The Impact of the Public Relations System on Marketing Management Through Digital Media

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Abstract

The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) was formed in 1992 following the first elections held in the Kurdish autonomous region geographically situated in northern Iraq, after the Kurdish uprising against the Baath Regime. Since its inception, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) has been ruled by two major political parties, specifically the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). There is a prevailing, but unsubstantiated impression among the general population, that the impact of these two political parties on the political development in KRI is predominantly negative rather than positive. The authors of this article intend to examine that claim by exploring the role of the two main political parties in the political development of the Kurdistan Region. In searching for an answer to this inquiry, the article starts with a conceptualization of political development and two of its indicators, namely democratization and political participation. Subsequently, a concise overview of the political context of the formation and development of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and the political procedures in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) is provided. The authors conducted a questionnaire among KRI's public university students to determine their perception of the role of two political parties in political development in the KRI. In the final section, the methodology is explained and the results of the survey are analyzed.

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پوختەی توێژینە

کاریگەری سیستەمی پەیوەندییە گشتیەکان لەسەر بەڕێوەبردنی بازاڕکردن لە ڕێگەی میدیای دیجیتاڵی

گەشەسەندنی خێرای تەکنەلۆژیای پەیوەندیکردن و پلاتفۆرمی میدیای دیجیتاڵی مەوداکانی نێوان بازاڕکردن، بانگەشە، ڕیکلام و بەشداریکردنی جەماوەر کەمکردووەتەوە. ئەم ئاڵۆزییە زیادبووە، تەحەدای بەرچاو لەگەڵ خۆیدا دەهێنێت، بە تایبەت لەناو بواره تازادەیەک نوێیەکەی توێژینەوەی پەیوەندییە گشتییەکاندا. گرنگە بزانین چۆن کاریگەرییەکانی سیستەمی پەیوەندییە گشتییەکان لەسەر بەڕێوەبردنی بازاڕکردن لە پلاتفۆرمە دیجیتاڵییەکانی پەیوەندییەکی نێوانیان هەیە بۆ وردکردنەوەی ستراتیژییە کاریگەرەکان لە چوارچێوەی دیجیتاڵیدا. بۆیە ئەم توێژینەوەیە لێکۆڵینەوە لەوە دەکات کە چۆن سیستەمی پەیوەندییە گشتییەکان کاریگەریان لەسەر بەڕێوەبردنی بازاڕکردن هەیە لە ڕێگەی پلاتفۆرمی میدیای دیجیتاڵییەوە. دیزاینی توێژینەوەکە لەسەر بنەمای داتای لاوەکی دامەزراوە بە لێکۆڵینەوە لە پرسیاره سەرەتاییەکان بە پێداچوونەوه به تێڕوانینەکانی بڵاوکراوەکانی پێشوو. دۆزینەوەکان هێمایان بۆ ئەوە کردووه کە ئێستا سایتەکانی سۆشیال میدیا وەک پلاتفۆرمی دینامیکی و کارلێککار سەریان هەڵداوە کە ڕێکخراوەکان دەتوانن بەرهەمەکان بخەنەڕوو و ڕای گشتی لە قاڵب بدەن و پەیوەندی درێژخایەن لەگەڵ کڕیارەکان پەرەپێبدەن. توێژینەوەکە پشتراستی دەکاتەوە کە سیستەمی پەیوەندییە گشتییە کاریگەرەکان کاریگەری لەسەر بەڕێوەبردنی بازاڕکردن هەیە سەبارەت بە توانا ناوازەکانی پلاتفۆرمی میدیای دیجیتاڵی. هەروەها لەم لێکۆڵینەوەیەدا دەردەکەوێت کە سۆشیال میدیا نوێنەرایەتی پێکهاتەیەکی سەرەکی هەر هەڵمەتێکی بازرگانی هاوچەرخ دەکات، چونکە دەرفەتی بێهاوتای بۆ بەشداریکردن، بینین و کارلێککردن لەگەڵ ئامانجەکان دەرەخسێنێت.

ملخص البحث

تأثير نظام العلاقات العامة على إدارة التسويق عبر الوسائط الرقمية

أدى التطور السريع لتقنيات الاتصال ومنصات الوسائط الرقمية إلى طمس الحدود بين التسويق والدعاية والإعلان وتفاعل الجمهور. ويطرح هذا التعقيد المتزايد تحديات كبيرة، لا سيما في مجال أبحاث العلاقات العامة الحديث نسبيًا. من المهم معرفة كيفية ارتباط تأثير أنظمة العلاقات العامة على إدارة التسويق في منصات الوسائط الرقمية بشروط وضع استراتيجيات فعّالة في السياق الرقمي. لذا، يستكشف هذا البحث كيفية تأثير أنظمة العلاقات العامة على إدارة التسويق من خلال منصات الوسائط الرقمية. ويستند تصميم البحث إلى بيانات ثانوية من خلال دراسة الأسئلة الأولية ومراجعة رؤى المنشورات السابقة. وقد أكدت النتائج أن مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي أصبحت الآن منصات ديناميكية وتفاعلية تُمكّن المؤسسات من عرض منتجاتها، وتشكيل الرأي العام، وبناء علاقات طويلة الأمد مع العملاء. ويؤكد البحث أن نظام العلاقات العامة الفعّال يؤثر على إدارة التسويق من خلال القدرات الفريدة لمنصات الوسائط الرقمية. ويستنتج من هذا البحث أيضًا أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي تُمثل عنصرًا أساسيًا في أي حملة تسويقية معاصرة، إذ توفر فرصًا لا تُضاهى للتفاعل والظهور والتفاعل مع الجمهور المستهدف.

1. Introduction

Public relations have been in constant pursuit of unique and more efficient ways to increase advertising. In this attempt, the digital media platforms have developed into the crucial partners of social media and traditional media (Wang, Cheng & Sun, 2021). A proper understanding of audience preferences and habits on various digital platforms holds the key to any good public relations strategy for the maximum reach and impact of campaign messages (Sutherland et al., 2020). Modern PR greatly contributes to digital media marketing through the use of interactive, promotional, and advertising tools on social media and online channels. It follows that with this shift in emphasis, the need to investigate the relationship between marketing management and public relations in this digital era is increasingly important (Andersson, 2024). Marketing management encompasses the process of assessing the distribution, promotion, and positioning of products and services within organizational goals and budgets (Abishovn, 2014). It is increasingly recognized that public relations are a very important element in improving marketing management. Identifying public opinion and stimulating consumer engagement have become intrinsic elements of any effective marketing strategy today (Bowden & Mirzaei, 2021). It will be effective if approaches are integrated, components of marketing are used, and the orientation also integrates corporate social responsibility (Charest et al., 2016). Digital communication, while growing so fast, has made online platforms a lifeline for engaging audiences. In particular, public relations have been transformed through the use of social media by practitioners to better and more directly reach customers than was possible before. PR strategies have now been targeted towards Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Telegram social media and WhatsApp and Telegram instant messengers because of the unparalleled coverage and influence of consumers globally, as Gupta & Nair 2021 posit. The present research investigates the impact of the public relations system on marketing management through digital media platforms and its consequences for the formation of public opinion, audience involvement, and consumption patterns. It underlines the strategic use of digital

means to maximize the outcome of market achievements and long-run effects on this industry in an increasingly digitalizing world.

Based on that, this study attempts to address its two primary research questions: to what extent does digital media increase the effect of public relations, and to what level does public relations enhance marketing management? The remainder of the current research is divided into seven sections. The introduction comes first. Section two examines the literature relating to the public relations system, marketing management, and digital media or social media. The research methodology employed was the subject of the third section. Section four summarizes the results based on the findings. Section five included discussions, while section seven concluded the review with suggestions and consequences.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Public Relations

Public relations are described as a deliberate interaction process that develops mutually favorable relationships between organizations and their public (Andersson, 2024). The British Institute of Public Relations defines public relations as fostering strong bonds and understanding between an organization and its members, groups, and organizations; this leads to a positive reputation and continuing relationship, this definition was accurate when it was first given in 1948 (Charest et al., 2016; Sutherland et al., 2020). Vast public relations specialists discuss the various functions that public relations play in businesses and organizations that provide services, and they all agree that marketing is by far the most significant job that public relations do in these settings (Elgueta-Ruiz, & Martínez-Ortiz, 2022). The marketing system's processes, which include everything that contributes to attracting and attracting the largest possible number of new customers and maintaining the loyalty of the organizations, make up the public relations system, which is the culmination of these interactions (Joshi et al., 2023). Earning the confidence of customers, clients, and the public at large is a continuous process in public relations that every organization

must do to achieve mutual understanding with these parties. For this to happen, an organization must keep tracking and evaluating its perception of the services offered and the procedures followed (Wang, Cheng & Sun, 2021). Furthermore, the digital age describes how public relations has evolved during this time when the fast growth of digital platforms and communication technology has drastically changed and expanded communication and interaction processes. The objective of this evolution is to surpass traditional public relations techniques and adjust to the dynamic character of the modern world (Yoruk & Summak, 2023).

2.2. Marketing Management

Marketing management is a collection of procedures or actions that aim to identify consumer needs and provide a range of goods or services that meet those needs while generating profits for the business in a reasonable amount of time. Historically and still, the primary objective of marketing campaigns has been to offer consumers fresh incentives to purchase new goods (Mammadbayov et al., 2020). Marketing can be defined as the art of selling; however, sales are part of the process. From a common perspective, marketing is the link between the material needs of society and responding to economic patterns by delivering the value of a product or service to customers (Kotler, 2001). Coordination of managerial choices on product, price, market demand, and communication and service policies is the primary function of marketing in achieving an organization's goals and objectives (Abishovn, 2014). Marketing management can be considered a business function of an organization and a set of mechanisms that create and deliver value to customers and deal with customers in a way that benefits the institution's shareholders in its capital (Danchenok & Laskovets, 2010). As for marketing as a science, it is the process of identifying the target market by analyzing and segmenting the market understanding customer trends, and providing high value to them (Kotler, 2001). The growth in global commerce and free markets caused rivalry in the production of products and services, which led to the emergence of the notion of marketing. Because consumers

would not know about the products and services without marketing, a lot of marketing professionals think that marketing is just as crucial as producing them (Capon & Kolchanov, 2011).

Through widely disseminated means and a variety of techniques, advertising serves as a means of mass communication that informs consumers about goods and services and fosters sufficient awareness and understanding of them to influence individuals and groups with varying needs, motives, ages, and cultural backgrounds, depending on societal variables.

2.3. Digital Media Platforms

Digital media and it is platforms are those forms of media that have been created, distributed, and shared by computers, mobile devices, and other technologies related to the Internet. Examples of modern digital media platforms include blogs, e-books, video games, and other more modern forms of physical storage like flash drives and hard drives (Gupta & Nair, 2021). Some scholars classify digital media in the general category of "new media," distinguishing them from more traditional forms like mass or analog media. Well put by Demuyakor (2020), digital media have evolved in just the same way computers have come to be highly advanced tools from simple calculators, to changing human communication, entertainment, and creativity. This historical progression situates digital media platforms as integral to the reshaping of contemporary methods of information production and consumption, reflecting an evolutionary history of interactive technologies and media (Badham et al., 2024).

According to UNCTAD (2019), digital media platforms have considerably reduced the barriers to cross-border information flow and, consequently, simplified communication across the globe. Interpersonal communication, once constrained by geographical distance and time, has been elevated to new levels. Whereas messages previously required hours, days, or even months to reach recipients, digital media allows for instant communication (Khang et al., 2012). Besides, print and broadcast

media organizations are increasingly investing in digital platforms, and they have so far managed to attract massive online audiences. In the last couple of years, almost every established news organization has managed to establish a formidable presence on digital platforms, with some surpassing the success recorded by traditional print media (Reuters Institute, 2019; Yoruk et al., 2023).

The speedily developing technologies heightened global awareness about how fundamental to life digital media is and exactly how content must be available but also presented appealingly. New technologies have spurred transformative changes throughout the world as regards the use of media within the production and dissemination of information (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Since digital platforms in audience engagement methods have revolutionized industries and changed marketing approaches, this thus calls for a dire need to investigate digital media marketing. In dealing with the change that comes with this convergence, there is a need to understand what digital platforms do to modern marketing functions (Yoruk et al., 2023).

3. Research Method

The grounds of this descriptive and analytical research are a thorough assessment of the literature on the topic of how public relations and marketing management interact when using digital media platforms. An analytical-descriptive methodology has been employed to offer an understanding of how digital media platforms alter public relations marketing tactics. Nonetheless, according to Hiebl (2021), one of the major problems in the field of public relations and marketing research is that there is inadequate guidance available for selecting the sample when thinking about systematic reviews. This is the area where there is a deficiency since there is an urgent need for more structured methods to evaluate the interplay of digital media platforms, marketing, and public relations.

3.1. Data Source and Procedure

The secondary approach for data collection will be adopted in this research. Sources will include literature review and empirical research findings from peer-reviewed journals, reports, and others that are in the public domain through academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, and Clarivate. The usage of more than one database in the literature review follows Ewald et al. (2022), who recommend at least two databases since this reinforces the review by making it less prone to publication bias due to not finding studies. In general, using secondary data collection in academia is seen to be efficient and pragmatic for insights into established topics (Johnston, 2017).

The research procedure is of logical structure, where the subject matter of concern is given systematic breakdowns into well-defined, manageable parts to ensure clarity and accessibility for any reader coming from a diversity of academic backgrounds. However, in using secondary data, there is an inherent limitation. For example, the question of validity or reliability might be raised about data sourced from public sources, as identified by Saunders et al. (2019), therefore leading to conclusions that may not have represented the greater environment. Also, secondary data is inherently limited by the scope and context of the initial studies and might not exactly concur with the specifics of the research objectives set by the study (Bryman, 2016).

3.2. Main Questions and Approach to Exploration

The technique of the research is systematic, to answer the research's main questions **RQ1** to what degree does public relations contribute to the betterment of marketing management, particularly marketing campaigns?, and **RQ2** to what degree do digital media platforms strengthen public relations impact on marketing campaigns? It also discusses how institutional planning and the system of public relations influence consumer behavior and the boundaries of marketing influence.

This will review and analyze expert views and opinions on marketing, digital media platforms, and public relations, conforming to strict academic criteria and techniques usually applied in research and studies. In this respect, the researcher adopted a descriptive approach to investigate the use of public relations in digital media platforms for commercial marketing. Thus, the research viewed this as an emerging trend and a continuity of the previously adopted practice of using traditional media for marketing purposes. This framework considered the ever-changing character of the area under study, and how it is still changing in this age of digital communication platforms.

4. Analysis and Results

4.1. The Impact of Public Relations on Marketing

Relating to the impact of public relations on marketing, Rickard (2024), and Shah (2021) revealed that public relations have been developing comprehensive campaigns aimed at diverse domestic and international audiences, progressively assuming roles often associated with marketing. In the modern organizational climate, marketing aims to engage and motivate consumers to act by making purchases and using products. It is no longer only about disseminating information. According to Shah's (2021) research, public relations is important for marketing. It facilitates raising the income of businesses in rural regions and aids in winning over people's trust and loyalty.

Public relations principles elevate an organization's reputation in the eyes of the public. These will have to do with its own identity, goals, and purpose for existing. Shah (2021) asserts that developing such values is a difficult undertaking that takes a lot of time and calls for the assistance of public relations and marketing professionals who are in charge of creating and disseminating certain corporate images. Public relations play a major role in marketing, and there are many cases in which public relations activities can complement an organization's marketing objectives. There are

many ways in which public relations complement marketing, including, for example: public relations contribute to promoting the company's brand, products, and services or promoting their quality. In this way, it indirectly contributes to the company's efforts to promote its products, services, and solutions (Yoruk, et al., 2023).

Public relations may also contribute to bringing about some changes within the organization. For example, it may intervene to improve the nature of the organization's dealings with its customers in a way that helps gain more customers (Elgueta-Ruiz & Martínez-Ortiz, 2022). The link between public relations and marketing, as the Internet is the modern means of public relations in all its forms, including digital media, considering that the Internet, in its impact on public relations by working through it in digital media, eliminates distance and time by gathering intellectual resources together. This highlights how the Internet and its digital media component are affected by public relations and its marketing component. All of this is related to the communications between public relations, marketing, and the Internet, including digital media (Wang et al., 2021).

4.2. The Mediating Role of Digital Media Platforms

Digital media platforms, including social media and the Internet, allow for more reach across longer distances, data-driven customization, and real-time client involvement. In the meanwhile, conventional media continues to play a critical role in spreading messages, providing legitimacy, and connecting with audiences that prefer traditional media (Joshi et al., 2023). In addition to increasing brand awareness, this deliberate blending of public relations and marketing initiatives creates real connections with customers, molds their perceptions, impacts their behavior, and fosters brand loyalty (Omenugha, 2018). In this context, interactive video conferencing is becoming a crucial component of public relations campaigns through digital media. They have become an essential component of marketing plans, particularly on social media platforms where prompt audience contact may increase brand trust and involvement (Wang et al., 2021). Any business may engage

directly with consumers, industry experts, and other stakeholders by including video conferencing in their internet marketing plan. This gives them a chance to strengthen their relationships and reinforce their brand messaging (Tong and Chan, 2020).

Besides, Voorveld, Van Noort, Muntinga & Bronner (2018) mentioned that there is a complete contrast between digital promotional advertising and conventional methods. Compared to the rigid, one-way communication that it formerly was, advertising is now an interactive, dynamic discipline as a result of digital media. Personalization, targeting, and audience segmentation are made possible by the move to digital media, which also makes it possible to analyze and evaluate campaign efficacy in real time (Danchenok & Laskovets, 2010; Demuyakor, 2020). With the orchestration of interactive video, social media interactions, and data-driven personalization, it has evolved into an integrated, pure-play digital experience that, in turn, enables marketers to reach and engage with customers in unthinkable ways only a few years ago. This development highlights how crucial it is for public relations and digital marketing to collaborate to spur consumer action and improve brand awareness in a media landscape that is undergoing fast change (Adeola et al., 2020).

In the digital media age, public relations have become crucial for companies and institutions in their efforts to engage with the public, shape public opinion, and connect with customers. Traditionally, managing media departments in large corporations was challenging, with each department, including marketing, customer service, branding, advertising, and public relations, playing its role (Sutherland et al., 2020). However, public relations firms have taken the lead in handling social media, as brand owners increasingly recognize the opportunities and risks it presents. Public relations professionals, responsible for managing a company's relationship with its clients, are best suited to advise on communication strategies and influence customer behavior to meet business objectives (Joshi et al., 2023).

5. Discussions of the Findings

The current research pursued two central questions: to what degree do public relations contribute to the betterment of marketing management, particularly marketing campaigns? And to what degree do digital media platforms strengthen public relations' impact on marketing campaigns? It was observed that with the increased popularity of social platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, and X, formerly known as Twitter, new opportunities for social interaction have emerged and are developing alongside earlier models of communication (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). With their adoption rates increasing among public relations practitioners, society had to put up with the consequences of such platforms and look for ways of gaining full benefit from such technologies (Khang, Ki, & Ye, 2012).

Technologically, the modern world depends on it almost in all aspects because it has facilitated the exchange of ideas, information, and cultural materials across borders easily (Castells, 2011). The interdependency thus created has deeply impacted human behavior in the spheres of communication and interaction. The research revealed that contemporary public relations, supported by digital media platforms, have facilitated marketing to a great extent. This is due to the quantitative as well as qualitative improvement in the tools of communication, which have reduced the gap between individual and collective social interaction and have given new dimensions to knowledge (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

At the same time, the rapid development of digital media platforms has fully integrated public relations with marketing, which was initially considered to be separate domains, into an inseparable form for transforming advertising, marketing, publicity, and promotion (Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2016). Today's consumers depend much on digital media, which shapes not only public perception but also influences the audience in terms of behavior and preference (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). Public relations have also greatly benefited from the various services provided by digital social media. While in traditional media, all the processes of communication are controlled by the media institution, in digital media, the public

can act as both sender and receiver, establishing a participatory environment for communication (Habermas, 1989; Shirky, 2010). It has facilitated the easy flow of information, thus creating thousands of marketing groups on Viber and WhatsApp and millions of shared marketing videos on social networks. These tools are now part of the modern marketing mix, and their development has been driven by public relations efforts.

6. Conclusions

This research was purposed to investigate the impact of public relations systems on marketing management through digital media platforms. The results of the investigation showed that modern public relations greatly speed up marketing activities across online media platforms and channels. Moreover, public relations have an enormous effect on people's perceptions and consumers' attitudes towards various products and services. The research also set the fact that a significant majority of the population engages in social media sites. Such an audience is very sensitive to the strategic public relations initiatives that seek to achieve widespread marketing goals. There is, therefore, an implication that developments in public relations practice are directly associated with the potential created by exploiting digital tools for shaping public opinion. Moreover, the study proved that digital media marketing is more effective than other traditional methods of public relations. The interactivity of digital platforms, like social networking sites and online pages, increases the effectiveness of audience participation. Such digital platforms allow institutions and companies to undertake focused campaigns that influence and impress their target audiences more effectively, thereby reinforcing the role of digital media in the realization of marketing objectives.

7. Recommendations

Based on the current research's findings regarding the impact of the public relations system on marketing management through digital media, the researcher

recommends that organizations integrate public relations with their marketing strategy to ensure that the latter has consistent messaging across all digital platforms. In this approach, brand reputation, trust, and awareness might be achieved with the aid of public relations, all the while boosting and improving marketing. In this regard, organizations should carefully consider focusing on developing strong audience interaction since digital media platforms like Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube have a wealth of engagement options. To achieve public relations and marketing objectives, this entails producing information that can be shared, responding to audience comments, and fostering appropriate discourse. The researcher also recommends that organizations use analytics tools to monitor the effectiveness of public relations initiatives across digital media platforms. Above all, information on audience behavior, attitude, and involvement is crucial in fine-tuning the public relations plan to better suit the marketing goals.

In addition, to maintain their competitiveness, organizations should also make sure that their public relations staff members receive ongoing training in the use of new digital media tools and platforms. This facilitates them to manage online interactions, produce digital content, and react to new trends that affect marketing management. Furthermore, to guarantee that the messaging is coherent, compelling, and supports both brand image and marketing objectives, businesses should also promote cooperation between the public relations and marketing teams when creating digital content. By doing so, the two roles may work more harmoniously, and the campaign's total efficacy may increase.

8. Implications and Suggestions

This research offers valuable perspectives to academics, practitioners, researchers, and scholars alike. The research implications embodied examined how interactive marketing has evolved inside the confines of public relations systems to become modern public relations. By identifying certain processes that encourage participation and the uptake of concepts or goods, the study fills in important

information gaps about the connections between digital media consumers, marketing, and public relations. In this respect, a research gap has been identified about the influence of public relations on marketing through digital media in the era of modern media technology. Thus, this research has a unique contribution to the literature. Through consideration of the influence of public relations on marketing through digital media, one comes to an understanding of the model of modern public relations.

The findings of this research also contribute to the literature and have significant implications for organizations to reconsider the significant impact of public relations on marketing campaigns. Many organizations have already shifted to marketing their products and services via the Internet, leveraging the power of direct communication with customers, investors, suppliers, neighbors, and even the media. This seamless interaction has become both engaging and rewarding. The research also provided evidence in favor of the idea that the pattern of public relations' influence in marketing via digital media is linked to enhancing the desire of the consumer, the public, and the public opinion interacting with digital media according to the theory of desires that marketing works on through advertising via these networks by organizing public relations to create desires through advertising itself by developing and creating needs.

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