Social media celebrities and the role of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards them (An exploratory study in Kuwait)

مساعد فهد الشمري

Musaed Fahad ALshammari
PhD student at ASU in United state

Abstract

This study aims to identify the role of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards Social media in Kuwait. Quantitative approach was adopted to answer the question of the study by using questionnaires. A quantitative methodology was adopted, where a questionnaire has been distributed online among a sample of (300) social media masses and users in Kuwait. The collected responses were analyzed by SPSS 23 and the results showed that Kuwaitis rely on various social media platforms to follow celebrities, but the largest percentage of them depend on Instagram, followed by Facebook, then Twitter, then YouTube, Snapchat and TikTok. The study also showed the importance of public relations companies and the efforts made by them in introducing the audience to social media celebrities' news, activities and events, as it represents the mirror of the celebrity and plays a key and effective role in managing its social activities and facilitating

communication and interrelationship between the celebrity and the public. The results also stressed on the importance of communication means including media interviews, posting videos, photos, live streaming videos, etc. used by public relations companies to improve the image of celebrities. Finally the study concluded that there is a statistically significant positive impact of public relations management companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards social media celebrities at significant level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). The study recommended the necessity for companies to adopt social media in their business and focus their efforts on increasing the effectiveness of their content on social networks

Keywords: Social media; Celebrities; Influencers; Public Relations; Mental image.

1. Introduction

The past recent decades witnessed a huge technological and knowledge revolution, which produced many concepts that formed a transformative blister for many fields. Social media is one of the most important changes produced by this revolution, as it is today the most widely used activity on the Internet (Aroraa, Bansal, Kandpal, Aswani, & Dwivedi, 2019). Social media has transformed the entertainment and media industry. These platforms provide opportunities for individuals to become famous by creating content and sharing it with the public, so social media celebrities appeared (Pöyry, Pelkonen, Naumanen, & Laaksonen, 2019). These celebrities communicate with their followers directly and display their daily activities and practices through these platforms, which gives them high credibility and the ability to influence their followers. Therefore, brands and businesses

contract with these celebrities to promote their products and activities on widespread social media platforms (Giles, 2017).

To ensure the success of the work of these celebrities and to create mass value, which helps them achieve many gains, it is necessary to work on creating positive impressions and feelings about them. The integration between these beliefs and feelings known as the mental image of the masses, which refers to the trends, perceptions, beliefs and feelings towards them. The formation of a positive mental image is critical to ensuring business continuity and success, due to its impact on the behavior of the masses and their satisfaction with these works and assessing their ability to meet their needs (AL-Rhaimi, 2015).

A positive mental image is something that is difficult to create and maintain, and on the other hand, is easy to lose. Therefore, building and improving a mental image requires organized and continuous efforts and well-informed programs prepared by specialists who are able to remove all obstacles or problems that lead to distortion of this image (Chen & Chen, 2014).

Hence, the importance of public relations clearly shows to carry out systematic, planned, and continuous efforts to gain the masses' trust, sympathy, and to establish effective communication channels that ensure a mutual understanding between clients of public relations companies and their masses (Chege, 2014). Public relations companies contribute to provide two-way communication channels, create state of trust, respect, mutual

understanding. In addition, they works to justify situations and analyze issues and help its clients achieve their goals (Ghryani & Omar, 2021).

Based on the foregoing, the importance of public relations in managing the business of social media celebrities appears. Considering, the increasing number of these celebrities in the Arab world i and the Gulf in particular .Therefore, The idea of this research crystallized to identify the public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards Social media celebrities.

1.1 Problem Statement

The Arab Gulf is witnessing a wide spread of influencers or famous social media. These celebrities have the ability to influence the behavior of the masses and their attitudes towards consuming products and brands, which has made them a strategic tool for marketing and promoting businesses, brands and others. The influence of these celebrities depends on the nature of the impressions they leave with their masses, and accordingly these celebrities aim to improve the public's mental image towards them, which requires the presence of organized and continuous efforts made by specialists in the management of public relations. Therefore, the problem statement of this study is identify the role of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards Social media in Kuwait.

١.٢ Study Questions

The study seeks to answer the following main question, "What is the role of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards Social media celebrities in Kuwait?" In addition, the following sub-questions:

1. What is the most used social media in Kuwait?

2. What are the functions of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards the famous social media in Kuwait?

3. What are the means of communication used to improve the mental image of the masses towards the famous social media in Kuwait?

١,٣ Significance of the Study

There are no studies that have addressed the role of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards Social media. Most of the relevant studies deal with the role of public relations in improving the mental image of organizations. On the other hand, the results of the study are expected to contribute to the development of public relations management practices for social media celebrities and to determine the nature of the public's mental image towards them.

2. Literature review

2.1 Social Media Celebrities

The wide spread of social media platforms has created new patterns of interaction and communication. This communication is based on virtual media that provides an interactive, attractive, and entertaining environment that has managed to attract a huge number of followers around the world (Aroraa, Bansal, Kandpal, Aswani, & Dwivedi, 2019).

A few years after the advent of social media, it has become the most popular activity on the Internet. It has spread very quickly, with more users than email users. The concept of social media is used to describe platforms that allow their users to create and share content. Social media is defined as "a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technical foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content" (Samarasinghe, 2019).

Social media is an important platform for celebrities and consumers. They provide a safe and convenient platform for celebrities to interact with their fans. Celebrities use social media to promote their movies and concerts and to create awareness of charitable events or causes (Chung & Cho, 2017).

Considering the media nature of social media and based on the general principles of the entertainment industry, social media has created various opportunities for individuals to become famous. Many terms are used to describe individuals who became famous through social media such as social media celebrities, influencers, insta-fame and vlogger celebrity. (Pöyry, Pelkonen, Naumanen, & Laaksonen, 2019)

Social media celebrities are working to provide content to the masses and with the huge influence of these followers, brands and companies are promoting their activities and products through these celebrities. Due to their high credibility and direct communication with their masses, many researchers believe that social media celebrities have more influence on consumers' preferences and choices than traditional advertising (Djafarova & Rushworthb, 2017; Giles, 2017).

The phenomenon of social media celebrities has emerged with the rise of reality TV stars. The concept of social media celebrities refers to non-traditional celebrities who became famous through social media (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2016). These celebrities have a great influence on their followers, especially in consuming products and brands, which attributed to the close and direct relationship between them and their masses, which increases their reputation and desire to imitate them. Conversely, traditional celebrities who use social media as a promotional tool for their work (Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019).

Social media influencers are a subset of digital content creators. They promote brands and commercial projects through their accounts, which are followed by a large number of followers (Duffy, 2020).

Social media celebrities seek to increase the number of their followers and maintain a close relationship between them based on respect, discussion and mutual benefit. They are the most important capital that determines the value of this celebrity and the level of his fame.

Therefore, they are keen to build, maintain and improve a positive image among their masses. The image of social media celebrities depends on many traits; Credibility, realism, attractiveness, familiarity, good faith, experience, trustworthiness…etc. This image contributes to determining the level of influence of a social media celebrity and his ability to persuade his followers to consume the products and brands he is promoting (Ryu & Han, 2021).

2.2 Public Relations Companies

The term Public Relations (PR) was first used in the US during the early twentieth century. In 1906, the Post Office became the first private firm to offer public services to its customers (Gilaninia, Taleghani, & Mohammadi, 2013). It is difficult to define public relations precisely, it was defined in 1978 by the International Public Relations Association as "The art and social science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organization's leadership, and implementing planned programme of action which will serve both the organization's and the public's interest" (Chege, 2014, p. 1).

The British Institute of Public Relations define it as systematic, planed, continuous effort to gain the trust, sympathy, and endorsement of the public, with creating a state of mutual understanding through solid communication and effective policies (Gilaninia, Taleghani, & Mohammadi, 2013). This is confirmed by the definition of the Chartered Institute of

Public Relations that defined public relations as striped and continued effort done by specific bodies to found and protect goodwill and reciprocal comprehension between Institutions and its masses (Anyango, 2012).

Furthermore, it is one of the human communication arts that aims to create distinguished relationships between public relations company's clients and the public, based on respect, appreciation, trust and mutual interests (Gilaninia, Taleghani, & Mohammadi, 2013).

Public relations have administrative nature; it helps to maintain reciprocal channels for communication, understanding and cooperation between institutions or persons and their different masses. Therefore, the Public Relations use as an administrative tool for the effective management to help them achieve their goals and advance in their field (Chege, 2014).

The concept of public relations has great importance in the past decades because of the increasing intensity of competition between companies and institutions in all fields of work (Kaleli, Otslulah, & Mutisya, 2021). The point of Public relations is mostly to convince the general population, financial backers, workers and different partners to keep a positive and specific perspective to the organization, and its administration and products (Anyango, 2012).

Public relations companies implement many practices aim to anticipate, analyze and interpret public opinion, expected attitudes and trends, and issues that may be relevant to

their clients business. The importance of these practices lies in establishing interactive relationships, creating positive trends and improving the mental image of these customers among their audiences in a way that ensures the sustainability of their business and the continuity of their progress with confident, successful steps capable of achieving goals (Oparaugo, 2021).

The literature indicates four models of public relations that define the nature of public relations companies' functions and the relationship between these companies, clients and their masses (Cho, Schweickart, & Haase, 2014). First: The Press a gentry/Publicity model, this model is used in works that include a kind of show business, such as public relations for celebrities. This model aims of creating media coverage and promoting the celebrities works. Second: The public information model, which is used to deliver information to the masses and facilitate the process of communication between the company's clients and their masses. Third: Two-way asymmetric public relations model, this model provides a two-way communication that aims to create positive change in the attitudes and orientations of the masses only (it is not aim to develop the practices of its clients, which is why it is called asymmetric). Fourth: Two-way symmetric public relations model, this model is an ideal picture of public relations. Provides bilateral communication aimed at achieving mutual benefit, the clients of these companies and their masses are ready to create positive change that suits the needs and goals of each party (Ayman, Kaya, & Kuruç, 2020).

Public relations companies are associated with the celebrity and media industry, it contribute to the promotion and media coverage of celebrities, and their projects. Despite the different methods used to manage celebrity public relations and promote their businesses, all of them aim to expand the spread of celebrities, build positive image among their masses, and link them with strong businesses that able to achieve success and excellence. Scholars have indicated a strong relation between the spread of celebrities and public relations management, and promotions operations (Fitch, 2017).

Celebrity PR companies (celebrity agencies) help their clients reach celebrity status by providing media coverage that helps them stay in the spotlight, informs masses, defines what they expect from their celebrity clients and helps them implement their goals in a way that enjoys social satisfaction and acceptance .In addition to create a positive attitudes in a way that ensures the continuity of their follow-up and tracking their news and activates (Fitch, 2017).

 The emergence of multiple social media platforms has changed the landscape of the celebrity industry and how they manage their public relations (Zamani, Giaglis, & Kasimati, 2015). With the spread of these platforms and their reliance on them in the entertainment and marketing industry, influencers or Social media celebrities are emerged. With the expansion of their business, most of them began to rely on agencies or companies to manage their business and relationships in order to help them create public value that

helps them develop their financial gains and conclude business deals. Therefore, the process of managing the public relations of these celebrities has become important. Which create channels of communication with the masses for self-promotion and increased income (Abidin, 2016).

Marwick (2015) indicated that managing the relationships of social media celebrities is based on improving their image and increasing their followers, he mentioned that the public relations of social media celebrities requires "a mind set and a collection of self-presentation practices endemic in social media, in which users strategically formulate a profile, reach out to followers, and reveal personal information to increase attention and thus improve their online status" (P.138).

2.3 Mental Image of the Masses

The competitive nature of business organizations and the need for quick access to markets have contributed to focusing on create a positive image of the organization and installed in the minds of stakeholders, because of its vital and effective role in the success of the organization's work, the sustainability of its competitiveness, and winning the loyalty of its internal and external customers and satisfying their needs (Plewa, Ho, Conduit, & Karpen, 2016) .

Image in business is one of the assets that able to influence public opinion through the presence of a positive mental image presented through various media. The mental image is

a reflection of the trends that individuals carry from the surrounding environment because of their interaction with it (AL-Rhaimi, 2015). The mental image of a company refers to the customers' perceptions of their products and services. Companies invest a lot of their money on building, improving and maintaining a positive mental image (Alhadid & Qaddomi, 2016)

The founder of mental image theory was a physician Maxwell Maltz, who found during his evaluation of the effects of facial surgery on the patient's personality, as he indicated that the main factor in changing the lives of these patients after surgery is not changing the physical appearance, but rather changing the image they have of themselves in their minds (Beigi, 2014)

The mental image define as a set of beliefs, thoughts, and influences that a person has about a product, organization, brand, company or person (Salarzehi, Joodzadeh, & Saravani, 2015).

Moreover, a mental image is a set of perceptions that are formed in the minds of individuals about something; it is one of the most important factors for obtaining general acceptance. In a business environment, a positive mental image is a competitive tool that attracts the largest number of potential customers (Yee, 2015).

On the other hand, the mental image is the marketing field that shows the features of the intellectual, emotional, and physical dimensions in the minds of customers and their

products and the activities they provide to achieve desirable marketing behavior. This definition shows that the mental image is one of the concepts used in the marketing field (AL-Rhaimi, 2015). It is worth noting that   the mental image is a treasure and resource that is difficult to obtain and easy to lose. The process of building and maintaining a mental image requires great and continuous efforts (Chen & Chen, 2014; Fournier, Deremaux, & Bernier, 2008).

The mental image brings many benefits to the various parties involved. In the following, we explain the importance of a healthy image for each of the masses, those working in institutions and their management:

The mental image brings many benefits to the various parties involved. In the following, the importance of a healthy image for each of the masses are explained:

1. **Masses   (customers)**: The mental image helps the public to evaluate their experiences with different individuals, institutions or products and determine their feelings about this experience and thus their awareness of their ability (individuals, institutions, products, companies,…) to meet their needs, which is reflected in their level of satisfaction and frequency of dealing With them. Organizations that have a positive mental image in the minds of their customers have a better competitive advantage over their competitors (Mohamad, Awang, & Ilmu, 2009).

2. **Employees**: In institutions, the positive mental image of employees is a reflection of their efforts to serve this institution and achieve its goals. The positive mental image of the employees means their feeling of pride in working in it, which is reflected positively on their motivation to work, level of productivity and concern for the assets of the institution (Hashim, Abdullateef, & Sarkindaji, 2015).

3. **Individuals and the management of the institution towards which the mental image is formed**: the mental image reflects the level of quality of the institution's management and its competitive capabilities. Therefore, it is an evaluation tool improve developmental decisions to improve the level of performance and meet the needs of the masses more efficiently (Mohamad, Awang, & Ilmu, 2009).

Mental image includes three main types, the following are illustrates them (AL-Rhaimi, 2015; Sakarneh, 2012; Azoury, Daou, & Khoury, 2013) :

1. **Self-image**: It refers to self-esteem and its positive concept towards itself. The self-mental image is a reflection of the practices, activities and operations of of individuals or institutions that are carried out to express their own capabilities to form a positive image in others.

2. **Desired image**: is the image that individuals and organizations desire to appear from the point of view of others. They are internal aspirations to improve one's

standing, reputation, and relationships with others in order to create a definite positive image in the minds of their audience

3. **Perceived image**: is the mental image of the masses. It refers to the perceptions and impressions of others towards individuals or institutions, which are formed by rational and emotional interpretation based on cognitive and emotional components.

The mental image consists of different components; Cognitive (beliefs), emotional (feelings), and behavioral, the following are illustrates them (AL-Rhaimi, 2015; Mohamad, Awang, & Ilmu, 2009):

1. **Cognitive component**: refers to the beliefs or information and ideas that the masses possess, which are perceived by the characteristics of the thing about which the image is formed. Moreover, this component expresses the knowledge and beliefs that the public holds about an individual, a product, and an institution, brands, which are acquired because of direct interaction from the surrounding environment or indirectly through media and communication channels.

2. **Emotional component**: This component is associated with feelings and emotions about something. It expresses attitudes and emotional reactions towards individuals, organizations, products, and brands. It is influenced by the

ps0ychological state and internal motives, and appears through the public's feeling of comfort, confidence, and safety towards them.

3. **Behavioral component**: It expresses the individual's trends in different areas of his life to meet his needs and aspirations. The mental image affects the behavior of the individual and determines the level of his satisfaction and acceptance. This component appears through direct behaviors such as bias or feelings such as frustration

The mental image is related to public relations, where public relations practices are based on building, improving and maintaining a mental image. Improving the mental image of the masses is the starting point in all programs and plans set by public relations companies. The roles of public relations companies are building and improving the mental image through providing two-way communication channels between the masses and clients of public relations companies (individuals, institutions, brands, products) and achieving a state of trust, respect, mutual understanding and ensuring that this state is maintained. Furthermore, the Public Relations companies works to justify situations, remove misunderstandings, interpret and analyze issues, and anticipate and seize opportunities. In addition to helping its clients to visualize and implement their goals in a way that achieves social acceptance, and product mass value that achieves gains (Ghryani & Omar, 2021).

These day the efforts of public relations in forming and improving the mental image are carried out more easily through social media platforms, which provided discussions platforms with the masses, which provide direct access to them and their participation and documenting media relations (Ghryani & Omar, 2021) .

3. Methodology

3.1 Method Design and Tool

In this study, the research problem focuses on revealing the role of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards Social media in Kuwait. The quantitative approach is considered as the most appropriate utilized approach to cover the research problem in a clearer way. This approach essentially integrates data, analyses and uses them to examine the connection between variables (Rawbone, 2015). The main objective of this method is to define the possible association between two or more variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005), as is the case in this research which is aiming to find the relation between celebrities' public relations companies' efforts and the mental image of the masses towards celebrities in Kuwait.

The questionnaire was the instrument utilized in this study for the collection of primary data through conducting a cross sectional survey. Owens (2002) pointed to the advantages of the survey such as its consistency, as the data gathered is not available from other sources, the unbiased representation of the population of interest and the standardization

of the measurement, since the same data is collected from every participant. The questionnaire was designed based on previous relevant studies and literature and consisted of four different parts with a set of closed statements directed towards collecting data on the different study variables.

The first part of the questionnaire consists of questions covering the socio-demographic information of the selected sample participating in this study including Kuwaiti social media users' gender, age, qualifications and the most social media site followed by them. The second part includes a set of 12 statements asking about the efforts of public relations management companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards the social media celebrities, while the third part consists of 10 statements concerned with investigating the means of communication used by public relations companies to improve the mental image of the masses towards the social media celebrities. The final fourth part includes 8 statements that evaluate the degree of improvement in the mental image of the masses towards the social media celebrities. Moreover, the fifth Likert Scale was utilized to gather the responses of the study sample.

However, it is necessary to verify the reliability and validity of the study tool. The validity of the questionnaire was achieved as long as its statements were taken from questionnaires published in peer-reviewed and reliable previous studies and papers including. However, for the reliability of the questionnaire, it was verified by conducting a pilot study on a

sample of (30) social media masses and users in Kuwait. The reliability of the tool and its components was determined by SPSS' Alpha Cronbach test before distributing the tool to the original study sample members and conducting the real study. Table 1 shows the Cronbach alpha values for the overall questionnaire and its different parts.

Table 1: The results of Cronbach' alpha reliability test

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha value
1. The efforts of public relations management companies in improving the mental image of the masses	12	0.831
2. The means of communication used by public relations companies to improve the mental image of the masses	10	0.805
3. The degree of improvement in the mental image of the masses	7	0.876
Overall Tool's Items	**29**	**0.863**

As shown in Table 1, Cronbach's alpha was determined to be (0.831) for elements of the first scale, (0.805) for elements of the second scale and (0.876) for elements of the third scale. Moreover, it was (0.863) for the overall instrument elements, which means that the reliability of the tool is acceptable, and that the results that will be obtained from this questionnaire are valid and will be the same if the questionnaire is redistributed to another random sample, as long as Cronbach's Alpha value is higher than (0.7) (Graham, 2006).

3.2 Research Sample

The study population in the current study consisted from all social media masses and users in Kuwait. The reason for choosing this category is that they are the most closely related to social media and most closely following its celebrities, their lives and other events and products that they promote, and therefore those users are the most able to assess the image of celebrities in their minds and the extent of the influence of public relations companies on this image.

Due to the impossibility of covering the entire study population, in terms of cost and time-consuming, a simple random representative sample of the study population consisting of (300) social media masses and users in Kuwait was selected. Finally, the designed questionnaires have been distributed electronically via online google forms to the targeted sample of global managers as it is considered the easiest, fastest and highest coverage data collection techniques (Cooper et al., 2006).

The following Table 2 shows the socio-demographic description of the members of the study sample according to (gender, age and educational qualification):

Table 2: The socio-demographic characteristics of the study sample

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentages
Gender	Male	160	53.3%
	Female	140	46.7%
Age	15-25 years	77	25.7%

	26-35 years	120	40.0%
	36-45 years	60	20.0%
	More than 45 years	43	14.3%
Educational Qualifications	Bachelor's degree	177	59.0%
	Higher Diploma	55	18.3%
	Master's degree	34	11.3%
	PhD	34	11.3%
Overall		**300**	**100%**

The descriptive statistics of the socio-demographic data of the study sample shows that the study participants were divided almost evenly between males (53.3%) and females (46.7%). The most participated age category in this survey was 25-35 years old with a percentage of (40.0%), followed by (25.7%) users of 15-25 years old, (20.0%) users of 36-45 years old and lastly (14.3%) social media users whose age are older than 45 years as shown in Table 2 above. Most of the study sample members were well educated having Bachelor's degree at least (59.0%), Higher Diploma (18.3%), Master's degree with a ratio of (11.3%) or Doctoral degree with a ratio of (11.3%). This indicates that the study sample consists of young and educated social media users, which means that they have the ability to answer the research questions with credibility and high efficiency.

The researcher utilized SPSS (23) software program to analyze the primary collected data from the questionnaires, and then presenting the results and conclusions raised from this study. Different statistical descriptive tests were performed including frequencies,

percentages, means and standard deviations to summarize variables of interest. Moreover, the simple linear regression and Pearson correlation tests were used to examine impact of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards Social media in Kuwait at significance level 5%, which is the main problem of this study.

4. Results and Discussion

In this part, the data of the questionnaires that were collected from a sample of social media users and masses in Kuwait were analyzed, using means and standard deviations to obtain the level and ranks of the items related to the study, as well as the Pearson correlation and simple linear regression test to predict the relationship between the relation between celebrities' public relations companies' efforts and the mental image of the masses towards celebrities in Kuwait.

4.1 Results related to the most used Social Media Platforms in Kuwait

In order to identify the most widely used social media platform in Kuwait, the frequency distribution of the respondents' answers was analyzed on a group of six different social media platforms including (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and Snapchat), and the distribution is illustrated in the following Figure 1:

Most used social media platform

Platform	Percentage
Snapchat	7.70%
YouTube	7.30%
TikTok	6.70%
Instagram	38.70%
Twitter	14%
Facebook	25.70%

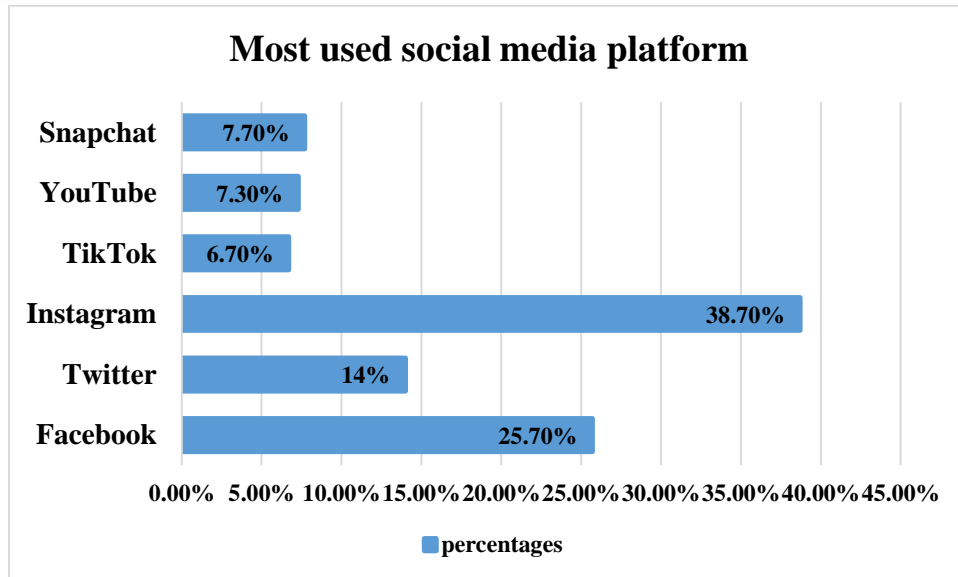0.00% 5.00% 10.00% 15.00% 20.00% 25.00% 30.00% 35.00% 40.00% 45.00%

■ percentages

Figure 1: Distribution of frequency for the usage of social media platforms

It is clear from the graphic distribution that Kuwaitis rely on various social media platforms to follow celebrities, but the largest percentage of them depend on Instagram (38.7%), followed by Facebook (25.7%), then Twitter with a percentage of (14%), then YouTube and Snapchat with almost the same percentage of (7.3%) and (7.7%) respectively, down to the lowest frequently used platform which is TikTok by (6.7%).

This result is in line with the Digital 2018 report issued by the company "hotsuite" specialized in the field of social networking, which showed that social media dominate the lives of Kuwaitis remarkably, achieving high record numbers in terms of using social media or influencing society and purchasing and advertising decisions in the country. According to the Independent Arabic (2019), Instagram is the most widely used application

for Kuwaitis and Twitter is in second place, while Snapchat and Facebook are in the lowest ranks. This was also explained by what was shown in the study of (Almerri, 2017) that Instagram has many advantages represented in enabling users to grow socially and develop within this social network, and to attract constantly increasing numbers of followers. The best of all is the ability to share tastes and preferences as well as ideas that contribute to preparing trends and tendencies and thus reach the desired target masses, which made it a great for entrepreneurs, artists and influencers as a tool to help them in their work.

4.2 Results related to the Efforts of Public Relations Management Companies in Improving the Mental Image

In order to identify the efforts of public relations management companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards the social media celebrities in Kuwait, the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviation) of the responses and their ranks, which were elicited using a five-point Likert scale were calculated via SPSS. The statements with means ranging from (1-1.80) were considered very low, from (1.81 to 2.60) were considered low, from (2.61-3.40) were considered moderate, from (3.41-4.20) were considered high and from (4.21-5.00) were considered very high. Table 3 below shows the descriptive summary of the responses to the questionnaire's items used to measure the efforts of public relations management companies.

Table 3: Summary of participants' responses to items measuring the efforts of public relations management companies (N=300)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Level
1. Public relations management companies are constantly publishing the news of social media celebrities through the media.	4.07	0.87	1	High
2. Companies promote the work and activities of social media celebrities.	3.96	0.99	11	High
3. Public relations companies provide media coverage of the activities of social media celebrities.	3.98	0.87	9	High
4. Public relations companies help celebrities face crises and problems they face.	3.93	0.96	12	High
5. Public relations companies are working to help social media celebrities to explain their positions and justify them in a way that eliminates misunderstanding.	4.04	0.83	5	High
6. Public relations companies create two-way communication channels between celebrities and their fans.	3.99	0.96	8	High
7. Public relations management companies promote direct communication with celebrities, such as real meetings or meeting on social media platforms through direct broadcasts and others.	4.06	0.89	2	High
8. Public relations companies are interested in achieving mutual understanding and respect between celebrities and their fans.	4.00	0.92	7	High
9. Public relations management companies help social media celebrities to carry out activities and events that satisfy the masses and attract their attention.	4.05	0.82	4	High
10. Celebrity care about their celebrities' appearance and the value of what is viewed on their social media platforms.	4.06	0.88	3	High
11. Public relations managers of social media celebrities are concerned with the credibility of celebrity content and the extent to which it meets the aspirations of the masses.	3.97	0.93	10	High

12. Public relations managers of social media celebrities are interested in developing celebrity content and expanding their reach on all social media platforms.	4.03	0.87	6	High
Overall	**4.02**	**0.88**	**High**	

It is clear from Table 3 above that the arithmetic means that measure the efforts of public relations management companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards the social media celebrities in Kuwait were high ranged from (3.93- 4.07). It can be noticed that item (1) which stated: "Public relations management companies are constantly publishing the news of social media celebrities through the media", represents the highest agreed mean statement (4.07) and was followed secondly by item (7) in which it stated: "Public relations management companies promote direct communication with celebrities, such as real meetings or meeting on social media platforms through direct broadcasts and others" with a mean (4.06), followed thirdly by item (10) which it stated that: "Celebrity care about their celebrities' appearance and the value of what is viewed on their social media platforms" with a mean (4.06) and finally with the least mean value, item (6) which stated that: "Public relations companies help celebrities face crises and problems they face." with a high mean (3.93).

Furthermore, the overall mean for this section was high with a value of (4.09), which indicates that most of the study sample agree to a large extent on the importance of public relations companies and the efforts made by them in introducing the audience to social

media celebrities news, activities and events, as it represents the mirror of the celebrity and plays a key and effective role in managing its social activities and facilitating communication and interrelationship between the celebrity and the public. Also, according to the study of (Chen & Chen, 2014; Chege, 2014; Ghryani & Omar, 2021), the public relations effort is crucial in conveying and reflecting the image of the celebrity and his daily life to the public, which makes investing in it a strategic investment.

4.3 Results related to the Means of Communication used by Public Relations Management Companies in Improving the Mental Image

In order to identify the means of communication used by public relations companies to improve the mental image of the masses towards the social media celebrities in Kuwait, a set of statements were ranked by respondents in the same manner using Likert scale of five points. Table 4 below shows the descriptive summary of the responses to the questionnaire's items used to measure the means of communication used by public relations companies.

Table 4: Summary of participants' responses to items measuring the means of communication used by public relations companies (N=300)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Level
1. A social media celebrity uses more than one platform to connect with his or her audience.	4.10	0.85	1	High
2. Social media celebrities appear on TV through media interviews.	4.09	0.86	2	High

3. Social media celebrities appear through celebrity magazines.	4.00	0.92	6	High
4. Social media celebrities regularly and continuously download content.	4.03	0.93	4	High
5. Social media celebrities communicate with their fans by downloading personal photos.	3.97	0.94	8	High
6. Social media celebrities communicate with their fans through the daily social media stories on a daily basis.	4.07	0.83	3	High
7. Social media celebrities respond to messages sent to them from fans through social media platforms.	3.98	0.95	7	High
8. Social media celebrities organize live meetings with their fans in public places.	3.95	1.00	9	High
9. Social media celebrities organize live meetings with their fans through live broadcasts.	3.93	0.97	10	High
10. Social media celebrities participate in celebrations and artistic and national events.	4.01	0.91	5	High
Overall	**4.02**	**0.90**	**High**	

It is clear from Table 4 above that the arithmetic means that measure the means of
communication used by public relations companies to improve the mental image of the
masses towards the social media celebrities in Kuwait were high ranged from (3.93- 4.10).
It can be noticed that item (1) which stated: " A social media celebrity uses more than one
platform to connect with his or her audience.", represents the highest agreed mean
statement (4.10) and was followed secondly by item (2) in which it stated: " Social media
celebrities appear on TV through media interviews." with a mean (4.09), followed thirdly

by item (6) which it stated that: "Social media celebrities communicate with their fans through the daily social media stories on a daily basis." with a mean (4.07) and finally with the least mean value, item (9) which stated that: "Social media celebrities organize live meetings with their fans through live broadcasts." with a high mean (3.93).

Furthermore, the overall mean for this section was high with a value of (4.02), which indicates that most of the study sample agree to a large extent on the diversity of communication means used by public relations companies to improve the image of celebrities, and their importance in enabling these celebrities to communicate with their followers on social media directly, gives them high credibility and the ability to influence their followers. This is consistent with the study of (Chege, 2014; Giles, 2017; Djafarova & Rushworthb, 2017; Ghryani & Omar, 2021) which showed that there are many means of communication used by public relations companies to enable interaction between celebrities and audiences, such as using more than one social media platform, and their appearance on television through media interviews, and through posting videos, photos, live streaming videos and much more.

4.4 Results related to the Role of Public Relations Companies in Improving the Mental Image

In order to identify the impact of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards social media celebrities in Kuwait, a set of statements were ranked

by respondents in the same manner using Likert scale of five points to show the degree of

improvement in the mental image of the masses towards the social media celebrities. Table

5 below shows the descriptive summary of the responses to the questionnaire's items used

to measure the degree of improvement in the mental image.

Table 5: Summary of participants' responses to items measuring the degree of improvement in the mental image (N=300)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Level
1. The celebrities I follow have a bright image in my mind.	4.05	0.87	4	High
2. I am convinced and trust the information that celebrities provide through social media.	4.03	0.96	5	High
3. I feel satisfied with the activities and content of social media celebrities.	4.07	0.85	2	High
4. I feel that the content of social media celebrities is purposeful and tasteful that suits the needs and aspirations of their followers.	3.98	0.98	7	High
5. I trust the products promoted by social media celebrities and feel that they are credible and highly efficient that provide benefit to the masses	4.08	0.87	1	High
6. I trust the events and activities organized by social media celebrities and that they aim to meet the needs of the masses.	3.99	0.92	6	High
7. I have great admiration for the lives of the celebrities I follow and the way they think and act.	4.06	0.88	3	High
Overall	**4.04**	**0.89**	**High**	

It is clear from Table 5 above that the arithmetic means that measure the degree of improvement in the mental image of the masses towards the social media celebrities were high ranged from (3.98- 4.08). It can be noticed that item (5) which stated: "I trust the products promoted by social media celebrities and feel that they are credible and highly efficient that provide benefit to the masses ", represents the highest agreed mean statement (4.08) and was followed secondly by item (3) in which it stated: " I feel satisfied with the activities and content of social media celebrities " with a mean (4.07), followed thirdly by item (7) which it stated that: " I have great admiration for the lives of the celebrities I follow and the way they think and act " with a mean (4.06) and finally with the least mean value, item (4) which stated that: " I feel that the content of social media celebrities is purposeful and tasteful that suits the needs and aspirations of their followers." with a high mean (3.98). The overall mean for this section was high with a value of (4.04), which indicates that most of the study sample agree to a large extent on the significant improvement in the public's mental image towards social media celebrities through the efforts of public relations companies.

Moreover, in order to statistically estimate the relation between celebrities' public relations companies' efforts and the mental image of the masses towards celebrities in Kuwait, Pearson correlation and simple linear regression analyses were implemented utilizing SPSS. The results were as indicated in the following Table (6) below:

Table 6: Linear regression's model summary for the impact of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards social media celebrities in Kuwait (N=300)

(R)	(R^2)	F	DF		α	β	T	Sig
0.995	0.990	30876.315	**Regression**	1	0.000	1.003	175.717	0.000
			Residual	298				
			Total	299				

From the above Table 6, the model summary and overall fit statistics indicates that there is a statistically significant positive impact of public relations management companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards social media celebrities, where the coefficient of Pearson correlation R (0.896) at (α≤ 0.05). The coefficient of determination R^2 amounted to (0.803), this means that (80.3%) of the positive improvement in the mental image of the masses towards social media celebrities is because of the efforts of public relations management companies. Moreover, the degree of impact (β) for the role of public relations management companies in enhancing the mental image of the masses towards social media celebrities is (1.003). This means that a one-step increase in the level of efforts made by public relations companies improves the mental image of social media celebrities by (1.003). The significance of this effect is the value of the calculated (F) which reached (30876.315) and is significant at the level of (α 0.000 ≤ 0.05).

These results can be explained by referring to the study of (Ghryani & Omar, 2021; Fitch, 2017) which showed that the mental image of the masses and customers is closely related to public relations, where public relations practices are based on building, improving and maintaining the mental image. Improving the masse's mental image is the starting point for all programs and plans that PR firms put in place. Studies including (Zamani, Giaglis, & Kasimati, 2015; Fitch, 2017) have shown that public relations companies contribute to achieving a state of trust, respect and mutual understanding between celebrities and their audiences, and ensuring that this state is maintained for as long as possible. Moreover, PR firms work to justify situations, remove misunderstandings, explain and analyze problems, anticipate and seize opportunities for celebrities, which increases public confidence in celebrities and their satisfaction with the content they provide.

5. Conclusion & Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion:

In light of the many and growing communication capabilities provided by social media platforms and their increased use by different groups of audiences, and due to their ease of use, flexibility and interaction, these means have witnessed a wide spread of influencers or famous celebrities in the Arabian Gulf. These celebrities have the ability to influence the behavior of the masses and their attitudes towards consuming products and brands, which has made them a strategic tool for marketing and promoting businesses, brands and more.

The influence of these celebrities depends on the nature of the impressions they leave with their fans, and therefore these celebrities aim to improve the public's mental image towards them, which requires the presence of organized and continuous efforts made by specialists in the management of public relations.

Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the role of public relations companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards Social media celebrities in Kuwait. The study found that Kuwaitis rely on various social media platforms to follow celebrities, but the largest percentage of them depend on Instagram, followed by Facebook, then Twitter, then YouTube, Snapchat and TikTok. Instagram is ranked first in terms of use because it has many advantages of enabling users to socially grow and develop within the social network, and attract ever-increasing numbers of followers, which has made it great for entrepreneurs, artists and influencers as a tool to help them in their work.

The study also showed the importance of public relations companies and the efforts made by them in introducing the audience to social media celebrities' news, activities and events, as it represents the mirror of the celebrity and plays a key and effective role in managing its social activities and facilitating communication and interrelationship between the celebrity and the public. The results also stressed on the importance of communication means including media interviews, posting videos, photos, live streaming videos, etc. used by public relations companies to improve the image of celebrities, and enabling these

celebrities to communicate with their followers on social media directly, gives them high credibility and the ability to influence their followers.

Finally the study concluded that there is a statistically significant positive impact of public relations management companies in improving the mental image of the masses towards social media celebrities at significant level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). The study explained this impact by the fact that public relations companies contribute to achieving a state of trust, respect and mutual understanding between celebrities and their audiences, and ensuring that this state is maintained for as long as possible. Moreover, PR firms work to justify situations, remove misunderstandings, explain and analyze problems, anticipate and seize opportunities for celebrities, which increases public confidence in celebrities and their satisfaction with the content they provide.

5.2 Recommendations:

In the light of what the researcher has found, these are the key recommendations of this research:

- Companies should give greater recognition to public relations and its effectiveness in improving the image of celebrities and generating profits for them.
- The need for companies to adopt social media in their business and focus their efforts on increasing the effectiveness of their content on social networks.

- Work to create a bridge of relationships between public relations companies and celebrities to facilitate the exchanging of information and identify the problems they face.

- Public relations companies should rely on a specialized cadre of media and public relations graduates in managing celebrity relations, and work on providing them with specialized training in their field of work.

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