 107-130. . (in persian)
- Nemati Far, N. A., Khojasteh, H., & Kazemi, H. (2019). Study of Media Literacy in Social Network Users (Case Study of Telegram Social Network). *New Media Studies*, 4(16), 143-175. (in persian)
- Omidbakhsh, E (2015). Investigating people's behavior in online shopping. The first period of the national creative economy conference. Islamic Azad University, Tehran West Branch. (in persian)
- Rahnama, and (2014). Marketing and business in social networks, the second national marketing research conference, Tehran. (in persian) (in persian)
- Razzaghi, H (2019). Investigating the effect of media literacy on trust in online shopping. *New Media Studies Quarterly*. 6 (2). 113-145. (in persian)
- Sadrnia, L., Bagherian Farahabadi, M., & Naghshbandi, S. (2019). The Role of Social Media Marketing in Causal Relationship of Brand Love and Viral Marketing among Customers of Selected Sportswear Brands. *Applied Research in Sport Management*, 8(1), 85-94. (in persian)
- Schivinski, B. & Dabrowski, D. (2015). The impact of brand communication on brand equity through Facebook. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 9 (1), 31-53.
- Seifollahi, N., & Eskandari, N. (2021). Social media marketing and consumer buying intentions; mediation of brand Image and awareness. *Consumer Behavior Studies Journal*, 8(3), 199-220. (in persian)
- Thompson, A. J., Martin, A. J., Gee, S., & Eagleman, A. N. (2014). Examining the development of a social media strategy for a national sport organization: A case study of tennis New Zealand. *Journal of Applied Sport Management*, 6, 2, 42-63.
- Vale, L., & Fernandes, T. (2018). Social media and sports: driving fan engagement with football clubs on Facebook. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 26, 37 - 55.
- Yon, R. (2016). The Use of Propaganda and Social Media. In *The New Islamic State* (pp. 55-72). Routledge.
- Zhang, M., Gue, L., Hu, M., Lin, W. (2017). Influence of customer engagement with company social networks on stickiness: mediating effect of customer value creation. *International journal of information management*; 37 (3): 229-240.
- Zokaei, M. S., & veisi, S. (2021). Facing and meaning making of Iranian users of virtual networks. *Media Studies*, 16(1), 111-126. (in persian)