

Impact of Social Media on the Personal Branding of Cricketers

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Abstract

As a result of widespread use of information technology, there had been a rapid increase in the number of internet and social media platform users during the last three decades. At present, social media has become a crucial aspect of people's daily life. Athletes, in particular, establish public relationship with their audiences through social media platforms to manage others' impressions on their skills, abilities and experiences. Most of the authors have identified that due to the complexity of human behaviour, there is a lack of generalizability in this context. On the other hand, some authors have identified this as an attractive research area due to the scarcity of related literature. Moreover, many of the previous authors that have been identified were recommended to do further research on this topic. Therefore, the objective of this research is to discuss the impact of social media platform, content quality, content type, advocacy for advertising, life cycle, and performance on the brand image of Sri Lankan cricketers. Conceptual framework was formulated accordingly. A quantitative methodology was employed for this study. Data were collected through online survey method with the help of pre-tested structured questionnaire from 384 social media users in Sri Lanka who actively follow cricketers, using convenience sampling techniques. Unit of analysis was individual. Both correlation and regression analyses were employed in data analysis. The study concludes that the brand image of cricketers on social media is positively and significantly influenced by six key factors; social media platform, content quality, content type, advocacy for advertising, lifestyle, and performance. Due to the lack of literature on influence of social media platform and personal branding, researchers are recommended to do further research for validating and generalizing their findings.

Keywords: athlete branding, cricketers' brand image, personal branding, social media influence, sports marketing