

INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF SPONSORSHIP ACTIVITIES ON KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE TOWARD THE BRAND OF CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP AT SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL EVENT (CASE STUDY: FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT)

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Abstract.In the present study due to the increase in conferences and seminars in the country and the presence of various companies as sponsorships in this program, effect of sponsorship activities (sponsorship) on knowledge and attitude toward the brand of corporate sponsorship at scientific and technical event discussed. Research using empirical research (field) and the use of web-based questionnaire, among the audience Fifth International Conference on Project Management at intervals before and after the conference performed. The population of this study was registered at the conference. The sample was selected by simple random sampling method and sample size was 269 people. Cronbach's alpha for reliability and content validity for validity of questionnaire were used. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS software. The findings show that sponsorships activities at scientific and technical events, however, did not increase the component of brand awareness, but increasing brand awareness for companies that have little reputation. Also, sponsorship activities has not effect on promoting the attitude of the participants in the event than sponsorship brand. None of the factors influencing the awareness of the corporate sponsorship (audience conflict with an event, match between sponsorship and event, participants view in an event on the concept of sponsorships activities, attitude participating in the event) has not significant effect on awareness of corporate sponsorship, but awareness of the corporate sponsorship has impact on the awareness of company's brand.

Keywords: sponsorships activities, brand, brand awareness and attitude

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, due to competition of markets and different industries, using different options for lasting competition in the market and has great importance and companies to obtain a share of the consumer market, the different methods used. Various needs of individuals and their tastes makes marketing managers are increasingly looking for new ways according to the interests of consumers that they can better communicate with them. The rapid changes in the global markets, organizations have many challenges to face. Survival and growth of organizations in competitive markets requires the ability to create "differentiation", to attract and retain customers and their loyalty. One of the effective tools in creating value for customers and maintain their loyalty, application of successful brand management in order to create brand value for organizations. Today, one of the efficient means to advance the strategic goals and operational marketing managers and organizations are trying and using different tools to achieve the objectives set out in brand management. One of these tools is the use of advocacy. Brands see every day sponsorship programs and various occasions in various forms that are not advertised so openly, but it seems these companies a huge part of your marketing budget to sponsorship programs have use it as a competitive advantage in order to add value to their brand they use. In Iran, a variety of sports, especially football to art programs and concerts as well as a variety of conferences and seminars, various brands of domestic and foreign participation as a sponsorship are due to increasing competition and growing market complexity Iran and the large investments made by some of the company in order to sponsorship various research and examine different aspects of the effectiveness of this tool is due to the characteristics of the market and consumers is essential. The main problem was that this study evaluates the effectiveness of these marketing tools in terms of impact on knowledge and attitudes towards their audience in Iran. But as I mentioned in a range of events and sponsorship activities in the implementation of the program is that each of these has its own features and the need for a separate investigation. In the present study due to the increase in conferences and seminars in the country and the presence of various companies as sponsorships in the program and costs in this regard, the impact of these tools on knowledge and attitude toward the brand has been in the conferencing environment and answers questions whether this sponsorship can make changes in brand awareness and brand attitude to have? The results of this research can help companies to more

carefully consider the issue and how the results are used as a way to assess this.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

• Sponsorship activities

Meenaghan in 1991 define corporate sponsorship activities as constraints and requirements for cooperation and assistance with cultural activities, Sports Festival will be reserved for commercial purposes (Sirgy et al 2007, 2007). Other sponsorship in defining a mutually profitable trade agreement between the sponsorship and the event will be introduced to achieve certain goals (Mason & Cochetel, 2006). Nicholls & Roslow, 1999 stated that one of the members of the broader marketing in sponsorship activities in the event and local events include the Olympic Games (Dolphin, 2003). Walliser in 2003 sponsorship exchange between the sponsorship and the event organizer knows which aims to create marketing communications by exploiting the commonality of both (sponsorship of the event). In this connection, indirectly sponsorship clients to see and less pessimistic than when the sponsorship company directly advertise, in them there is goodwill and better in their responses (Davies et al., 2006). IEG's advocacy in 2001 as cash or alternatively the assets of the company to sporting events, entertainment, etc or events and non-profit organizations that back, to take advantage of potential business opportunities lead of these assets, defined (Coppetti et al., 2009).

Brand

Philip Kotler Marketing Association of America, which are traditionally made it put it this way: a name, term or phrase, symbol, sign, symbol, design or a combination of them intended to introduce the product or service that a seller or group of sellers offer and thereby distinguish them from goods of competitors (Kotler, 2003). David Aaker brand symbol knows that a large number of assets and liabilities linked mental and aims to identify and distinguish products (Aaker, 1991). As defined by the company Interbrand, the brand is: "a set of tangible and intangible elements that are located in a brand together as for reliability and excellence and create more value for customers create "(Rita Clifton & Esther Maughan, 2000).

• Brand awareness

The differentiating factor is the starting point of brand knowledge and brand value, brand awareness (Aaker, 1991). The buyer's brand awareness as the ability recognizes and recalls a brand that belongs to a particular class of product. According chlorine brand awareness plays an

important role in consumer decision making for business benefit of learning, taking advantage of selective advantage. Brand equity occur the customer from the customer perspective, a high level of brand awareness and has a close with strong and unique single brand to keep in mind (Atilgan, 2005). Brand awareness of the contribution that target customers, brand awareness and brand knowledge refers first differentiating factor is the starting point of brand equity (Aaker, 1991). Typically knowledge of the names likely to increase retention brings it to mind. This awareness includes both brand recall.

• **Attitudes toward the brand**

Attitude is an important component in consumer behavior. Marketers hope to be able to identify the factors influencing attitudes, influence on consumers' purchasing behavior. One of the oldest definitions of attitude is presented by Thurston. His attitude as a simple concept and is defined as: "The sense of a person against or in the direction of a subject." A few years later on a much broader definition given port and attitude to mental and neural state of readiness responds when organized through experience and dynamic impact on the behavior of the arrow and leaves defined.

Operational definition used in this study about attitudes toward the brand is:

Attitude to the brand, the consumer's overall assessment of good or bad, desirable or undesirable, pleasant or unpleasant a mark. One of the sources of brand equity various studies have been conducted for several (Low & Lambjr in 2000, listed on the Bahraini Nezhad, 2008)

• **The role of sponsorship's activities in brand**

One of the most important tools of marketing communication sponsorships activities in the public interest for the company or brand targeting a specific audience by a specific sponsorship's activities and companies is not directly related to official propaganda (Cliff and Motion, 2005).

Sponsorships activities in the many ways to create value-added marketing convey the brand. Help sponsorships activities can be seen and driving the brand's core strategy, a great experience for customers and added value created thereby. Sponsorship activities in the brand can achieve goals such as brand awareness, brand attitude (Cliff and Motion, 2005). Sponsorships activities can benefit your customers or where they are and how they can obtain an alert (Dolphin, 2003).

Hypotheses

1. Company supporting of event increase participants awareness in the event than brand of corporate sponsorship.
2. Company supporting of event increase participants attitude in the event than brand of corporate sponsorship.
3. Engage the participants with an event have a positive effect on their awareness of the sponsorships of the event.
4. Match between "sponsorship corporate" and "event" has a positive impact on the awareness of the participants of the event sponsorships.
5. Participants perspective in an event on the concept of sponsorship activities () has a positive effect on their awareness of the event sponsorships.
6. The attitude of participants in an event the event has a positive effect on awareness of the event sponsorships.
7. Promotional activities in the corporate sponsorship an event have a positive impact on the awareness of the participants.
8. Awareness of participants of corporate sponsorship in the event has a positive impact on the brand awareness.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study in term of aim is applied research and in term of method is an experimental study. Corporate sponsorship participating in different activities that, population in this study used participants (registered) in the fifth international conference on project management. In the event some specialized companies in the field of project management in order to connect with audience, as sponsorship attending the conference. Participants in the international conference of about 900 people are Project Management and people in various fields such as project management, project implementation; project management consulting and project management training are working or studying. Thus, according to these three areas of the sponsorship of the Mapna company conference in the project, Tehran Parsa Moshaver Company in the field of project management consulting and training in the field of Project Management Institute Project Management Ariana were studied. Sampling of the audience conference for simple random sampling was carried out according to Morgan community had 900 registered participants at the Conference must, therefore a sample of 269 people and link conference questionnaire was sent to 269 people. Study using electronic questionnaire is field study.

The questionnaire was based on a web page and each person was given a code to access the pages of the questionnaire to assess the validity of the expert groups in the field and do you also earn professors and experts in this field and to establish the reliability of Cronbach's alpha was used and an Cronbach alpha coefficients for all the questions but the questions related to the involvement of the top is 0.7. Therefore, in general, in terms of statistical validity was confirmed. The dependent variable in this research is brand awareness and attitude toward the brand. Knowledge of the factors affecting the company's sponsorship in the consciousness of the sponsorship is considered as the dependent variable and the impact on brand awareness has been considered as the independent variable. Other independent variables include attitude toward the event, participants view with respect to events, participant's involvement with the event, sponsorship promotional activities during the event and the match between sponsorship and event. For the analysis of data obtained from logistic regression was used.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

• The first hypothesis test

Table 1) recall and awareness in Mapna brand in the field of project before and after the event

variable	Mapna Company			Parsa Moshaver Company			Ariana Company		
	lack of awareness	awareness		lack of awareness	awareness		lack of awareness	awareness	
		lack of awareness	awareness		lack of awareness	awareness		lack of awareness	awareness
recall	lack of awareness	47	8	lack of awareness	65	1	lack of awareness	20	6
	awareness	9	12	awareness	0	0	awareness	5	38
awareness	lack of awareness	15	10	lack of awareness	59	14	lack of awareness	24	16
	awareness	10	41	awareness	2	1	awareness	16	20

Table 2. McNemar test every three (Mapna, Parsa Moshaver and Ariana Company) in two variables recall and awareness

variable	Statistics	Mapna before and after the event	Parsa before and after the event	Ariana before and after the event
recall	N	76	66	69
	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000(a)	1.000(a)	1.000(a)
awareness	N	76	76	76

Corporate sponsorship of an event and participant's awareness of the event increased than corporate sponsorship. According to Table (2) because of the significance level obtained McNemar test every three (Mapna, Parsa Moshaver and Arianna) is more than 0.05 that a significant difference between brand awareness Mapna, Parsa Moshaver and Ariana before and after the event does not exist. As a result, corporate sponsorship the conference in promoting brand awareness (recall component) they have not been affected and also has significant differences between the recall of Tehran Parsa Moshaver Company is seen on there before and after the event.

But there is a significant difference between brand awareness in Ariana Project Management Institute through its logo before and after the event.

So apparently recognized the sponsorship of the conference in promoting brand awareness (cognitive component) they have not been affected. But now famous little sponsorship in promoting brand awareness (cognitive component) affects them.

	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000(a)	.004(a)	1.000(a)
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Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mapna	before after	Paired Difference Mean	t Std. Deviation	df Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)				
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Upper			
		- .00909	.69138	.14740	Lower	Upper	-.062	21	.951
Ariana	before after	-.20500	1.45178	.22955	-.66930	.25930	-.893	39	.377

Second hypothesis test

Corporate sponsorship of an event is the attitude of the participants in the event increase sponsorship brand.

For this comparison, according to the rank of the data by calculating the di and Kolmogorov - Smirnov normality was confirmed frequencies (Table ()) and then on the basis of paired t-test was used to compare attitudes. Since the Mapna company 0.05 significance level is the difference

between the attitudes toward the Mapna brand before and after. None of those present at the investigation stage Parsa Moshaver Company firm did not choose, so comparison was not possible. Also, because the levels were significantly higher than 0.05 so a significant difference between the attitudes toward the brand Ariana Project Management Institute there before and after the event. Corporate sponsorship in improving attitudes toward the brand does not affect their conference.

Table 3 Kolmogorov-Smirnov test the attitude toward the brand Mapna, Parsa Moshaver and Ariana

Statistics	Attitude toward the brand Mapna	Attitude toward the brand Parsa Moshaver	Attitude toward the brand Ariana
Number	22	22	40
Kolmogorov-Smirnov z value	.664	.740	.832
Significance level	.770	.644	.492

Table (4) Paired t-test results

• Third to seventh hypotheses test

Logistic regression analysis of the effect of independent variables on sponsorship awareness (awareness and recall)

Mapna Company as sponsorship of the conference also, none of the independent variables on awareness of the sponsorship does not affect cognitive component Mapna

Table (4) The absence of independent variables on awareness of the sponsorship variables (awareness and recall) in the regression model Mapna Company

	Variables		Score	df	Sig.
Awareness of sponsorship (recall)		Match Mapna with Conference	1.971	1	.160
		Mapna promotional activities at conferences	.214	1	.643
		Conflicts with conference	.098	1	.754
		Attitude toward the event	.253	1	.615
		Overall Statistics	2.234	4	.693
Awareness of sponsorship (awareness)		Match Mapna with Conference	.003	1	.956
		Mapna promotional activities at conferences	1.064	1	.302
		Conflicts with conference	2.151	1	.142
		View of sponsorship activities	.084	1	.772
		Attitude toward the event	.047	1	.828
		Overall Statistics	4.010	5	.548

Logistic regression analysis of the effect of independent variables on sponsorship awareness (awareness and recall)

Parsa Company as sponsorship of the conference

Results Table 5 shows none of the independent variables has no effect on awareness of sponsorship of Parsa Company (component awareness and recall).

Table (5) The absence of independent variables on awareness of the sponsorship variables (awareness and recall) in the regression model Parsa Company

	Variables		Score	df	Sig.
Awareness of sponsorship (awareness)		Conflict	.010	1	.921
		View	.139	1	.709
		Attitude	2.800	1	.094
		promotional activities	.403	1	.525
		Match	1.217		.270
		Overall Statistics	2.234	5	.215

Awareness of sponsorship (recall)	Variables	Conflict	1.075	1	.300
		View	.082	1	.775
		Attitude	.338	1	.561
		promotional activities	.631	1	.427
		Match	.298	1	.585
Overall Statistics		3.330	5	.649	

Logistic regression analysis of the effect of independent variables on sponsorship awareness (awareness and recall)

Results Table 6 shows none of the independent variables has no effect on awareness of sponsorship of Ariana Project Management Institute (component awareness and recall).

Ariana Company as sponsorship of the conference

Table (6) the absence of independent variables on awareness of the sponsorship variables (awareness and recall) in the regression model Ariana Company

			Score	df	Sig.
Awareness of sponsorship (awareness)	Variables	Conflict	2.746	1	.098
		View	.528	1	.468
		Attitude	.668	1	.414
		promotional activities	.093	1	.761
		Match	1.027		.311
Overall Statistics		4.512	5	.478	
Awareness of sponsorship (recall)		Conflict	1.092	1	.296
		View	.194	1	.659
		Attitude	1.430	1	.232
		promotional activities	2.632	1	.105
		Match	.007	1	.932
Overall Statistics		6.846	5	.232	

Finally, according to the survey on the three brands can be expressed:

Eighth hypothesis: awareness of participants of corporate sponsorship in an event has a positive effect awareness of its brand.

None of the factors influencing the awareness of the sponsorship (audience involvement with the event, match between sponsorship and event, company's vision in relation to the concept of sponsorship, the attitude of the participants in relation to the event and sponsorship promotional activities during the event) does not have a significant effect on the consciousness of the sponsorship of the conference.

Results Table (7) shows that by raising awareness of the corporate sponsorship Mapna, and Ariana, Parsa companies are increasing brand awareness and this model is significant and thus awareness of the corporate sponsorship in the event the after the event has an impact on brand awareness.

Table (7) Variables in the Equation

Company	Change source	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Mapna	Sponsorship awareness	1.855	.655	8.014	1	.005	6.389
	Constant	-2.457	.602	16.677	1	.000	.086
Parsa	Sponsorship awareness	3.942	1.327	8.829	1	.003	51.500
	Constant	-3.248	.510	40.631	1	.000	.039
Ariana	Sponsorship awareness	1.238	.492	6.332	1	.012	3.448
	Constant	.595	.311	3.647	1	.056	1.812

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Brand awareness consists of two components, awareness and recall. From the results it can be concluded that the effect on the recall component of sponsorship the conference is brand awareness. In the cognitive component of the brands Mapna and Ariana Project Management Institute (which seems to have more fame) does not and just about Parsa brand (apparently does not have a great reputation) was affected. It looks for companies that are apparently more fame the event aims to sponsorship and maintain brand awareness and presence in the market if this is true, these companies have achieved their goal. In the case of companies which are less known may need to access specific investment target brand awareness. As stated Cliff and Motion in 2005 achieve the set goals that are consistent with the needs of enterprise strategy on a basket sponsorship is more appropriate. According to the tests conducted for the second hypothesis can be seen which sponsorship the conference a significant impact on the audience's attitude. The subject of the research is conducted by Jaleh et al in 2004 in connection with the acquired brands. Of course Gostter and Tamspon in 2001 noted that advocacy has a significant effect on brand awareness and attitude but the impact will depend on how implementation sponsorship activities. To investigate what factors affect the audience's awareness of sponsorship the effective sponsorship an event? According to the literature the influence of five factors "audience engagement with an Event" "match between sponsorship and event company", "view of participants at an event on the concept of advocacy", "attitude about participating in the event" and "sponsorship promotional activities during the event" the variable " sponsorship awareness" in the third to eighth research hypotheses were examined. The logistic regression results show the theme of the conference" and "match between sponsorship and event" on all three now have an impact on the awareness of the participants of the conference had corporate sponsorship. It seems that this is due to the company and audience of these events are somehow related to the specialized subject event and the condition of their participation in such events such proportion and so this is the distinguishing factor is not a participant in the event and the variable "view of participants at an event" just about Mapna impact on the awareness of the sponsorship and the two other companies, Parsa and Ariana Project Management Institute does not have awareness of the sponsorship.

According to research conducted by Alexandris in 2008 is the cause of this issue according to the

Mapna Company is one of the largest companies in the implementation of projects in Iran, names of sponsorship for his impressions of the conference the company is not commercial and profit. So the positive side and the benevolent and social marketing have been highlighted.

The test was carried out to evaluate the effect of the event on knowledge attitude toward the sponsorship of all three companies show this factor has a significant effect on awareness no from these corporate sponsorship. For two years in a row in the conference sponsorship even if they only have a two-day conference in connection with this audience and so the impact is not enough time. It is best sponsors events that are held periodically during the period of holding the next event organizers to communicate with the audience. Conference participants are also looking at Ariana Project Management Institute, MAPNA and Tehran Parsa is most active promotion in two conferences.

But the results of logistic regression shows that the impact on the awareness of these three companies is not sponsorship should be a coherent program extension before the event began and later also follow and do not stop these activities only during the two day conference. The second factor is the weakness of the means of implementation and the use of promotional activities undertaken by the company. Since the company and the audience such events are mainly in the field of industrial marketing and experts in their respective fields better promotional programs tailored to this audience set. Promotional activities as well as corporate sponsorship in the event the participants' awareness of the positive impact they have no sponsorship. The lack of influence of the variable duration of the relationship also informed the participants of the event sponsorship by a company in a positive impact on the awareness of its brand. This is done by research by Gross in 2004 as well as Alexandris approved in 2008. As stated Alexandris is aware of the sponsorship the event as the first and most basic purpose is advocacy purposes. Therefore, these studies are necessary in connection with the audience and prestige event to event and how to participate in the event is necessary. Also according to the results of this study and other research has created a negative attitude in the minds of consumers in relation to a variety of promotional activities (including sponsorship) the effectiveness of these activities is severely affected. This seems sponsorship activities of the social marketing approach and non-commercial intentions can enhance the effectiveness of those activities. It is better marketing managers also consider this

point, as was observed in this study or research Jaleh et al famous brands such as Coca-Cola (in this study, Mapna) to maintain its position in the market and maintain awareness of the brand to promote the use of these activities.

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