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Competitive marketing vigilance and its relationship to social persuasion among a sample of sports equipment sales representatives in Iraq

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Abstract

The rapid transformations that are taking place today and due to multiple factors, including modern technological development and intense competition between sports institutions at the local and global levels with the aim of controlling the sports market and achieving superiority, have put marketing representatives in difficult situations, and increasing pressure due to the demand of administrative officials in the field of sales to increase their sales and profits on the one hand, and on the other hand, the demand of sports consumers to satisfy their multiple and different needs and desires, in addition to the presence of competitors for the sports institution produced locally and globally. With high quality standards, the sports marketing job will face great and difficult challenges. The research aimed to identify the relationship between competitive marketing and social persuasion among a sample of sales representatives of sports teams in Iraq, whose number of representatives was (60) delegates randomly selected from the total community. The descriptive approach was used in the relational method of the relationship. Competitive marketing and social persuasion measures were distributed to the sample with the need to confirm the answer as an alternative, and once the answer was completed, the questionnaires were collected, audited and processed statistically using appropriate statistical means. The researcher found that: sales representatives are characterized by competitive marketing and have the ability to convince the social consumer of sports, the possession of representatives to a degree of competitive vigilance in marketing has a positive ethical relationship with their ability to convince the sports consumer socially. Therefore, the researcher recommends when choosing sales representatives the need to distinguish competitive marketing due to their role in convincing the consumer to buy.

Keywords: competitive marketing vigilance, social persuasion, sports equipment sales representatives.

Sport is a social and civilized phenomenon that has been and still reflects development, sophistication and values in different societies, and it is one of the most prominent pillars of integrated development in them, because it deals with its most important element, which is the human being intellectually and physically (Hummadi et al., 2024). If amateur sports practitioners can afford to play sports individually, organizing sports activities locally and internationally requires a lot of money, so the idea of marketing arose in the sports field. The requirements for sports stadiums, sports products, media and sports equipment have become a subject and target for the marketing of sports equipment and products, as well as being an area of material benefit and advertising for television networks, stadiums and sports is no longer associated with a specific competitive activity, but it has become a great business that has led private companies and institutions to invest in them (Othman Idham et al., 2023). Hence, competitive vigilance is concerned with collecting accurate and complete information about competing institutions, understanding their current situation, understanding their behavior and capabilities, predicting their future performance, comparing their performance with the performance of their competitors, determining their position for them, and trying to develop or maintain it (Othman Idham et al., 2023). Marketing is "a set of activities carried out by individuals or organizations for the purpose of facilitating and accelerating transactions and exchanges within the framework of the environment and market conditions, where marketing focuses on studying the needs and desires of customers and anticipating what the consumer desires for goods and services and researching how to achieve them to satisfy the needs of consumers (Amira Mahat, 2014). As for competitive marketing vigilance, it is concerned with monitoring and analyzing the marketing environment of the institution, that is, everything related to relationships, activities and marketing methods, to obtain potential indicators related to opportunities and threats that affect the survival of the institution (Intisar Aziz Hussein, 2015). Therefore, workers in the field of sports marketing or the so-called delegates must be characterized by a degree of vigilance in the market and consumer requirements and how to compete efficiently and deservedly with other companies, through their ability to convince the social consumer of sports in promoting their products and influencing

him to buy them and demand them permanently and continuously. That people's minds and perceptions differ from each other according to the principle of individual differences, disparity and difference in mental and intellectual abilities and degrees of awareness and levels, as well as the difference in degrees of understanding, clairvoyance and speed of response, some of them are not convinced of the evidence unless it seems to them the wisdom of that legislation, and some of them are sufficient evidence and present to him as presented to him in the form of dialogue and persuasion and then take it and act out (Moncef Ben Khadija, 2006). The management of the sports institution always seeks to know what the sports consumer wants and desires and what determines the factors that affect the purchase decision and the demand for sports practice, and thus the success rate of investment in this area is high and this is a strong indicator of the relationship of marketing with the sports management of the institution that is looking for the requirements of skilled achievement in the type of specialized sports and its requirements. Therefore, **the importance of research lies in the success of the sports marketing process in the sports institution, which requires its success in how the delegate's personality deals with the consumer in a coordinated, organized, integrated and coherent manner, and his awareness of the appropriate marketing methods and methods that are in line with the desires and aspirations of the sports consumer. And adopt marketing strategies that attract beneficiaries and knowledge of the market and competition, and this requires the development of marketing plans for the sports field clearly and purposefully.**

1.2 Research problem:

The rapid transformations that are taking place today and due to multiple factors, most notably the modern technological development and the intense competition between sports institutions at the local and global levels with the aim of controlling the sports market and achieving superiority, have made marketing representatives in difficult situations, and increasing pressure due to the demand of administrative officials in the field of sales to increase their sales and profits on the one hand, and on the other hand to demand sports consumers to satisfy their needs and desires multiple and different, in addition to the presence of competitors to the locally produced sports institution. Globally and with high quality standards, so the sports marketing function will face important and difficult challenges. From here, the problem of research appears among

sports marketing representatives who are required to modify their marketing programs for sports products and services targeting sports consumers who differ in customs, traditions, cultures, languages and religions, and this requires careful marketing competitive vigilance, taking into account the time, effort and cost of sports events. In addition to their ability to socially persuade the sports consumer in promoting their sales, this is what made the developed countries in the field of sports marketing looking for delegates with a high ability to predict, vigilance and the ability to social persuade the sports consumer.

1.3 Research Objective:

- Identify the relationship between competitive marketing vigilance and social persuasion among a sample of sports equipment sales representatives in Iraq.

1.4 Research hypothesis:

- Competitive marketing vigilance has a positive relationship with social persuasion among a sample of sports equipment sales representatives in Iraq.

2- Research Methodology and Field Procedures:

2.1 Research Methodology:

Use the descriptive approach (correlation) to adapt it to the nature of the solution of the research problem (Ali, 2022).

2.2 Community and Research Sample:

The research community was identified by the representatives of sports equipment sales in Baghdad, which numbered approximately (130) delegates, and the community cannot be counted as it is not proven in official records. (60) delegates were randomly selected from the total population of the research sample. Their percentage was (46%).

2-3 Methods and tools used in research:

Arab and foreign sources - International Information Network (Internet) - Competitive Marketing Vigilance Scale (Appendix 1) - Social Persuasion Scale (Appendix 2) - Assistant Working Group (Ali & Hammadi, 2022).

2.4 Metrics used:

2.4.1 Competitive Marketing Vigilance Scale:

The competitive vigilance scale has been adopted, which includes 13 statements, and the response to the scale is according to the five-point Likert scale, the highest score

on the scale is (65) degrees, the lowest score is (13) degrees, and the default average of the scale is (39) degrees (Moncef Ben Khadija, 2006) .

2.4.2 Social Persuasion Scale:

The social persuasion scale, which includes 15 sentences, was adopted, and the response to the scale is according to the five-point Likert scale, thus the highest score in the scale is (75) degrees, the lowest score (15) degrees, and the default mean of the scale (45) degrees (Ahmed Bakhoush, 2007) .

2.5 Exploratory Experiment:

The exploratory experiment of the scale was conducted on Saturday (4/1/2020) on a sample of (4) randomly selected delegates, and the purpose of the exploratory experiment was to ensure the clarity of the instructions and phrases of the scale while identifying the obstacles and negatives that may occur during the application of the main experiment, and to ensure the efficiency and tasks of the assistant work team in distributing questionnaires from the scale to the sample (Adham Ali et al., 2022) .

2.6 Main experience:

The main experiment was applied to the research sample that included (60) delegates from the total community from Thursday (9/1/2020) until Thursday (23/1/2020) and over a period of two weeks, as the two scales were distributed to the sample with the need to confirm the answer to one alternative by placing a sign (√) in front of the appropriate alternative, and after the end of the answer, the questionnaires were collected and checked, Each member of the sample for all statements, and by collecting the scores of alternatives for each phrase to represent in the end the total score of the scale to be placed in special forms in order to process them statistically using appropriate statistical means.

2.7 Statistical methods:

The statistical data was processed using the statistical program SPSS, and according to the following laws: percentage - arithmetic mean - default mean - standard deviation - T test for each sample. (Awad et al., 2024)

3- Presentation, analysis and discussion of the results:

3-1 Presentation and analysis of the results of the scale of competitive marketing vigilance and social persuasion and discussion:

Table 1

Shows the statistical features of the results of the scale of competitive marketing vigilance and social persuasion

Statistical Methods	Competitive Marketing Vigilance Scale	Social Persuasion Scale
Arithmetic mean	43.45	49.51
Hypothetical mean	39	45
Standard deviation	7.949	11.997
Sprain	-1.019	-0.248
Value T per sample	42.3 11	31.9
Error level	0.000	0.000
Significance level	0.05	0.05
Significance of differences	Moral	Moral

Table (1) shows that the competitive marketing vigilance scale and the social persuasion scale achieved arithmetic averages higher than the default averages, and the calculated values of (T) achieved error level values below the significance level (0.05), meaning that marketing sales representatives have competitive marketing and the ability to persuade the sports consumer. This suggests that salespeople have a level of competitive marketing vigilance in their work by monitoring their competitors' strengths and weaknesses, their willingness to get proactive information about competitors, and the possibility of creating promotional programs for their sales. "Having marketing competitive vigilance helps them analyze all the changes that occur in the marketing competitive environment, and then work to improve and develop their promotional programs by adopting strategies and methods that enable them to achieve leadership and excellence and avoid making mistakes" (Ahmed Al-Shafei, 2006). Competitor analysis is also an essential step in the process of analyzing the competitive marketing environment by examining and understanding the competitor's performance and expectations for future business, and this allows you to discover the strengths that constitute an opportunity for the delegate if they are well utilized (Moncef Ben Khadija, 2006). The researcher also attributes the delegates' enjoyment of a degree of social persuasion as evidence that they possess self-awareness, as this enables them to be aware of the feelings of the sports consumer and the possibility of convincing them verbally of the ability to bring and convince the

consumer. By buying through self-confidence and awareness of consumer requirements.

3.2 Presentation and analysis of the results of the relationship between competitive marketing vigilance and social persuasion:

Table (2) Shows the correlation between the scale of competitive marketing vigilance and social persuasion

Scale	Correlation coefficient	Error level	Relationship direction	Significance of the link
Competitive Marketing Leadership	0.84	0.000	Direct	Moral
Social persuasion				
Significant at the significance level ≤ 0.05				

Table (2) showed a significant correlation between the competitive marketing vigilance scale and the social persuasion scale, where the values of the correlation coefficient at the error level were less than the significance level (0.05). The researcher attributes that the reason for the positive moral relationship between the measure of competitive marketing vigilance and the measure of social persuasion is that the leader of competitive marketing makes the delegate have a high ability to convince the sports consumer to buy for promoted products. As the delegate's ability to collect information about competitors and the environment in which they are active and the sports consumer, and then analyze the internal and external environment, realize it and predict it in the future, and then draw strategies will achieve the objectives of the delegate in convincing and the demand of the sports consumer to increase sales (Amira Mahat, 2014). Also, the individual's enjoyment of marketing competitive vigilance enables him to set goals in advance, analyze that information and turn it into action in a new way to exploit opportunities and avoid potential threats to enable him to make strategic decisions and prepare strategies (Al-Alwani O. A., 2023). Thus, it contributes to achieving effective performance efficiency to maintain its competitive position with other competitors pursuing the same goal (Al-Alwani O. A., 2023). The researcher believes that the delegate's possession of a degree of marketing competitive vigilance increased his awareness and awareness in analyzing the requirements and desires of the sports consumer and drawing strategies to convince him and attract him towards buying the product, and this means that owning

a degree of marketing competitive vigilance increases the ability and ability of the delegate to promote and convince the consumer to buy the product.

4.1 Conclusions:

- Sales reps are characterized by competitive marketing vigilance and have the ability to convince the social consumer of sports.
- Possessing a degree of competitive marketing vigilance by delegates is associated with a positive ethical correlation with their ability to socially convince the sports consumer

4.2 Recommendations:

- When choosing sales representatives, they must be characterized by competitive marketing because of its role in convincing the consumer to buy.
- Delegates should participate in training courses that increase their ability to perceive and predict the marketing strategies of competitive enterprises and the characteristics, requirements and desires of the consumer.
- Develop the social persuasion of delegates with the different culture and environment of the sports consumer.

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Appendix (1) Competitive Marketing Vigilance Scale

Competitive Marketing Vigilance Scale Phrases	Always agree	I often agree	I agree sometimes	Rarely agree	I don't agree
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1.	Provide and collect factual and proactive information on the performance of sports consumers and current and new competitors on an ongoing basis in various sports activities.					
2.	Able to monitor the weaknesses and strengths of competing institutions.					
3.	It was characterized by the ability to maintain the state of attention and not to lose sight of the performance of competitors and the desire and need of the sports consumer.					
4.	Closely follow the strategies of competing sports institutions and consumer requirements and desires.					
5.	I seek to improve the level of performance of competitive marketing with other sports institutions according to the information received.					
6.	I have more than one source of information or knowledge to obtain everything related to the work of competing sports institutions and the desire of the sports consumer.					
7.	Race in everything new and related to work for competing sports institutions and sports consumers.					
8.	Permanent evaluation of marketing programs by benchmarking with competing sports institutions and the desires and requirements of the sports consumer.					
9.	Constantly study the possibility of opening new fields and methods according to the requirements of the sports consumer, taking into account the development of other competing enterprises.					
10.	Setting a future vision for my marketing programs that outperforms competitors and attracts the sports consumer.					
11.	Keep an eye on new areas of competitors and sports consumer demands.					
12.	I predict the reactions of sports consumers and sports organizations about my marketing program.					
13.	Able to monitor the needs and requirements of the sports consumer.					

Appendix 2 Social Persuasion Scale

	Competitive Marketing Vigilance Scale Phrases	Always agree	I often agree	I agree sometimes	Rarely agree	I don't agree
1.	I have the power to influence the sports consumer to change their minds.					
2.	I tend to convince the sports consumer in a civilized style.					
3.	I seek my ability to convince the sports consumer by his gaze.					

4.	I rely on the psychological excitement of the sports consumer that I aim to convince him of the object of purchase.					
5.	I avoid provoking the logical thinking of the consumer whom I aim to convince about the subject of purchase.					
6.	I feel confident in what I say or act to promote the goods.					
7.	I rely on controversy to convince the sports consumer who disagrees with me.					
8.	I start with the controversial things when I convince the sports consumer.					
9.	Some of my behaviors with the sports consumer in promotion have become a model for my colleagues.					
10.	I have a marketing card that helps me convince the sports consumer to buy the goods.					
11.	I adopt the psychologically favorable timing when I convince the sports consumer to buy the goods.					
12.	I am keen to reach the positive feelings of the sports consumer by buying the goods.					
13.	I follow the movements of the person I am talking to, to know the manifestations of distress or acceptance and satisfaction.					
14.	I believe that persuasion is defeating the other psychologically.					
15.	I think persuasion is changing the wrong opinion.					

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