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SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACTS OF MEGA-SPORT EVENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACTS OF MEGA-SPORT EVENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA CASE STUDY OF SAUDI DAKAR RALLY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the determinants of the perceived social impact of a sports event by analyzing data obtained from the community including sports enthusiasts in general and Dakar Rally fans of the 2020 Dakar Rally. To achieve the objectives of the research, the researchers used the descriptive approach due to its relevance to the nature of the research.

The research sample was chosen randomly and included (600) people. The platform was tested by creating a database of 600 tweets from Dakar SaudiArabia2020.

Through the search, tweets were sorted by algorithms designed for this method. Also, tweets were classified into three categories (positive, neutral, and negative), and both the good and the weak were considered as negative opinions despite what is carried by the positive or negative tendencies towards the 2020 Dakar Rally.

The Results show that a sports event achieves a higher level of social impact for regional attendees if they feel a greater sense of social companionship at the event and/or perceive a higher level of social responsibility of the event because of the geographical diversity and the interest to encouraging, motivating, and loving this type of sports. and the Saudi Dakar Rally is popular and accepted by those interested in such competitions, such as male local attendees observing a high level of social impact are likely to back the event.

Keywords: Social media - mega-sport events.

تأثير وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على الاحداث الرياضية في المملكة العربية السعودية دراسة حالة رالى داكار

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الملخص

بحث هذه الدراسة في محددات التأثير الاجتماعي الملحوظ لحدث رياضي من خلال تحليل البيانات التي تم الحصول علبها من المجتمع المشمول بعشاق الرياضة بشكل عام ومشجعي رالي داكار في رالي داكار ٢٠٢٠. ولتحقيق أهداف البحث استخدم الباحثون المنهج الوصفي لارتباطه بطبيعة البحث ..

تم اختيار عينة البحث بشكل عشوائي وضمت (٦٠٠) شخص. تم اختبار المنصة من خلال إنشاء قاعدة بيانات من خلال البحث ، تم فرز التغريدات حسب الخوارزميات المصممة لهذه الطريقة. كما تم تصنيف التغريدات إلى ثلاث فئات (إيجابية ، ومحايدة ، وسلبية) ، واعتبر كل من الجيد والضعيف آراء سلبية رغم ما تحمله النزعات الإيجابية أو السلبية تجاه رالى داكار ٢٠٢٠.

تظهر النتائج أن الحدث الرياضي يحقق مستوى أعلى من التأثير الاجتماعي للحاضرين الإقليميين إذا شعروا بإحساس أكبر بالرفقة الاجتماعية في الحدث / أو أدركوا مستوى أعلى من المسؤولية الاجتماعية للحدث بسبب التنوع الجغرافي والاهتمام لتشجيع وتحفيز وحب هذا النوع من الرياضة. ويحظى رالي داكار السعودي بشعبية ومقبولة من قبل المهتمين بمثل هذه المسابقات ، مثل حضور الذكور المحليين الذين يلاحظون مستوى عالٍ من التأثير الاجتماعي ومن المرجح أن يدعموا هذا الحدث.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أثر، شبكة، تواصل، الاجتماعي، الرياضة.

Introduction:

The impact of sports events is typically brought about by the social media engagement of the athletes. Social media communication is therefore developing and getting more attention. The number of potential consumers has increased because of this improvement. Websites and social media are included.

Bolton et al 2013 We can define social media as "any online service through which users can create and share a variety of content." Social media use has an impact on beliefs about a behavior, a service, involvement in events and how customers construct their identities, co-creation of value, and brand loyalty. Thus, using social media influences how much events are worth.

(Bolton, others 2013)

Social media

"Social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook allow for instant interaction between a brand and its customers, thus representing another pivotal point of engagement for sports teams and organizations. Over the last few years social media usage has shown exponential growth" (Williams, 2011), and "it is estimated that 1.43 billion people around the world are using social media platforms."

(Shalvey, 2012)

Understanding the role of social media in sporting events is crucial for communication between customers and businesses as well as for the benefits to the organizations in terms of promotion and marketing. (Mattila,2001) showed that "emotionally bonded customers invest more in their relationships than customers who lack affective commitment. This commitment is clear in sporting events, where consumption is hedonic". Using social networks and interactions between the firm and the customers boosts customer loyalty.

(Phang, C.W, Zhang, C, & Sutanto, J,2013).

mega-sport events

A mega event "is a term usually reserved for large scale, including sporting events that have a mass popular appeal, international significance, and dramatic character. Variable combinations of international non-governmental organizations and national governmental typically organize them". (Roche, 1994).

The desire to host sports mega-events has grown over the last two decades for three related reasons. First, advances in mass communication technologies, particularly the development of satellite television, have resulted in unprecedented global audiences for events such as the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup.

"Sporting mega-events have become an important tool for strategic marketing for the host country. Considering their level of geographical area and, if skillfully managed, it may increase tourist activity and improve the image of the city." (Getz,2007)

Events are believed to have a variety of effects on the country that is hosting them. (Fredline, 2004) (Ritchie,1984), which can be divided into social and economic impacts (Chalip, 2006).

"The most important sports mega-events, the Soccer World Cups, and the Olympic Games bring three important additional benefits to the host countries or cities, its social impact, the economic growth and legacy of infrastructures".

A sports event's perceived social impact is a sense of community, as well as enthusiasm among residents of a host community, and an increased sense of community. (Crompton, 2004) (Ritchie, 1984).

"The perceived social impact of professional sports teams and their events include increased community pride, increased social bonding, heightened collective self-esteem, civic glory because of major league city status, pride in

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efforts to revive deteriorated areas, increased social bonding, excitement from guests and emotional involvement."

"From a social perspective, organizing a large-scale event can be a fantastic way for a community to strengthen its organizational capabilities. Also, it may inspire people to participate in sports. (Girginov and Hills, 2018)

At all events, most research has indicated that "hosting a mega sports event, such as the football World Cups and the Olympic Games, results in pride in the local population, giving the impression of cohesion and unity that allows overcoming social conflicts". (Preuss and Solberg, 2008)

"It is crucial that the local community understands both the potential benefits and the associated costs. All parties involved in the planning and execution of the sporting event should consider these as specific elements":

(1)Concern with the local community; (2) engagement between the event with the community; (3) The socio-geographical and socio-environmental values of the local community. (Gursoy and Kendall,2006)

According to Chalip (2006), "Individuals are likely to feel a sense of friendship at a sports event when it provides them with various opportunities to interact with others. He proposed three means of fostering social camaraderie at sports events: conducting event-related social events, enabling sociability, and developmental social opportunities". (Chalip, 2016)

Even though several studies on the effects of sporting events have been undertaken (Like the Olympic Games), "most have focused on the economic factors at the expense of the social and environmental factors"

(Kim & Patrick, 2005).

certainly "Improving local support for hosting similar events requires a better knowledge of the social aspects involved in hosting a large sports event."

(Fredline, 2005).

Research problem and its importance:

There is growing interest in analyzing the social media impact of major events given the popularity and size of sports mega-events in the global arena as well as the significant investments made by the host countries.

Social media is today's most popular digital platform because it is a participantoriented, open-to-share communication environment that provides the opportunity to reach a wide mass.

The increase in social media usage is thought to be Because social media tools make it easier for users to share content with others and exchange content.

Fans communicate with each other, express their opinions, experiences, and ideals online, and draw attention to the event through the media. Social media is therefore a crucial component of major sporting events because the platform has established itself as a trustworthy source for businesses looking to learn about fan comments or even game knowledge.

This research adds major value to the articles by analyzing the relationships between hosting mega sports events and social media impact using the outcome of sharing photos, comments, and tweets on social media platforms.

This study analyzes the preference for social media, discusses the purpose of its use within the context of the sample, and assesses the social media usage and content sharing of participants in sports events.

Furthermore, this study aims to explore how social media affects viewers' pleasure in sporting events and their sense of authenticity.

Looking at the ambitious Vision 2030, initiated by Crown Prince H.H Muhammad Bin Salman Bin Abdul-Aziz, may Allah bless him, developing the Sports industry is one of the goals the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is working on achieving. (Saudi Vision, 2030)

Without a doubt, sports mega-events in KSA count as one of the most important community development pillars in achieving the goals set by the Kingdom in all fields. Sports events include two industries: sports and mega-events, and it stems from the Vision's core that aims to expand and flourish promising sectors.

Accordingly, the researchers decided to name the title of this study: Social Media Impacts of mega-sport Events in Saudi Arabia "Case Study of Saudi Dakar Rally 2020"

Research Objective:

The research aims to social media impacts of mega-sport events in Saudi Arabia, from which the following sub-objectives emerge:

- 1- Determining the types of engagements around #Dakar_Rally_Saudi2020
- 2- Knowing how many views were there on videos related to #Dakar Rally Saudi2020
- 3- Knowing the follower's opinions on #Dakar Rally Saudi2020
- 4- Knowing the expressive feelings of opinions on #Dakar_Rally_Saudi2020

- 5- Knowing the most important cities #Dakar_Rally_Saudi2020 was tweeted from
- 6- Knowing the motivating keywords used to express opinion on #Dakar_Rally_Saudi2020

Research Questions:

The current study through the following main question:

-What is the function of social media impacts of mega sports events in Saudi Arabia?

From which the following sub-questions emerge:

- 1- What type of interactions are there around #Dakar Rally Saudi2020?
- 2- How many views are there on the videos included in #Dakar_Rally_Saudi2020?
- 3- What are the audience's takes on #Dakar_Rally_Saudi2020?
- 4- What are the expressive feelings of opinions on #Dakar_Rally_Saudi2020?
- 5- What are the most important cities that #Dakar_Rally_Saudi2020 was tweeted from?
- 6- What were the motivating words used to express the opinion on #Dakar_Rally_Saudi2020?

Research terms

Social media: are defined as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010).

Mega-sport events are defined as those "one-time sporting events of an international scale organized by a special 'authority' and yielding extremely high levels of media coverage and impacts (economic, tourism, infrastructure, etc.) for the host community" because of the importance and scope of the event. Parallel events, such as festivals or cultural events, frequently take place in conjunction with the main event.

(Byers, Slack, Parent, 2012)

Research Methodology:

To achieve the objectives of the research, the researchers used the descriptive approach due to its relevance to the nature of the research.

Research community:

The research community included sports enthusiasts in general Dakar Rally fans, and those interacting with the hashtag.

The Research Sample:

The research sample was selected at random. and included (600) person. The platform was tested by creating a database of 600 tweets from #Dakar_SaudiArabia2020.

Data Collection

Through the search, tweets were sorted by algorithms designed for this method. Also, tweets were classified into three categories (positive, neutral, and negative), and both the good and the weak were considered as negative opinions despite what is carried by the positive or negative tendencies towards the 2020 Dakar Rally.

Through this, the standard is used to classify opinions into either positive, neutral, or negative as they are compatible with the nature of the study that aims to measure the social media impacts of mega-sport events. Consequently, the idea can be further demonstrated as follows:

Positive: Tweets contain motivational phrases or words, such as following words: (accomplish, congratulations, all the best, and continue), so those words are classified as "positive"

Neutral: Tweets that carry objective speech through moderate phrases or words and describe them as good, or neutral, meaning that they are neither positive nor "negative."

Negative: is that the tweets contain negative words, phrases, and opinions to belittle the Saudi Dakar Rally 2020, as well as the Saudi contestant achieving a fourth-place spot for the first time in the history of the Saudis 'participation in the rally.

Data Quantification

The tweets were collected from the electronic platform (analysis lucid), where they were examined, compiled, and checked according to the following model:



Among these methods are the following:

Statistical methods have been used by using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Were used to achieve the objectives of the study and analyze the collected data, appropriate the following are the statistical methods used in analyzing the data:

- 1. The data was coded and entered into the computer.
- 2. Frequency and percentages were calculated to identify opinions.

Statistical Processes Used:

Frequency and percentages.

Presentation and Discussion of Results:

The first question was as follows:

"What is the gender (sex) of the participants of the Saudi Dakar Rally 2020" and the response was as follows:

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	٤٥٧	76.2%
Female	158	23.8%
Total	7	100%

Table (1): detailed analysis of the opinions given on the Saudi Dakar Rally 2020.prepared by the student using SPSS exports.

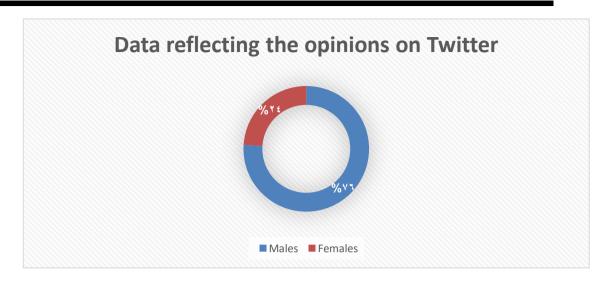


Fig.1: Details of the opinions' data on "Twitter" by gender.
Prepared by the student on Excel.

It is evident from Table (1) and Figure (1) that many opinions regarding the variable gender (sex) are males interested in the Dakar-Saudi Rally 2020. In the field of sports, their percentage reached 77%, while the percentage of female interest in sports reached 24%.

This bolsters the fact that males are the ones who are interested in this sport, as it requires strength, endurance, and perseverance.

This result is consistent so of the study of Nico Schulenkorf and Deborah Edwards (2012) "Event organizers and communities need to provide relevant and feasible opportunities for ongoing sport-related activities and exchanges that sustain intercommunity cooperation and togethemes beyond the event. If all parties understand the importance of looking beyond direct event impacts and focus on social event leverage for long-term outcomes, there is great potential to create sustainable intergroup relationships, increase the psychographic reach of events, improve the overall image of communities, and enhance the reputational capital of the organizers."

"To achieve these goals, large-scale sports events can be used to attract a wider audience while small-scale sports events can be employed to foster and cultivate intercommunity togetherness." (Schulenkorf and Edwards, 2012)

2- The second question was as follows:

"How many video views are there for participating in the #Dakar_Saudi Arabia 2020 rally?"

After collecting and analyzing data, the following information became clear.

View	Frequency	Percentage
Like	०१२	91%
Dislike	0 5	9%
Total	٦٠٠	100%

Table (2) determines the number of views of videos through Twitter prepared by the student using SPSS exports.

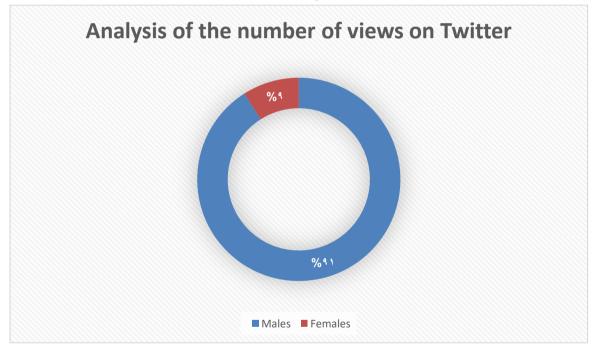


Fig.2: Analysis of the number of views on Twitter. Prepared by the student on Excel

Figure (2) determines the number of video views on the "Twitter" platform.

It is evident from Table (2) and Figure (2) that the majority of views from opinions in the Dakar-Saudi Rally-Saudi 2020 race are (Like) and their percentage is 91%, while the percentage of (Dislike) opinions is 9%.

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This is because the rallying and the Saudi Dakar Rally in particular is popular and accepted by those interested in such competitions, which indicates that sports competitions combine and achieve higher goals that outweigh competitive goals.

This result is consistent so of the study of Kyriaki (Kiki) Kaplanidou, Shannon Kerwin, and Kostas Karadakis (2013) "With the proviso that they may be more applicable to organizations, the findings of this study allow for various practical conclusions to be drawn. The event providers should focus on building sports event portfolios, benchmarking marketing initiatives and products that sports event attendees perceive as effective, and offering experiences that enrich the event and encourage favorable attitudes and reactions toward the event. Effective linkages between the local tourism sector, the sports organization, and the locals are required for this to happen to foster a festive mood. The social and psychological attraction of the event can be increased by a festive atmosphere, allowing attendees, participants, and locals to feel like they are a part of the celebration".

Chalip (2006) proposed the idea of encouraging a sense of celebration and offered three key ways to do so: "the creation of informal social opportunities, and the utilization of visual symbols and cues in the community that reinforces the celebratory feeling". (Kaplanidou, Kerwin and Karadakis, 2013)

3- The third question was as follows:

"What are the views of the followers (fans) of the #Rally - Dakar - Saudi Arabia 2020?"

After collecting and analyzing data, the following became rather clear:

Emotions	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	٤٤٤	74%
Neutral	177	22%
Negative	7	4%
Total	٦٠٠	100%

Table (3) determines the feelings of people through Twitter prepared by the student using SPSS exports.

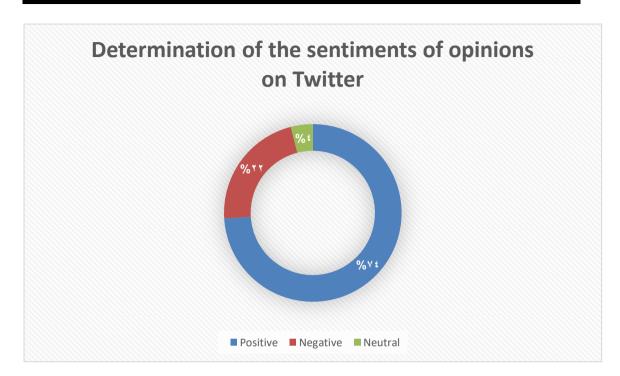


Fig.3: Determination of the sentiments of opinions on Twitter. Prepared by the student on Excel.

It is evident from Table (3) and Figure (3) that the majority of the feelings contained within the opinions on the Dakar Rally-Saudi Arabia 2020 race are (positive) and their percentage reached 74%, while the (neutral) category percentage of opinions reached 22%, while it was found that the category with the least feelings regarding the rally was the negative category that undermines the rally and the achievements in this race, with their percentage being 4%.

This further supports the fact that the rally is attractive and competitive for those interested, which indicates that such competitions contribute to promoting sports tourism.

This result is consistent so of the study by Carlos Pulleiro (2020) "Ports mega events must be commercially successful or at least they need to follow the economic and political goals of the original bid to avoid criticism to both public and sports institutions." (Pulleiro,2020)

4- The fourth question indicated:

What are the types of review posts in #Rally - Dakar - Saudi Arabia 2020? After collecting and analyzing data, the following became evident:

Type of participation	Frequency	Percentage%
Tweet	٤٠٨	%TA
Retweet	7 £	% €
Retweet with comment	١٦٨	%٢٨
Total	7	%1

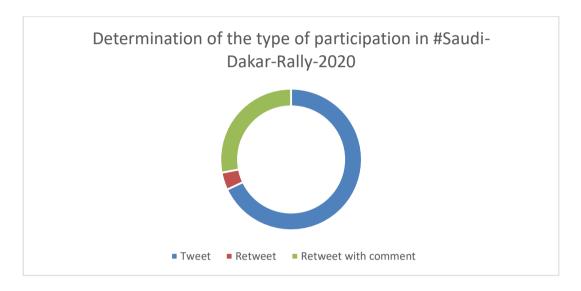


Fig.4 identifies the types of opinion posts in

#Saudi-Dakar-Rally-2020. Prepared by the student on Excel.

It is evident from Table (4) and Figure (4) that the majority of types of opinion posts in #Saudi-Dakar-Rally-2020 are (Tweet) and their percentage reached 68%, and we find posts that provide an opinion (Retweeting with a comment) at a percent of 28 %. Meanwhile, we found the posts in the reviews for the Dakar Rally - Saudi Arabia 2020 (Retweet) at 4%.

This is because rally sport has participants and an audience that is observant and interactive with events and developments.

This result is consistent so of the study of Vicente Prado-Gascó, Ferran Calabuig Moreno, Vicente Añó Sanz, Juan Núñez-Pomar and Josep Crespo Hervás (2017) "The event's general image was a necessary condition for comment sharing through social media, photo and video sharing through social media. A positive general image of the event and a high willingness to share the consumption experience on social networks were the most important

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antecedents of comment, photo, and video sharing through social media. The willingness to share the consumption experience on social networks and the event's positive general image were antecedents of the future use of social networks for participatory sporting events. Conversely, a lack of willingness to share the consumption experience on social networks and the event's poor general image led participants not to use social networks about participatory sporting events". (Gascó and Others, 2017)

This result is consistent so of the study of Kyriaki Kiki Kaplanidou, Shannon Karadakis (2013)"Organizers Kerwin, Kostas should advertisements that raise awareness of the social impact these events offer for participants and spectators, for example, organizers can provide opportunities for participants and spectators to socialize during downtimes of the event, through social media applications that increase awareness and involvement with the event experience. Creating opportunities for participants and spectators to interact can enhance the positive experiences for visitors and the local community, this can cause destination image enhancement, which could lead to return visits, thus generating more economic and tourism activity for the community, the event can be managed in such a way to create a social outlet platform of participants' families who share an interest with their children and want them to benefit from the event participation."

(Kaplanidou, Kerwin and Karadakis, 2013)

5- The fifth question indicated:

Which cities tweeted the most during the # Rally - Dakar - Saudi Arabia 2020? After collecting and analyzing data, the following became evident:

City	Frequency	Percentage%
Jeddah	175	70%
Al-Wajh	٤٤	٧.٣%
Mecca	70	٤.٢%
Al Ula	٣٦	٦%
Hazel	٤٠	٦.٧%
Riyadh	100	۲٥.٨%
Al jour	۲.	٣.٣%
'Asir	٣٣	0.0%
Wadi al- Dawasir	٣٩	7.0%
Abha	٣٦	٦.٧%
Al-Qassim	79	٤.٨%
Madinah	۲.	٣.٣%
Total	٦	1%

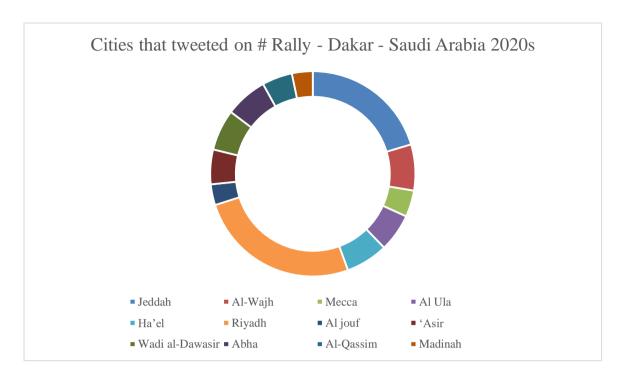


Fig.5 Cities that tweeted on #Dakar-Rally-SaudiArabia2020. Prepared by the student on Excel.

Figure (5) identifies the cities that have been tweeted from # Rally - Dakar - Saudi Arabia 2020

It is clear from Table (5) and Figure (5), that the majority of cities that were tweeted from # Rally - Dakar - Saudi Arabia 2020, are (Riyadh) and it reached 25.8%, while we find the city of (Jeddah) by 20.5%, and we find a city (Al-Wajh) by 7.3%, and we find the city (Hail and Abha) by 6.7%, and we find the city (Wadi Al-Dawasir) by 6.5%, and we find the city of (Al-Ula) by 6%, and the city of (Aseer) by 5.5%, and a city (Al-Qassim) by 4.8%, and Medina (Makkah Al-Mukarramah) by 4.2%, while each of the cities (Medina and Al-Jouf) grew by 3.3%.

This is due to the geographical diversity and interest in pursuing the rally and its competitions. The disparity in proportions in Riyadh and Jeddah is because they are two cities with a high population density. On the other hand, Al-Wajh and Ha'el are interested in this kind of sport.

Also, the diversity in participation from several cities indicates the importance of this sport and that it has followers and interested people in different regions and cities, in addition to that some observers track the movements of the contestants in the rally and learn about the areas and places

they ventured into, and through them the formation of cultural knowledge through these tours which in and of themselves are guided tours.

This result is consistent so of the study of Roberto Paolo Vico and others (2019) "which concluded the analysis of the socio-geographical impacts, and it was verified that the consequences of a mismanagement of the residents' interests may produce aversion to the sports event with the wrong perception of its aim and negative feelings towards the event"

(Paolo Vico and Others, 2019)

6- The sixth question indicated:

"What are the keywords tweeted in #Rally - Dakar - Saudi Arabia 2020?" After collecting and analyzing data, the following became evident:

Table (6) identifies the most important words that were tweeted in # Rally - Dakar - Saudi Arabia 2020

Words	Frequency	Percentage %
Mashallah	710	٣٥.٨%
Congratulations	171	77%
Excellent	١٨٣	٣٠.٥%
All the best	09	٩.٨%
Other words	77	۳.٧%
Total	7	1%

Table (6): Words tweeted in #Dakar-Rally-SaudiArabia2020. Prepared by the student using SPSS exports.



Fig. (6) Words tweeted in #Dakar-Rally-SaudiArabia2020. Prepared by the student on Excel.

It is clear from Table (6) and Figure (6), that the majority of the words that were tweeted in # Rally - Dakar - Saudi Arabia 2020 are (Mashallah) and it reached 35.8%, while we find the word (excellent) at a rate of 30.5%, while we find the word "congratulations" was 20.2%, while the word "All the best" was 9.8%, while other words accounted for 3.7%.

This is attributed to the people's interest in encouraging, motivating, and loving this type of sport, which indicates that it has an audience, and there is a desire and love to hold such competitions, which encourages sports tourism.

in this context of the study of Joseph Maguire (2011), We need a realistic picture of mega sports events and their impact on nations, and civilizations across the world. That is why it is crucial to study how big events affect society. (Maguire, 2011)

After processing the data, statistical analysis, and interpretation of the results of this study on the platform #Dakar Rally Saudi Arabia 2020: the result showed that 77% of the results were opinions, mainly from men who are interested in sports compared with 76% of hashtag of #Dakar Rally Saudi Arabia 2021, while the presence of the female component in the Dakar Rally 2020, and the year of 2021, these results represented in 2020, 2021 respectively has enhanced this sport in the Kingdom, despite the simplicity of this presence and the total number of opinions reached 91%, 95% through comments and likes with p-value <0.05. The positive sentiment reached 74%, and 80% of the posts came from Twitter. 32% of Twitter posts the highest percentage came from western provinces in the year 2020. While 63% in the year 2021 were from the same province. The most word used (as positive) in the tweets were (Congratulations) and (Masha' Allah).

Considering the aim of the research, its questions, the statistical treatments, and the results of the research, the researchers reached the following conclusions:

The best means of marketing sports tourism through the media and telecommunications are the following for the year 2020 and 2021:

- The media organized conferences and seminars to cover the Saudi Dakar Rally.
- Various programmers were offered through different media channels and in multiple languages to maximize coverage.
- Tourist destinations for the Saudi Dakar Rally were announced and brochures and maps were produced.
- Advertising campaigns for the Saudi Dakar Rally were also conducted.

Recommendations:

Considering the results and conclusions that have been reached: The researchers recommend the necessity of:

- Holding several sports events to attract sports tourism.
- Promoting by holding different conversation threads on various online platforms on sports tourism in Saudi Arabia, highlighting the most eminent tourism sites.
- Distributing souvenirs bearing pictures of tourist areas in Saudi Arabia to teams participating in international championships.
- Conducting competitions and sports tournaments in tourist sites.
- Allocating tours to the most prominent attractions for all sports delegations participating in tournaments and providing accommodation in the aforementioned places.
- Hosting celebrity athletes in tourist sites to talk about the sites.

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