

The role of ethical marketing practices in improving intellectual image of football clubs' brands

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Abstract:

The research aims to identify the role of ethical marketing practices in improving the mental image of the brand of football clubs, by studying ethical marketing practices related to (market targeting, product, pricing, promotion, distribution) and its role in improving the mental image of the brand (acceptance, trust, quality, reliability, fame). the researcher used the descriptive approach, and a questionnaire was designed for the most important ethical marketing practices, and a questionnaire was designed for the mental image of the brand, and it was applied to a sample of (858) consumers, a set of results were reached, the most important of which are: Many football clubs apply marketing ethics to preserve existing consumers and attract new ones. The mental image of the football club brand is affected by the extent of these clubs' commitment to ethical practices in sports marketing. The most effective ethical practices in improving the mental image of the brand of football clubs are product-related practices. Then promotion, price, distribution, market targeting.

Ethics in sports industry is an important topic that occupies a large space of thinking by industry's actors and beneficiaries as a result of increasing temptations faced by those in sports industry to behave unethically. This is mainly due to high competitiveness of these parties to achieve success both in and out field, which causes increased pressure by fans, boards of directors, media and sponsors to achieve desired success.

Ethics concerns judgments about whether human behavior is true or wrong, with some distinguishing ethics from morals by defining ethics as the principles or components we cherish in behavior, morals are specific criteria

for correctness or errors in this principle. (20: 90)

Although great the nature variety in ethical violations at sports, it is not limited to a single country or culture, nor underestimating. (10: 15)

The diversity and seriousness of unethical behaviors in global sports industry is confusing and goes beyond violations by athletes and coaches. However, no attention has been paid to estimating the nature of these threats, and marketers regularly assess internal resources and external crises when developing a marketing strategy.(9: 89)

Marketing is the important and necessary strategic activity for sports organizations involved in communicating with their customers

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and how to focus resources on targeting the best markets. Sports marketing is a part of marketing but focuses more on sports context and how sport can increase organizations' abilities to influence customers. Also, many organizations use sports marketing as a way to give themselves a competitive advantage and link sport with more commercial orientation . (21: 164)

The initial strategic steps of sports marketers have always been talked about by: consumers- consumer protection groups- fans, and media. As in any other industry, there were some questions about decisions' suitability of targeted markets, production strategies, distribution decisions, pricing policies, and promotional practices.

These questions and concerns include the process of marketing sports products, as well as practices used in marketing non-sports products through using sports framework. We can say that criticisms generally represent gaps in ethical principles rather than legal violations. (14: 220)

Marketing professionals face many ethical issues in fact, and their decisions can have repercussions on products' safety, advertising validity, price integrity and suitable behaviors towards distributors. In general, marketing managers faces more ethical problems than other company managers because their role is external and they deal with multiple actors outside the organization and are likely to have conflicting interests. (25: 60)

Pritchard, M. (2014) citing Laczniak, G. points out that unethical practices can clearly occur in different parts of sports marketing mix (e.g., price, promotion). But in sales-

intensive industries, sales' staff may be particularly vulnerable to ethical pressures. (20 :89)

The social and economic cost of ethical failure in professional sport can no longer be ignored. Sports marketers cannot assume that ethical failures result in little or no damage to the brand and its different relationships. (16: 210)

Therefore, it is necessary to have the ability to understand and assimilate basic ethics, so that we can discuss the ethics applied within sports clubs. This enables club managers to understand the purpose of their work and helps them to make decisions that matches their ethics. (23: 113)

It should be noted that brand's image lies in consumers' minds, where image is a thought about the brand based on past experiences - existed knowledge – and knowledge obtained from other resources, including marketing communications. (13: 109)

The brand can increase consumer preference and usage, to stir consumers' emotions and tend to enhance level of trust and loyalty among consumers. In fact, both brands and branding have become the cornerstone of sports teams' long-term survival. (22:181)

The concept of a brand's intellectual image stems from a psychological perspective, which expresses psychological influence on consumers' behaviors and decisions by influencing their emotions, taking into account their tendencies and desires, by trying to meet consumers' needs that is difficult to satisfy through an innovative new message or developing attractive product, defined as "total

intellectual correlations stored in consumer's memory of a brand" (4:97)

The intellectual image is one of the most important challenges facing the institution, especially in light of rapid changes in its surroundings. Therefore, it has become necessary for the institution to work to provide all efforts and harness all possibilities to build a positive intellectual image and improve its reputation among consumers in order to achieve survival and sustainability. (2: 119)

Within limits of researchers' knowledge, they found that despite increased scientific efforts to study sports marketing, studies in ethical practices in sports marketing are somewhat rare. There is still a need for further research on marketing ethics according to recommendations made in some studies such as Pritchard, M., & Burton, R. (2014), Oyebode et al (2016), Bjelica, Dusko et al (2016), Nureldin Scharf, Abed bin Kaddour (2020) in order to align marketing practices with marketing ethics and implanting interest in them as an entry point to enhance intellectual image as the main driver for expanding market quotas and finding competitive advantages of football clubs as well as working to attract new consumers and preserve existing consumers and this prompts the need for current research.

Research Terms:

- **Ethical marketing practices:** These are club's intended practices to achieve its marketing objectives under an ethical umbrella aimed at achieving consumers' needs and desires.
- **Brand:** It is a "name, word, sign, symbol, drawing, or combination of all of that". Any brand serves the purpose of identifying company's goods and services and distinguishing them from competitors. (22: 180)
- **Intellectual image:** Personal impressions made by individuals

towards the club based on their practices and relevant outputs to related parties, which influence their behaviors towards the club.

Research Objective:

The research aims to recognize the role of ethical marketing practices in improving intellectual image of football clubs' brands by testing validity of following assumptions:

Research Assumptions:

1. There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices and improving brand's intellectual image of football clubs.
2. There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices associated with market targeting and improving brand's intellectual image.
3. There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices associated with the product and improving brand's intellectual image.
4. There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices associated with pricing and improving brand's intellectual image.
5. There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices associated with distribution and improving brand's intellectual image.
6. There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices associated with promotion and improving brand's intellectual image.

Research Procedures:

Used Method:

The researchers used descriptive-surveying method, for suitability research's nature.

Research Community:

Current research community includes consumers of football clubs' products in Arab Republic of Egypt.

Research Sample:

The researchers selected research's sample randomly, 947 of which were consumers of football

clubs in Arab Republic of Egypt, 89 consumers in reconnaissance sample, and 858 consumers in basic sample.

Table (1)
Numerical and Relative Statement of Search Sample N = (947)

m	Basic Data		Reconnaissance sample		Basic Sample	
			Number	%	Number	%
1	Gender	Male	63	70.78%	496	57.81%
		Female	26	29.22%	362	42.19%
2	Age	Less than 20 years old	15	16.82%	225	26.23%
		From 20 to 34	24	26.91%	437	50.93%
		From 35 to 44	21	23.62%	110	12.82%
		From 45 to 55	16	17.97%	40	4.66%
		Older than 55 years	13	14.66%	46	5.36%
3	Total		89	100%	858	100%

Data collection tools:

The researchers used following methods to collect research data:

- Access to scientific research and references on marketing ethics, intellectual image, football brands such as: Brahimi Musaika (2019), Nour Eddine Scharf, Abed Ben Kaddour (2020), Pritchard, M., & Burton, R. (2014), Dusko, B. et al, (2016), Hosiny, A. (2016), Bridgewater (2010), where researchers identified the most important axes and dimensions of these research and the most important results.
- The researchers developed two questionnaires: ethical marketing practices' questionnaire (brand's intellectual image) with closed-answer questions using a quintet Licert scale (1 = strongly disagreed, 5 = strongly agreed) with following steps in their preparation:

Survey:

To verify appropriateness of questionnaire phrases, the researchers applied questionnaire Annex (1) on a

reconnaissance sample included (89) consumers of football clubs' products in Arab Republic of Egypt within research community and outside basic sample. The researcher used validity of internal consistency of both questionnaire and scale by finding Correlation coefficients between each phrase with its axis's overall degree, and questionnaire's overall degree, correlation between axes, and correlation between overall degree of each axis with questionnaire's overall degree.

Validity internal consistency of ethical marketing practices questionnaire:

By applying the questionnaire to reconnaissance sample that included (89) phrases, the researchers used validity of internal consistency to create a correlation between phrases and overall degree of each axis, and between axes and questionnaire's overall degree (validity of internal consistency), as shown in table No. (2):

Table (2)
Internal consistency validity of ethical marketing practices questionnaire n = (89)

phrases	Correlation coefficient		phrases	Correlation coefficient		phrases	Correlation coefficient	
	Axis	Questionnaire		Axis	Questionnaire		Axis	Questionnaire
First Axis: Ethical Practices Associated with Targeting Markets			Third Axis: Ethical Practices Associated with price			Fifth Axis: Ethical Practices Associated with promotion		
1	0.485	0.381	13	0.545	0.462	24	0.417	0.356
3	0.525	0.403	14	0.473	0.332	25	0.493	0.424
4	0.585	0.445	15	0.439	0.364	26	0.577	0.384
5	0.521	0.373	16	0.133	0.044	27	0.411	0.455
6	0.514	0.421	17	0.408	0.387	28	0.424	0.321
Second axis: ethical practices associated with sports product			18	0.398	0.292	29	0.534	0.313
7	0.562	0.435	Fourth Axis: Ethical Practices Associated with distribution					
8	0.464	0.395	19	0.421	0.333			
9	0.581	0.412	20	0.395	0.228			
10	0.565	0.395	21	0.405	0.330			
11	0.443	0.332	22	0.486	0.498			
12	0.089	0.101	23	0.577	0.431			

* value of tabular "R" at a significant level of 0.05 = 0.174

Table (2) shows a functional correlation between phrases and axes' overall degree, and between phrases and questionnaire's overall degree, where calculated "R" values were greater than tabular "R" value at significant level of 0.05, indicating questionnaire's validity under research, and absence of a functional correlation between phrases (12, 16) and axes' overall degree, and between these phrases and questionnaire's overall degree, where calculated "R" values were lower than tabular "R" value at

significant level of 0.05, indicating invalidity of these phrases.

Stability of Ethical Marketing Practices Questionnaire:

The researchers applied the questionnaire to a sample of 89 individuals from same research community and outside basic research sample aiming to find stability coefficient value for questionnaire of ethical marketing practices under research using Half segmentation -Alfa Kronbach method, as shown in table (3):

Table (3)
Ethical Marketing Practices Questionnaire n=(89)

m	Axes	Half segmentation	Sperman Brunn	Gitman Stability	Alfa Kronbach
1	Ethical practices associated with market targeting	0.659	0.797	0.759	0.829
2	Ethical practices associated with sports product	0.668	0.804	0.783	0.866
3	Ethical practices associated with price	0.662	0.799	0.777	0.924
4	Ethical practices associated with distribution	0.671	0.815	0.801	0.935
5	Ethical practices associated with Promotion	0.682	0.881	0.872	0.941
6	Overall degree of questionnaire	0.774	0.896	0.891	0.958

* value of tabular "R" at a significant level of 0.05 = 0.174

Table (3) shows that stability coefficient -Alpha Cronbach ranged from (0.829) to (0.941), with (0.958) for questionnaire's overall degree, and questionnaire's stability coefficient-Spearman Brunn ranged from (0.797) to (0.881), with (0.876) for questionnaire's overall degree, Gitman

stability coefficient ranged from (0.759) to (0.872), with (0.891) for questionnaire's overall degree, and Half segmentation coefficient ranged from (0.659) to (0.682) with (0.774) for questionnaire's overall degree, indicating high questionnaire's stability coefficient under research.

Validity internal consistency of intellectual image improvement questionnaire:

Table (4)

Validity internal consistency of intellectual image improvement questionnaire n = (89)

phrases	Correlation coefficient		phrases	Correlation coefficient		phrases	Correlation coefficient	
	Axis	Questionnaire		Axis	Questionnaire		Axis	Questionnaire
First: Acceptance			Third: Quality			Fifth: Fame		
1	0.429	0.325	8	0.506	0.379	16	0.361	0.300
2	0.469	0.347	9	0.408	0.339	17	0.437	0.368
3	0.529	0.389	10	0.506	0.379	18	0.521	0.328
4	0.352	0.331	11	0.095	0.087			
Second: Trust			Fourth: Reliability					
5	0.506	0.379						
6	0.408	0.339	12	0.365	0.277			
7	0.506	0.379	13	0.339	0.321			
			14	0.349	0.274			
			15	0.478	0.257			

* value of tabular "R" at a significant level of 0.05 = 0.174

Table (4) shows a functional correlation between phrases and axes' overall degree, and between phrases and questionnaire's overall degree, where calculated "R" values were greater than tabular "R" value at significant level of 0.05, indicating questionnaire's validity under research, as well as absence of a significant

Correlation between phrases (11) and axes' overall degree, and between these phrases and questionnaire's overall degree, where calculated "R" value were lower than tabular the "R" value at a significant level of 0.05, indicating invalidity of these phrases.

Stability of Intellectual Image Improvement Questionnaire:

Table (5)

Stability of Intellectual Image Improvement Questionnaire n = (89)

m	Axes	Half segmentation	Sperman Brunn	Gitman Stability	Alfa Kronbach
1	Acceptance	0.673	0.811	0.773	0.843
2	Trust	0.682	0.818	0.797	0.880
3	Quality	0.676	0.813	0.791	0.938
4	Reliability	0.685	0.829	0.815	0.949
5	Fame	0.696	0.895	0.886	0.955
6	Questionnaire's Overall degree	0.788	0.910	0.905	0.972

* value of tabular "R" at a significant level of 0.05 = 0.174

Table (5) shows that questionnaire's stability with Alpha Cronbach ranged from (0.843) to (0.955) with (0.972) for questionnaire's overall degree, stability coefficient in Spearman Brunn ranged from (0.811) to (0.895) with (0.910) for questionnaire's overall degree, and stability coefficient in Gitman's was between (0.773) and (0.886) with (0.905) for questionnaire's overall degree, as well as Half segmentation coefficient ranged from (0.673) to (0.696) with questionnaire's degree, indicating the high stability coefficient of questionnaire under study.

Basic study:

After conducting scientific transactions for validity and stability, the researcher applied both questionnaires in their final form. Annex (3), annex (4) to basic research sample of 858 consumers from 1/1/2022 to 30/1/2022. After application was completed, the data was organized, unloaded and scheduled for appropriate statistical processing.

Results Presentation and Discussion:
First Assumption: There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices and improving brand's intellectual image of football clubs.

Table (6)
Correlation between ethical marketing practices and improving brand's intellectual image of football clubs (n = 858)

m	Axes	Acceptance	Trust	Quality	Reliability	Fame	Questionnaire's Overall degree
1	Ethical practices associated with market targeting	0.654	0.592	0.662	0.667	0.632	0.662
2	Ethical practices associated with sports product	0.758	0.694	0.783	0.777	0.748	0.777
3	Ethical practices associated with price	0.584	0.521	0.683	0.644	0.587	0.634
4	Ethical practices associated with distribution	0.598	0.535	0.702	0.662	0.605	0.651
5	Ethical practices associated with Promotion	0.756	0.689	0.770	0.770	0.742	0.769
6	Overall degree of questionnaire	0.688	0.622	0.740	0.724	0.680	0.717

* value of tabular "R" at a significant level of 0.05 = 0.052

Table (6) shows a significant parcel correlation between ethical marketing practices and improving brand's intellectual image of football clubs, where calculated "R" values were greater than tabular "R" value at significant level of 0.05.

The researchers attribute this conclusion to the fact that ethical marketing practices have become one of the most important methods adopted by football clubs, especially with some hints of unethical practices and corruption issues within football industry, to build positive impressions of brands' intellectual image among consumers and related parties, especially in highly competitive commercialized environment, changes

in consumers' tastes, and increase in actors and beneficiaries of football industry.

This is consistent with Nour Eddine Scharf, Abed Ben Kaddour (2020) (5), which indicated that company's commitment to philosophy and concept of marketing ethics would reduce unethical marketing practices of its employees and maintain its image in targeted markets. Thus, the validity of the first assumption can be accepted.

Second Assumption: There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices associated with market targeting and improving brand's intellectual image.

Table (7)
Results' analysis of simple linear regression of ethical practices impact associated with market targeting on improving brand's intellectual image

Independent Variable	R	R ²	Regression coefficient	Standard error	β Value	"T" Value	Significance Level	"F" Value	Significance Level
Fixed amount			33.287	1.358		24.519	0.000		
Ethical practices associated with market targeting	0.634	0.401	1.828	0.076	0.634	23.957	0.000	573.958	0.000

Table (7) that calculated "F" value is equal to (573.958) is statistically significant at 0.05, where significance level is 0.00, which is below 0.05. This indicates a statistically significant impact between ethical practices associated with market targeting on improving brand's intellectual image, and this is confirmed by calculated "T" value and its significance level of (0.00), which is less than study's default level (0.05).

This shows statistically significant correlation between ethical practices associated with market

targeting and improving brand's intellectual image. This is confirmed by "R" coefficient value (0.634), which means that the better ethical practices associated with market targeting, the better became brand's intellectual image, as well as a statistically significant impact of ethical practices associated with market targeting on improving brand's intellectual image by (40.1%) assuming stability of other coefficients and this is significant impact at (0.05).

The researchers attribute this conclusion to the fact that marketing

practices of sports clubs to target groups in sports market are greatly assessed by consumers, although sports market does not include homogeneous groups of consumers who do not respond in the same way to marketing practices, these groups assess these practices and their compatibility with ethics prevailing in Egyptian society and thus reflect improved their intellectual image of football clubs' brands.

In this regard, Cousens, L., Babiak, K. & Bradish, C. (2006) points out that

social and economic cost of moral failure in professional sport can no longer be ignored. Sports marketers cannot assume that ethical failures result in little or no damage to the brand and its different relationships (16: 210). Thus, the validity of second assumption can be accepted.

Third Assumption: There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices associated with the product and improving brand's intellectual image.

Table (8)

Results' analysis of simple linear regression of ethical practices impact associated with product on improving brand's intellectual image

Independent Variable	R	R ²	Regression coefficient	Standard error	β Value	"T" Value	Significance Level	"F" Value	Significance Level
Fixed amount	0.777	0.603	4.342	1.695		2.561	0.011	1302.524	0.000
Ethical practices associated with product			2.823	0.078	0.777	36.090	0.000		

Table (8) shows that calculated "F" value is equal to (1302.524) as statistically significant at 0.05, where significance level is 0.00, which is below 0.05. This indicates a statistically significant impact between ethical practices associated with product on improving brand's intellectual image, and this is confirmed by calculated "T" value and its significance level of (0.00), which is less than study's default level (0.05).

This shows statistically significant relation between ethical practices associated with product and improving brand's intellectual image. This is confirmed by "R" coefficient value (0.777), which means that the better ethical practices associated with product, the better became brand's intellectual image, as well as a

statistically significant impact of ethical practices associated with product on improving brand's intellectual image by (60.3%) assuming stability of other coefficients and this is significant impact at (0.05).

The researchers attribute this conclusion to the fact that the product - whether it is a sports or not a sports product marketed through sport- is the real value that a consumer has in exchange process between the consumer and the club, So, ethical marketing of sports product creates compatibility process between information available about it and consumer's perception during its use, which affects improving intellectual image of football clubs' brands.

In this regard, Fetchko, M., Roy, D., & Clow., K. (2013) indicates that

product strategy is the starting point of marketing management decisions. The logical interpretation of the priority placed on product's strategy is that if there is no product there is no need to make decisions on price, distribution and communication (13: 125). Thus,

the validity of third assumption can be accepted.

Fourth Assumption: There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices associated with pricing and improving brand's intellectual image.

Table (9)
Results' analysis of simple linear regression of ethical practices impact associated with pricing on improving brand's intellectual image

Independent Variable	R	R ²	Regression coefficient	Standard error	β Value	"T" Value	Significance Level	"F" Value	Significance Level
Fixed amount	0.662	0.438	20.872	1.730		12.068	0.000	666.741	0.000
Ethical practices associated with pricing			1.805	0.070	0.662	25.821	0.000		

Table (9) that calculated "F" value is equal to (666.741) is statistically significant at 0.05, where significance level is 0.00, which is below 0.05. This indicates a statistically significant impact between ethical practices associated with pricing on improving brand's intellectual image, and this is confirmed by calculated "T" value and its significance level of (0.00), which is less than study's default level (0.05).

This shows statistically significant relation between ethical practices associated with pricing and improving brand's intellectual image. This is confirmed by "R" coefficient value (0.662), which means that the better ethical practices associated with pricing, the better became brand's intellectual image, as well as a statistically significant impact of ethical practices associated with pricing on improving brand's intellectual image by (43.8%)

assuming stability of other coefficients and this is significant impact at (0.05).

The researchers attribute this conclusion to the fact that price is one of the most important variables affecting purchasing decision of sports consumer, where sports consumers come from different economic systems that affect their sensitivity to price, so football clubs adopt ethical practices of fair pricing, setting prices according to different levels of sports product, especially in ticket prices, which gives the brand a positive impression of its intellectual image among consumers.

This is consistent with Özdemir, E. & Tokol, T. (2009) who noted that pricing is one of the most difficult processes in marketing, especially when it comes to adjusting it from ethical aspects because it is ethically assumed that price is suitable with total benefits received by the consumer (15) . Thus, the validity of fourth assumption can be accepted.

Fifth Assumption: There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices

associated with distribution and improving brand's intellectual image.

Table (10)

Results' analysis of simple linear regression of ethical practices impact associated with distribution on improving brand's intellectual image

Independent Variable	R	R ²	Regression coefficient	Standard error	β Value	"T" Value	Significance Level	"F" Value	Significance Level
Fixed amount			32.091	1.345		23.867	0.000		
Ethical practices associated with distribution	0.651	0.424	1.855	0.074	0.651	25.097	0.000	629.845	0.000

Table (10) that calculated "F" value is equal to (629.845) is statistically significant at 0.05, where significance level is 0.00, which is below 0.05. This indicates a statistically significant impact between ethical practices associated with distribution on improving brand's intellectual image, and this is confirmed by calculated "T" value and its significance level of (0.00), which is less than study's default level (0.05).

This shows statistically significant relation between ethical practices associated with distribution and improving brand's intellectual image. This is confirmed by "R" coefficient value (0.651), which means that the better ethical practices associated with distribution, the better became brand's intellectual image, as well as a statistically significant impact of ethical practices associated with distribution on improving brand's intellectual image by (42.4%) assuming stability of other coefficients and this is significant impact at (0.05).

The researchers attribute this conclusion to the vital role played by distribution practices of sports products in accordance with ethical frameworks and rules, without pursuing policies of consumers' prevention and exclusion away from intermediaries and parallel markets, which reinforces consumers' confidence in football clubs and reflects improvement of their intellectual image.

This is consistent with Falah al-Zaghib (2010), a morally committed institution must fulfill its promises to provide the product with the required and agreed quantity & quality, in exact place and time until consumer's desired benefit is realized (3). Thus, the validity of fifth assumption can be accepted.

Sixth Assumption: There is a statistically significant correlation between ethical marketing practices associated with promotion and improving brand's intellectual image.

Table (11)
Results' analysis of simple linear regression of ethical practices impact associated with promotion on improving brand's intellectual image

Independent Variable	R	R ²	Regression coefficient	Standard error	β Value	"T" Value	Significance Level	"F" Value	Significance Level
Fixed amount	0.769	0.592	5.661	1.700		3.329	0.001	1240.120	0.000
Ethical practices associated with promotion			2.304	0.065	0.769	35.215	0.000		

Table (11) that calculated "F" value is equal to (1240.120) is statistically significant at 0.05, where significance level is 0.00, which is below 0.05. This indicates a statistically significant impact between ethical practices associated with promotion on improving brand's intellectual image, and this is confirmed by calculated "T" value and its significance level of (0.00), which is less than study's default level (0.05).

This shows statistically significant relation between ethical practices associated with promotion and improving brand's intellectual image. This is confirmed by "R" coefficient value (0.769), which means that the better ethical practices associated with promotion, the better became brand's intellectual image, as well as a statistically significant impact of ethical practices associated with promotion on improving brand's intellectual image by (59.2%) assuming stability of other coefficients and this is significant impact at (0.05).

The researchers attribute this conclusion to the fact that promotion aim is to communicate with consumers to deliver club's benefits and advantages and play an important role in determining its place in consumer's mind using many methods, including advertising, personal sale, public relations, so adherence to ethical controls leads to forming of a positive attitude by consumers to influence their purchasing decisions.

In this regard, Robinson., M. (2010) indicates that successful promotional behaviors of any club are based on: creating a positive position for the product in consumer's mind - ability to reach target audience - collecting a return from club's investment - increasing consumer awareness - and the most important affecting on sales. (23:156)

Conclusions and recommendations:

Conclusions:

- Growing interest of football clubs in applying marketing ethics to preserve existing consumers and attract new consumers.
- Intellectual image of football clubs' brands is influenced by these clubs' adherence to ethical practices in sports marketing.
- The most influential ethical practices in improving intellectual image of football clubs' brands are the practices associated with product and then promoting, pricing, distribution, market targeting.
- There is an impact of ethical marketing practices associated with market targeting and improving brand's intellectual image.
- There is an impact of ethical marketing practices associated with product and improving brand's intellectual image.
- There is an impact of ethical marketing practices associated with pricing and improving brand's intellectual image.
- There is an impact of ethical marketing practices associated with

distribution and improving brand's intellectual image.

- There is an impact of ethical marketing practices associated with promotion and improving brand's intellectual image.

Recommendations:

- Football clubs must adopt ethics of sports marketing within its consistent principles and not be considered as a temporary situation changed by sports market changes.
- Football clubs must communicate regularly with consumers and look at their complaints and solve their problems resulting from some wrong marketing practices.
- Football clubs' interest in improving their brands' intellectual image among consumers through regular promotion of their ethical practices.
- Sports institutions that govern sports should work to develop and activate laws and regulations that stimulate working ethically in order to achieve all beneficiaries in football industry.
- Training marketing managers to deal with ethical problems and how to solve damage to football clubs' brands.

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