Spiritual Marketing And Brand Love: A Study In Noor Al-Kafeel Corporation For Animal And Food Products

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Abstract

The current study mainly examines the effect of spiritual marketing on achieving brand love to explain the nature of the relationship between the study's variables by analyzing the relationship between the variables. This was done through a survey of the opinions of a sample of customers of the Noor Al-Kafeel Foundation for Animal and Food Products in Iraq. The study relied on a descriptive and analytical approach to achieving its goals. The study reached several conclusions, the most important of which are: that the use of spiritual marketing activities within the organization increases the emotional participation of customers and thus develops the relationship between the institution and the customer and creates an intimate relationship that results in love with the brand. Furthermore, as the study recommended: Organizations should target strategies that adopt spiritual marketing to instill a love of the brand in the hearts of their customers so that their perception of the organization can be changed to a positive one.

Keywords: Spiritual Marketing, Brand Love, Noor Al Kafeel Foundation for Animal and Food Products, Iraq.

1. INTRODUCTION

Spiritual marketing focuses primarily on fulfilling God's will, as Allah the Almighty has given the individual the ability to meet his needs and absences, meaning that the products and services done with them should benefit society. Furthermore, since Allah, the Almighty, does not want to harm any creature, spiritual marketers need to sell products that do not harm others, and it is clear that this concept is oriented towards God's satisfaction, as it is essential to believe that each individual will get something in return from God in the best way.

Recently, spirituality has become one of the most important motives for purchasing decisions for most customers, as a result of life's pressures, problems, and obstacles, and spirituality focuses on
positive values such as building good relationships, accepting others, perfection, health, wellness, self-improvement, peace, and tolerance.

Even the most ordinary products and services can be marketed as symbols of deeper spiritual values, and placing products as something they are not in overall spiritual growth can attract loyal customers to the brand. Validating this type of marketing by offering the highest possible quality and building a community among customers can be very profitable.

The current study's importance comes from the variables I have touched upon the marketing of my soul and my love of the brand. This reflected the importance of the field and the theoretical importance of the Levi, addressed in the study. So marketing organizations that apply these variables and their subdimensions will lead the improvement of their business, enable them in the future to impose their survival in unstable environments, and work to strengthen their customers and their love of their brand, in line with the organization's future directions, which reflects on the survival of the marketing organization in the competitive market. The main problem with this study is the inadequacy of spiritual marketing efforts in Iraq and the lack of awareness of marketing organizations of their importance.

To address this problem, the study suggests that spiritual marketing be used to communicate with customers and build relationships with them. The intention is to address the whole customer, which consists of the body, mind, heart, and soul. Thus the shift from traditional marketing to a value-based marketing approach is to instill a customer's love for the brand instead of just reporting new products and promotions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Spiritual Marketing

Spirituality was derived from the Latin word "spiritus," which means 'breath of life' (Principe, 1983:131), and duck went through God's spiritual practices. There are two different types of views on spirituality, the first: is the desire or need to discover the significance and purpose of one's life in existence and the universe, and the second is the belief in the sovereignty of God, who controls the whole universe (Hunsberger & Jackson, 2005:809). Furthermore, the spirituality of the inner peace or experience of the individual changes his behavior raises his morale and increases his productivity (AlTai & Al-Hadrawi, 2019). In July 2011, a weekend survey was conducted in the USA, in which it was described that 47% of Americans feel that spirituality is an essential part of their happiness (Nendi & Sunanto, 2019:17).

Changes in the business environment, such as globalization, recession, customer empowerment, climate concerns, new social media, and new-wave technologies, have led to a massive shift in marketing practices (Friedman, 2005). These changes have created a new value-driven era in marketing called spiritual marketing (AlTaie& Al-Hadrawi, 2021:5078), and spirit marketing is defined as: "A value-based marketing concept that focuses not only on the customer's mind and
heart but also on the soul of the customer" (Kotler et al., 2010). The intention is to address the whole customer, which consists of body, mind, heart, and soul, thus shifting from traditional marketing to a value-based marketing approach (Cibities et al., 2011:23).

use (Kotler et al., 2010) the term human soul marketing to refer to their concept of spiritual marketing, and a clear description may be needed to understand the distinction between the terms mind, heart, and spirit. The human mind is capable of independent thinking and analysis, and the heart can feel emotions. Yet, the soul of the customer is the soul of the individual and the philosophical center. This philosophical center seeks the true meaning or purpose of life as a whole, happiness, and spiritual perception (Triatmo & Yulia, 2022) so that the satisfaction of spiritual needs takes precedence over material needs. Customers are looking for organizations that can offer more than money can buy. Customers have become more aware of organizations that provide solutions to their deep concerns about making the world a better place through the organization's vision, mission, and values. These fears reflect the philosophical center of the individual (Rahmayati, 2021:541).

define (Al-Hadrawi & Al-zurfi, 2021:22) spirituality as the appreciation of the immaterial aspects of human life, thus understanding the true meaning that protects or the true purpose of life. Moreover, spirituality seeks its importance in the creative community and tries to pursue self-fulfillment and self-transcendence as described by it (Kotler et al., 2010:19). Self-fulfillment is the need to make the most of the customer's potential and transcend oneself is the need to focus on each other rather than on oneself. Altruism, philanthropy, and spiritual awakening are examples of self-transcendence (Wahyun, 2022).

Spiritual marketing is in direct contrast to the product-centric and customer-oriented era, and the product-centric era has focused solely on the product. This marketing approach has been successful for organizations like Ford due to the lack of globalization and less competition in the market (Friedman, 2005). Then, with advances in technology and increased competition, organizations focused on customer-oriented marketing as they tried to segment and target a suitable customer base (Cundari, 2015). Marketers have realized that all customers do not prefer the same product, as in the case of Ford Model T cars that have been mass-produced and sold only in black, and you insatiably want products that suit their tastes. Because of this change in customer behavior, marketers realized that markets were inherently homogeneous and therefore had to be appropriately divided and targeted (Khairy & Abidin, 2018:4).

With developments in databases increasingly used by organizations to store customer information where purchasing patterns can be understood, and the appropriate customer category can be targeted (Bambang, 2021:233). Moreover, in this era of marketing, products and promotional activities were created to take advantage of the customer's feelings rather than focusing solely on product placement as in the era of product centricity (Kotler et al., 2010:19). Kotler also noted that the main weakness in the era of customer-oriented marketing is that organizations view customers
as mere targets of their promotion campaigns. This is because marketers assume that promotions are better the more customers are persuaded to buy their products (Hindarsah, 2021:3687).

These marketers have failed to understand that customers are human beings with a mind, heart, and soul (Umam, 2015:175) and that product placement and emotional appeals will touch only the minds and hearts of customers, not their souls. So to touch the souls of the customers as well and try to see them as complete human beings (Rini & Absah, 2017:70). Identified (Costa, 2018:839) four dimensions of spiritual marketing:

**Trust:** argue (Kotler et al., 2010:19:35-37) that we want to build trust to touch customers' souls or engage in spiritual marketing. Given the emergence of horizontal trust relationships, the market's task should not merely focus on the product's status but on the brand identity, peace, and image. The intention is to address the entire customer, which consists of body, mind, heart, and soul, where horizontal communication and values such as honesty and authenticity are essential (Cibities et al., 2011:23). A differentiation that is in line with product positioning will create a good brand image, however, for the product to achieve brand safety. Therefore, it must be able to achieve everything it demands through positioning and differentiation. Thus brand safety will build credibility and fulfill the promises of marketers to customers. Building the customers' trust in the brand, therefore, brand safety aims to attract the customer's soul through "trust" (Kotler et al., 2010:19:35-37).

**Creativity:** indicate (Kotler et al., 2010:19:20) that creativity in marketing practices touches the spirit of the customer, so it should be the focus of spiritual marketing. The customer finds all these aspects of spirituality through creativity that expresses itself in humanity, ethics, and spirituality. The authors note that the need for spirituality is the most significant catalyst for society. This creativity helps brands provide life-transforming experiences.

The emergence of the creative community has led to a high tendency towards creativity, and this creativity has become part of spiritual marketing or soul targeting. defines (Andrews & Smith, 1996:176) creative strategy as: "the extent to which the organizer and its practices implement new and meaningful marketing practices in the product category."

Moreover, define (Reinartz & Saffert, 2013:108) creativity as: "the ability of an entrepreneur to offer uncommon and unique solutions to a problem," and creativity is expressed through the spirit of the customer, and has observed (Zukav, 2002) has observed that spirituality has become the primary motivation of customers.

**Social Sustainability Practices:** The sustainability practices (social and environmental sustainability) of the regulator should be an integral part of its mission, vision, and values, and these three components consider the mission, vision, and values that focus, in particular on non-sustainability as the DNA of the regulator. Therefore, all actions of such an organization will accurately reflect these three components, so the organization must exercise task empathy toward
customers, society, and the environment. The long-term visions or aspirations of the regulator should therefore focus on social and environmental sustainability.

The values or standards of behavior adopted by the organizer should also make a difference in different societies. Modern leadership requires increased attention to customers and responsiveness to their needs and requirements (AlTai & Al-Hadrawi, 2019:25-26) as stated (Brecht et al., 2011) that social sustainability can be achieved through cause-related marketing, and so the regulators that practice customer relationship management make donations for a specific cause.

**Environmental Sustainability Practice:** Environmental sustainability is another way systems can embody the customer's soul. It is through sustainability that systems can practice empathy and make a difference. Yet, the practice of environmental sustainability is not just the implementation of a joint charitable activity or social sustainability program of the organizer. Therefore, sustainability should preferably be part of the organization's vision, mission, and values, and an organization’s primary purpose should be to make a difference in protecting the environment. The financial results should therefore come in second place (Kotler et al., 2010:19:58). defines (Peattie, 1995:28) green marketing as: "the management approach that identifies and satisfies the customers and society profitably and sustainably." Furthermore (Coddington, 1993:1) describes green marketing as: "an effort by organizations to protect the environment while recognizing it as a responsibility as well as an opportunity for growth." Thus both definitions converge with the concept of environmental sustainability, which is defined as a management approach aimed at the environment while making profits for the regulator" However, it is essential to know that when organizations aim at spiritual marketing, environmental sustainability should be an integral part of the vision, mission, and values of the organization and should not be just an effort or practice towards sustainability (Maheshwari, 2014).

### 2.2. Brand love

Researchers have studied the brand's attitude and developed many valuable concepts, such as customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Customer researchers have shown increasing interest in customers' feelings toward brands in the past few years. The study of customer behavior evolved from the early field of rational choice and classical decision theory to irrational purchasing. Researchers began to focus on playful, sensual, and emotional responses to non-depreciation. Consumption is "an influx of illusions, feelings, and fun," which is called the empirical view of consumption. Brand love is an emerging concept in this first experimental consumption (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982).

has conducted (Shimp & Madden, 1988) investigations into the construction of love for the brand, where they have defended the structural similarity between personal love and love of consumer objects, and since it was introduced by (Shimp & Madden, 1988). Brand love was a topic of great interest to brand managers, and at first, the researchers adapted the theory of love between customers to consumption contexts (Sternberg, 1986).
Consumers interact with thousands of brands in their lives. However, they develop a strong emotional bond with very few of these things. However, there is a possibility that customers will be able to create a strong emotional relationship with things that consume the same brands. Attachment theory suggests that a customer's emotional attachment to an object predicts the quality of their interaction with the object. For example, customers' emotional attachment to a brand may indicate their desire to make financial sacrifices to keep them close to it (Bowlby, 1979). The brand's love is an emotional emotion of a brand name (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006:81) stated (Batra et al., 2012:4) that the brand includes love and many cognitions, feelings, and behaviors organized into a mental prototype.

defines (Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010:506) brand love as a passion for branding. have developed (Thomson et al., 2005) the construction of an emotional attachment to a brand conceptually closer to brand love. Most previous studies depict the structural similarity between personal love and branding. However, few researchers have different perspectives, and has expressed (Bengtsson, 2003) considerable concern about the parallelism between brand love theory and human relations theory.

Advances in customer research have led to divergent views on brand love. According to customer culture theory, the customer's real world is not rational or transparently unified (Arnould & Thompson, 2005:870). Brand love is associated with this irrational view of consumption, where the customer builds multiple facts using consumption experiences. define (Bergkvist & Bech-Larsen, 2010:505) brand love as "a deep sense of passion for a brand." These studies consider that brand love is the concept of a purely emotional and irrational relationship.

envision (Batra et al., 2012:5) the various components of brand love: self-brand integration, emotionally driven behavior, positive emotional connection, long-term relationship, the narrowness of separation, parity of attitudes, and strength of an attitude. The parity of attitude component refers to comparing a particular brand with an ideal one, which is rational evaluation. Furthermore, in integrating the self-brand, the customer evaluates the degree to which the brand's image matches his self-image, which is also a practical evaluation. This shows that brand love is not a purely illogical concept but rather a combination of rationality and irrationality, and the rational part consists of cognitive thinking and evaluation.

To realize the potential of brand love, it is essential to understand the different factors associated with the general feelings of brand love. However, previous research has identified many of the survival and results of brand love. However, few deep emotional factors have not been addressed through these overt behavioral studies (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006:82), and has conducted (Batra et al., 2012:12) a preliminary qualitative study in the context of developed countries assuming that customer feelings vary widely based on the level of the economy. Since the qualitative exploration of the concept of brand love was in great demand in the context of the emerging economy or development, to what extent is brand love structurally similar to love between customers?
envisions (Sternberg, 1986-1997) four components of love between customers: intimacy, passion, decision, and commitment, and states (Shimp & Madden, 1988) that the components of love between customers described (Sternberg, 1986-1997) are present in the relationships between the customer and the subject. Intimacy is a feeling of admiration mainly derived from passion, passion is primarily derived from motivation and consists of various sources of arousal, the decision refers to the recognition of love in the short term, and commitment is the intention to maintain love in the long run.

The theory of the self-inclusion of love (Aron & Aron, 1986) has also been adapted to marketing. It assumes that customers need to become part of the other to feel loved, so it is suggested (Ahuvia, 1993) that when a brand reaches a high level of true and desired integration with the customer's sense of self, he feels love toward the brand. Another stream of research opinion is on brand love without reference to the theory of love among customers. does not explicitly (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006:84) refer to personal devotion. Instead, it suggests that love for a brand consists of passion, attachment, positive brand reviews, positive emotions in response to it, and love ads for the brand Arya. However, their measurement of one-dimensional brand love may fall into the perception of love's complexity, a construction usually presented as multidimensional (Batra et al., 2012). have identified (Albert et al., 2008) six first-class dimensions of brand love (idealization, intimacy, pleasure, dream, memories, unicity) and two dimensions of the second order (passion and affection). From the above, the following hypotheses were formulated:

**H1** There is a positive moral impact relationship between trust and brand love among Noor Al Kafeel Foundation for Animal and Food Products customers.

**H2** There is an positive moral impact relationship between creativity and the brand's love among Noor Al Kafeel Foundation for Animal and Food Products customers.

**H3** There is an positive moral impact relationship between Social Sustainability Practices And the love of the brand among Noor Al Kafeel Foundation for Animal and Food Products customers.

**H4** There is an positive moral impact relationship between Environmental Sustainability Practices and the brand's love among Noor Al Kafeel Foundation for Animal and Food Products customers.

And in light of the above hypotheses, The hypothetical model of the study was formulated (see Figure 1).
3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

The main tool used to collect the current study's data is a Questionnaire. Given the importance of the measuring instrument in any study that uses the empirical approach, this requires a matching quality test using a set of methods represented by apparent honesty, construction honesty, and stability.

To ensure the credibility of the sample in accurately and adequately representing the study population, the researchers electronically distributed a questionnaire to a Random Sample from the Noor Al-Kafil Foundation for Animal and Food Products in Najaf Al-Ashraf and Karbala Holy Governorates / Iraq using the Stratified Sampling method. After retrieving (310) questionnaires from a total of 360 internal customers in the said institution, it was found that the number of valid questionnaires for statistical analysis amounted to (310) questionnaires and a response rate of (86%). Therefore, it is an acceptable and high percentage and has been analyzed using several statistical tests available within the statistical program (SPSS. V.24).

3.2. Measures

The metrics used to measure variables in the current study are as follows:

- **Spiritual Marketing**: A measure of spiritual marketing developed by (Costa, 2018:844). Which contains four sub-variables: Trust, Creativity, Social Sustainability Practices, and Environmental Sustainability Practices. Participants in the institution were asked to answer by relying on the Likert scale of 5 points ranging from strongly agree (5) to disagree (1) strongly.

- **Brand Love**: We used a modified version of the scale by (Albert et al.,2008:301), and this multidimensional scale captures the complexity of feeling brand love, incorporating six first-order dimensions: idealization, intimacy, pleasure, dream, memories, and unicity. And two
dimensions of the second degree: passion and affection. Participants in the institution were asked to answer by relying on the Likert scale of 5 points ranging from strongly agree (5) to disagree (1) strongly.

4. RESULTS

Table 1 shows that the effect of spiritual marketing dimensions (independent variable) on brand love (dependent variable) is statistically significant as the calculated value of (F) was (12.104) and with a significant level of Sig equal to (0.000) which is less than (0.05), and the value of the coefficient of determination (R 2) equal to (.552) It confirms the morale of the decline. We find that the value of (B) for the Trust variable was (.369) The importance of (T) for this variable was (2.101) and at a significant level (0.016) which is less than (0.05), which confirms the significance of the regression coefficient. For the Creativity variable, the value of (B) was (.275) The value of (T) for this variable was (2.518) with a significant level (0.011) which is less than (0.05), which confirms the significance of the regression coefficient. At the same time, the value of (B) for the Social Sustainability Practices variable was (.421), and the value of (T) for this variable was (4.165) and a significant level of (0.007) which is less than (0.05), which confirms the significance of the regression coefficient. From the preceding and the results mentioned above, the hypothesis accepted the existence of a positive effect of statistical significance of the dimensions of spiritual marketing in the study: Trust, Creativity, Social Sustainability Practices, and Environmental Sustainability Practices. In achieving brand love at Noor Al Kafeel Establishment for Animal and Food Products in Iraq.

From the preceding, spiritual marketing and its exclusion under study plays a significant role because of its impact in achieving the brand's love under investigation.

Table 1: Results of the Regression Model

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<tr>
<td>Love Brand</td>
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<td>12.104</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>.369</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
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<td>Social Sustainability Practices</td>
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5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The current study examined the relationship between spiritual marketing and brand love at Noor Al-Kafeel Foundation for Animal and Food Products in Iraq. The study's results showed a close relationship between the variables in the sample under investigation. Furthermore, it was revealed that the institution that uses spiritual marketing with its customers creates a moderately positive relationship between spiritual marketing and brand love.

One of the most prominent advantages of spiritual marketing is that it creates an intimate relationship with customers, which leads to gaining their loyalty and love for the brand. This is proven in the current study, where it was observed that there is a strong correlation between spiritual marketing and brand love by the customer. Creating a love for a brand in a highly utilitarian product category is more complicated. Because most customers buy utilitarian products such as foodstuffs and detergents, the judgment of cognitive value is where the individual mind of the customer does not reach a state of deep emotion. However, marketing communications designed on spiritual foundations can also stimulate a love for utilitarian brands. And while love for a brand makes no sense, it is based on a cognitive evaluation of functional brand traits and cost-benefit analysis. To a large extent, in developing markets, customers are sensitive to price. Therefore, the obstacles are extreme at the cognitive level that does not allow the customer's mind to move to the next level of love. To avoid the barriers, the organization should carefully target the appropriate segments so that the knowledge satisfaction of the target customers with the brand is high. A spiritual marketing strategy may be right because a highly focused division is needed to create a beloved brand. The analysis supports idea (Fournier's, 1998: 361) that committed relationships between the customer and the brand "need a continuous relationship and constant assertion against market alternatives."

The results show that the use of spiritual marketing activities within the organization increases the emotional engagement of customers, thus developing the relationship between the institution and the customer and creating an intimate relationship that results in love with the brand. The goal of brand love is to attract the customer's spirit and emotions, as spiritual marketing helps customers make decisions with their hearts. Purchases that stem from customers' love for the product are the closest and most powerful ways to facilitate purchases and reduce bounce rates. Most importantly, it leads well to a repeat of the purchase process from the same organization, i.e., increased love and loyalty to the brand (Moorman et al., 1993). This is proven by the current study, so organizations should target strategies that adopt spiritual marketing to instill a love of the brand in the hearts of their customers so that their perception of the organization can be changed to a positive one.
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