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## GRADUATION DISSERTATION

To obtain a Professional Master degree

« In Marketing Management »

### **Examining the Contribution of sport events Sponsorship to Brand Image Formation**

**Case study: Ooredoo Algeria**

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**Abstract**

In a context of intensified competition within the telecommunications sector, sports event sponsorship has emerged as a strategic communication tool enabling brands to strengthen their image and differentiate themselves from competitors. This study examines the contribution of brand dimensions induced by sports event sponsorship to the formation of brand image, using Ooredoo Algeria as a case study. Based on a quantitative method, a questionnaire was administered to 196 respondents who confirmed their exposure to Ooredoo's sponsorship activities. In this context, the collected data were analyzed using the PLS-SEM tool. Accordingly, four sponsorship-induced dimensions were examined as independent variables, namely: sponsorship-induced brand awareness, sponsorship-induced perceived credibility, sponsorship-induced perceived quality, and sponsorship-induced emotional attachment. The findings of the study reveal that emotional attachment, perceived credibility, and perceived quality contribute significantly to the formation of brand image, whereas induced brand awareness did not produce a statistically significant direct effect. Therefore, these four dimensions collectively explain part of the variance in brand image, confirming that sports sponsorship shapes brand image mainly through affective mechanisms.

**Keywords:** Sports event sponsorship, brand image, perceived credibility, perceived quality, emotional attachment, Ooredoo Algeria.

## Résumé

Dans un contexte de concurrence intensifiée au sein du secteur des télécommunications, le sponsoring d'événements sportifs s'est imposé comme un outil de communication stratégique permettant aux marques de renforcer leur image et de se différencier de leurs concurrents. Cette étude examine la contribution des dimensions de la marque, induites par le sponsoring d'événements sportifs, à la formation de l'image de marque, en prenant l'entreprise Ooredoo Algérie comme cas d'étude. Basée sur une méthode quantitative, un questionnaire a été administré à 196 répondants ayant confirmé leur exposition aux activités de sponsoring d'Ooredoo. Dans ce cadre, les données récoltées ont été analysées par l'outil PLS-SEM. C'est ainsi que quatre dimensions induites par le sponsoring ont été examinées en tant que variables indépendantes, à savoir: la notoriété de marque induite, la crédibilité perçue induite, la qualité perçue induite et l'attachement émotionnel induit par le sponsoring. Les résultats de notre recherche révèlent que l'attachement émotionnel, la crédibilité perçue et la qualité perçue contribuent significativement à la formation de l'image de marque, tandis que la notoriété induite n'a pas produit d'effet direct statistiquement significatif. De ce fait, ces quatre dimensions expliquent collectivement une partie de la variance de l'image de marque, confirmant que le sponsoring sportif façonne l'image de marque principalement à travers des mécanismes affectifs.

**Mots-clés :** Sponsoring d'événements sportifs, image de marque, crédibilité perçue, qualité perçue, attachement émotionnel, Ooredoo Algérie.

## ملخص

في ظلّ اشتداد المنافسة داخل قطاع الاتصالات، أصبح رعاية الأحداث الرياضية أداةً اتصاليةً استراتيجية تمكّن العلامات التجارية من تعزيز صورتها والتميّز عن منافسيها. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص مساهمة أبعاد العلامة التجارية الناتجة عن رعاية الأحداث الرياضية في تشكيل صورة العلامة التجارية، وذلك من خلال دراسة حالة شركة أوريدو الجزائر. واعتمادًا على المنهج الكمي، تم توزيع استبيان على 196 مشاركًا أكدوا تعرضهم لأنشطة الرعاية الخاصة بأوريدو. وفي هذا الإطار، تم تحليل البيانات المجمعة باستخدام أداة PLS-SEM. وعليه، تم اختبار أربعة أبعاد ناتجة عن الرعاية باعتبارها متغيرات مستقلة، وهي: الوعي بالعلامة التجارية الناتج عن الرعاية، والمصادقية المدركة الناتجة عن الرعاية، والجودة المدركة الناتجة عن الرعاية، والارتباط العاطفي الناتج عن الرعاية. وقد أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن الارتباط العاطفي، والمصادقية المدركة، والجودة المدركة تساهم بشكل معنوي في تشكيل صورة العلامة التجارية، في حين أن الوعي الناتج عن الرعاية لم يُظهر تأثيرًا مباشرًا ذا دلالة إحصائية. وبناءً على ذلك، تفسّر هذه الأبعاد الأربعة مجتمعةً جزءًا من التباين في صورة العلامة التجارية، مما يؤكد أن الرعاية الرياضية تُسهم في تشكيل صورة العلامة التجارية أساسًا من خلال الآليات العاطفية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** رعاية الأحداث الرياضية، صورة العلامة التجارية، المصادقية المدركة، الجودة المدركة، الارتباط العاطفي، أوريدو الجزائر.

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## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

- AVE:** Average Variance Extracted
- BTL:** Below-The-Line
- CB-SEM:** Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling
- CFO:** Chief Financial Officer
- ELM:** Elaboration Likelihood Model
- F<sup>2</sup>:** Effect Size
- FAVB :** Fédération Algérienne de Volleyball
- HTMT :** Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio
- IMC:** Integrated Marketing Communications
- MCA:** Mouloudia Club d'Alger
- MCO:** Mouloudia Club d'Oran
- NFI:** Normed Fit Index
- PLS-SEM:** Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
- QP:** Perceived Quality (Sponsorship-Induced)
- R<sup>2</sup>:** Coefficient of Determination
- ROI:** Return on Investment
- SD / STDEV:** Standard Deviation
- SERVQUAL:** Service Quality Model
- SMartPLS:** Smart Partial Least Squares (Software)
- SPSS:** Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
- SRMR:** Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
- USMA :** Union Sportive de la Médina d'Alger
- VIF:** Variance Inflation Factor
- WTA:** Wataniya Telecom Algeri

# **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Research Context and Relevance**

One of the primary challenges faced by modern organizations in a rapidly evolving global environment is brand differentiation, which requires increasingly creative approaches to building and maintaining a strong brand image. Rather than relying solely on traditional advertising channels, companies are progressively adopting experiential and emotional communication strategies. In this context, sports event sponsorship enables brands to associate themselves with positive values such as performance, passion, community, and excellence.

The growing popularity of sports sponsorship worldwide reflects its effectiveness as a strategic communication tool. Organizations invest substantial financial resources in sponsorship agreements to connect their brand image with sporting events at both local and international levels. This trend can be explained by the organic and immersive nature of sponsorship, which often generates deeper emotional engagement compared to traditional advertising methods.

From a theoretical perspective, sports sponsorship influences brand image through several psychological mechanisms, including image transfer, associative learning, and the halo effect. When a brand is consistently associated with sporting events that evoke excitement, pride, and quality, consumers tend to transfer these positive perceptions to the sponsoring organization. This phenomenon has been widely examined in marketing literature.

In the Algerian context, this issue is particularly relevant. The telecommunications sector has experienced rapid expansion, accompanied by intense competition and evolving consumer expectations. Major operators such as Mobilis, Djezzy, and Ooredoo Algeria operate in a saturated market where differentiation based on price and technical features is increasingly difficult to achieve. Consequently, these companies have progressively adopted sports sponsorship as a strategic communication tool to strengthen their brand image and foster emotional connections with consumers.

Despite its growing importance, the impact of sports sponsorship on brand image formation remains underexplored in Algeria. Most existing studies focus on Western and East Asian contexts, leaving a gap in understanding this phenomenon within the North African socio-cultural environment. Furthermore, the evolution of event marketing, from its origins in social and cultural gatherings to its current strategic and hybrid (physical-digital) form has reinforced its role as a key component of modern communication strategies. Today,

event sponsorship is not only aimed at increasing brand visibility but also at creating value, enhancing customer engagement, and reflecting organizational values such as social responsibility and sustainability (Pascal & Christophe, 2025).

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to examine the contribution of sport event sponsorship-induced brand dimensions to the formation of brand image for Ooredoo Algeria. The research focuses on isolating the specific perceptions created by sponsorship activities and determining their individual and collective impact on the brand's overall image.

More specifically, this research seeks to:

- Analyze the impact of Sponsorship-Induced Brand Awareness to investigate how exposure to Ooredoo's sports sponsorship activities influences consumer brand recognition and recall, and whether this specific awareness translates directly into a stronger brand image.
- Assess the role of Sponsorship-Induced Perceived Quality to evaluate the extent to which Ooredoo's association with prestigious sports events elevates the perceived quality of its telecommunications services in the minds of the target audience.
- Examine the influence of Sponsorship-Induced Brand Credibility to determine how sports sponsorship shapes the brand's perceived trustworthiness, expertise, and reliability, and the importance of this credibility in forming a coherent brand image.
- Investigate Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment to explore the affective bonds and positive feelings generated through Ooredoo's involvement in sports, and to measure the strength of this emotional connection compared to cognitive dimensions.
- Validate the Collective Contribution to determine the combined effectiveness of these four sponsorship-induced dimensions in predicting the overall formation of Ooredoo Algeria's brand image, thereby validating the proposed structural model.

## **1.3 Justification of the Topic Choice**

There are multiple reasons for choosing this research theme as a topic for study. First, the Algerian telecommunications sector is characterized by extreme competitiveness and dynamism, making brand differentiation a strategic necessity. In such a saturated industry, organizations are increasingly moving beyond traditional product-based communication to

adopt experiential strategies, such as sports event sponsorship, to shape consumer preferences and foster long-term loyalty. Second, sports (particularly football) hold a central place in Algerian culture, where major tournaments and domestic matches attract vast audiences. This high level of cultural resonance makes sports sponsorship an exceptionally effective vehicle for brands to achieve visibility and resonance. Third, Ooredoo Algeria's consistent and active engagement in sponsoring diverse sporting initiatives provides a robust and contemporary case study through which the theoretical constructs of this research can be empirically validated. By analyzing a brand with such a prominent presence in the sporting arena, this study can accurately measure the specific effects of sponsorship exposure on brand perception. Finally, there is a notable lack of empirical research investigating the relationship between sponsorship-induced dimensions and brand image formation within the specific socio-cultural context of Algeria. This dissertation seeks to address this academic gap by providing a detailed analysis of how sponsorship-induced awareness, perceived quality, brand credibility, and emotional attachment collectively contribute to the construction of a brand's image in a North African market.

#### **1.4 Research Problematic**

In an increasingly saturated and highly competitive telecommunications market, brands are forced to look beyond traditional differentiation strategies centered on pricing and technical features. Sports event sponsorship has emerged as a powerful strategic communication tool, enabling brands to move away from conventional advertising toward experiential and emotional engagement. However, the precise mechanisms through which sponsorship exposure translates into a coherent brand image remain complex and underexplored within the specific socio-cultural landscape of Algeria. While international marketing literature extensively discusses the benefits of sponsorship, there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding how it specifically functions in the North African context, where consumer perceptions are deeply influenced by local market dynamics and emotional ties to sports. This reality gives rise to the central research question of this dissertation:

**To what extent does sports event sponsorship contribute to the formation of Ooredoo Algeria's brand image through the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand awareness, perceived quality, brand credibility, and emotional attachment?**

This investigation seeks to uncover the specific pathways through which sponsorship-driven associations are internalized by consumers and to determine which cognitive or affective dimensions play the most significant role in shaping the overall image of the brand.



## 1.5 Research Hypotheses

In order to operationalize the research problematic and guide the empirical investigation, the following hypotheses have been formulated based on the proposed conceptual model:

### Main Hypothesis:

**H1:** Each sponsorship-induced brand dimension individually and positively influences Ooredoo Algeria's brand image.

**H1a:** Sponsorship-induced brand awareness positively influences Ooredoo Algeria's brand image formation.

**H1b:** Sponsorship-induced perceived quality positively influences Ooredoo Algeria's brand image formation.

**H1c:** Sponsorship-induced brand credibility positively influences Ooredoo Algeria's brand image formation.

**H1d:** Sponsorship-induced emotional attachment positively influences Ooredoo Algeria's brand image formation.

**H2:** Sponsorship-induced brand awareness, perceived quality, brand credibility, and emotional attachment collectively and significantly contribute to the overall formation of Ooredoo Algeria's brand image.

## 1.6 Conceptual Model of the Study

The conceptual model presented in this research illustrates the structural relationships between sponsorship-induced brand dimensions and brand image formation within the context of Ooredoo Algeria's sports sponsorship activities.

The model is organized around two principal components. On the left, four independent variables represent the sponsorship-induced dimensions examined in this study: Sponsorship-Induced Brand Awareness, Sponsorship-Induced Perceived Quality, Sponsorship-Induced Brand Credibility, and Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment. These dimensions reflect the principal cognitive and emotional consumer perceptions generated through exposure to Ooredoo Algeria's sports sponsorship activities.

On the right, the dependent variable, Brand Image Formation, represents the overall consumer perception and image associated with the Ooredoo brand. The model seeks to explain how the four sponsorship-induced dimensions contribute to the formation of this brand image.

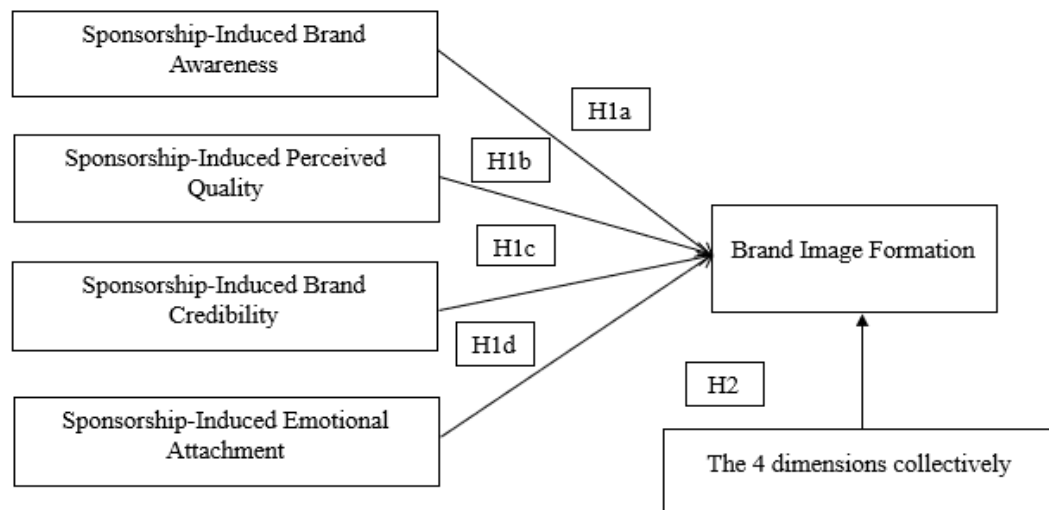
Each independent variable is connected to the dependent variable through a directional arrow representing a hypothesized positive relationship. These relationships are respectively represented by hypotheses H1a, H1b, H1c, and H1d.

In addition, the collective hypothesis H2 is represented by the simultaneous contribution of the four sponsorship-induced dimensions to brand image formation. This hypothesis postulates that sponsorship-induced brand awareness, perceived quality, brand credibility, and emotional attachment collectively and significantly contribute to the formation of a positive brand image of Ooredoo Algeria among consumers.

The model therefore adopts a multidimensional explanatory structure in which brand image formation is understood as the result of several interconnected cognitive and affective perceptions generated through sports sponsorship exposure.

This conceptualization is consistent with Keller's (1993) customer-based brand equity framework, associative learning theory, and sponsorship literature, which suggest that sponsorship activities shape consumer perceptions through multiple psychological mechanisms before influencing the overall brand image.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Model**



Source: Own elaboration

## 1.7 Methodological Approach

To address the research problem and test the proposed hypotheses, this study adopts a quantitative methodological approach grounded in the hypothetico-deductive and post-positivist research paradigm. Within this framework, theory guides the formulation of hypotheses, which are subsequently subjected to empirical testing through the collection and statistical analysis of quantitative data.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to individuals who were aware of Ooredoo Algeria's sponsorship of sports events and had been exposed to at least one sponsored event or sponsorship activity. Only respondents meeting these criteria were retained for analysis ( $n = 196$ ), ensuring that all participants possessed prior exposure to the sponsorship context examined in this study.

Rather than operationalizing sports event sponsorship as a directly measured latent construct, the study focuses on examining the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions to brand image formation. Accordingly, the empirical model analyzes the relationships between four sponsorship-induced dimensions namely Sponsorship-Induced Brand Awareness, Sponsorship-Induced Perceived Quality, Sponsorship-Induced Brand Credibility, and Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment and the dependent variable, Brand Image Formation. This methodological approach is consistent with prior sponsorship research in which sponsorship exposure is controlled through respondent selection rather than modeled as an independent construct.

The questionnaire utilized a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions regarding the four sponsorship-induced brand dimensions as well as their overall perception of Ooredoo Algeria's brand image. The measurement instrument was adapted from previously validated scales drawn from the literature on sponsorship, brand equity, and consumer behavior.

A pre-test was conducted to ensure the clarity, relevance, and comprehensibility of the questionnaire items. Internal consistency and reliability were assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using descriptive statistics, normality tests (SPSS) and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS 4. This analytical approach enabled the evaluation of both the measurement model and the structural model, including the assessment of reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, path relationships between constructs, and the predictive relevance of the proposed model.

## **1.8 Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is organized into three main chapters, framed by a general introduction and a conclusion. The present introduction establishes the research context, articulates the central problematic and research objectives, presents the hypotheses, outlines the conceptual model, and provides an overview of the methodological approach adopted.

Chapter One, entitled Theoretical Framework, is divided into two main sections. The first reviews the existing literature on event sponsorship, brand image, and the relationship between the two, while examining the mechanisms through which sponsorship influences brand image. The second section develops the conceptual framework of this study, detailing each of the four sponsorship-induced brand dimensions and the theoretical mechanisms through which sports event sponsorship influences them.

Chapter Two presents the Methodological Framework of the study. The first section provides a detailed presentation of Ooredoo Algeria, including its history, mission, vision, and sports event sponsorship strategy. The second section details the quantitative methodology adopted, covering questionnaire construction and validation, the target population, the sample of 196 respondents, and the operationalization of the independent variables.

Chapter Three is devoted to the Presentation and Analysis of Empirical Results. The first section presents the findings through descriptive analysis; an evaluation of the key variables employs PLS-SEM to test the research hypotheses. The second section discusses the results in light of the theoretical framework.

Finally, the Conclusion synthesizes the principal contributions of the study, recapitulates the key findings, highlights theoretical and managerial implications, acknowledges limitations, and proposes directions for future research.

# **CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

## **Introduction to chapter 01**

In the highly competitive environment of the telecommunications sector, businesses are increasingly under pressure to distinguish themselves from others and establish connections with consumers. The traditional method of advertising alone cannot help firms create long-term brand positioning. Event sponsorship has been identified as a marketing communications technique that can effectively create brand visibility, generate emotions, and foster consumer associations (Cornwell, 2019; Catane et al., 2025).

The overall perception and associations that consumers have regarding a particular brand refer to the concept of brand image. Brand image represents the most valuable intangible asset that any telecommunications business possesses (Keller, 1993). As the telecommunications sector becomes more competitive due to products and services being indistinguishable based on functional features, the power to create a positive brand image emerges as a critical competitive advantage (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

The objective of this chapter is to lay down the theoretical background of the research on the basis of some core concepts related to event sponsorship and brand image. This chapter is divided into two main sections. Section One discusses the literature review in regard to the marketing communication concept of event sponsorship, the theoretical background of brand image, and the well-known connection between sponsorship and brand image development. Section Two discusses the development of the conceptual framework in terms of the dimensions of brand image being examined, the means for sponsorship's influence on each of the dimensions, and the theoretical propositions behind it.

## **Section 01: Literature Review**

This section reviews the existing literature on event sponsorship, brand image, and the relationship between the two. It begins by positioning event sponsorship within the broader field of marketing communication, then explores the theoretical foundations of brand image and consumer perception, and finally examines the mechanisms through which sponsorship influences brand image.

### **1.1 Event Sponsorship as a Strategic Marketing Communication Tool**

Event sponsorship is widely recognized in the literature as a strategic marketing communication tool and one of the most prominent forms of commercial investment in events (Mason & Cochetel, 2006). Event sponsorship can be defined as a marketing technique where a business entity makes a monetary or other contribution to an event in

return for marketing advantages that enable it to link its brand with the event's target audience, themes, and atmosphere (Cornwell & Kwon, 2020).

Sponsorship has grown into a core element of contemporary communication strategies from a secondary marketing activity (Zahra Zain & Adiwijaya, 2024). Marketing departments of companies allocate substantial proportions of their budgets to sponsorships since the enhancement of corporate image has always been the top priority for companies investing in sponsorship opportunities (Grohs & Reisinger, 2014). According to Amoako et al. (2012), sponsorship is a win-win arrangement where both the brand and the sponsored organization benefit from it.

The strategic value of sponsorship is its capacity to create a link between a brand and the positive experiences created through the event, thus establishing positive associations for consumers (Zahra Zain & Adiwijaya, 2024). The critical difference between sponsorship and conventional advertising is the method of transmission: while the former is indirect, emotional, and symbolic, the latter is direct and one-way (Meenaghan, 2001). This allows sponsorship to penetrate through advertisement noise, connect with hard-to-reach audiences, and foster genuine consumer relations (Meenaghan, 1998; Cornwell, 2019).

From an empirical perspective, studies confirm that sponsorships improve brand recognition, brand attitude, purchase intention, and competitive advantage (Boronczyk & Breuer, 2020; Catane et al., 2025; Nuiser, 2020). Moreover, when sponsorships combine with other marketing communications such as advertisements and digital marketing, they create synergies (Erdogan & Kitchen, 1998; Deloitte, 2021).

## **1.2 The Role of Sponsorship in the Marketing Communication Mix**

Within the broader promotional mix, sponsorship plays a distinctive and complementary role. It contributes to objectives including brand awareness, brand image enhancement, customer loyalty, and stakeholder engagement (Gwinner, 1997; Aaker, 1991; Shimp, 2003). When combined with advertising and sales promotion, its effectiveness is further amplified through a synergistic effect (Erdogan & Kitchen, 1998).

A central mechanism through which sponsorship operates is value transfer: the values, emotions, and symbolic meanings associated with a sponsored event are transferred to the sponsoring brand in the minds of consumers (Meenaghan, 1998). This transfer is particularly effective when there is strong congruence between the sponsor and the event, a condition referred to as sponsor–event fit (Speed & Thompson, 2000). When such alignment is

perceived as natural and coherent, consumers make more favorable evaluations of the sponsoring brand and develop stronger associations (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999).

According to Cornwell (2019), one can observe another vital trend in the field: instead of achieving visibility, the ultimate goal is creating a sincere, significant, and lasting relationship with customers. It should be acknowledged that this trend gains support from the use of sponsorship in digital and social media channels since brands gain opportunities to extend their experience at events, reach out directly to their audience, and enhance brand visibility far beyond the event itself (Biscaia et al., 2022; Parganas et al., 2023; Deloitte, 2021).

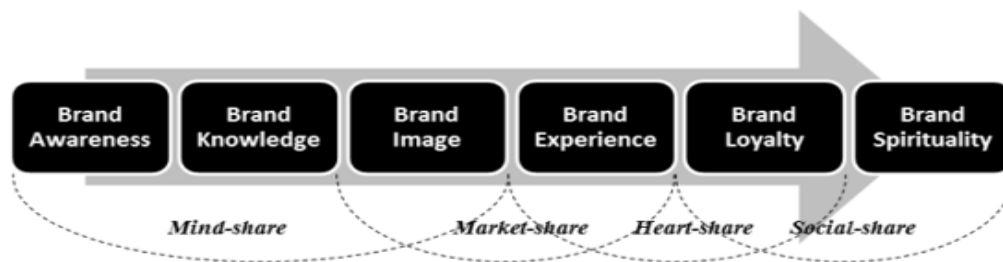
Overall, sponsorship has transformed from a means for promoting visibility into a powerful communication tool for creating emotional bonds, improving brand reputation, and achieving marketing objectives.

### **1.3 Theoretical Foundations of Brand Image**

Brand image can be described as the set of consumer beliefs and perceptions about a particular brand, stored in consumer memory. As defined by Mowen and Minor (2001), brand image includes both utilitarian aspects pertaining to brand usage and more abstract concepts associated with consumers' perception of brand-related messages and symbolism. Brand image, according to Keller (1993), is the set of consumers' perceptions about a particular brand conveyed through associations in consumer memory. Associations are different in terms of strength, favorability, and distinctiveness. Aaker (1991) claims that brand image is an integral part of brand equity, which consists of all resources, positive or negative, that augment or decrease the benefit provided by a brand to consumers.

However, the brand image should not be seen as what the firm tries to communicate; instead, it is what consumers interpret as a result of their cumulative experiences and continued interaction with the marketing communication efforts (Wijaya, 2011). It is an ever-changing and multidimensional concept influenced both by cognition (e.g., awareness and quality perceptions) and affect (e.g., attachment and trust).



**Figure 2: Hierarchy of Branding**

Source: (Wijaya, B.S, 2011)

When a particular brand is launched into the market, consumers tend to have limited knowledge about it. At this particular stage, consumers are only aware of the brand's name or have limited knowledge of its attributes, this is referred to as brand awareness. However, as consumers become more familiar with the brand and it gains more visibility, they begin to learn more about its attributes and benefits, which constitutes brand knowledge.

Over time, through continuous marketing communication, consumers begin to form perceptions or associations with the brand. These perceptions shape the image of the brand in the minds of consumers, which is called the brand image. Continuing the relationship with the brand, consumers may eventually consume the product or have direct contact with the brand. These experiences create new meanings, emotions, and feelings with the brand, thereby strengthening or modifying the existing image. This phase is called the brand experience.

When the consumer has both a positive image of the brand and satisfying experiences, the position of the brand in the consumer's mind and heart becomes stronger. As a consequence, the brand gains higher brand equity, which in turn makes it more preferred by the consumer. A brand that has higher brand equity is likely to create brand loyalty, as the consumer will tend to choose the brand again and again and will not be inclined to switch to other brands. At the highest level of the consumer–brand relationship, loyalty can progress into a deeper level of emotional and symbolic bonding. At this level, consumers feel a strong sense of belonging to a brand and make it a part of their personal values and lifestyle. Consumers may even advocate for the brand, persuading other consumers to adopt it. This advanced level is termed brand spirituality, where the brand becomes part of consumers' personal values, lifestyle, and social interactions.

These stages represent a gradual build-up in the development of a consumer–brand relationship. Phases from brand awareness to brand image are mainly focused on acquiring

mind-share; brand experience contributes to acquiring market-share; brand loyalty reflects acquiring heart-share; and brand spirituality reflects acquiring social-share.

The transformation from brand loyalty to brand spirituality represents the ultimate goal for brand owners and stakeholders, as it increases the value of the brand. Brand value represents the added contributions that the brand makes to the accomplishment of corporate objectives. Brand value is mostly driven by the firm's capacity for developing and strengthening brand equity, which in turn has an impact on shareholder value (Raggio & Leone, 2007).

#### **1.4 Consumer Perception and Its Role in Brand Image Formation**

Consumer perception refers to the manner in which individuals pick up information, organize it, and interpret it to develop a coherent understanding of a particular brand (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). This process is subjective, relying on personal experiences, pre-existing attitudes, culture, and the specific situation at hand. As Kotler and Keller (2016) note, consumer perception is a three-stage process that entails exposure, attention, and interpretation. All these stages influence consumer behavior in response to marketing stimuli, such as event sponsorship, and consequently determine consumer attitudes towards the brand.

The relationship between consumer perception and brand image is direct and substantial. Positive consumer perceptions resulting from marketing activities culminate in positive brand images, whereas negative consumer perceptions undermine them. Event sponsorship is one of the most successful marketing tools used to alter consumer perceptions about brands, since the activity provides an emotionally engaging environment in which exposure to brands does not seem forced but rather comes naturally (Meenaghan, 2001; Cornwell, 2019). In this way, consumer perception may be seen as the foundation for brand image formation.

#### **1.5 The Relationship Between Event Sponsorship and Brand Image**

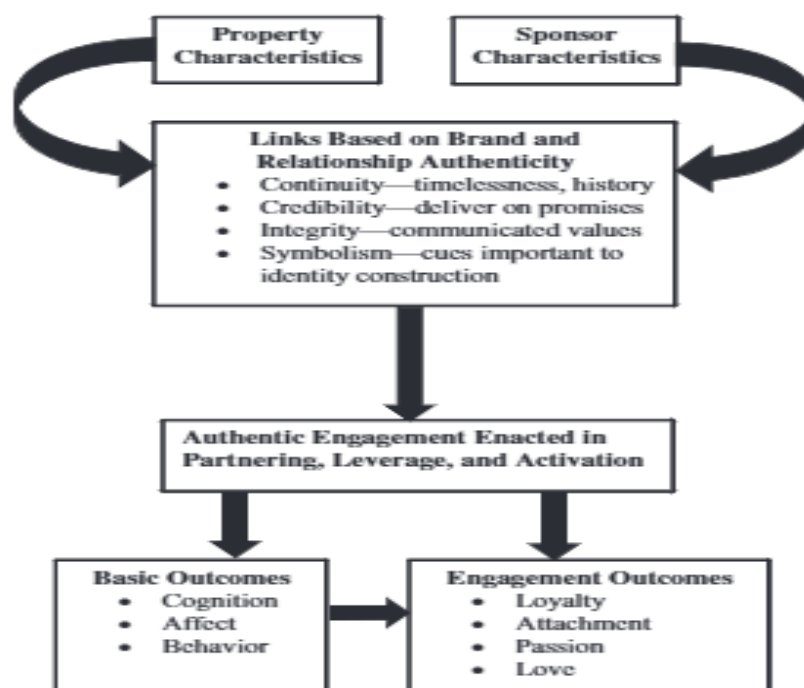
The relationship between event sponsorship and brand image is a well-established and increasingly researched area in marketing communication. Sponsorship enables organizations to associate their brands with events that carry strong symbolic, emotional, and social meanings, thereby transferring those meanings to the brand itself (Meenaghan, 2001). In firm evaluations of sponsorship effectiveness, image improvement consistently ranks as the most important corporate objective (Grohs & Reisinger, 2014).

Event sponsorship has emerged as one of the most popular forms of marketing communication strategies for companies that seek to increase their visibility and improve their brand positioning. It helps organizations to associate their brands with events that have large reach and create emotional connections with their consumers. Event sponsorship is recognized as a significant marketing strategy for organizations to promote their brands and reach their target audience through events.

The relationship between event sponsorship and brand image is an important emerging area of marketing communications research. Sponsorship has evolved from a peripheral marketing activity to a central component of corporate communications strategy, with firms allocating substantial portions of their marketing budgets to sponsorship engagements, and it capture a significant proportion of marketing budgets (Grohs & Reisinger, 2014). In firm evaluations of the effectiveness of sponsorship engagements, image improvements represent the most important company objective. Similarly, managers rank the promotion of corporate and brand image as their most important sponsorship goals (Schnittka, 2011; Tomczak et al., 2008).

To better understand the mechanisms through which sponsorship influences brand image, the following model illustrates how the alignment between sponsor and event characteristics leads to authentic consumer engagement and, ultimately, to cognitive, emotional, and behavioral outcomes.

**Figure 3:** Sponsorship engagement based on brand and relationship authenticity



Source: Cornwell (2019)

This model represents the mechanism by which sponsorship generates value by connecting brand characteristics with consumer engagement outcomes. It starts with two essential inputs: property characteristics (referring to the sponsored event or entity) and sponsor characteristics (referring to the brand itself). The combination of these two factors generates significant associations through several aspects: authenticity, continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism aspects that guarantee that the collaboration is legitimate, consistent, and in accordance with consumer values.

The model emphasizes that these associations result in authentic engagement, achieved through the management of partnerships, leverage, and activation. Thus, sponsorship is not merely monetary support but requires activation to achieve consumer engagement. Finally, the model differentiates between two types of outcomes:

Basic outcomes: cognition (awareness), affection (feelings), behavior (actions).

Engagement outcomes: more in-depth and emotional, such as loyalty, attachment, passion, and brand love.

This model reveals that successful sponsorship is not merely about visibility but also about establishing emotional and relational links between the brand and consumers.

### **1.5.1 Mechanisms of Brand Image Formation Through Sponsorship**

The formation of brand image through sponsorship operates through several interconnected mechanisms. First, brand association formation occurs when consumers link a brand to the values, emotions, and symbolic meanings of a sponsored event (Keller, 2014). These associations can be functional, symbolic, or experiential (Park et al., 1986), and event sponsorship is particularly effective in developing the symbolic and experiential categories, which are most impactful for long-term brand image building.

Second, image transfer rooted in the meaning transfer model of McCracken (1989) explains how the image, values, and emotions associated with an event are progressively transferred to the sponsoring brand through repeated interaction and exposure. Empirical research consistently shows that a high degree of fit between the event and the brand strengthens this transfer process, while low congruence may weaken or even negatively affect brand image (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; Grohs et al., 2009; Speed & Thompson, 2000).

Third, emotional transfer plays a central role in building affective brand associations. Events generate powerful emotions such as excitement, pride, and joy, which consumers extend to the sponsoring brand (Cornwell et al., 2005). This mechanism is particularly relevant to the emotional attachment dimension of brand image studied in this research.

Finally, repetition and exposure reinforce all of the above mechanisms. The more frequently consumers encounter a brand in the context of a meaningful event, the stronger the associations become in memory, increasing the likelihood of recall and favorable evaluation (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2004; Keller, 1993).

### **1.5.2 Theoretical Foundations and Moderating Factors of Sponsorship Effectiveness**

Several theoretical frameworks explain why event sponsorship is effective in shaping brand image. Signaling Theory (Erdem & Swait, 2004) posits that sponsorship, especially of high-profile events, signals brand quality and credibility to consumers. By investing in a prominent event, a brand communicates confidence in its own value proposition, thereby reducing consumer uncertainty and risk perception.

Balance Theory (Heider, 1958) suggests that consumers seek cognitive consistency in their attitudes. When a brand sponsors an event that consumers love, they are psychologically motivated to develop positive feelings toward the brand in order to maintain attitudinal balance. This mechanism explains why sponsor–event fit is such a critical determinant of sponsorship effectiveness.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) provides further insight, explaining that sponsorship primarily influences brand attitudes through the peripheral processing route: consumers form favorable attitudes toward the sponsor based on their positive feelings about the event rather than through active deliberation. This is particularly relevant in sports contexts where fan involvement is high.

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) offers a powerful explanation for the emotional attachment dimension: consumers who strongly identify with a sports team or event extend that identity to the sponsoring brand, adopting it as part of their social and personal self-concept. Fan identification with an event thus becomes a vehicle for building deep consumer–brand relationships (Funk & James, 2001).

Among the moderating factors, perceived sponsor–event congruence is the most extensively studied. A strong alignment enhances brand evaluations, strengthens consumer attitudes, and improves brand recall (Boronczyk & Breuer, 2019; Rifon et al., 2004). Exposure level and consumer involvement also moderate the relationship: high involvement enhances positive outcomes, while excessive exposure combined with low fit and high commercialization may generate negative responses (Grohs & Reisinger, 2014). Recent research further highlights the bidirectional nature of image transfer, whereby image can flow both from the event to

the brand and from the brand to the event, depending on relative familiarity (Koo & Heo, 2023).

### **1.6 Empirical evidence on sponsorship and brand image**

Empirical research in the telecommunications sector confirms the strategic importance of brand image and event sponsorship for consumer behavior. In a study of the Nigerian telecommunications market, Muhammed et al. (2023) found that brand image significantly influences consumer purchase intentions, demonstrating that in highly competitive telecom markets, brand image is a decisive driver of choice behavior.

Tomalieh (2016) investigated the effect of event sponsorship on brand image and purchase intention using a survey of event participants. The findings revealed that attitudes toward the event and brand awareness significantly influence brand image, which in turn affects purchase intention, confirming the causal role of sponsorship in brand image formation.

Deng et al. (2018) applied structural equation modeling in an event sponsorship context and found that congruity between event image and brand image positively affects brand attitude and loyalty. Additionally, alignment between consumers' self-image and the brand enhanced emotional attachment and strengthened brand perception, underscoring the importance of symbolic and experiential associations.

Beyond these sector-specific studies, a substantial body of research confirms that sponsorship contributes to brand image by increasing media visibility, enhancing public perception, and creating long-term emotional connections with consumers (Meenaghan, 2001; Barrett, 1993; Howard & Crompton, 2005). When integrated with other communication tools such as advertising and public relations, its synergistic impact further strengthens overall marketing effectiveness and contributes to sustainable competitive advantage (Tripodi, 2001; Keller, 2003).

However, most of these studies have focused on general contexts or established markets, with limited attention given to the telecommunications sector in emerging economies such as Algeria. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the specific impact of sports event sponsorship on brand image dimensions within the Algerian telecommunications industry.

## **Section 02: Conceptual framework**

Building on the theoretical foundations established in Section One, this section develops the conceptual framework of the study. It begins by presenting the event marketing context

within the telecommunications industry, then details the process and typology of sponsorship, before defining each sponsorship-induced brand dimension that constitutes the independent variables of this research

## **2.1 Sponsorship**

In today's highly competitive environment, organizations are constantly seeking innovative ways to strengthen their presence and connect with their audiences. Sponsorship has emerged as a powerful lever in this pursuit, allowing brands to align themselves with events, causes, and personalities that resonate with their values and target markets. Far beyond a simple financial transaction, it has become a strategic tool deeply embedded in modern marketing and communication plans.

### **2.1.1 Definition of sponsorship**

Event sponsorship is widely recognized as a strategic marketing communication tool (Mason & Cochetel, 2006). According to Meenaghan (1991), it can be defined as an investment, in cash or in kind, in an activity in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that activity. This definition emphasizes the strategic and reciprocal nature of the relationship: the sponsor provides resources, and in exchange receives rights to associate with the event for commercial purposes.

Multiple authors have enriched this definition. Bernadette (2013) describes it as the right to associate with the profile and image of an event and to exploit this association for commercial ends. Shimp (2003) frames it as a way to promote a firm's interests by linking its brand with a given event, while Fill and Hughes (2008) emphasize its mutually beneficial partnership structure. Cornwell (2014) adds that effective sponsorship is not simply financial support but involves strategic alignment between the sponsor and the sponsored property.

From a practical standpoint, Henin (2020) emphasizes that sponsorship is an effective technique only when integrated into a global marketing strategy, with a clearly defined event, target audience, media exposure plan, and expected financial returns. Smith and Zook (2011) characterize it as a form of enlightened self-interest, where a worthy activity is supported in exchange for achieving specific corporate objectives.

### **2.1.2 Distinction between sponsorship and advertising**

While sponsorship is related to advertising, several authors highlight key differences between these two communication tools. First, sponsorship relies on indirect communication through emotions, whereas advertising is based on more direct communication. Hastings (1994) notes that sponsorship involves a two-way relationship between the sponsor and the

sponsored entity, while advertising remains largely one-directional. Furthermore, sponsorship enables organizations to reach audiences that are less accessible through traditional advertising. Meenaghan (2001) explains that advertising uses consumers' emotions for commercial purposes, whereas sponsorship builds on emotions that are already naturally present in events or activities. Similarly, Crimmins and Horn (1996) emphasize that sponsorship operates through associative processes, linking the brand to the event's meaning. Thus, sponsorship is characterized by emotional association, long-term image building, and consumer engagement, while advertising focuses more on information dissemination, mass media exposure, and short-term persuasion.

In order to better understand the specific role of sponsorship within marketing communication strategies, the following table highlights the key distinctions between sponsorship and advertising.

**Table 1:** Key distinctions between sponsorship and advertising

| <b>Comparison criteria</b> | <b>Sponsorship</b>                                                                       | <b>Advertising</b>                                  |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Communication type         | Indirect – via emotional and symbolic association                                        | Direct – explicit persuasion through media messages |
| Direction                  | Bidirectional: builds relationship between sponsor and sponsored entity (Hastings, 1994) | Unidirectional: from brand to consumer              |
| Audience                   | Engaged audiences with existing emotional investment in an event                         | Mass audience, often passive recipients             |
| Emotional mechanism        | Leverages pre-existing emotions generated by the event (Meenaghan, 2001)                 | Creates emotions through creative content           |
| Brand impact               | Long-term image building; experiential and symbolic associations (Cornwell, 2014)        | Short-term awareness and persuasion                 |



|                     |                                                                                             |                                            |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Consumer perception | Perceived as more genuine and goodwill-generating (Crimmins & Horn, 1996)                   | Often perceived as intrusive or commercial |
| Integration         | Embedded in consumer experience; synergistic with other IMC tools (Erdogan & Kitchen, 1998) | Stand-alone or part of a media plan        |
| Measurement         | ROI on brand equity, awareness, image, loyalty                                              | GRP, reach, frequency, conversion rates    |

Source: adapted by us based on Meenaghan (2001), Hastings (1994), Crimmins & Horn (1996), Cornwell (2014), Erdogan & Kitchen (1998)

As illustrated in the table, sponsorship differs significantly from traditional advertising in its indirect and relationship-oriented nature. By associating the brand with events and experiences, sponsorship fosters deeper consumer engagement and contributes more effectively to the development of brand image.

### 2.1.3 Evolution and history of sponsorship

Sponsorship finds its origins in the concept of patronage, whereby individuals or organizations provided financial support to the arts and sciences without explicit commercial expectations. This early form of support was mainly driven by social prestige and cultural contribution rather than strategic objectives (Cornwell, 2008). During the twentieth century, particularly with the emergence of mass media and the professionalization of sports, sponsorship evolved into a structured communication tool. As noted by Meenaghan (1991), organizations began to use events as platforms to achieve specific marketing objectives, marking a shift from philanthropic support to a formalized element of the promotional mix (Wilkinson, 1993).

This transformation was further accelerated by the saturation of traditional media, which encouraged firms to seek more effective communication channels. In this context, sponsorship emerged as a valuable alternative for enhancing brand visibility and overcoming advertising clutter (Meenaghan, 1998; Otker, 1988).

From the 1990s onwards, sponsorship adopted a more strategic orientation, emphasizing brand-event congruence, precise audience targeting, and long-term partnerships to strengthen brand image and consumer associations (Gwinner, 1997; Cornwell et al., 2005).

More recently, with the rise of digital technologies and experiential marketing, sponsorship has become increasingly interactive and engagement-driven. Consumers are now active participants in brand experiences, with a stronger focus on emotional connection, co-creation, and value generation, reinforcing sponsorship's central role in modern marketing communication strategies (Close & Lacey, 2014; Cornwell, 2019; Biscaia et al., 2017).

**Table 2:** Evolution of event sponsorship as a communication tool

| Period                                          | Key Characteristics                                                                                                                                                              | Main Drivers                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pre-20 <sup>th</sup> Century<br>(Patronage Era) | Sponsorship rooted in patronage; financial support for arts, culture, and science without commercial return; motivated by prestige, philanthropy, and social status.             | Cultural development, social recognition, elite influence.                              |
| Early–Mid 20th Century (Emergence Phase)        | Gradual shift from philanthropy to more structured support; early links between brands and events begin to appear, especially in sports.                                         | Rise of organized sports, early media exposure (radio, print).                          |
| Late 20th Century<br>(Commercialization Phase)  | Sponsorship becomes a formal marketing communication tool; integration into promotional mix; clear commercial objectives (brand awareness, image building).                      | Expansion of television, professionalization of sports, increasing advertising clutter. |
| 1990s–2000s (Strategic Integration)             | Sponsorship evolves into a strategic partnership; focus on brand-event fit, audience targeting, and long-term relationships; emergence of measurement tools (ROI, brand equity). | Media fragmentation, globalization, increasing competition.                             |
|                                                 | Sponsorship integrated with event marketing and experiential strategies; strong emphasis on consumer engagement, co-                                                             | Digital transformation, consumer empowerment,                                           |

|                                               |                                                                                              |                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2010s–Present<br>(Experiential & Digital Era) | creation, and emotional connection; use of digital platforms and social media amplification. | demand for interactive experiences. |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

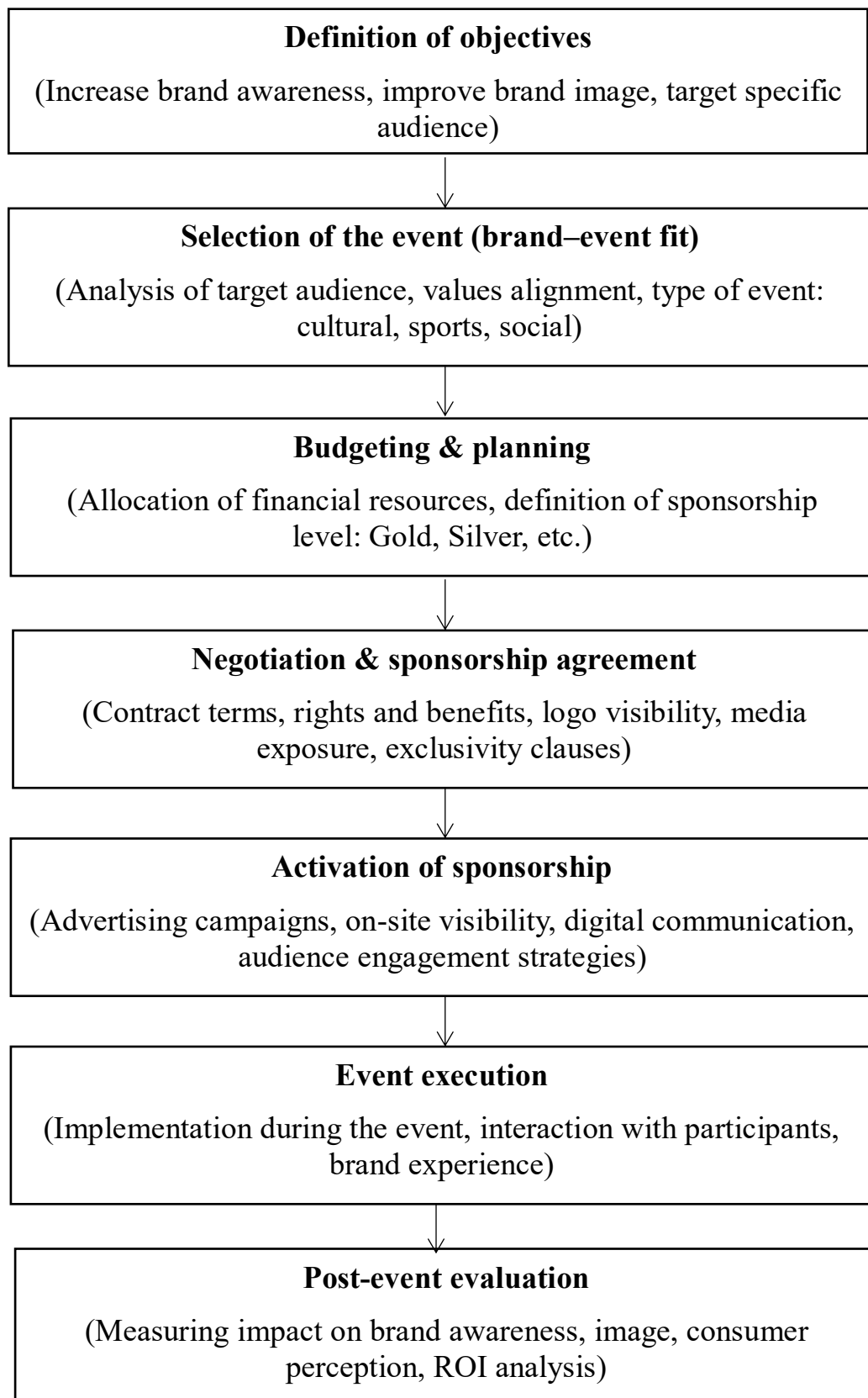
Source: own elaboration

The following table illustrates the evolution of event sponsorship over time, highlighting its transformation from a philanthropic practice rooted in patronage to a strategic marketing communication tool. It presents the key stages of this development, along with their main characteristics, driving factors, and relevant scholarly contributions.

#### 2.1.4 Objectives and process of event sponsorship

Sponsorship serves several strategic marketing objectives, including increasing brand awareness, strengthening customer loyalty, and improving brand image (Reed, 1994). It also helps attract new customers, support distribution channels, and motivate employees. Through sponsorship, organizations can engage consumers and other stakeholders using an interactive and experiential communication approach (Meenaghan, 1998; Fill & Hughes, 2008; Picton & Broderick, 2005).

Event sponsorship follows a structured process that begins with defining objectives and selecting events that fit the brand's values and target audience (Speed & Thompson, 2000). This is followed by negotiation of sponsorship rights and sponsorship levels such as platinum, gold, silver, and bronze, which determine the level of investment and benefits received (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). The sponsorship is then activated through integrated marketing communication activities, and finally evaluated based on its impact on brand perception, consumer response, and return on investment (Cornwell et al., 2005).

**Figure 4:** Developed process of event sponsorship

Source: adapted by us based on (Speed & Thompson, 2000), (Cornwell, Weeks, & Roy, 2005)

Within the promotional mix, sponsorship is recognized as a key communication tool that contributes to building brand equity and fostering long-term relationships with consumers (Gwinner, 1997; Aaker, 1991; Shimp, 2003). Its effectiveness is further enhanced when integrated with other communication instruments, creating a synergistic impact (Erdogan & Kitchen, 1998). From a strategic perspective, sponsorship facilitates the transfer of symbolic values from the sponsored entity to the brand, reinforcing its positioning and differentiation in the market (Meenaghan, 1998). Consequently, it has evolved into an essential component of contemporary marketing strategies, supporting sustainable competitive advantage. More recent perspectives emphasize a shift toward authenticity and engagement, where the focus extends beyond mere visibility to the development of meaningful and enduring relationships with consumers (Cornwell, 2019).

## **2.2 Types of sponsorship**

Sponsorship can take several forms depending on the nature of the sponsored entity and the strategic objectives of the company (Henin, 2020). Sports sponsorship involves the allocation of financial, human, or material resources to athletes, teams, governing bodies, or event organizers in exchange for rights leveraged across the pre-, during-, and post-event phases (Aduonum, 2009; Eastman, 2000). Programme sponsorship refers to the association of a brand with television or media content, enabling companies to connect with audiences in an engaging context while enhancing brand awareness and viewer loyalty. Educational sponsorship involves supporting students, schools, or academic institutions through scholarships or resources, thereby enhancing corporate reputation and demonstrating social responsibility. Sponsorship also extends to arts, cultural, and entertainment events, allowing organizations to associate their brands with cultural expression and creativity while reaching diverse audiences (Ghanaian Chronicles, 2010).

For the purposes of this study, the focus is on sports event sponsorship, which represents the most strategically significant and widely researched form of sponsorship in the telecommunications sector (Pelsmacker et al., 2005; Shilbury, 2009).

### **2.2.1 Sports events as a privileged sponsorship vehicle**

Sports events hold a unique and prominent place within the entire domain of event sponsorship. Sports events are associated with a rare level of audience size, emotional engagement, media saturation, and identification with the sport, making them the most valued medium of sponsorship for companies (Meenaghan, 2001; Cornwell, 2019).

According to Statista (2023), approximately 70% of the total global expenditure on sponsorships is spent on sports events.

### **2.2.2 Definition and characteristics of sports events**

A sports event can be defined as an organized and structured occasion in which athletes or teams compete according to established rules, before an audience that may be physically present, following the event through media, or engaging with it digitally (Getz, 2002; Allen, 2010). Sports events range considerably in scale and scope, from local or regional competitions to national championships and international mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup, the Olympic Games, the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), or the UEFA Champions League.

Regardless of their scale, sports events share a set of defining characteristics that distinguish them from other forms of sponsored occasions and explain their strategic attractiveness to sponsoring brands:

**Mass and Loyal Audiences:** Sports events attract consistently large and demographically diverse audiences, both in-stadium and through broadcast and digital media. Unlike single occurrence cultural events, many sports events (particularly league-based competitions) generate repeated exposure over extended periods (an entire season), offering sponsors sustained and cumulative brand visibility (Shilbury, 2009; Pelsmacker et al., 2005).

**High Emotional Intensity:** Sports events are inherently charged with strong collective emotions (excitement, tension, pride, celebration, and disappointment). These emotions are experienced simultaneously by large groups of people, creating a shared affective environment that is highly receptive to brand association (Meenaghan, 2001).

**Extensive Media Coverage:** Major sports events benefit from comprehensive media coverage across television, radio, digital platforms, and social media. This multiplies the reach of sponsoring brands far beyond the physical audience of the event, extending exposure to millions of viewers and online followers (Biscaia et al., 2022; Parganas et al., 2023).

**Cultural and National Significance:** In many countries and regions, sports particularly football carry deep cultural, social, and national meanings. Supporting or sponsoring a national team or a beloved local club connects a brand to powerful symbols of collective identity, pride, and community belonging (Funk & James, 2001). This dimension is especially relevant in the Algerian context, where football holds exceptional cultural resonance.

Recurring and Predictable Structure: The calendar-based, season-structured nature of sports competitions allows brands to plan long-term sponsorship strategies with clear activation windows (pre-season, during competition, post-season finals), enabling consistent and cumulative brand building rather than one-off visibility (Cornwell et al., 2005).

### **2.2.3 The concept of sports events within the sponsorship**

The academic conceptualization of sports events as a sponsorship vehicle has evolved considerably over the past three decades. Early definitions treated sports events primarily as media platforms—audiences to be reached and impressions to be generated consistent with a broadcasting model of communication in which the sponsor's primary objective was maximizing brand exposure (Otker, 1988; Meenaghan, 1991). This perspective, while not entirely obsolete, has been progressively superseded by a relational and experiential conceptualization in which sports events are understood as cultural and social phenomena capable of generating deep psychological engagement among participants and spectators alike (Cornwell, 2019; Funk & James, 2001).

Getz (2002) defines events as spatially and temporally bounded social occasions, planned and managed to achieve specific experiential, communicative, or symbolic outcomes. Applied to sports, this definition encompasses a broad typology of occasions from local club competitions and national league championships to continental tournaments such as the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) and global mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup or the Olympic Games. Shilbury (2009) further distinguishes between event types on the basis of their geographic scope, recurrence, institutional organization, and cultural significance, noting that the brand image implications of sponsorship vary considerably across these categories.

### **2.2.4 Theoretical mechanisms linking sports event sponsorship to brand image**

The relationship between sports event sponsorship and brand image is mediated by several interconnected theoretical mechanisms, each of which illuminates a distinct dimension of the sponsorship effect.

The most foundational of these mechanisms is image transfer, theorized by Gwinner (1997) and empirically validated by Gwinner and Eaton (1999). According to this framework, the image attributes of a sponsored event, its perceived prestige, excitement, cultural significance, and associative meanings are progressively transferred to the sponsoring brand through consumer perception processes. This transfer is neither automatic nor uniform: it is contingent upon the degree of perceived congruence between the sponsor and the event, such

that higher congruence produces stronger and more favorable image transfer (Speed & Thompson, 2000; Grohs & Reisinger, 2014). In the sports context, where events carry particularly rich and culturally embedded image attributes, this transfer mechanism operates with exceptional force, enabling sponsoring brands to acquire associative meanings that would be difficult to construct through conventional advertising (Cornwell et al., 2005).

Complementing image transfer theory, McCracken's (1989) meaning transfer model provides a semiotic account of how cultural meanings embedded in sports events migrate to sponsoring brands. Sports figures, teams, and competitions accumulate specific cultural meanings (excellence, determination, national pride, community) that are recognized and internalized by consumers within a given cultural context. Sponsorship creates a structured association between the brand and these meaning systems, enabling the brand to absorb and leverage them as components of its own identity. This mechanism is particularly operative in football sponsorship within North African and Sub-Saharan contexts, where the sport carries dense and collectively shared cultural meanings (Berkoune, 2023).

A third mechanism, rooted in Signaling Theory (Erdem & Swait, 1998, 2004), addresses the quality and credibility dimensions of brand image. Sports events particularly high-profile national or international competitions function as credibility signals: by investing in the sponsorship of a prestigious or culturally significant event, a brand communicates to consumers that it possesses the financial stability, social legitimacy, and quality assurance necessary to sustain such a partnership. This signal is particularly effective in markets where consumers have limited direct experience with the brand's technical performance, as is frequently the case in telecommunications services, where network quality is difficult to evaluate prior to subscription (Muhammed et al., 2023).

Finally, Balance Theory (Heider, 1958) explains a fourth mechanism operating at the level of cognitive consistency. Consumers maintain psychological equilibrium in their attitudinal systems: when a brand becomes associated with an event they evaluate positively, they are motivated often unconsciously to develop correspondingly positive attitudes toward the brand in order to preserve attitudinal coherence. This cognitive pressure toward consistency amplifies the positive evaluative effects of sports sponsorship, particularly among highly engaged fans whose attitudes toward their sport are strongly held and emotionally anchored (Meenaghan, 2001; Rifon et al., 2004).



## **2.3 Brand image: construction and dimensions**

Brand image represents one of the most fundamental concepts in marketing strategy. Understanding how brand image is constructed and what dimensions it comprises is essential to grasp how a brand establishes a lasting and meaningful presence in the minds of its target audience.

### **2.3.1 The concept of brand image**

Brand image refers to the set of perceptions, emotions, and associations held in consumers' memory regarding a brand. It is not the intended message projected by the company, but rather the outcome of consumer interpretation based on accumulated experiences and marketing exposure (Keller, 2020; Aaker, 2021). From a conceptual standpoint, brand image is a multidimensional construct reflecting how consumers perceive a brand's identity, value, and reputation.

Recent literature conceptualizes brand image as a structured network of associations in memory, where meanings are linked to attributes, benefits, and symbolic values (Aaker, 2021; Reynaldi & Nuvriasari, 2024). These associations differ in strength, favorability, and uniqueness, and collectively influence brand evaluation and differentiation in the marketplace. Brand image is also increasingly shaped by both offline and digital environments: social media interaction, experiential marketing, and user-generated content contribute significantly to the continuous formation and reinforcement of brand perceptions (Tandon et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021).

Brand image is a central component of brand equity and strategic brand management (Aaker, 1991). A strong brand image enhances corporate reputation, strengthens competitive positioning, and contributes to long-term value creation for both the consumer and the firm (Kotler, 2000).

### **2.3.2 formation of brand associations**

A brand association is anything directly or indirectly linked in a consumer's memory to a brand (Keller, 2014). These associations can take various forms (attributes, benefits, experiences, or symbolic meanings) and play a central role in shaping overall brand image. Brand associations are formed through both direct experiences (actual product or service use) and indirect experiences (exposure to marketing communication, including advertising, word-of-mouth, and event sponsorship; Keller, 2008).

In the context of event sponsorship, consumers do not necessarily experience the product directly but develop associations based on the symbolic and emotional value of the event.

Repetition of brand exposure reinforces these associations in memory, making them more accessible and influential in purchase decisions (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2004). Emotional transfer is a particularly powerful formation mechanism: events evoke strong emotions excitement, pride, joy that consumers associate with the sponsoring brand, generating positive affective links consistent with McCracken's (1989) meaning transfer model.

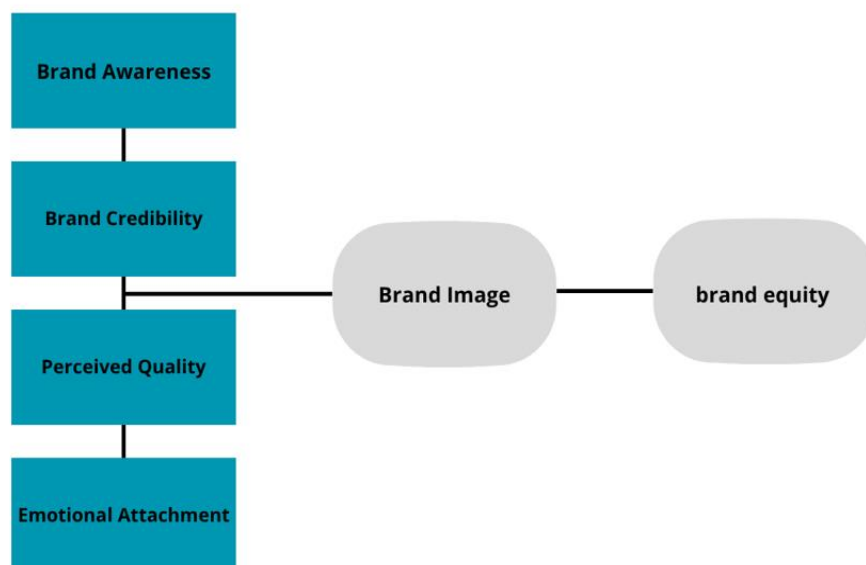
Brand associations can be classified into three categories: functional (relating to product performance), symbolic (relating to social identity and self-expression), and experiential (relating to sensory and emotional experiences; Park et al., 1986). Event sponsorship excels in generating symbolic and experiential associations precisely those most conducive to building a strong and differentiated brand image. The effectiveness of these associations depends on their strength (ease of recall), favorability (positive evaluation), and uniqueness (differentiation from competitors; Keller, 1993).

### 2.3.3 Dimensions of brand image

Brand image is a multidimensional construct that reflects the overall value of a brand. According to the literature, it is composed of several key dimensions, including awareness, perceived quality, associations, loyalty, credibility, emotional attachment, competitive advantages (Business news Publishing, 2013).

Brand equity is the total added value derived from four distinct factors, each of Which drives the brand's value proposition:

**Figure 5:** Dimensions of Brand image



Source: own elaboration based on Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) and recent studies

This figure illustrates that brand image is a multidimensional construct composed of four main dimensions: brand awareness, brand credibility, perceived quality, and emotional attachment. Each dimension contributes to shaping consumers' perceptions and evaluations of the brand. Together, these elements create a strong brand image, which plays a key role in enhancing brand equity by increasing consumer preference, trust, loyalty, and perceived value. The figure also highlights that a positive brand image serves as an important source of competitive advantage for the brand.

Building on this framework, the present study focuses on the following dimensions:

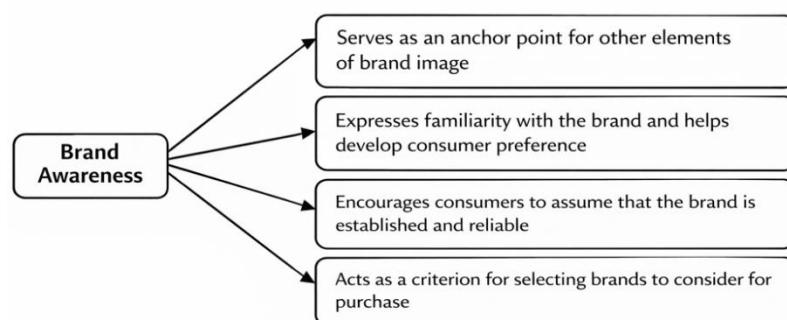
#### a) Brand awareness

Brand awareness represents the first and foundational dimension of brand image. It plays a crucial role in helping companies differentiate themselves and build customer loyalty. According to Aaker (1991), familiarity with a brand significantly influences consumer decision-making, as individuals tend to prefer brands they recognize, associating them with reliability, availability, and consistent quality.

In the context of event sponsorship, repeated exposure to a brand enhances its visibility and recall. However, while brand awareness is essential, it remains a necessary but not sufficient condition for building a strong and positive brand image.

Keller (1993) defines brand awareness as the consumer's ability to recognize or recall a brand within a specific product category. This implies that true awareness goes beyond simple recognition, requiring a spontaneous association between the brand and its field of activity (Baynast et al., 2017). Furthermore, Malaval and Décaudin (2009) emphasize that brand awareness is the starting point of any branding strategy, as it reflects the degree to which a brand is present in consumers' minds and linked to its products or services.

**Figure 6:** The advantage of brand awareness



**Source:** Malaval, P., & Décaudin, J.-M. (2009). *Pentacom* (2nd ed., p. 288). Paris: Pearson Education.

This figure shows that brand awareness plays an essential role in consumer behavior. When a brand is well known, it becomes easily identifiable by consumers, which strengthens its image and creates a sense of familiarity. It also allows the brand to be perceived as more credible and more experienced, which encourages consumers to prefer it at the time of purchase.

When a brand is well known, it becomes easily identifiable by consumers, which strengthens its image and creates a sense of familiarity. It also allows the brand to be perceived as more credible and more experienced, which encourages consumers to prefer it at the time of purchase. Brand awareness refers to the ability of consumers to recognize or recall a brand in different situations, reflecting the degree of familiarity a consumer has with a brand within a given product category (Copley, 2014; Lai et al., 2016, p. 53). It constitutes a fundamental prerequisite for a brand's existence in the marketplace and represents the first stage in the development of brand image, as consumers cannot form perceptions or attitudes toward a brand unless they are aware of its existence.

According to Aaker (1991), brand awareness can be assessed through different levels:

**Top-of-mind awareness:** represents the most demanding level of awareness. It is particularly relevant for leading or very strong brands in their markets. It is also important for low-involvement products and for quick purchase decisions.

**Spontaneous awareness:** is an indicator of how a brand is represented in consumers' minds and hence how easily it can be included in their shopping lists, considered for purchase, selected for consumption, and finally bought. However, only three to four brands in a given product category fall in the highly competitive bracket of spontaneous awareness. It is therefore essential for a brand to enter this circle, often by outperforming a competing brand, especially in low-involvement categories.

**Aided awareness:** is the least demanding level of brand knowledge. Nevertheless, it is the only sensitive indicator for brands with low awareness, particularly those in the launch phase, where top-of-mind and spontaneous awareness levels may be close to zero. It is also particularly relevant in certain markets, especially for durable goods. For instance, in the home appliance sector, consumers often choose the retailer, product type, and budget first, and only decide on the brand in-store. A satisfactory level of aided awareness allows the brand to maintain visibility in stores, reassure consumers when mentioned by salespeople, and ultimately increase the likelihood of purchase.

Qualified awareness: combines awareness with attribution. It indicates that the target audience is familiar with the different products offered by the brand, and not only with its flagship product.

These levels illustrate the brand's ability to occupy a position in consumers' memory and influence their purchasing decisions (Lai et al., 2016, p.55). Keller (1993) also emphasizes that strong brand awareness enhances the likelihood of inclusion in the consumer's consideration set.

The following table illustrates the different types of brand awareness, classified according to the level of consumer knowledge

**Table 3:** The four types of brand awareness

| Question                                              | Response                               | Type of Brand awareness    |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Which brand(s) in this market are you familiar with?  | Mentioned first                        | Top of mind                |
|                                                       | Mentioned spontaneously                | Spontaneous awareness      |
| Are you familiar with this brand?                     | Yes                                    | Aided awareness (Assisted) |
| Which products from this brand are you familiar with? | Mentioned most of the brand's products | Qualified awareness        |

Source: (Lewi and Lacoëuilhe, 2014, p.53.)

In the context of this study, brand awareness is operationalized as sponsorship-induced brand awareness, measuring the extent to which sports event sponsorship specifically enhances consumers' ability to recall and recognize the brand.

### **b) Perceived quality**

Another essential aspect of brand image is the perceived service quality. It is defined as "the consumer's subjective perception of excellence or superiority of a product or service." It is obvious that a brand image is directly influenced by a consumer's perception of excellence or superiority of a certain product or service. The main research in this area has been undertaken by researchers who recognized a significant difference between services and goods. As Christian Grönroos noted in his research in (2001), "the most important characteristic of services is the fact that services are processes, not things." It is obvious that this difference is of great importance in brand image formation because a consumer's perception of a brand is not only based on a certain result but also on a certain process.

Grönroos (1984) developed a service quality model that differentiates between technical quality (what the customer is receiving) and functional quality (how the customer is receiving the service). The overall image of the company acts as a filter for judging these perceptions of quality. This implies that a positive brand image and service quality are mutually beneficial concepts.

On the back of this theoretical framework, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry developed the SERVQUAL model, which is the most widely accepted framework for measuring service quality. Their research revealed that there are five key dimensions of perceived service quality: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Each of these dimensions' forms part of the overall mental image of the brand created by the customer.

The significance of perceived quality transcends services and becomes a vital element in building brand equity, which in turn affects brand image. The authority on brand management, David Aaker, has specifically identified perceived quality as a vital element in building brand equity, which has five dimensions in total. Perceived quality, according to Aaker, is not just a measure of quality in a product or service but a quality of a brand, which in turn affects the image of a brand in the minds of consumers. If a brand is associated with quality, a strong, positive, and unique image is developed in the minds of consumers. Recent studies have further validated this, indicating that perceived quality has a strong, positive influence on brand equity.

Perceived quality may be defined as "the customer's subjective opinion about the overall excellence or superiority of a product." It is pertinent to note that "perceived quality is not based on the inherent qualities of a product, but also on the customer's experiences, perceptions, and opinions about a specific product or brand." This is a vital element in building a brand image, as it directly affects consumer satisfaction (Copley, 2014).

Perceived quality is a catalyst for the decision-making process for the consumer by reducing uncertainty and risk. This increases the level of trust between the consumer and the brand (Copley, 2014).

Business news Publishing (2013) indicates that perceived quality is a significant part of a brand's value proposition and plays a role in influencing satisfaction and purchase intention. A high level of perceived quality increases the level of trust for the consumer and builds brand preference. This is supported by Aaker (1991), which indicates that perceived quality is a fundamental dimension of brand equity.

perceived quality is operationalized as sponsorship-induced perceived quality, examining how companies' association with sports events elevates consumer perceptions of service quality and network performance.

### **c) Credibility of the brand**

The definition of brand credibility is "the extent to which a brand is regarded as dependable and capable of delivering on its promises." It is cultivated through marketing activities characterized by reliability, transparency, and consistency. In this regard, it can be argued that "the brand is an implicit promise to consumers of a certain level of quality and performance" (Lai et al., 2016).

In addition, Erdem & Swait (2004) argue that brand credibility is instrumental in reducing perceived risks and information costs, hence making consumer decision-making easier. In this regard, it is evident that brand credibility is deeply rooted in consumer trust for a specific brand.

In this regard, it is evident that the relationship between the consumer and the brand is a critical factor. According to Crosby et al. (1990), trust is based on predictable and reliable behavior, hence fostering trust for a specific brand. In this regard, Morgan & Hunt (1994) argue that trust is a critical factor in relationship marketing, hence fostering consumer loyalty (as cited in Copley, 2014).

In this regard, it is evident that for a brand to maintain credibility, it is essential for it to keep investing in it, as it can easily be damaged. A negative experience may not only erode consumer trust but can also turn consumers into active critics of the brand (Copley, 2014).

brand credibility is operationalized as sponsorship-induced credibility, assessing how the investment in sports events signal's reliability and trustworthiness to consumers.

### **d) Emotional relationship with the brand**

Apart from these functional benefits, the relationship between the consumer and the brand also seems to be driven by emotional forces. For example, loyalty towards a brand not only represents a functional behavior, buying the same brand repeatedly, but also an emotional connection with the brand. Loyalty, in general, can be defined on two different dimensions: Behavioral loyalty, which can be observed in terms of repetition and purchase frequency. Attitudinal loyalty, which can be observed in terms of emotional connection with the brand. A significant question for marketers, however, lies in the way attitudinal loyalty can be generated, as emotional bonding with a brand ensures loyalty for the consumers, which in

turn makes them less likely to switch brands even in the presence of competing brands (Lai et al., 2016, p. 57).

Emotions have been established to be of critical importance to consumer-brand relationships. Emotions have been seen to affect perception, memory, and decision-making. Additionally, it is believed that a brand which is able to evoke positive emotions is likely to enhance the relationship with the consumer and establish long-lasting loyalty. Some brands have been able to become symbols of identity to the consumer. This has enabled consumers to express their personality, values, and sense of belonging. As a result, emotional engagement is a critical strategy for building a strong brand image.

In addition to perceived benefits, emotional factors have been identified to be of critical importance in building a brand image. The consumer-brand relationship has been seen to be similar to a human relationship. This is based on trust, commitment, and common values. Moreover, emotions have been identified to be similar to those of a married couple. This is underpinned by the fact that there is a build-up of trust, which will result in long-term commitment (McDonald, 1981, as cited in Copley, 2014). Therefore, brand loyalty has been found to have both attitudinal and emotional bases (Copley, 2014).

This emotional relationship is facilitated through satisfying consumers, quality interaction, and the ability of the brand to deliver as expected. The higher the quality of the relationship, the higher the quality of loyalty. Nevertheless, this loyalty is tenuous and relies on the continued ability of the brand to deliver quality experiences (Copley, 2014). Furthermore, brand image has two sides: functional and symbolic. The first side will meet the consumer's needs, whereas the symbolic side will allow them to express themselves (Bhat & Reddy, 1998, as cited in Copley, 2014).

Lastly, the relationship between consumer and product will be affected by factors such as trust and commitment, as they create loyalty. Nevertheless, loyalty to multiple products may exist in a highly competitive market, making it impossible to attain loyalty (Copley, 2014). Finally, emotional attachment is the deepest and most relational level of brand image. Indeed, brand image is not only based on cognitive factors such as awareness and credibility, nor is it only related to the product's quality. Rather, brand image is also characterized by its affective dimension. It is the feelings, the emotions, and the relationship that the consumer creates with the brand. As Wijaya (2011) argues, brand image is not only developed with the aim of consuming the product. Rather, it is related to the way in which the consumer creates his/her own self-concept and reality. This is where the importance of event sponsorship is located. Indeed, events are emotionally charged with feelings such as passion for sports,



pride for culture, and joy for festive activities. Therefore, the brand can establish a strong affective relationship with the consumer, which can lead to the creation of emotional attachment and, consequently, a rich brand image. In the context of this study, emotional attachment is operationalized as sponsorship-induced emotional attachment, capturing the affective bonds generated through sports sponsorship activities.

## **2.4 Research Gap and Study Contribution**

Previous studies have extensively demonstrated that sports event sponsorship constitutes an effective marketing communication strategy capable of enhancing several dimensions of brand equity, including brand awareness, perceived quality, brand credibility, emotional attachment, and overall brand image. The literature also confirms that sponsorship enables companies to strengthen consumer attitudes, improve brand associations, and create positive emotional connections with audiences through repeated exposure to sponsored events. In addition, numerous empirical studies conducted in international contexts have highlighted the positive relationship between sponsorship activities and consumers' perceptions of sponsoring brands.

However, despite the growing body of literature on sponsorship effectiveness, several gaps remain insufficiently explored. First, much of the existing research has been conducted in Western or developed market contexts, while limited attention has been given to emerging markets and North African countries. Second, previous studies often examine sponsorship as a general communication tool without specifically analyzing the distinct sponsorship-induced dimensions contributing to brand image formation. Furthermore, few studies have focused on the telecommunications sector, particularly in highly competitive markets where sponsorship represents a major branding strategy.

Therefore, this research seeks to contribute to the existing literature by examining the impact of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions on brand image formation within the Algerian telecommunications sector, using Ooredoo Algeria as a case study. By focusing on the Algerian context, this study provides empirical evidence from an underexplored market characterized by increasing competition and growing investment in sports sponsorship activities. In addition, the study proposes an integrated model that analyzes the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand awareness, perceived quality, brand credibility, and emotional attachment to brand image formation. Consequently, the research contributes both theoretically, by extending sponsorship literature to a new contextual setting, and

managerially, by providing insights for telecommunication companies seeking to optimize sponsorship strategies in Algeria.

## 2.5 Summary of key theoretical frameworks

The following table consolidates the principal theories mobilized in this study, indicating their authors, the brand dimension to which each relates, and their specific contribution to the research framework. These theories will serve as the primary reference points for interpreting and discussing the empirical results obtained in the subsequent chapters.

**Table 4:** Key theoretical frameworks and their role in this study

| Theory                             | Author(s)                              | Brand Dimension                | Role in This Study                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Brand Equity Model                 | Aaker (1991)                           | All four dimensions            | Provides the foundational framework for the four brand image dimensions studied.                          |
| Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) | Keller (1993, 2008)                    | Awareness, associations, image | Explains how consumer-held brand associations shape perceived brand quality and image.                    |
| Meaning Transfer Model             | McCracken (1989)                       | Emotional attachment, image    | Explains how values and meanings from events are transferred to and internalized by the sponsoring brand. |
| Image Transfer Theory              | Gwinner (1997); Gwinner & Eaton (1999) | All dimensions via congruence  | Directly predicts how event image improves brand image, contingent on fit.                                |

|                                          |                               |                                   |                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Signaling Theory                         | Erdem & Swait<br>(1998, 2004) | Perceived quality,<br>credibility | Sponsorship signals<br>brand quality and<br>credibility, reducing<br>consumer uncertainty.                              |
| Balance Theory                           | Heider (1958)                 | Credibility, image                | Consumers maintain<br>cognitive consistency<br>by attributing event<br>qualities to the<br>sponsor when fit is<br>high. |
| Elaboration<br>Likelihood Model<br>(ELM) | Petty & Cacioppo<br>(1986)    | Awareness, credibility            | Explains peripheral-<br>route attitude<br>formation through<br>repeated sponsorship<br>exposure.                        |
| Social Identity Theory                   | Tajfel & Turner<br>(1979)     | Emotional attachment              | Fans who identify<br>with an event extend<br>that identity to the<br>sponsoring brand.                                  |
| Consumer–Brand<br>Relationship Theory    | Fournier (1998)               | Emotional attachment              | Frames emotional<br>attachment as a long-<br>term relational<br>construct mirroring<br>human relationships.             |

Source: Source: own elaboration

## Conclusion of chapter 1

Previous research highlights the significant impact of brand image on consumer behavior, particularly in service industries such as telecommunications. It also demonstrates that event sponsorship can positively influence brand image through mechanisms such as increased exposure, image transfer, and sponsor–event congruence. However, most existing studies have focused on general contexts, with limited attention given to the telecommunications sector in emerging markets such as Algeria. This study therefore seeks to address these gaps

by analyzing the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions (namely brand awareness, perceived quality, perceived credibility, and emotional attachment) to brand image formation. Ultimately, this theoretical framework provides the basis for the development of the conceptual model and research hypotheses, which guide the empirical phase of the study.

The theoretical framework developed in this study served as the foundation for the selection of the research variables, the formulation of the hypotheses, and the design of the measurement instrument. More specifically, the review of the literature on sponsorship, brand image, perceived quality, brand credibility, emotional attachment, and brand awareness enabled the identification of the main constructs influencing brand image formation in the telecommunications sector. Based on these theoretical foundations, the conceptual model and the associated hypotheses were established in order to empirically examine the relationships between the study variables. Furthermore, the questionnaire items were adapted from previously validated scales in the literature to ensure the reliability and validity of the measurement instrument. Consequently, the methodological approach adopted in this research is directly aligned with the theoretical assumptions and conceptual orientations identified in the preceding chapter.

# **CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT**

## **Introduction to chapter 02**

Having established the theoretical foundations of sports event sponsorship and brand image in the preceding chapter, Chapter Two shifts toward the empirical and methodological dimensions of the study. This chapter is structured around two complementary sections that together provide the operational framework necessary for testing the research hypotheses.

The first section is devoted to the organizational context of the study. It offers a detailed presentation of Ooredoo Algeria (formerly known as Wataniya Telecom Algeria and commercially launched under the Nedjma brand) tracing its remarkable evolution from a pioneering mobile operator to Algeria's first multimedia telecommunications company. This section examines the company's vision, mission, and core values, as well as its organizational structure and the strategic role of its Marketing Department, particularly its Events and Sponsorship unit. It also sheds light on the nature and scope of Ooredoo's sponsorship activities in Algeria, encompassing sports, cultural, and professional events, and outlines the internal process through which sponsorship decisions are evaluated and implemented.

The second section presents the methodological framework adopted to address the central research question. Grounded in a quantitative, hypothetico-deductive approach, the study relies on a structured questionnaire as its primary data collection instrument. This section details the construction, structure, and validation of the questionnaire including the pre-test phase and the Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis conducted across all five measurement dimensions. It further specifies the characteristics of the target population, the sampling strategy and size determination, the data collection modalities, and the definition of the dependent and independent variables under examination.

Together, these two sections form a coherent and rigorous foundation upon which the empirical analysis presented in Chapter Three will be built.

### **Section 01: Company presentation and study context**

In this section, we will first present a brief overview of the OOREDOO Group, a key player in the telecommunications sector operating internationally. Next, we will focus on OOREDOO Algeria, the company where we carried out our internship. Finally, we will discuss the OOREDOO sponsorship events and the steps of sponsoring an event.

## 1.1 Company presentation

Ooredoo is a leading international telecommunications company operating across the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia, with a vision to enrich people's lives by stimulating human development through communication. Founded in August 2004, Ooredoo Algeria has become a key player in the country's socio-economic development, particularly among young Algerians, due to its bold vision and strong national network. As an innovator, Ooredoo pioneered the launch of 3G in 2013 and 4G in 2016, and today covers 99% of the Algerian population. Most recently, Ooredoo Algeria officially introduced 5G technology in December 2025 after completing technical tests and receiving regulatory approval, with the service becoming commercially available in January 2026, marking a new era of high-speed connectivity. Beyond operational performance, Ooredoo stands out for its commitment to employees and society, recognized for innovative HR policies and social initiatives such as supporting female entrepreneurship through Machrou3i and the Media Star journalism competition. With a dense sales network of over 250 points of sale across the country, ambitious projects like 5G deployment, and sustainability actions, Ooredoo continues to play a central role in Algeria's digital transformation. Under the enlightened leadership of Mr. Roni Tohme, Managing Director since 2023, the company positions itself as a leading player in North Africa and beyond, combining innovation, excellence, and social responsibility. Globally, Ooredoo has established itself as a leading telecommunications group, operating across multiple markets in the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia. As of 2025, the Group serves approximately 147 million customers and reported revenues of around QAR 24.6 billion, reflecting its sustained growth and strong market presence. Its operations span several countries, including Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Algeria, Tunisia, Iraq, Palestine, the Maldives, and Indonesia, highlighting its extensive international footprint and strategic expansion in emerging markets (Ooredoo, 2026).

The information sheet below summarizes the main characteristics of the company.

**Figure 7:** Logo OOREDOO from 2022



Source: Ooredoo website ( <http://choof.ooredoo.dz>) consulted in Mars 2026

**Table 5:** OOREDOO ALGERIA information sheet

|                           |                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| date of creation          | August 25,2004                                                                                             |
| Legal form of the company | Public limited company (S.P.A)                                                                             |
| Slogan                    | OOREDOO, upgrade your world!                                                                               |
| CEO                       | Roni Tohme (1 août 2023–)                                                                                  |
| Head office               | 66, Route d'Ouled Fayet 1614 Cheraga                                                                       |
| Activity                  | Telecommunication operator                                                                                 |
| Products                  | Mobile teephony<br>HSPA+<br>3G++<br>4G<br>LTE (Long Term Evolution)<br>5G<br>Push-to-talk<br>Mobile phones |
| Workforce                 | 2500                                                                                                       |
| Website                   | <a href="http://choof.ooredoo.dz">http://choof.ooredoo.dz</a>                                              |
| Former name               | Nedjma (2004-2013)                                                                                         |
| Revenue                   | 119.1 billion (2025) +13,9 % growth compared to 2024                                                       |
| Subscriber base           | 15,32 million (2025)                                                                                       |

Source: Source: own elaboration using internal company documents, HR department, April 2026

The table eloquently illustrates the operator's strategic position; several key elements emerge, allowing for a quick understanding of its competitive strengths and highlighting its growth drivers in a constantly evolving sector.

### 1.1.1 Ooredoo's vision

Ooredoo's vision is to enrich the digital lives of individuals and stimulate human development through communication technologies. This means going beyond simply providing connectivity; the company aims to empower people by giving them the tools and digital solutions they need to learn, grow, work, and connect with the world around them. Whether it is a student accessing online education, an entrepreneur launching a business through mobile platforms, or a family staying in touch across distances, Ooredoo believes



that communication technology can unlock human potential. By fostering digital inclusion, supporting innovation, and promoting access to high-speed internet such as 4G and 5G, Ooredoo seeks to create a positive and lasting impact on society. Ultimately, the company's vision is not just about technology for its own sake, but about using connectivity as a force for social progress, economic development, and personal enrichment across the communities it serves in Algeria, the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia.

### **1.1.2 Ooredoo's mission**

Ooredoo's mission is to enable its customers to access and enjoy the Internet in a personalized way, by offering them digital solutions tailored to their needs. This means that Ooredoo does not believe in a one-size-fits-all approach; instead, the company strives to understand the unique requirements of each customer segment, whether they are individual consumers, families, students, or large enterprises. For young digital natives, this might mean offering unlimited streaming packages and social media bundles. For small business owners, it could involve providing cloud services, digital payment solutions, and reliable broadband to help them compete in the modern economy. For rural communities, personalization means ensuring affordable access and relevant local content. By leveraging data analytics, customer feedback, and cutting-edge technologies like 4G, 5G, and fiber optics, Ooredoo designs flexible and user-friendly digital experiences that put control back in the hands of the customer. Ultimately, the mission is to make the Internet not just accessible, but truly enjoyable, intuitive, and beneficial for every individual, empowering them to live, work, and connect on their own terms.

### **1.1.3 Ooredoo's values**

Ooredoo is built upon three fundamental values: caring, connecting, and challenging, which guide its actions and shape its commitment to both customers and innovation. Caring reflects the company's deep sense of responsibility toward its employees, customers, and the wider community; this means Ooredoo listens actively, treats people with respect and empathy, and invests in social initiatives such as supporting female entrepreneurship through Machrou3i, promoting journalistic talent via Media Star, and fostering a workplace where employees feel valued and supported. Connecting goes beyond simply providing network coverage; it is about creating meaningful relationships and enabling human interaction, whether by helping families stay in touch across distances, linking businesses to new markets, or bridging the digital divide so that more Algerians can access education, healthcare, and

economic opportunities through reliable telecommunications. Challenging represents Ooredoo's spirit of continuous improvement and its refusal to settle for the status quo; this value drives the company to pioneer new technologies such as 3G in 2013, 4G in 2016, and most recently 5G in 2025–2026, to push boundaries in customer service, and to constantly ask how things can be done better, faster, and more efficiently. Together, these three values form the ethical and strategic compass of Ooredoo, ensuring that innovation serves people, that technology builds bridges, and that the company never stops striving for excellence while remaining deeply human at its core.

## 1.2 History and evolution of Ooredoo

Ooredoo Group is a major international player in the telecommunications sector, offering mobile and fixed-line telephony services, high-speed internet, and enterprise solutions designed to meet the needs of both individuals and professionals. The Group operates across key markets in the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia, including Qatar, Kuwait, the Sultanate of Oman, Algeria, Tunisia, Iraq, Palestine, the Maldives, and Indonesia.

### 1.2.1 The evolution of Ooredoo

The evolution of the Ooredoo Group can be traced through several key dates that highlight its growth and transformation:

**Table 6:** The evolution of Ooredoo

| Date              | Evolution                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1949              | Qatar Telecom (Qtel) was founded and established itself as the main telecommunications service provider in Qatar                                                           |
| 1999              | Wataniya Telecom was founded, initially owned by the Kuwait Projects Company (KIPCO)                                                                                       |
| March 2007        | KIPCO sold the majority of Wataniya Telecom's shares to the Qtel Group, making Qtel the majority shareholder                                                               |
| February 25, 2013 | Qtel rebranded and officially became the Ooredoo Group. The name "Ooredoo" means "I want" in Arabic, and the new identity was gradually rolled out across all subsidiaries |

|             |                                                                                                               |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| End of 2013 | The Ooredoo Group surpassed 90 million customers across operations in North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Source: Compiled by myself using internal company documents, HR department, April 2026

### 1.2.2 From Nedjma to a Leading Multimedia Operator

Ooredoo Algeria, originally known as Wataniya Telecom Algeria (WTA), proudly holds the distinction of being the first multimedia operator in Algeria. From its humble beginnings as a mobile telephony provider operating under the commercially recognized brand Nedjma, the company has grown and transformed significantly over the years, evolving into a full-fledged multimedia powerhouse that offers a wide range of telecommunications and digital services to millions of Algerian users.

This remarkable journey, driven by a constant pursuit of innovation and excellence, is reflected through a series of key milestones that have defined the company's presence and impact in the Algerian market from the launch of its very first network to becoming a pioneer in next-generation connectivity.

**Table 7:** The Evolution of Ooredoo Algeria: From Nedjma to 5G

| Date              | Event                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| December 2, 2003  | Wataniya Telecom Algeria obtained a national mobile telephony service license                                                                                                               |
| August 25, 2004   | WTA launched its brand commercially under the name Nedjma, immediately adopting an accelerated network deployment policy. By end of 2005, its network covered the entire Algerian territory |
| March 2007        | The KIPCO Group concluded a transaction with the Qtel Group, which became the majority shareholder of Wataniya Telecom                                                                      |
| February 25, 2013 | The Qtel Group changed its identity to become Ooredoo Group, with the change progressively applied to all Group operations                                                                  |
| November 21, 2013 | Following the Group's rebranding, Nedjma officially became Ooredoo                                                                                                                          |

|                   |                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| December 13, 2013 | Ooredoo (formerly Nedjma) launched its third-generation (3G) mobile network, offering Algerian users a new world in mobile telecommunications     |
| July 2016         | Ooredoo launched its fourth-generation (4G) mobile network                                                                                        |
| 2018              | Installation of 1,400 4G technical sites, with a network covering all 48 wilayas (provinces) of Algeria                                           |
| January 7, 2026   | Ooredoo launched its fifth-generation (5G) mobile network under the slogan "Born for 5G," marking a new era of high-speed connectivity in Algeria |

Source: own elaboration using internal company documents, HR department, April 2026

### 1.2.3 Ooredoo's Commitment to Algerian Customers

Ooredoo offers Algerian customers not only innovative products and services but also a high quality of transmission thanks to equipment derived from the latest technologies. The company is committed to providing customer service based on the highest standards and a highly competitive pricing policy.

To better understand the operator's evolution, it is necessary to review the main milestones that have marked its history, presented in the summary table below:

**Table 8:** History of OOREDOO in Algeria

| Key date          | Historical development                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| December 25, 2003 | WTA acquired a license to provide nationwide wireless telephony services in Algeria.                                                               |
| August 25, 2004   | WTA commercially launches its Nedjma brand.                                                                                                        |
| End of 2005       | Nedjma implements a policy to accelerate the deployment of its network, which will cover the entire Algerian territory.                            |
| March 2007        | The KIPCO Group, owner of WTA, completes a transaction with Qatar Telecom (Qtel), which then becomes the majority shareholder of Wataniya Telecom. |

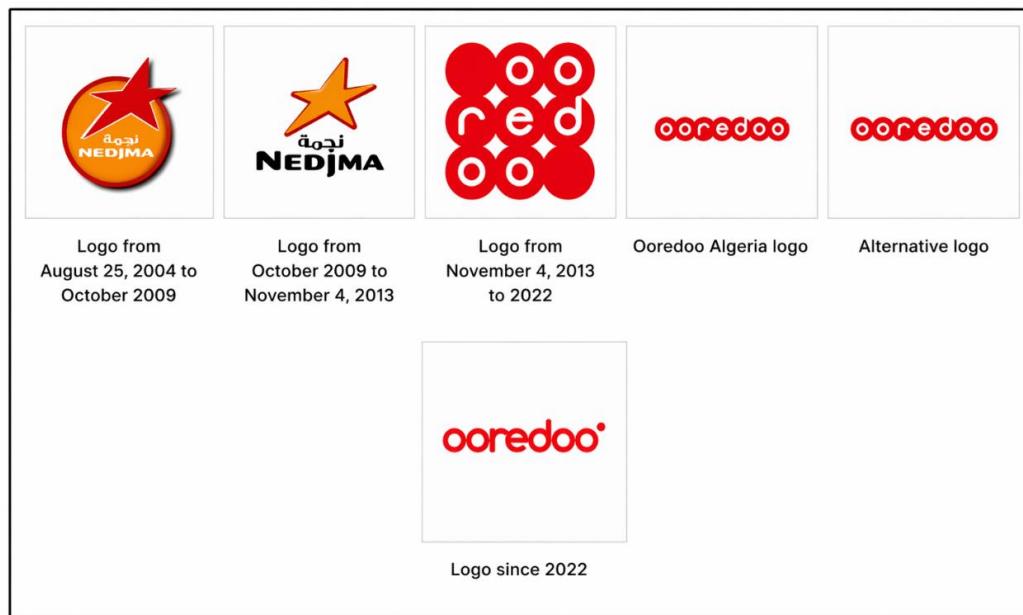
|                  |                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 25,2013 | Qtel Group is changing its visual identity and name to become Ooredoo Group. This change will be gradually integrated into all of the group's operations. |
| November 21,2013 | Nedjma, in turn, took the name Ooredoo.                                                                                                                   |
| Decembre 13,2013 | Ooredoo launches its third-generation (3G) mobile network                                                                                                 |
| July 2016        | Ooredoo launches its fourth-generation (4G) mobile network                                                                                                |
| 2018             | Installation of 1,400 4G technical sites, with a network covering all 48 wilayas.                                                                         |
| January 7,2026   | Ooredoo launches its fifth-generation (5G) (born for 5G) mobile network                                                                                   |

Source: Compiled by myself using internal company documents, HR department, April 2026

This summary table, which represents the evolution, has allowed us to trace the important dates in the rise of Ooredoo Algeria, highlighting the key moments that shaped its development and market positioning.

Ooredoo relies on a strong technical infrastructure and an extensive distribution network. With network coverage reaching 99% of the population, it includes several points of sale (POS), 442 Ooredoo Service Spaces (ESO), 99 Ooredoo Spaces (EO), 38 Ooredoo City Shops (CSO), 2 Shop-in-Shop (SIS) outlets, VIP spaces, as well as 103 authorized Ooredoo agents (AAO) distributed across the national territory. Beyond its economic performance, the company is actively committed to supporting its employees and society through various social initiatives, thereby contributing to national socio-economic development.

The operator's visual identity consistently reflects its ambition to position itself as a major player in the telecommunications sector. Its distinctive design, shown in the figure below, highlights values of innovation, connectivity, and commitment to customer satisfaction.

**Figure 8:** The evolution of OOREDOO's identity

Source: Internal document from the company's HR department 2026

The figure illustrates the evolution of OOREDOO's identity over time from 2004 to 2022, Nedjma brand was replaced by OOREDOO, as part of a harmonization of the commercial and visual identity across all subsidiaries of the group.

### 1.3 Organization and operation

In Algeria, Ooredoo was formerly known as *Wataniya Télécom Algérie*. It is recognized as the first multimedia mobile telecommunications operator in the country. The company offers Algerian users innovative mobile services supported by the latest technologies and optimized transmission quality. It also stands out through customer service aligned with international standards and a competitive pricing policy. Its activities are divided into three main strategic business areas: mobile services, fixed services including internet and voice, and services dedicated to enterprises.

To support these three strategic areas, the company relies on a well-defined organizational structure. The organizational chart schematically represents the functional, organizational, and hierarchical relationships within a company, thus providing an overall view of how positions and roles are distributed within the structure. This simplified representation makes it easier to visualize lines of authority and relationships of subordination, thereby offering a clear understanding of complex structures.

The organizational structure of Ooredoo is presented through a hierarchical diagram (APPENDIX A) that reflects the distribution of responsibilities and functional relationships

within the company. At the top of this structure is the General Directorate, which represents the highest level of management and is responsible for overall strategic decision-making and organizational leadership. Directly under the General Directorate, the company is divided into three main divisions: the Technology Division, the Support Division, and the Commercial Division.

The Technology Division focuses on the technical and operational aspects of the company. It includes several key departments such as the Information Systems Department, Network Engineering Department, Service Assurance & Operation Department, and Technology Governance Department. These departments are responsible for maintaining network infrastructure, ensuring service quality, managing IT systems, and overseeing technological compliance.

The Support Division plays an important role in providing administrative, strategic, and financial support to the organization. It encompasses multiple departments, including Human Resources, Corporate Affairs, Strategy, Legal, and Regulatory Affairs. In addition, it includes the Procurement & Supply Chain Department and the Internal Audit Department. The financial structure within this division is led by the Chief Financial Officer Department, which supervises the Treasury Department, Business Planning Department, and Finance Department. This division ensures the smooth internal functioning of the company and supports decision-making processes.

The Commercial Division is responsible for market-facing activities and revenue generation. It consists of the Marketing Department and the Sales Department. The Marketing Department includes Customer Service and Communication departments, focusing on customer satisfaction and brand image. The Sales Department is further divided into several units: Indirect Sales, B2B Sales, Direct Sales, Digital Sales Channels, and Distribution Department. These units work together to enhance sales performance and expand market reach.

### **1.3.1 Marketing department**

During an internship at Ooredoo, the researcher was integrated into the Marketing Department, specifically within the Events and Sponsorship unit. This unit plays a strategic role in enhancing the company's brand image and strengthening its relationship with customers through experiential marketing. Sponsorship is considered a key communication

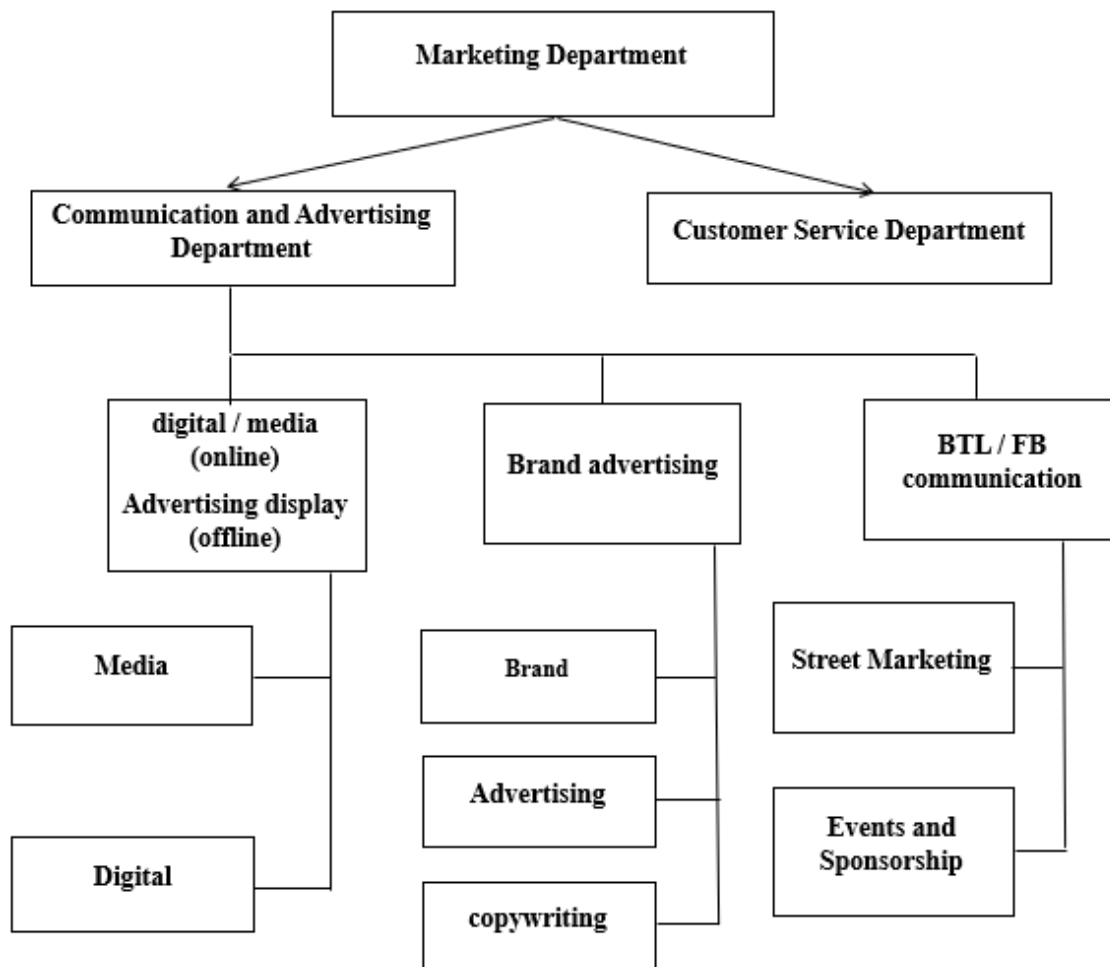
tool, as it enables the company to associate its brand with popular events, cultural activities, and sports initiatives.

In Algeria, Ooredoo backs major national events and has teamed up with top football clubs like Mouloudia Club of Algiers (MCA) and Union Sportive of Médina of Algiers (USMA). Expanding its reach beyond football, Ooredoo also sponsors the volleyball *club Mechâal Baladiat Bejaia* (MBB), covering both its male and female categories. Furthermore, Ooredoo has served as the official sponsor of the Algerian Volleyball Federation (FAVB), supporting the national teams in major regional and international competitions. Beyond sport, Ooredoo is renowned for its commitment to journalistic excellence through the "Media Star" competition, which has become a must-attend annual event for media professionals across Algeria. They also support cultural festivals, youth programs, and massive gatherings like Dima Ooredoo, which spark innovation and bring the community together. Overall, these efforts help Ooredoo stand out, create those heartfelt bonds with customers, and show it's a company that truly cares about being socially responsible and putting people first.

The Marketing Department of Ooredoo is structured around two main units: the Communication and Advertising Department and the Customer Service Department. The Communication and Advertising Department is responsible for designing and implementing the company's promotional strategies and is further divided into three key areas. The first focuses on digital and media channels, encompassing both online platforms (such as social media and websites) and offline advertising (including traditional media). The second area is dedicated to brand advertising, which involves brand management, the development of advertising campaigns, and copywriting activities aimed at creating persuasive and coherent brand messages. The third area covers below-the-line (BTL) and field-based communication, including street marketing initiatives as well as events and sponsorship activities, which aim to establish direct interaction with consumers and enhance brand experience. In parallel, the Customer Service Department plays a crucial role in managing customer relationships, handling feedback and complaints, and ensuring overall customer satisfaction. This organizational structure allows the company to effectively coordinate its communication efforts while maintaining a strong customer-oriented approach.



**Figure 9:** The organizational structure of communication and advertising department at Ooredoo



Source: Internal document from the company's marketing department, 2026

### 1.3.2 Sponsorship in Ooredoo

Sponsorship is an important part of Ooredoo's communication strategy because it helps the company improve its brand image and visibility by being associated with big national events. Ooredoo uses a variety of sponsorship strategies in Algeria that include sports, cultural, and professional events. The company sponsors several well-known football clubs, such as Mouloudia Club of Algiers (MCA), Sportive Club of Constantine (CSC), Mouloudia Club of Oran (MCO), and Youth Sportive of Saoura (JS Saoura). Ooredoo also sponsors a wide range of events, from sports competitions such as the Ooredoo Press Tournament to major national and international events like the Algerian Production Fair and the Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF 2025) held in Algiers.

In addition to sports, Ooredoo is also actively involved in cultural and professional events. For instance, it sponsors the International Cultural Festival of Symphonic Music of Algiers and the International Arab Film Festival of Oran, both of which promote art and creativity across Algeria. The company also supports employment and innovation initiatives such as Impolitic Connect and participates in major technology events like Connected Algeria. Through this diversified sponsorship portfolio, Ooredoo aims to position itself not only as a telecommunications operator but also as an active contributor to social, cultural, and economic development, further reinforcing its image as a dynamic and socially responsible brand.

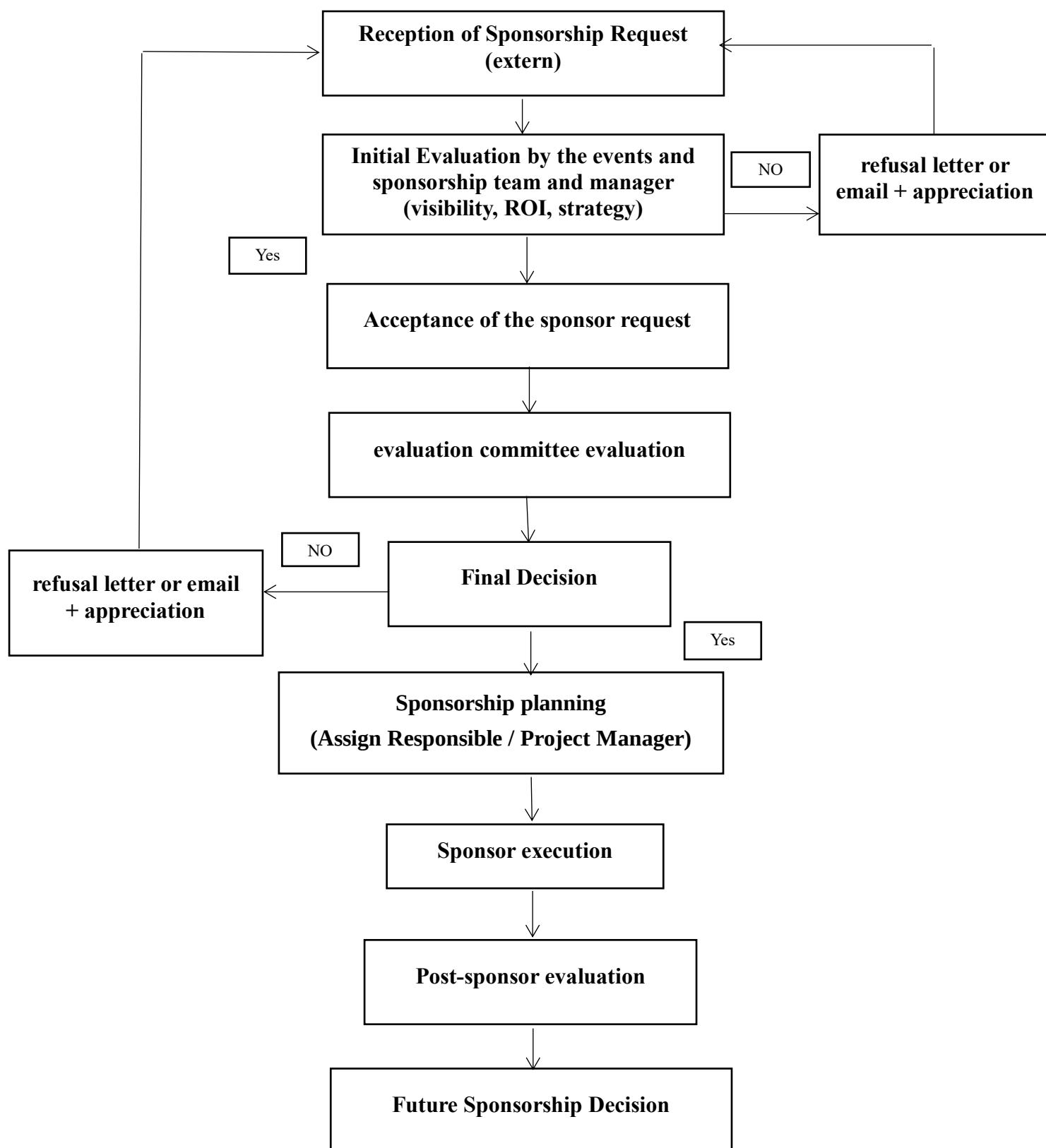
### **1.3.3 Steps of events sponsorship in Ooredoo**

The event sponsorship process at Ooredoo follows a structured and selective approach to ensure alignment with the company's strategic objectives. Initially, the company receives sponsorship requests from external organizations. These proposals are carefully analyzed based on several criteria, including visibility, expected return on investment, market opportunities, and overall strategic fit. Following this evaluation, a preliminary decision is made: if the proposal does not meet the company's expectations, it is rejected and a formal refusal letter is sent along with a note of appreciation.

If the proposal is considered relevant, it proceeds to a second stage involving a cross-functional committee composed of representatives from marketing, strategy, finance, and other concerned departments. This committee conducts a more in-depth evaluation and collectively decides whether to approve or reject the sponsorship. In case of rejection, a formal response is again communicated to the requesting party.

When the sponsorship is approved, the Events and Sponsorship team initiates the planning phase. A project manager is assigned to oversee the event's execution and ensure its alignment with Ooredoo's brand objectives. After the event, a post-evaluation is conducted to assess performance and measure outcomes such as visibility and return. This final step helps the company determine whether to continue sponsoring similar events in the future.

The following diagram represents the different steps involved in the event sponsorship process adopted by

**Figure 10:** The steps of event sponsorship in Ooredoo

Source: internal document from the company's marketing department 2026

This section provided an overview of Ooredoo Algeria as the organizational context of this study. The analysis revealed that Ooredoo has established itself as a leading telecommunications operator in Algeria, with sports event sponsorship playing a central role in its communication strategy. Through its dedicated Events and Sponsorship unit, the company adopts a structured and goal-oriented approach to sponsorship, aimed at strengthening its brand image and building emotional connections with Algerian consumers. This context justifies the relevance of Ooredoo Algeria as a case study and provides the foundation for the methodological framework presented in the following section.

## **Section 02: Methodology and data of the study**

This section will elaborate on the methodological approach used for this study. The methodological framework, as well as the instruments used, will be discussed here. These have been chosen as means to help solve the research problem stated and achieve the set objectives.

### **2.1 Research Methodology**

According to Velmuradova (2004), every scientific study must adopt a clear methodological position that explains how knowledge is created and analyzed. In line with this, the present study uses a quantitative research approach, which is best suited for examining relationships between variables and testing theories (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016). This approach was chosen because it is concerned with quantities, measurements and objective data, allowing for statistical analysis and the generalization of findings (Hair et al., 2019). Since this study aims to examine the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions to brand image formation, a quantitative method is particularly appropriate, as it allows patterns and relationships between variables to be identified through standardized tools (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

To collect data, a structured questionnaire was used as the main research instrument, a method widely recognized for its ability to gather information from a large number of people efficiently (Fowler, 2014). The questionnaire was designed to measure respondents' perceptions of four sponsorship-induced brand dimensions (brand awareness, perceived quality, perceived credibility, and emotional attachment) and their contribution to overall brand image formation. Before its full distribution, a pre-test was conducted to check the

clarity and reliability of the questions, which helped improve the overall quality of the data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Overall, this methodological approach ensures that the data collected is both valid and reliable, enabling a rigorous examination of the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions to brand image formation, and supporting the testing of the study's hypotheses (Field, 2018; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018).

### **2.1.1 The Quantitative Approach**

According to Coron (2020), the quantitative approach is based on the use of structured data collected from a large number of individuals, typically exceeding 100 respondents. It allows for the measurement of phenomena and the quantification of relationships between different variables.

This approach is characterized by the use of standardized research instruments, such as questionnaires with closed-ended questions, which ensure consistency and comparability of responses. It also relies on statistical analysis techniques to test hypotheses, identify correlations, and examine potential causal relationships between variables.

One of the main strengths of the quantitative approach lies in its ability to produce objective, reliable, and generalizable results. Additionally, it enables researchers to compare groups, detect behavioral patterns, and draw conclusions that can be extended to a broader population.

In order to test our hypotheses, a survey was conducted using a questionnaire following a pre-test phase, which ensured the clarity, validity, and reliability of the measurement instrument.

### **2.1.2 The construction of the questionnaire**

The construction of the questionnaire was guided by the theoretical framework developed in Chapter One, drawing on marketing literature related to sports event sponsorship and brand image formation. Existing theories provided the conceptual basis for identifying the principal mechanisms through which sponsorship shapes consumer perceptions, including image transfer, associative learning, credibility signaling, and emotional engagement. (APPENDIX B)

This study adopts a multidimensional approach to brand image formation by focusing on four sponsorship-induced brand dimensions: Sponsorship-Induced Brand Awareness,

Sponsorship-Induced Perceived Quality, Sponsorship-Induced Brand Credibility, and Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment. These dimensions are widely recognized in the branding and sponsorship literature as fundamental components of consumer brand perception and image formation (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Speed & Thompson, 2000).

The questionnaire, entitled “*Examining the Contribution of Sponsorship-Induced Brand Dimensions to Brand Image Formation: The Case of Ooredoo Algeria*”, was designed to examine how sponsorship-induced consumer perceptions contribute to the formation of Ooredoo Algeria’s brand image among Algerian consumers exposed to the company’s sports sponsorship activities. The focus on Ooredoo Algeria is justified by its strong involvement in sponsoring national sports events, which provides a relevant context for investigating sponsorship-related brand perceptions.

Overall, the questionnaire was structured to assess respondents’ perceptions regarding the four sponsorship-induced brand dimensions and their contribution to overall brand image formation, thereby enabling a coherent analysis of the structural relationships between the study variables.

### **2.1.3 Questionnaire Structure**

The questionnaire consisted of twenty-nine questions organized into eight main sections, allowing for a systematic exploration of the research problem and its different dimensions. (APPENDIX C)

The first section consisted of an introduction and informed consent statement, in which the purpose of the study was briefly presented and participants were invited to voluntarily participate in the research.

The second section focused on the general characteristics of the participants. It included demographic information such as gender, age, occupation, the mobile operator currently used, and the duration of use. This section also contained a filter question asking whether respondents were aware of Ooredoo Algeria’s sports sponsorship activities, in order to ensure the relevance and validity of the collected data.

The third section addressed respondents’ exposure to Ooredoo Algeria’s sports sponsorship activities. It aimed to identify the sponsored sports events recognized by participants, the communication channels through which they were exposed to sponsorship activities such as television, social media, YouTube, outdoor advertising, or direct attendance as well as the

frequency of their exposure. This section helped contextualize respondents' familiarity with Ooredoo's sponsorship presence.

The fourth section measured Sponsorship-Induced Brand Awareness using Likert-scale items. It evaluated the extent to which exposure to Ooredoo's sports sponsorship activities enhances brand recognition, recall, and visual identification among consumers.

The fifth section examined Sponsorship-Induced Brand Credibility. It aimed to assess how sports sponsorship activities influence respondents' perceptions of Ooredoo's seriousness, professionalism, reliability, and ability to fulfill its commitments toward customers.

The sixth section focused on Sponsorship-Induced Perceived Quality. Through Likert-scale statements, it explored whether Ooredoo's association with sports events positively influences consumers' perceptions regarding the quality, reliability, and overall performance of its telecommunications services.

The seventh section assessed Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment. It measured the emotional responses generated through sponsorship exposure, including positive feelings toward the brand, personal identification with the values conveyed by sports sponsorship such as excellence and team spirit and the influence of sponsorship activities on customer attachment and loyalty intentions.

The eighth and final section evaluated Overall Brand Image Formation. It examined whether the sponsorship-induced dimensions contribute to building a positive, modern, and dynamic image of Ooredoo Algeria and whether the brand is perceived as a leading telecommunications operator compared to its competitors.

Overall, the questionnaire combined different types of questions, including multiple-choice questions and Likert-scale items, in order to measure consumer perceptions and attitudes related to sponsorship-induced brand dimensions and overall brand image formation. This methodological design ensured the reliability of the quantitative analysis and enabled a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between the study variables.

#### **2.1.4 Questionnaire Validation**

A preliminary validation phase of the questionnaire was conducted to ensure its methodological quality and reliability. A pre-test was administered to a pilot sample of 30 respondents, selected according to the criteria of the target population. This step aimed to assess the clarity, relevance, and comprehensibility of the questionnaire items.

The feedback obtained from participants indicated that the questionnaire was generally clear and easy to complete. The wording of the questions was well understood, and no major difficulties were reported. As a result, no significant modifications were required following this preliminary evaluation.

To further ensure the reliability of the measurement scales, an internal consistency analysis was carried out using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. This analysis was performed using SPSS Statistics (version 27), allowing for the assessment of the coherence of the items associated with each dimension of brand image, namely brand awareness, perceived quality, perceived credibility, and emotional attachment.

The following Tables present the results of the reliability analysis of the measurement scales used in this study.

**Table 9:** Reliability Analysis Results of Brand awareness

| Alpha de Cronbach | Number of elements |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>0,775</b>      | <b>4</b>           |

Source: Source: (SPSS Statistics version 27, adapted by us)

The Brand Awareness section yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.775, which exceeds the minimum threshold of 0.70 recommended by Nunnally (1978). This result reflects an acceptable level of internal consistency among the items measuring brand awareness, confirming that respondents interpreted and answered these questions in a coherent and reliable manner.

**Table 10:** Reliability Analysis Results of credibility

| Alpha de Cronbach | Number of elements |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>0,837</b>      | <b>4</b>           |

Source: Source: (SPSS Statistics version 27, adapted by us)

The Credibility section obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.837, a value that comfortably surpasses the 0.70 benchmark. This good level of internal consistency indicates that the



items within this section effectively capture the same underlying construct, demonstrating the strong reliability of this dimension in the questionnaire.

**Table 11:** Reliability Analysis Results perceived quality

| Alpha de Cronbach | Number of elements |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>0,778</b>      | <b>4</b>           |

Source: Source: (SPSS Statistics version 27, adapted by us)

With a Cronbach's alpha of 0.778, perceived quality section demonstrates an acceptable degree of internal consistency, slightly above the minimal acceptable threshold. This result confirms that the selected items measure the perceived quality construct in a sufficiently homogeneous and reliable way.

**Table 12:** Reliability Analysis Results of emotional attachment

| Alpha de Cronbach | Number of elements |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>0,839</b>      | <b>4</b>           |

Source: Source: (SPSS Statistics version 27, adapted by us)

The Emotional Attachment section recorded the second highest alpha coefficient of 0.839, reflecting a good internal consistency. This value indicates a strong coherence among the items of this dimension, suggesting that the scale successfully captures the emotional bond between consumers and the Ooredoo brand.

**Table 13:** Reliability Analysis Results Brand image

| Alpha de Cronbach | Number of elements |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>0,781</b>      | <b>4</b>           |

Source: Source: (SPSS Statistics version 27, adapted by us)

The Overall Brand Image section produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.781, confirming an acceptable internal consistency that meets the standards set by Nunnally (1978). This result validates the reliability of this final dimension and supports the use of these items as a coherent measure of the respondents' global perception of the Ooredoo brand.

Overall, all five sections of the questionnaire achieved Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.775 to 0.839, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold. These results collectively confirm the psychometric robustness of the instrument and validate its use as a reliable and consistent data collection tool for the subsequent analyses.

## **2.2 Study Data**

A quantitative methodology was chosen to tackle the research problem regarding the effect of sponsoring sports events on the formation of Ooredoo's brand image. The quantitative methodology is characterized by using empirical data collected, processed and analyzed for this purpose with the help of a structured questionnaire conducted among a representative sample of the targeted population.

The following part covers several issues relating to the study data such as the identification of the target population which comprises individuals who have been to or seen sports events sponsored by Ooredoo, the sample size, the way of distributing the questionnaire and types of variables.

This will allow us to achieve scientific validity of our results by putting hypotheses under test.

### **2.2.1 Research Paradigm and Epistemological Positioning**

This study is grounded in the post-positivist paradigm and follows a hypothetico-deductive approach, both of which align naturally with the quantitative and confirmatory nature of the research. Post-positivism assumes that while an objective reality exists, it can only be approximately known through rigorous empirical investigation, positioning this study between pure objectivism and interpretive subjectivity (Pilcher,2024). Within this framework, knowledge is built deductively: existing theoretical foundations, namely sponsorship literature, brand equity theory, and associative learning, guided the formulation of the research hypotheses, which were subsequently subjected to empirical testing through structured data collection and statistical analysis. This reasoning process moves from the general to the specific, from theory to observation, which is the defining logic of the hypothetico-deductive method. The choice of this paradigm is fully justified by the nature of the research objectives: since this study seeks to measure, test, and quantify the relationships between sponsorship-induced brand dimensions and brand image formation, an interpretive or inductive approach would be incompatible with such goals. Consequently, all methodological decisions that follow, including the use of a structured Likert-scale

questionnaire, a sample of 196 respondents, and PLS-SEM analysis through SmartPLS 4, flow directly and coherently from this epistemological positioning

### **2.2.2 The target population**

Part of this research is dedicated to examining the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions to the formation of brand image in the telecommunications sector through the case of Ooredoo Algeria. More specifically, the questionnaire used in this study was entitled *“Examining the Contribution of sport events Sponsorship to Brand Image Formation: Case study Ooredoo Algeria.”* Taking into consideration the topic and context of the research problem, the target population consisted of individuals who had been exposed to Ooredoo Algeria’s sports sponsorship activities, whether through direct participation in sponsored events or through media and communication channels such as television, social media, YouTube, and outdoor advertising.

The selection of this population was justified by the fact that these individuals represent the consumers most likely to develop perceptions related to Ooredoo’s sponsorship activities and their influence on brand image formation. By examining the perceptions of consumers exposed to sponsorship activities, the study aims to obtain valid and relevant insights regarding the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions to Ooredoo Algeria’s overall brand image.

With regard to the sampling strategy, this study adopted a non-probability sampling approach, as it was not possible to establish a complete and exhaustive list of all individuals exposed to Ooredoo Algeria’s sports sponsorship activities. Non-probability sampling is commonly used in marketing research when the boundaries of the target population are difficult to define precisely (Malhotra, 2020).

More specifically, a purposive sampling technique was employed, whereby participants were selected based on a specific criterion namely their prior awareness of or exposure to Ooredoo Algeria’s sports sponsorship activities. This criterion was ensured through the inclusion of a filter question at the beginning of the questionnaire, allowing only relevant respondents to proceed with the survey. In addition, a convenience sampling method was applied during questionnaire distribution, as the survey was shared through accessible online platforms and social media channels targeting individuals who were readily available and willing to participate.

The combination of purposive and convenience sampling enabled the study to reach a relevant and accessible sample while maintaining consistency with the research objectives and the contextual nature of sponsorship exposure (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

### 2.2.3 Sample Selection

The sample size was determined using the Cochran (1977) formula, which is widely used in quantitative research when the population size is unknown or very large:

$$n = (Z^2 \times p \times q) / e^2$$

With:

**n:** sample size

**Z:** value from the normal distribution corresponding to the desired confidence level (1.96 for a 95% confidence level)

**P:** 0.5 (proportion of the population, assumed at 50% for maximum variability)

**q:**  $1 - p$

**e:** stands for the margin of error or confidence interval, this is the acceptable error margin in selecting our sample. The margin of error typically ranges from 1% to 10% in human population studies. In this case, it's considered as 7%

The decision to increase the tolerated margin of error from 5% to 7% was justified by several practical reasons.

First, the target population of this study, which consists of individuals exposed to Ooredoo's sports event sponsorship, is not officially listed or easily accessible, making it difficult to collect a large sample within the timeframe of this research (Malhotra, 2020).

Second, as this study was conducted within the limited timeframe of a Master's dissertation, collecting the 384 responses required by a 5% margin of error was not feasible given the time and resource constraints faced by the researcher (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

Third, a margin of error of 7% remains academically acceptable in social science and marketing research, and several studies have adopted similar margins without compromising the validity of their findings (Cochran, 1977; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). As a result, the sample size of 196 respondents is still considered statistically sufficient for this study.

Finally, since this research focuses specifically on Ooredoo in Algeria, the study is limited in scope, and a slightly relaxed margin of error is justifiable given that the main goal is to identify general trends and relationships rather than produce broadly generalizable findings (Hair et al., 2019).

By applying these parameters:

$$Z = 1.96$$

$$p = 0.5$$

$$e = 0.07$$

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{(0.07)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0049}$$

$$n = \frac{0.9604}{0.0049} \approx 196$$

#### 2.2.4 Collecting data

As part of this study, data collection was carried out using a self-administered online questionnaire, designed and distributed via the Google Forms platform. This method was chosen for its practicality, speed of deployment, and its ability to reach a wide range of respondents, particularly individuals who have attended or have been exposed to events sponsored by Ooredoo, which constitute the main target of this research.

To optimize the response rate and ensure sufficient diversity among participants, the questionnaire was disseminated through several digital channels. This dual-channel strategy enabled a more effective targeting of individuals likely to be familiar with Ooredoo's sponsorship initiatives.

Furthermore, the online distribution approach facilitated access to respondents who are regularly exposed to event-related content and brand communications, whether directly (by attending events) or indirectly (through digital platforms and social networks). This is fully aligned with the objectives of the study, which aims to evaluate the impact of event sponsorship on brand image.

The data collection period extended over several days, in accordance with methodological standards for quantitative research. The data collected will be analyzed in the following chapter in order to test the research hypotheses and examine the relationships between the studied variables, particularly between Ooredoo's event sponsorship activities and the formation of its brand image among Algerian consumers.

### 2.2.5 Data Variables

Within the framework of this research, the study variables were defined based on the research problem, objectives, hypotheses, and the theoretical concepts developed in the literature review. The study adopts an explanatory quantitative model aimed at examining the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions to the formation of Ooredoo Algeria's brand image.

#### Dependent Variable

Brand Image Formation represents the dependent variable of the study. It reflects the overall perception and image associated with Ooredoo Algeria in the minds of consumers exposed to the company's sports sponsorship activities. This variable evaluates the extent to which consumers perceive Ooredoo as a positive, modern, dynamic, and credible telecommunications brand compared to its competitors.

The construct was measured using several Likert-scale items related to respondents' global evaluations of Ooredoo Algeria's brand image.

#### Independent Variables

The study examines four independent variables representing sponsorship-induced brand dimensions identified in the sponsorship and brand equity literature as key determinants of brand image formation.

-Sponsorship-Induced Brand Awareness, this variable refers to the extent to which exposure to Ooredoo Algeria's sports sponsorship activities enhances consumers' recognition, recall, and familiarity with the brand.

-Sponsorship-Induced Perceived Quality, this variable reflects consumers' perceptions regarding the quality, reliability, and overall performance of Ooredoo Algeria's telecommunications services as influenced by sponsorship exposure.

-Sponsorship-Induced Brand Credibility, these variable measures the extent to which sports sponsorship activities strengthen perceptions of Ooredoo Algeria's professionalism, trustworthiness, and ability to fulfill its commitments toward customers.

-Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment, this variable evaluates the emotional bond and positive affective responses developed by consumers toward Ooredoo Algeria through exposure to sports sponsorship activities.

### Sponsorship Exposure as a Contextual Condition

Although sports event sponsorship constitutes the contextual foundation of this research, it was not operationalized as a directly measured latent construct within the structural model. Instead, sponsorship exposure was controlled through the sampling process by selecting only respondents who were aware of or exposed to Ooredoo Algeria's sports sponsorship activities.

Exposure-related questions such as awareness of sponsored events, communication channels, and frequency of exposure were therefore used to contextualize respondents' familiarity with sponsorship activities rather than being incorporated as independent variables in the structural model.

### **Conclusion of chapter 02**

This chapter has bridged two fundamental dimensions of the research in order to establish a solid basis for the empirical investigation.

In the first section, the organizational framework of the study was presented through an exploration of Ooredoo Algeria's environment. By analyzing the company's history, strategic positioning within the Algerian telecommunications market, and its active involvement in sports and event sponsorship activities, a clearer understanding of the brand's communication strategy and market objectives was established. This analysis highlighted the importance of sports sponsorship as a strategic communication tool used by Ooredoo Algeria to strengthen consumer perceptions and reinforce its presence within the Algerian market.

In the second section, the operational framework of the study was detailed. The methodological approach adopted in this research was based on a structured questionnaire administered to consumers exposed to Ooredoo Algeria's sports sponsorship activities. The study relied on a quantitatively oriented research design, a non-probability sampling approach, and clearly defined variables represented by four sponsorship-induced brand dimensions namely Sponsorship-Induced Brand Awareness, Sponsorship-Induced Perceived Quality, Sponsorship-Induced Brand Credibility, and Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment as well as the dependent variable, Brand Image Formation. This methodological framework ensured the reliability and validity of the collected data and provided a coherent basis for statistical analysis.

Together, these elements constitute a solid empirical foundation for the following chapter, which focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the empirical results and the testing of the research hypotheses related to the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions to Ooredoo in Algeria's brand image formation.



# **CHAPTER III: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## **Introduction to chapter 03**

Within this chapter, we present the empirical results of the quantitative study conducted to examine the impact of sports event sponsorship on brand image formation in the context of Ooredoo Algeria. The data collected through the questionnaire were thoroughly analyzed and interpreted using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 27.0) and SmartPLS4. These tools were instrumental in uncovering insights, relationships, and patterns within the dataset, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the research findings. The chapter is structured into two main sections: the first presents the results of the statistical analyses, while the second discusses these findings in light of the theoretical framework established in the preceding chapters.

## **Section 1: Presentation of the Results**

In order to guarantee the suitability of our data for this study and analysis, we took measures to confirm the absence of any missing values in our dataset and to verify whether our data follows a normal distribution. These preliminary steps are essential to ensure the validity of the subsequent statistical analyses.

### **1.1 Missing Values**

After thoroughly reviewing the data in IBM SPSS and running frequency tests, we confirmed that there were no missing values in our database. This was an expected outcome, as the survey was conducted online, which ensured a complete dataset by requiring participants to provide responses to all questions before submitting the questionnaire. This approach eliminated the possibility of incomplete or partially filled-out responses, which can often be a challenge with traditional paper-based or in-person surveys.

### **1.2 Normality test**

Analyzing the normality of a dataset is a crucial preliminary step in statistical analysis, as it determines whether parametric or non-parametric tests are appropriate, and ensures the validity of subsequent analyses. To verify the normality of our data, we conducted the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests on each variable within our model for  $n = 196$ , as detailed in the table below.

**Table 14:** Results of the Normality Test

| Test                     | Kolmogorov-Smirnov |     |         | Shapiro-Wilk |     |         |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----|---------|--------------|-----|---------|
|                          | Statistiques       | Ddl | Sig.    | Statistiques | ddl | Sig.    |
| <b>Brand awareness</b>   | 0,226              | 196 | < 0.001 | 0,913        | 196 | < 0.001 |
| <b>Credibility</b>       | 0,243              | 196 | < 0.001 | 0,890        | 196 | < 0.001 |
| <b>Perceived quality</b> | 0,144              | 196 | < 0.001 | 0,928        | 196 | < 0.001 |
| <b>E. Relationship</b>   | 0,139              | 196 | < 0.001 | 0,947        | 196 | < 0.001 |
| <b>GBI</b>               | 0,145              | 196 | < 0.001 | 0,932        | 196 | < 0.001 |

Source: SPSS Statistics version 27

The results of both normality tests reveal that all five constructs (Brand Awareness, Credibility, Perceived Quality, Emotional Attachment, and Brand Image) obtained significance values (Sig.) strictly below the conventional threshold of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the normality assumption. However, it is widely recognized in the literature that with large sample sizes (in our case,  $n = 196$ ), the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests become highly sensitive and tend to reject the null hypothesis of normality even when the deviation is minimal and practically negligible (Field, 2018; Pallant, 2020). Consequently, the use of PLS-SEM is justified, as this method does not require multivariate normality and remains robust under such conditions (Hair et al., 2017).

### 1.3 Multicollinearity test

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was assessed using SmartPLS4 to examine the presence of multicollinearity among the predictor constructs in the structural model. Multicollinearity occurs when two or more constructs are highly correlated, which complicates the interpretation of each construct's individual contribution to the endogenous construct. As recommended by Hair et al. (2017), a VIF value below 3.3 is considered ideal, while values below 5 remain acceptable. Values exceeding 5 indicate severe multicollinearity, which may produce inconsistent and unreliable path coefficient estimates. Therefore, assessing VIF values is an essential step in confirming the validity and dependability of the PLS-SEM model

**Table 15:** multicollinearity test

|             | <b>VIF</b> |             | <b>VIF</b> |
|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>q103</b> | 1.000      | <b>q402</b> | 2.323      |
| <b>q201</b> | 1.583      | <b>q403</b> | 2.291      |
| <b>q202</b> | 1.698      | <b>q404</b> | 1.840      |
| <b>q203</b> | 1.601      | <b>q501</b> | 2.186      |
| <b>q204</b> | 1.562      | <b>q502</b> | 2.782      |
| <b>q301</b> | 1.772      | <b>q503</b> | 2.346      |
| <b>q302</b> | 2.654      | <b>q504</b> | 2.493      |
| <b>q303</b> | 3.134      | <b>q601</b> | 1.767      |
| <b>q304</b> | 2.578      | <b>q602</b> | 1.999      |
| <b>q401</b> | 2.060      | <b>q603</b> | 1.658      |

Source: SmartPLS4

As presented in the table above, the VIF values for all indicators range from 1.562 (q204) to 3.134 (q303), remaining well below the critical threshold of 5. The majority of indicators fall below the more stringent threshold of 3.3, with the highest value of 3.134 for q303 still within the excellent range. These results confirm the absence of multicollinearity among the predictor constructs in the structural model. Consequently, the path coefficient estimates are considered stable and reliable, supporting the suitability of the model for further analysis.

#### **1.4 Descriptive statistics**

This section presents the analysis of the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents, as well as their awareness and exposure to Ooredoo's sports event sponsorship activities. It provides a better understanding of the participants' profiles in terms of gender, age, professional status, mobile operator used, and duration of use.

### 1.4.1 Respondents' profiles

A total of 265 responses were initially collected during the data collection phase. However, following the application of a filter question asking respondents whether they were aware of Ooredoo's sports event sponsorship activities, 69 respondents who answered “No” were considered ineligible and excluded from the study, as they lacked the necessary exposure to meaningfully evaluate the impact of sponsorship on brand image. In addition, respondents who selected “Aucun” when asked about the sponsored events they had attended were also omitted from the analysis, since they had not attended any Ooredoo-sponsored events. Consequently, the final valid sample consists of 196 respondents (74%) who confirmed their awareness of Ooredoo's sponsoring activities and had exposure to its sponsored events.

The table below presents the main sociodemographic characteristics of the 196 qualified respondents who confirmed their awareness of Ooredoo's sports event sponsorship.

**Table 16:** Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Valid Sample (n=196)

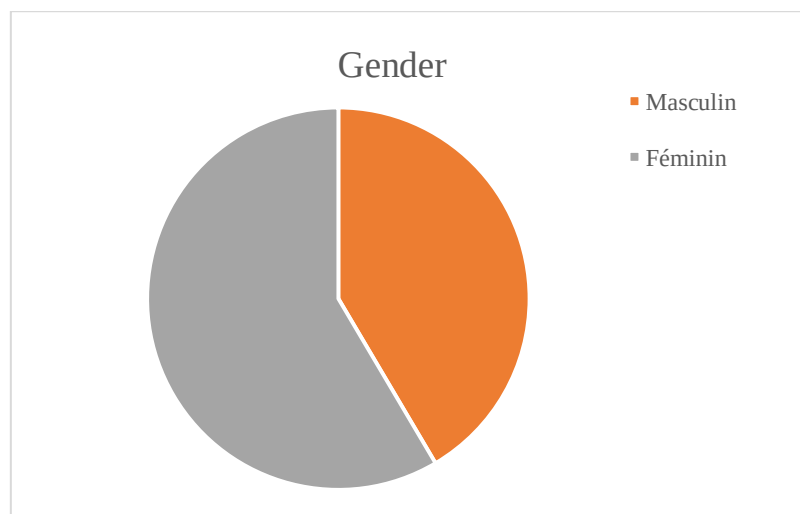
|                   | Categories | Frequencies | Percentage   |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Gender</b>     | Male       | 87          | 44,4 %       |
|                   | Female     | <u>109</u>  | <u>55,6%</u> |
| <b>Age</b>        | 18–25      | <u>109</u>  | <u>55,6%</u> |
|                   | 26–35      | 51          | 26,0%        |
|                   | 36–45      | 31          | 15,8%        |
|                   | Over 45    | 5           | 2,6%         |
| <b>Occupation</b> | Student    | <u>107</u>  | <u>54,6%</u> |
|                   | Employed   | 65          | 33,2%        |
|                   | Unemployed | 10          | 5,1%         |
|                   | Other      | 14          | 7,1%         |
|                   | Ooredoo    | <u>145</u>  | <u>74,0%</u> |
|                   | Djezzy     | 32          | 16,3%        |

|                             |                    |            |              |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Mobile Operator Used</b> | Mobilis            | 19         | 9,7%         |
| <b>Duration of Use</b>      | Less than 6 months | 12         | 6,1%         |
|                             | 6 months–1 year    | 28         | 14,3%        |
|                             | 1–3 years          | 47         | 24,7%        |
|                             | More than 3 years  | <u>109</u> | <u>55,6%</u> |

Source: Developed by the authors using SPSS Statistics version 27

In order to visualize the sociodemographic profile of the respondents, the charts below illustrate the distribution of the sample according to gender, age, occupation, mobile operator used, and duration of use.

**Figure 11:** Distribution of respondents by gender

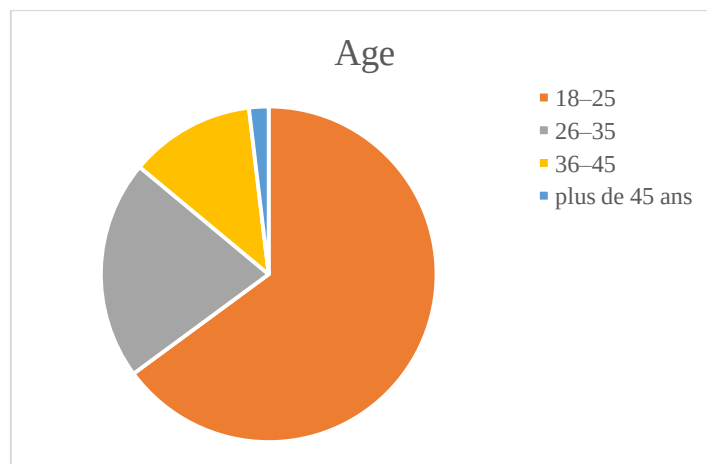


Source: SPSS Statistics version 27

The sample is composed of a majority of female respondents (109) compared to male respondents (87), representing respectively around 55.6% and 44.4% of the total valid sample ( $n = 196$ ). This slight female dominance may reflect a higher participation rate of women in online surveys. Nevertheless, both genders are well represented, ensuring a balanced and reliable sample for analyzing the impact of Ooredoo's sports sponsorship on brand image.

The following graph highlights the distribution of respondents according to their age group.

**Figure 12:** Distribution of respondents by age

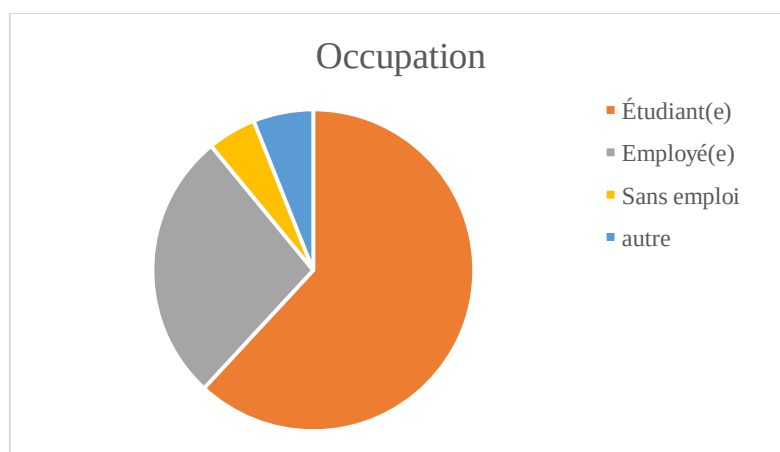


Source: SPSS Statistics version 27

The age distribution reveals that the 18–25 age group is largely dominant (55,6%), accounting for 109 respondents, followed by the 26–35 group (51 respondents, 26.0%), the 36–45 group (32 respondents, 16.3%), and finally respondents over 45 (6 respondents, 3.1%). This indicates that the sample is predominantly young and active, which is highly consistent with the nature of sports sponsorship consumption and the typical demographic of telecom service users in Algeria.

This graph illustrates the different professional statuses of the participants.

**Figure 13:** Distribution of respondents by occupation

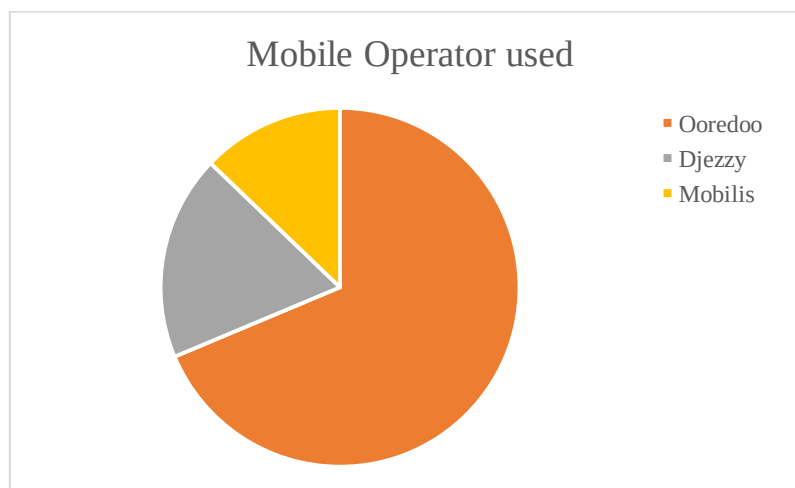


Source: SPSS Statistics version 27

The sample is largely composed of students (107 respondents, 54.6%), followed by employed respondents (65 respondents, 33.2%), other occupations (15 respondents, 7.7%), and unemployed (11 respondents, 5.6%). The dominance of students is fully consistent with the young age profile observed previously, and suggests a sample that is highly connected, digitally active, and regularly exposed to sports events and media content — making them a relevant target audience for Ooredoo’s sponsoring strategy.

The following graph highlights the distribution of respondents according to their mobile operator used

**Figure 14:** Distribution of respondents by Mobile Operator Used

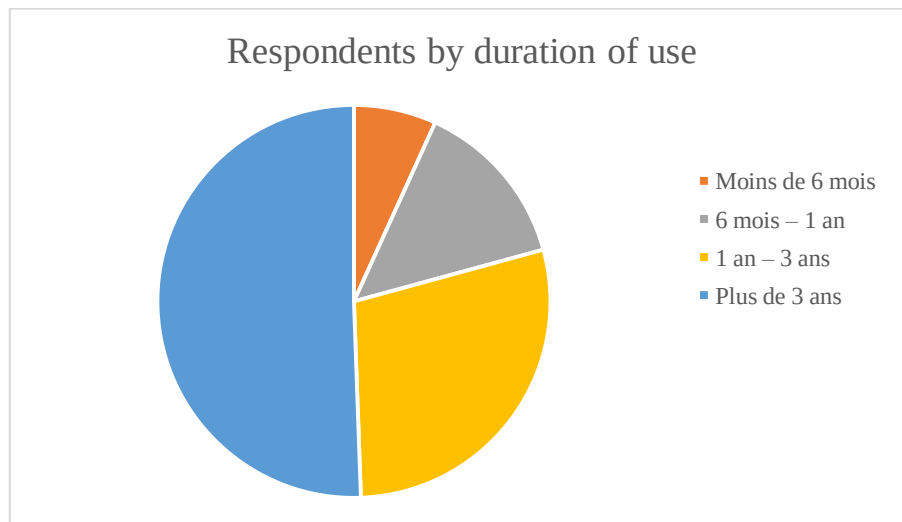


Source: SPSS Statistics version 27

The results clearly show that Ooredoo is the most widely used operator among respondents, with 146 users (74.5%), followed by Djezzy (33 respondents, 16.8%) and Mobilis (19 respondents, 9.7%). This strong representation of Ooredoo users is particularly relevant and advantageous for this study, as these respondents are more likely to have direct experience with the brand and to have been exposed to its sports sponsoring activities, thereby providing more informed and meaningful responses regarding brand image formation.

The following graph highlights the distribution of respondents according to their duration of using the mobile operation.



**Figure 15:** Distribution of respondents by Duration of Use

Source: SPSS Statistics version 27

The majority of respondents have been using their current mobile operator for more than 3 years (109 respondents, 55.6%), followed by 1–3 years (47 respondents, 24.0%), 6 months to 1 year (29 respondents, 14.8%), and less than 6 months (13 respondents, 6.6%). This indicates that most respondents maintain a long-standing and loyal relationship with their operator, suggesting well-established brand perceptions that have been shaped over time through repeated exposure to Ooredoo's sponsoring and communication activities.

Overall, the sample is composed of a majority of female respondents (55.6%) compared to male respondents (44.4%). The age distribution reveals that the 18–25 age group is largely dominant (55.6%), followed by the 26–35 group (26.0%), the 36–45 group (15.8%), and respondents over 45 (2.6%). This indicates that the sample is predominantly young and active, which is highly consistent with the nature of sports sponsorship consumption and the typical demographic of telecom service users in Algeria. In terms of occupation, students constitute the largest group (54.6%), followed by employed respondents (33.2%). Regarding the mobile operator used, Ooredoo is the most widely used operator (74.0%), followed by Djezzy (16.3%) and Mobilis (9.7%). Finally, the majority of respondents have been using their current operator for more than 3 years (55.6%), indicating well-established brand perceptions shaped through repeated exposure to Ooredoo's sponsoring and communication activities.

### 1.4.2 Descriptive analysis of the study

This section presents the univariate analysis of the data collected, including descriptive statistics (mean scores and standard deviations) for each construct. The five-point Likert scale interpretation follows the thresholds:

**Table 17:** Likert scale

| <b>Totally disagree</b> | <b>disagree</b> | <b>Neutral</b> | <b>agree</b> | <b>Totally agree</b> |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------------|
| <b>1</b>                | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>       | <b>4</b>     | <b>5</b>             |

Source: Adapted from Rensis Likert (1932).

**Table 18:** Fields of the mean of the five-point Likert scale

| <b>Fields of the mean</b> | <b>Likert scale</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>[1 ,1.8]</b>           | Totally disagree    |
| <b>[1.9, 2.6]</b>         | Disagree            |
| <b>[2.7 ,3.4]</b>         | Neutral             |
| <b>[3.4, 4.2]</b>         | Agree               |
| <b>[4.3, 5]</b>           | Totally agree       |

Source: (Joshi, 2015)

#### a) Sponsoring Exposure Analysis

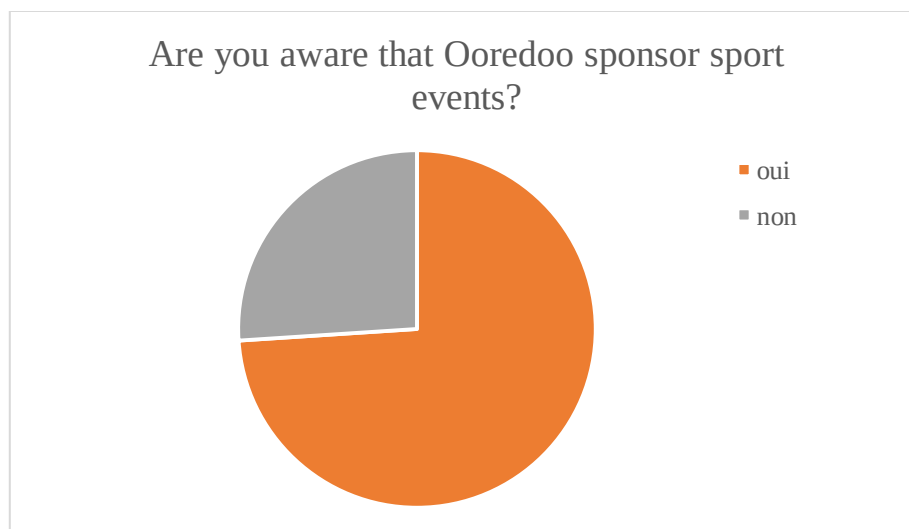
**Q006: Are you aware that Ooredoo sponsor sport events?**

**Table 19:** Sponsorship Awareness (n=265)

| <b>Modalities</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Yes               | 196              | 74%               |
| No                | 69               | 26%               |
| Total             | 265              | 100%              |

Source: Developed by us using the SPSS statistics version 27

**Figure 16:** Distribution of respondents by the sponsorship of sport event awareness



Source: SPSS statistics version 27

Out of a total of 265 respondents, the majority answered Yes, representing 196 respondents, or 74% of the sample. In contrast, only 69 respondents answered No, accounting for 26% of the total. These results indicate that nearly three-quarters of the participants responded affirmatively, reflecting a strong predominance of positive responses within the sample.

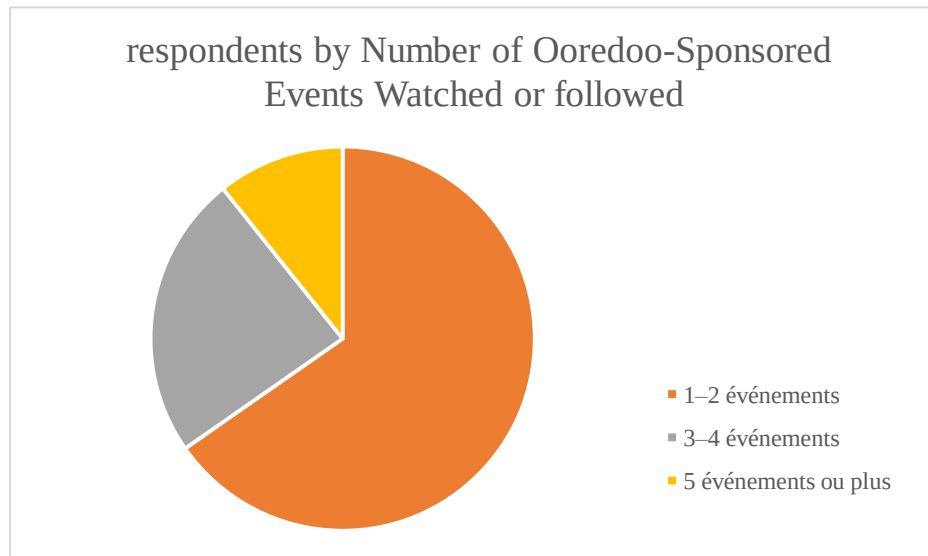
**Q103: How many events sponsored by Ooredoo have you seen or followed in recent months?**

**Table 20:** Number of Ooredoo-Sponsored Events Watched

| Modalities         | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| 0 event            | 0         | 0%         |
| 1-2 events         | 128       | 65,3%      |
| 3-4 events         | 47        | 24%        |
| More than 5 events | 21        | 10,7%      |
| Total              | 196       | 100%       |

Source: Developed by us using the SPSS statistics version 27

**Figure 17:** Distribution of respondents by Number of Ooredoo-Sponsored Events Watched or followed



Source: Developed by us using the SPSS statistics version 27

#### b) Brand Awareness (BA)

**Q201:** Sports event sponsorship helps me remember the Ooredoo brand more easily.

**Q202:** Through its sports sponsorship, Ooredoo comes to my mind spontaneously when I think about telecommunications operators in Algeria.

**Q203:** Ooredoo's sponsorship of sports events has helped me better recognize its logo, colors, and visual identity.

**Q204:** Ooredoo's presence in sports events increases its visibility and makes it more present in my daily life.

**Table 21:** Descriptive Statistics Brand Awareness

|                  | Q201        | Q202 | Q203 | Q204 |
|------------------|-------------|------|------|------|
|                  | Frequencies |      |      |      |
| Totally disagree | 4           | 6    | 3    | 4    |

|                                               |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Disagree</b>                               | 7     | 17    | 11    | 14    |
| <b>Neutral</b>                                | 31    | 28    | 30    | 20    |
| <b>Agree</b>                                  | 97    | 103   | 95    | 116   |
| <b>Totally agree</b>                          | 57    | 42    | 57    | 42    |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | 196   | 196   | 196   | 196   |
| <b>Mean</b>                                   | 4     | 3,81  | 3,98  | 3,91  |
| <b>Std. Deviation</b>                         | 0,883 | 0,973 | 0,900 | 0,884 |
| <b>Evaluation</b>                             | Agree | Agree | Agree | Agree |
| <b>Overall mean of the variable</b>           | 3,92  |       |       |       |
| <b>Overall std. deviation of the variable</b> | 0,71  |       |       |       |
| <b>Overall evaluation of the variable</b>     | Agree |       |       |       |

Source: Developed by us using the SPSS statistics version 27

### c) Credibility (CR)

**Q301:** Ooredoo's sponsorship of major sporting events strengthens my perception of the brand's seriousness and professionalism.

**Q302:** Ooredoo's support for sports gives me the impression that it is a reliable company that fulfills its commitments to its customers.

**Q303:** Sponsorship increases my confidence in Ooredoo's ability to deliver on its promises as a telecommunications operator.

**Q304:** Ooredoo's sports sponsorship strengthens my trust in the brand's ability to provide services that meet its promises.

**Table 22:** Descriptive Statistics Credibility

|                                               | <b>Q301</b>        | <b>Q302</b> | <b>Q303</b> | <b>Q304</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                                               | <b>Frequencies</b> |             |             |             |
| <b>Totally disagree</b>                       | 4                  | 2           | 2           | 4           |
| <b>Disagree</b>                               | 6                  | 10          | 8           | 8           |
| <b>Neutral</b>                                | 29                 | 25          | 37          | 30          |
| <b>Agree</b>                                  | 107                | 105         | 109         | 111         |
| <b>Totally agree</b>                          | 50                 | 54          | 40          | 43          |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | 196                | 196         | 196         | 196         |
| <b>Mean</b>                                   | 3,98               | 4,02        | 3,90        | 3,92        |
| <b>Std. Deviation</b>                         | 0,844              | 0,838       | 0,801       | 0,847       |
| <b>Evaluation</b>                             | Agree              | Agree       | Agree       | Agree       |
| <b>Overall mean of the variable</b>           | 3,95               |             |             |             |
| <b>Overall std. deviation of the variable</b> | 0,71               |             |             |             |
| <b>Overall evaluation of the variable</b>     | <b>Agree</b>       |             |             |             |

Source: Developed by us using the SPSS statistics version 27

**d) Perceived Quality (QP)**

**Q401:** The fact that Ooredoo sponsors major events leads me to believe that its telecommunications services are of high quality.

**Q402:** The professional way in which Ooredoo organizes and supports sporting events reflects the overall quality of its services.

**Q403:** Seeing Ooredoo associated with prestigious sporting events strengthens my confidence in the reliability and performance of its network.

**Q404:** I consider Ooredoo to be a high-quality operator, partly due to its involvement in sports.

**Table 23:** Descriptive Statistics Perceived Quality

|                                               | <b>Q401</b>        | <b>Q402</b> | <b>Q403</b> | <b>Q404</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                                               | <b>Frequencies</b> |             |             |             |
| <b>Totally disagree</b>                       | 2                  | 2           | 2           | 0           |
| <b>Disagree</b>                               | 12                 | 9           | 8           | 11          |
| <b>Neutral</b>                                | 26                 | 30          | 29          | 36          |
| <b>Agree</b>                                  | 88                 | 89          | 89          | 104         |
| <b>Totally agree</b>                          | 68                 | 66          | 68          | 45          |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | 196                | 196         | 196         | 196         |
| <b>Mean</b>                                   | 4,06               | 4,06        | 4,09        | 3,93        |
| <b>Std. Deviation</b>                         | 0,904              | 0,875       | 0,864       | 0,798       |
| <b>Evaluation</b>                             | Agree              | Agree       | Agree       | Agree       |
| <b>Overall mean of the variable</b>           | 4,03               |             |             |             |
| <b>Overall std. deviation of the variable</b> | 0,72               |             |             |             |

|                                                   |              |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Overall<br/>evaluation of<br/>the variable</b> | <b>Agree</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------|

Source: Developed by us using the SPSS statistics version 27

#### e) Emotional Attachment (EA)

**Q501:** The sporting events sponsored by Ooredoo evoke positive and warm feelings in me toward this brand.

**Q502:** I feel personally connected to the values (excellence, team spirit, self-transcendence) conveyed by Ooredoo's sports sponsorship.

**Q503:** Ooredoo's support for sport (clubs, competitions, equestrian) creates in me an emotional attachment to this brand.

**Q504:** Ooredoo's sports sponsorship activities strengthen my desire to remain loyal to this brand

**Table 24:** Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Attachment

|                         | <b>Q501</b>        | <b>Q502</b> | <b>Q503</b> | <b>Q504</b> |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                         | <b>Frequencies</b> |             |             |             |
| <b>Totally disagree</b> | 3                  | 2           | 3           | 4           |
| <b>Disagree</b>         | 13                 | 17          | 14          | 22          |
| <b>Neutral</b>          | 43                 | 49          | 42          | 54          |
| <b>Agree</b>            | 94                 | 88          | 96          | 73          |
| <b>Totally agree</b>    | 43                 | 40          | 41          | 43          |
| <b>Total</b>            | 196                | 196         | 196         | 196         |
| <b>Mean</b>             | 3,82               | 3,75        | 3,81        | 3,66        |



|                                               |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Std. Deviation</b>                         | 0,902 | 0,914 | 0,902 | 1,008 |
| <b>Evaluation</b>                             | Agree | Agree | Agree | Agree |
| <b>Overall mean of the variable</b>           | 3,75  |       |       |       |
| <b>Overall std. deviation of the variable</b> | 0,81  |       |       |       |
| <b>Overall evaluation of the variable</b>     | Agree |       |       |       |

Source: Developed by us using the SPSS statistics version 27

#### f) Global Brand Image (GBI)

**Q601:** I have a positive image of Ooredoo thanks to its commitment to sports sponsorship.

**Q602:** Ooredoo's sports sponsorship contributes to giving it a modern, dynamic image that is close to Algerian citizens.

**Q603:** I consider Ooredoo to be a reference brand in the telecommunications sector in Algeria, partly due to its investment in sport.

**Q604:** My overall image of Ooredoo is more favorable than that of other telecom operators in Algeria, due to its sports sponsorship activities."

**Table 25:** Descriptive Statistics of Global Brand Image

|                         | <b>Q601</b>        | <b>Q602</b> | <b>Q603</b> | <b>Q604</b> |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                         | <b>Frequencies</b> |             |             |             |
| <b>Totally disagree</b> | 3                  | 1           | 3           | 4           |

|                                               |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Disagree</b>                               | 16    | 3     | 10    | 15    |
| <b>Neutral</b>                                | 23    | 19    | 32    | 62    |
| <b>Agree</b>                                  | 81    | 94    | 101   | 77    |
| <b>Totally agree</b>                          | 73    | 79    | 50    | 38    |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | 196   | 196   | 196   | 196   |
| <b>Mean</b>                                   | 4,05  | 4,26  | 3,94  | 3,66  |
| <b>Std. Deviation</b>                         | 0,978 | 0,736 | 0,872 | 0,944 |
| <b>Evaluation</b>                             | Agree | Agree | Agree | Agree |
| <b>Overall mean of the variable</b>           | 3,97  |       |       |       |
| <b>Overall std. deviation of the variable</b> | 0,74  |       |       |       |
| <b>Overall evaluation of the variable</b>     | Agree |       |       |       |

Source: Developed by us using the SPSS statistics version 27

Given the multidimensional and predictive nature of this study, which seeks to examine how four sponsorship-induced brand dimensions jointly and individually contribute to Ooredoo Algeria's brand image formation, PLS-SEM was deemed the most appropriate analytical method. This technique allows the simultaneous testing of multiple path relationships between the sponsorship-induced constructs, namely brand awareness, perceived quality, brand credibility, and emotional attachment, and the dependent variable, brand image formation, while also assessing the reliability and validity of the measurement instrument. Furthermore, as the data collected from the 196 respondents did not fully satisfy the normality assumption, PLS-SEM proved particularly suitable given its distribution-free nature. Its emphasis on predictive relevance and variance explanation aligns directly with

the objective of this study, which is not merely to confirm the existence of relationships but to determine the relative contribution and predictive power of each sponsorship-induced dimension in shaping consumers' overall perception of the Ooredoo brand (APPENDIX D)

### 1.5 Fit model

In order to assess the Overall Model, Fit, SmartPLS4 provides several fit measures to evaluate it, including SRMR, d\_ULS, d\_G, Chi-square and NFI. -The SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) is a popular fit index, with values less than 0.08 or 0.10 indicating a good fit -The d\_ULS (Unweighted Least Squares Discrepancy) and d\_G (Geodesic Discrepancy) are bootstrap-based exact fit measures. These should be interpreted based on the 95% confidence intervals obtained through bootstrapping. -The NFI (Normed Fit Index) compares the chi-square value of the proposed model to a null model, with values greater than 0.90 indicating a good fit. All the results were satisfying in our case as mentioned in the table below

**Table 26:** Model Fit Indices

|                   | <b>Saturated model</b> | <b>Estimated model</b> |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>SRMR</b>       | 0.068                  | 0.068                  |
| <b>d_ULS</b>      | 0.884                  | 0.884                  |
| <b>d_G</b>        | 0.457                  | 0.457                  |
| <b>Chi-square</b> | 519.648                | 519.648                |
| <b>NFI</b>        | 0.802                  | 0.802                  |

Source: SmartPLS4

The SRMR value of 0.068 is below the recommended threshold of 0.08, indicating an acceptable model fit (Henseler et al., 2015). The NFI value of 0.802, while slightly below the ideal threshold of 0.90, remains acceptable for a PLS-SEM model given the sample size and model complexity. Overall, the model fit indices confirm the adequacy of the proposed structural model and support the continuation of the analysis.

## 1.6 Reliability and validity of the study

Many constructs in management studies, such as loyalty, perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions, are not directly observable. Typically, empirical studies measure such constructs using established scales with multiple indicators. When the scales are used in a different population, the items are translated into other languages or revised to adapt to other populations, it is essential for researchers to report the quality of measurement scales before using them to test hypotheses. This approach has been extensively applied in fields as consumer behavior and marketing research. (Gordon W. Cheung, Helena D. Cooper-Thomas, Rebecca S. Lau ,2023).

### 1.6.1 Verification of composite reliability

This is done by checking the composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha. These values must be greater than 0.7 to be considered reliable (Hair et al., 2017).

According to Gordon W. Cheung, Helena D. Cooper-Thomas and Rebecca S. Lau (2023), Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.7 has been widely used as the standard for adequate reliability. A more suitable reliability metric for studies based on Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is Construct Reliability (CR), also referred to as McDonald's omega, composite reliability, or congeneric reliability. This measure is based on the congeneric model, which doesn't necessitate equal factor loadings across items. Hair et al. (2009, p. 619) pointed out that CR values of 0.7 or above indicate good reliability. This means that the total error variance should make up less than 30% of the variance of the latent variable, which is verified in our study according to the table below.

### 1.6.2 Indicator Reliability and Internal Consistency

Indicator reliability was assessed by examining the outer loadings of each item on its respective construct.

**Table 27: Outer Loadings**

| Construct            | Item | Outer Loading |
|----------------------|------|---------------|
| Brand awareness (BA) | q201 | 0.771         |
|                      | q202 | 0.797         |

|                                  |      |       |
|----------------------------------|------|-------|
|                                  | q203 | 0.762 |
|                                  | q204 | 0.803 |
| <b>Credibility (CR)</b>          | q301 | 0.783 |
|                                  | q302 | 0.870 |
|                                  | q303 | 0.895 |
|                                  | q304 | 0.884 |
| <b>Perceived quality (QP)</b>    | q401 | 0.812 |
|                                  | q402 | 0.860 |
|                                  | q403 | 0.870 |
|                                  | q404 | 0.820 |
| <b>Emotional Attachment (EA)</b> | q501 | 0.837 |
|                                  | q502 | 0.894 |
|                                  | q503 | 0.867 |
|                                  | q504 | 0.876 |
| <b>Global brand image</b>        | q601 | 0.854 |
|                                  | q602 | 0.875 |
|                                  | q603 | 0.824 |

Source: smart PLS4

During the assessment of indicator reliability, item Q604 ("My overall image of Ooredoo is more favorable than that of other telecom operators in Algeria, due to its sports sponsorship activities") was examined alongside the three retained items of the Global Brand Image construct. Although Q604 recorded an acceptable mean at the descriptive level ( $M = 3.66$ ), its outer loading fell below the 0.70 threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2017), indicating

insufficient indicator reliability. In accordance with standard PLS-SEM practice, items with outer loadings below this threshold are considered to contribute poorly to the construct's measurement and are therefore removed to improve the overall reliability and validity of the model. Consequently, Q604 was excluded from the final measurement model, and the Global Brand Image construct was retained with three indicators (Q601, Q602, Q603), all of which demonstrated satisfactory outer loadings above 0.70.

All outer loadings exceed the 0.70 threshold, ranging from 0.762 (q203) to 0.895 (q303), confirming satisfactory indicator reliability for all constructs. No items were deleted from the model.

### 1.6.3 Verification of convergent validity

This is done by checking the average variance extracted (AVE). The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) signifies the mean quantity of variance that a construct accounts for in its indicators, compared to the total variance of those indicators. In other words, the AVE indicates the proportion of the indicator variance that is accounted for by the latent construct. To demonstrate an acceptable level of convergent validity, the AVE should not be lower than 0.5 as stated by Fornell and Larcker (1981). This means that the latent construct 74 should explain at least 50% of the variance in its indicators. An AVE value of 0.5 or higher suggests that the construct is able to explain more than half of the variance in its measured items, indicating a satisfactory level of convergence. (Gordon W. Cheung, Helena D. Cooper Thomas and Rebecca S. Lau (2023). AVE values in our case are all greater than 0.5, so the convergent validity is established.

**Table 28:** Construct reliability and validity-Overview

|            | <b>Cronbach's<br/>alpha</b> | <b>Composite<br/>reliability (rho_a)</b> | <b>Composite<br/>reliability (rho_c)</b> | <b>Average vari ance<br/>extracted (AVE)</b> |
|------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>BA</b>  | 0.791                       | 0.799                                    | 0.864                                    | 0.614                                        |
| <b>CR</b>  | 0.881                       | 0.893                                    | 0.918                                    | 0.738                                        |
| <b>EA</b>  | 0.892                       | 0.895                                    | 0.925                                    | 0.755                                        |
| <b>GBI</b> | 0.810                       | 0.812                                    | 0.888                                    | 0.725                                        |
| <b>QP</b>  | 0.862                       | 0.866                                    | 0.906                                    | 0.708                                        |

Source: SmartPLS4

As shown in the table above, Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.791 to 0.892, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold. Composite reliability values ( $\rho_c$ ) range from 0.864 to 0.925, also above the 0.70 threshold, confirming internal consistency across all constructs. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values range from 0.614 to 0.755, all exceeding the 0.50 threshold recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981), thus confirming convergent validity. These results collectively validate the reliability and convergent validity of the measurement model.

#### 1.6.4 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using two complementary criteria: the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait Ratio (HTMT). The Fornell-Larcker criterion requires that the square root of each construct's AVE (shown on the diagonal) be greater than its correlations with all other constructs.

**Table 29:** Discriminant validity-Fornell-Larcker criterion

|            | <b>BA</b> | <b>CR</b> | <b>EA</b> | <b>GBI</b> | <b>QP</b> |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| <b>BA</b>  | 0.783     |           |           |            |           |
| <b>CR</b>  | 0.654     | 0.859     |           |            |           |
| <b>EA</b>  | 0.585     | 0.663     | 0.869     |            |           |
| <b>GBI</b> | 0.620     | 0.730     | 0.749     | 0.851      |           |
| <b>QP</b>  | 0.612     | 0.718     | 0.670     | 0.718      | 0.841     |

Source: smart PLS4

The diagonal values (square roots of AVE) are all greater than the corresponding off-diagonal values in their respective rows and columns, confirming discriminant validity according to the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

**Table 30:** Discriminant Validity HTMT Matrix

|            | <b>BA</b> | <b>CR</b> | <b>EA</b> | <b>GBI</b> | <b>QP</b> |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| <b>BA</b>  |           |           |           |            |           |
| <b>CR</b>  | 0.777     |           |           |            |           |
| <b>EA</b>  | 0.691     | 0.743     |           |            |           |
| <b>GBI</b> | 0.765     | 0.855     | 0.878     |            |           |
| <b>QP</b>  | 0.733     | 0.814     | 0.755     | 0.855      |           |

Source: SmartPLS4

All HTMT values remain below the 0.90 threshold recommended by Gold et al. (2001). The highest value is observed between GBI and EA (0.878), which, although slightly above the conservative 0.85 threshold proposed by Kline (2011), remains well below 0.90. Following Gold et al. (2001), discriminant validity is therefore confirmed for all construct pairs. These results indicate that all five constructs are sufficiently distinct from one another, validating the measurement model in its entirety.

### 1.7 Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Having validated the measurement model, we proceeded to assess the structural model. Hypothesis testing in PLS-SEM is conducted using bootstrapping, a non-parametric resampling technique (5,000 subsamples, two-tailed test, significance level 0.05). The structural model is evaluated through path coefficients ( $\beta$ ), T-statistics, P-values, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and effect sizes ( $f^2$ ).

#### 1.7.1 Path Coefficients and Significance (Bootstrapping Results)

**Table 31:** Path Coefficients, Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Values

|                                          | <b>Original sample (O)</b> | <b>Sample mean (M)</b> | <b>Standard deviation (STDEV)</b> | <b>T statistics ( O/STDEV )</b> | <b>P values</b> |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Brand awareness -&gt; Brand Image</b> | 0.096                      | 0.098                  | 0.059                             | 1.638                           | <b>0.102</b>    |



|                                                       |       |       |       |       |              |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| <b>Credibility -&gt;<br/>Brand Image</b>              | 0.263 | 0.262 | 0.087 | 3.016 | <b>0.003</b> |
| <b>Emotional<br/>attachment -&gt;<br/>Brand Image</b> | 0.369 | 0.370 | 0.073 | 5.082 | <b>0.000</b> |
| <b>Perceived<br/>quality -&gt;<br/>Brand Image</b>    | 0.223 | 0.223 | 0.075 | 2.995 | <b>0.003</b> |

Source: SmartPLS4

### 1.7.2 Effect Sizes ( $f^2$ )

**Table 32:** Effect Sizes ( $f^2$ )

|                                                           | <b>Original<br/>sample (O)</b> | <b>Sample<br/>mean (M)</b> | <b>Standard<br/>deviation<br/>(STDEV)</b> | <b>T statistics<br/>( O/STDEV )</b> | <b>P<br/>values</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Brand<br/>awareness -<br/>&gt; Brand<br/>Image</b>     | 0.015                          | 0.021                      | 0.020                                     | 0.743                               | 0.458               |
| <b>Credibility -<br/>&gt; Brand<br/>Image</b>             | 0.084                          | 0.095                      | 0.061                                     | 1.379                               | 0.168               |
| <b>Emotional<br/>attachment<br/>-&gt; Brand<br/>Image</b> | 0.203                          | 0.216                      | 0.089                                     | 2.283                               | 0.022               |
| <b>Perceived<br/>quality -&gt;<br/>Brand<br/>Image</b>    | 0.064                          | 0.073                      | 0.047                                     | 1.380                               | 0.168               |

Source: SmartPLS4

The effect size analysis confirms that Emotional Attachment exerts the strongest effect on Global Brand Image ( $f^2 = 0.203$ , medium effect), followed by Credibility ( $f^2 = 0.084$ , small effect) and Perceived Quality ( $f^2 = 0.064$ , small effect). Brand Awareness shows a negligible effect size ( $f^2 = 0.015$ ).

### 1.7.3 Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )

**Table 33:** R-Square Overview

|                    | Original sample (O) | Sample mean (M) | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T statistics ( O/STDEV ) | P values |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| <b>Brand image</b> | 0.688               | 0.700           | 0.042                      | 16.381                   | 0.000    |

Source: SmartPLS4

The  $R^2$  value of 0.688 for Global Brand Image indicates that the four predictor constructs (Brand Awareness, Credibility, Perceived Quality, and Emotional Attachment collectively explain 68.8% of the variance in brand image formation. According to Hair et al. (2017),  $R^2$  values of 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 represent weak, moderate, and substantial levels of explanatory power respectively. The obtained value of 0.688 therefore reflects a substantial explanatory power, confirming the overall relevance and predictive capability of the structural model.

### 1.7.4 Hypotheses Testing Summary

**Table 34:** Hypotheses Testing Recapitulative Table

| Hypothesis                                         | Path                         | $\beta$ | T-Stat | P-Value | Result    |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|-----------|
| H1a: Sponsoring<br>→ Brand Awareness<br>(positive) | Descriptive<br>(Mean = 3.92) |         |        |         | Supported |

|                                                            |                              |       |       |       |                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------------------|
| H1b: Sponsoring<br>→ Perceived<br>Quality (positive)       | Descriptive<br>(Mean = 4.03) |       |       |       | Supported        |
| H1c: Sponsoring<br>→ Credibility<br>(positive)             | Descriptive<br>(Mean = 3.95) |       |       |       | Supported        |
| H1d: Sponsoring<br>→ Emotional<br>Attachment<br>(positive) | Descriptive<br>(Mean = 3.75) |       |       |       | Supported        |
| H2: BA → GBI                                               | BA → GBI                     | 0.096 | 1.638 | 0.102 | Not<br>Supported |
| H2: CR → GBI                                               | CR → GBI                     | 0.263 | 3.016 | 0.003 | Supported        |
| H2: QP → GBI                                               | QP → GBI                     | 0.223 | 2.995 | 0.003 | Supported        |
| H2: EA → GBI                                               | EA → GBI                     | 0.369 | 5.082 | 0.000 | Supported        |
| H2 Overall: 4<br>dimensions →<br>GBI                       | R <sup>2</sup> = 0.688       |       |       |       | Supported        |

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on SmartPLS4 results

## Section 2: Discussion of the results

This section provides an in-depth interpretation and comparative discussion of the empirical findings obtained through the PLS-SEM analysis. Each hypothesis is discussed in relation to the descriptive results (mean scores and standard deviations) and the structural model outputs (path coefficients, T-statistics, p-values, and effect sizes). The findings are systematically compared with prior empirical studies in the sponsorship and brand image literature, examined for convergence or divergence with established theoretical frameworks, and contextualized within the specific characteristics of the Algerian telecommunications market. This approach ensures that the interpretation of results goes beyond a simple reporting of statistics toward a deeper analytical and critical engagement with the research findings.

## 2.1 validation and Interpretation of the Measurement Model

Before discussing the structural relationships between constructs, it is necessary to confirm the psychometric quality of the measurement model, since the validity and reliability of structural conclusions depend entirely on the quality of the measurement instrument (Hair et al., 2017).

All outer loadings ranged from 0.762 (q203, Brand Awareness) to 0.895 (q303, Credibility), all exceeding the 0.70 threshold, confirming satisfactory indicator reliability across all twenty items. Internal consistency was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.791 (Brand Awareness) to 0.892 (Emotional Attachment), and composite reliability ( $\rho_c$ ) values ranging from 0.864 to 0.925, all above the 0.70 threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2017). Convergent validity was established through AVE values ranging from 0.614 (Brand Awareness) to 0.755 (Emotional Attachment), all above the 0.50 threshold set by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Discriminant validity was confirmed through both the Fornell-Larcker criterion, where all diagonal values (square roots of AVE) exceeded inter-construct correlations, and the HTMT ratios, where all values remained below the 0.90 threshold (the highest being 0.878 between Global Brand Image and Emotional Attachment). Multicollinearity was also assessed through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, which ranged from 1.562 to 3.134, all below the critical threshold of 5 and comfortably within the stringent threshold of 3.3 (Hair et al., 2017), confirming the absence of problematic multicollinearity in the structural model. Model fit was assessed through SRMR = 0.068, which falls below the 0.08 threshold, indicating an acceptable fit. The NFI of 0.802, while slightly below the ideal 0.90 threshold, remains acceptable given the sample size of  $n = 196$  and the five-construct model complexity (Henseler et al., 2015).

The psychometric properties of the measurement model are satisfactory across all criteria: indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and absence of multicollinearity. These results confirm that the five constructs (Brand Awareness, Perceived Quality, Credibility, Emotional Attachment, and Global Brand Image) are measured with precision and are sufficiently distinct from one another. This psychometric robustness provides a solid and credible foundation for the interpretation of the structural model results.

## 2.2 Discussion of Sub-Hypotheses H1a to H1d

Sub-hypotheses H1a to H1d examine whether Ooredoo's sports event sponsorship generates positive consumer perceptions across the four sponsorship-induced brand dimensions. These

hypotheses are tested at the descriptive level through mean scores on a five-point Likert scale, where the 'Agree' range corresponds to means between 3.41 and 4.20 (Joshi, 2015). All four dimensions record positive means within this range, providing descriptive support for H1a through H1d. The following subsections interpret each result comparatively.

a) H1a Sponsorship-Induced Brand Awareness (Overall Mean = 3.92)

The Brand Awareness dimension records an overall mean of 3.92 (SD = 0.71), with individual item means ranging from  $M = 3.81$  (Q202: spontaneous recall) to  $M = 4.00$  (Q201: ease of remembering the brand). All four items fall within the 'Agree' range, indicating that Ooredoo's sports event sponsorship is perceived by consumers as effectively enhancing brand recall, recognition, and visual identification. The highest-scoring item, Q201 ( $M = 4.00$ ), confirms that sponsorship is the primary recall trigger for the brand. The lowest-scoring item, Q202 ( $M = 3.81$ ), reveals that spontaneous top-of-mind positioning (where Ooredoo comes to mind first when thinking of Algerian telecom operators) is slightly less strong, which is theoretically coherent given the presence of two other major competitors, Djazzy and Mobilis.

This finding is theoretically consistent with Aaker (1991), who demonstrated that repeated brand exposure through sponsorship activities directly increases brand salience and recall probability. It is also aligned with Keller (1993), who conceptualized brand awareness as the consumer's ability to recognize and recall a brand within a specific product category, and who confirmed that sponsorship activities create and reinforce brand associations in memory. Empirically, this result converges with Tomalieh (2016), who found that event sponsorship significantly enhances brand awareness among event participants, and with Boronczyk and Breuer (2020), who documented superior awareness effects from high-profile sports sponsorships.

Convergence with the Literature, the descriptive support for H1a replicates a well-established finding in the sponsorship literature: exposure to branded sponsorship activities increases brand salience. This convergence holds across multiple contexts, Western (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; Grohs & Reisinger, 2014), Asian (Deng et al., 2018), and now the North African Algerian market. The finding thus contributes cross-cultural validation of the awareness-generating function of event sponsorship.

A contextual observation, however, is worth noting. The data show that 74% of all 265 initial respondents confirmed awareness of Ooredoo's sponsorship activities, while the most recognized event among valid respondents is the Algiers sports festival (53.1%). This indicates that Ooredoo's sponsorship portfolio, while broad, is not yet uniformly salient

across all sponsored events. The Marathon Sahara Algeria Trail ranks second at 40.3%, while more traditional events such as the Press Tournament and the National Arabian Horse Championship are recognized by only 13.3% of respondents each. This variation in event-level awareness suggests that Ooredoo's sponsorship investments produce unequal visibility returns depending on the event type and its cultural resonance with the target audience.

b) H1b Sponsorship-Induced Perceived Quality (Overall Mean = 4.03)

Perceived Quality records the highest overall mean among the four dimensions ( $M = 4.03$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ). Individual item means range from  $M = 3.93$  (Q404: I consider Ooredoo to be a high-quality operator, partly due to its involvement in sports) to  $M = 4.09$  (Q403: Seeing Ooredoo associated with prestigious sporting events strengthens my confidence in the reliability and performance of its network). All four items fall within the 'Agree' range, with Q403 approaching the 'Totally Agree' threshold of 4.20.

The strongest individual item, Q403 ( $M = 4.09$ ), is theoretically significant: it directly captures the image transfer mechanism theorized by Gwinner (1997), whereby the prestige and excellence attributes of a sponsored event are transferred to the sponsoring brand's perceived service quality. The fact that association with 'prestigious' sporting events (rather than mere sponsorship in general) drives quality perceptions underscore the critical role of event prestige and sponsor–event fit in triggering quality signaling. This is consistent with Signaling Theory (Erdem & Swait, 2004), which posits that high-profile sponsorship investments function as costly, credible signals of brand quality that are difficult for lower-quality competitors to imitate.

Empirically, this result is consistent with the findings of Grohs and Reisinger (2014), who documented significant quality dimension improvements following sports event sponsorship in Austria. It also converges with Grönroos (1984), who demonstrated the mutual reinforcement between brand image and perceived service quality, and with Muhammed et al. (2023), who specifically highlighted the importance of quality signals in the telecommunications sector of an emerging market (Nigeria).

The strong quality effect ( $M = 4.03$ , highest among all dimensions) is particularly meaningful in the telecommunications context. Network quality is an experience attribute (it cannot be fully evaluated before subscription) meaning consumers rely heavily on indirect quality signals, of which sponsorship is one of the most visible. In this context, Ooredoo's association with organized, professional sporting events serves as a proxy for organizational

capability and service reliability. This mechanism, theorized by Erdem and Swait (2004), is likely more powerful in-service sectors characterized by pre-purchase quality uncertainty than in tangible product categories, explaining why perceived quality ranks above credibility and emotional attachment at the descriptive level.

c) H1c Sponsorship-Induced Brand Credibility (Overall Mean = 3.95)

Brand Credibility records an overall mean of 3.95 (SD = 0.71), with individual item means ranging from M = 3.90 (Q303: 'Sponsorship increases my confidence in Ooredoo's ability to deliver on its promises') to M = 4.02 (Q302: 'Ooredoo's support for sports gives me the impression that it is a reliable company that fulfills its commitments'). All four items fall comfortably within the 'Agree' range.

The highest-scoring item, Q302 (M = 4.02), directly reflects the credibility-signaling function of sponsorship: by committing organizational resources to sponsoring sports events, Ooredoo communicates organizational reliability and follow-through to consumers. This is theoretically grounded in Erdem and Swait's (2004) dual-component model of brand credibility, which identifies trustworthiness (the brand keeps its promises) and expertise (the brand has the ability to deliver) as the two foundational dimensions of credibility. Sports sponsorship contributes to both: it demonstrates commitment (trustworthiness) and signals the financial stability and organizational capacity required to sustain a sponsorship partnership (expertise).

This finding converges with Meenaghan (2001), who argued that sponsorship generates consumer goodwill through its perceived non-commercial nature, which in turn enhances brand credibility and authenticity. It also aligns with Rifon et al. (2004), who demonstrated that perceived sponsor sincerity a credibility-adjacent construct significantly mediates the relationship between sponsor–event fit and brand attitude. The result is also consistent with Cornwell's (2019) sponsorship engagement model, which positions authenticity, continuity, and integrity as core dimensions of the sponsorship–credibility relationship.

Convergence with the Literature, the credibility effect observed in this study replicates findings across multiple cultural and sectoral contexts: Gwinner and Eaton (1999) documented credibility gains from sports sponsorship in the United States, Grohs and Reisinger (2014) confirmed credibility improvements in Austria, and Deng et al. (2018) established credibility enhancement in China. The present study adds empirical evidence from a North African emerging market (Algeria), extending the cross-cultural generalizability of the credibility-signaling function of event sponsorship.

A contextual specificity is worth highlighting. In the Algerian telecommunications market, consumers face notable information asymmetries: network coverage maps are rarely fully transparent, service quality benchmarking tools are limited, and switching costs create inertia that consumers must actively overcome. In this environment, brand credibility functions as a critical risk-reduction heuristic: consumers rely on signals such as sponsorship investment to infer organizational reliability before or without direct quality experience. This context-specific mechanism amplifies the credibility signal value of sponsorship beyond what is typically documented in more transparent, institutionally mature Western markets.

d) H1d Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment (Overall Mean = 3.75)

Emotional Attachment records the lowest overall mean among the four dimensions ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 0.81$ ), with individual item means ranging from  $M = 3.66$  (Q504: 'Ooredoo's sports sponsorship activities strengthen my desire to remain loyal to this brand') to  $M = 3.82$  (Q501: 'The sporting events sponsored by Ooredoo evoke positive and warm feelings in me toward this brand'). All four items remain within the 'Agree' range, providing descriptive support for H1d.

The highest-scoring item, Q501 ( $M = 3.82$ ), which measures warm feelings evoked by sponsorship, converges with the emotional transfer mechanism theorized by Cornwell et al. (2005): sports events generate strong collective emotions (excitement, pride, joy) that consumers extend to the sponsoring brand. The lowest-scoring item, Q504 ( $M = 3.66$ ), which measures loyalty intentions, is also the most behaviorally specific item in the dimension. The lower score on this item is theoretically coherent: emotional feelings toward a brand (Q501) develop before behavioral loyalty intentions (Q504) in the consumer–brand relationship progression theorized by Fournier (1998) and modeled by Wijaya (2011) through the brand hierarchy framework.

The moderate level of emotional attachment is consistent with Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which explains that fan identification with sporting events can extend to sponsoring brands but only through sustained, repeated, and emotionally meaningful sponsorship engagement. Funk and James's (2001) Psychological Continuum Model further explains this gradation: emotional attachment to a sponsoring brand through sport is a developmental process that deepens progressively with consistent exposure, not an immediate response to single or limited sponsorship encounters.

The moderate emotional attachment score ( $M = 3.75$ ) should not be interpreted as evidence that Ooredoo's sponsorship is emotionally ineffective. Rather, it reflects a brand-fan



relationship that is real and positive but still developing. The data show that 65.3% of respondents have followed only 1–2 Ooredoo-sponsored events in recent months, and the most widely recognized event (Festival des Sports d'Alger) is known by only 53.1% of the valid sample. This limited and relatively low-intensity exposure is unlikely to generate the deep emotional bonding associated with long-term, high-involvement sponsorship relationships. Brands that consistently sponsor the same high-identity events over multiple years as documented by Cornwell et al. (2005) produce substantially stronger emotional attachment outcomes than those with diverse but shallow portfolios.

### **2.3 Discussion of H2: Structural Relationships Between Dimensions and Brand Image**

The structural model results provide a nuanced understanding of how the four dimensions collectively contribute to brand image formation. The overall model explains 68.8% of the variance in Global Brand Image ( $R^2 = 0.688$ ), which represents a substantial level of explanatory power and confirms that the four dimensions collectively play a significant role in brand image formation, supporting the overall H2 hypothesis.

Emotional Attachment (Emotional attachment → Brand image:  $\beta = 0.369$ ,  $T = 5.082$ ,  $p < 0.001$ )

Emotional Attachment is the strongest and most statistically significant predictor of Global Brand Image ( $\beta = 0.369$ ,  $T = 5.082$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with a medium effect size ( $f^2 = 0.203$ ) according to Cohen's (1988) benchmarks (0.02 = small, 0.15 = medium, 0.35 = large). This means that when all other variables are held constant, each unit increase in Emotional Attachment produces a 0.369-unit increase in Global Brand Image the largest marginal contribution among the four dimensions.

This finding is theoretically grounded in the emotional transfer mechanism described by Cornwell et al. (2005), whereby the powerful emotions generated by sports events (excitement, collective pride, and celebratory joy) are progressively transferred to the sponsoring brand, enriching its image with affective and symbolic associations. The result is consistent with Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which explains how consumers who identify with a sporting event or community extend that identity to the sponsoring brand, adopting it as part of their social and personal self-concept. The primacy of emotional attachment also aligns with Meenaghan's (2001) theoretical proposition that sponsorship's fundamental advantage over conventional advertising lies in its capacity to generate genuine consumer emotion an affective pathway to brand image that direct advertising cannot replicate.

Empirically, this finding converges with Deng et al. (2018), who demonstrated through structural equation modeling that emotional alignment between consumers and sponsoring brands is the primary driver of brand image enhancement in a Chinese sports sponsorship context. It also aligns with Grohs and Reisinger (2014), who identified emotional involvement as a key moderator of image transfer in European sports sponsorships, and with Cornwell (2019), who positioned emotional engagement as the central objective of modern, relationship-oriented sponsorship strategy.

Convergence with the Literature, the primacy of emotional attachment as the dominant brand image driver is consistent across multiple cultural and methodological contexts. Gwinner and Eaton (1999) identified affective image transfer as a central sponsorship mechanism in the United States; Grohs and Reisinger (2014) confirmed emotional involvement as a key image driver in Austria; Deng et al. (2018) documented the same pattern in China. The present study adds the Algerian North African context to this cross-cultural convergence, strengthening the generalizability of emotional attachment as the primary pathway through which sports event sponsorship shapes brand image.

A contextual amplification distinguishes this finding from its Western counterparts. Football in Algeria is not merely a competitive sport; it constitutes a powerful vehicle of collective cultural identity, national pride, and social cohesion. The emotional intensity surrounding Algerian football amplified by the national team's victory in the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations and the sustained passion for clubs such as MCA and USMA, both of which Ooredoo sponsors directly creates an exceptionally fertile emotional environment for brand-fan transfer. In this context, a brand that successfully embeds itself in the emotional ecosystem of Algerian football can achieve levels of emotional attachment that exceed those typically documented in less culturally charged Western sponsorship environments. The beta coefficient of 0.369, higher than comparable values reported in Western studies, is consistent with this contextual amplification.

Credibility (Credibility → Brand image:  $\beta = 0.263$ ,  $T = 3.016$ ,  $p = 0.003$ )

Brand Credibility is the second most significant predictor of Global Brand Image ( $\beta = 0.263$ ,  $T = 3.016$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), with a small effect size ( $f^2 = 0.084$ ). Both the path coefficient and the effect size are statistically reliable: the bootstrapping T-statistic of 3.016 well exceeds the 1.96 threshold for significance at the 5% level, and the p-value of 0.003 confirms a low probability of a Type I error.

This finding is theoretically consistent with Signaling Theory (Erdem & Swait, 2004), which posits that the investment in high-profile events constitutes a costly signal of brand quality and reliability. In the Algerian telecommunications market, where consumers face structural information asymmetries (network performance is difficult to evaluate before subscription, tariff structures are complex, and contractual switching costs create inertia) credibility signals derived from sponsorship behavior carry elevated weight in consumer brand evaluation. By committing organizational resources to professional, high-visibility sports events, Ooredoo communicates organizational stability, market legitimacy, and promise-keeping capacity to consumers who cannot easily verify these attributes directly.

This result converges with Meenaghan (2001), who argued that sponsorship's perceived non-commercial nature enhances its credibility dividend relative to advertising. It also aligns with Rifon et al. (2004), who demonstrated that perceived sponsor sincerity mediates sponsorship effectiveness, and with Cornwell's (2019) engagement model, which positions authenticity and integrity as core credibility-building outcomes of well-activated sponsorships.

Perceived Quality (Perceived quality → Brand image:  $\beta = 0.223$ ,  $T = 2.995$ ,  $p = 0.003$ )

Perceived Quality is the third most significant predictor of Global Brand Image ( $\beta = 0.223$ ,  $T = 2.995$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), with a small effect size ( $f^2 = 0.064$ ). While the T-statistic of 2.995 and p-value of 0.003 confirm statistical significance, the small effect size indicates that perceived quality's marginal contribution to brand image net of the contributions of emotional attachment and credibility is relatively modest.

This result is consistent with the image transfer mechanism theorized by Gwinner (1997) and empirically validated by Gwinner and Eaton (1999), whereby the prestige, professionalism, and excellence attributes associated with high-profile sporting events are transferred to the sponsoring brand's perceived service quality. It is also aligned with Grönroos's (1984) service quality model, which demonstrated that brand image and perceived service quality are mutually reinforcing constructs: a positive brand image filters and elevates quality perceptions, while elevated quality perceptions reinforce brand image. Aaker (1991) further established perceived quality as a foundational dimension of brand equity, directly contributing to overall brand image.

The descriptive analysis corroborates this finding: Perceived Quality records the highest mean among all four dimensions ( $M = 4.03$ ), and item Q403 which directly captures the image transfer of sporting event prestige to network reliability perceptions achieves the

highest single-item score in the entire study ( $M = 4.09$ ). This convergence between descriptive strength and structural significance confirms that quality perceptions are genuinely sponsorship-induced rather than merely pre-existing brand perceptions.

Brand Awareness (Brand awareness  $\rightarrow$  Brand image:  $\beta = 0.096$ ,  $T = 1.638$ ,  $p = 0.102$ )

The most analytically significant finding of the structural model is the non-significant effect of Brand Awareness on Global Brand Image ( $\beta = 0.096$ ,  $T = 1.638$ ,  $p = 0.102 > 0.05$ ,  $f^2 = 0.015$ , negligible). With a T-statistic of 1.638 falling below the 1.96 threshold and a p-value of 0.102 exceeding the 5% significance level, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected for this path. This leads to the non-support of the Brand Awareness component of H2 in the structural model.

This result must be carefully distinguished from the descriptive support for H1a. At the descriptive level, Brand Awareness records a positive and acceptable mean ( $M = 3.92$ ), confirming that Ooredoo's sports event sponsorship does enhance consumer awareness and recall. The structural non-significance does not contradict this descriptive finding. What it reveals, instead, is that when brand awareness competes with emotional attachment, credibility, and perceived quality as simultaneous predictors of Global Brand Image, its unique contribution is negligible. This distinction between the generation of awareness and its translation into brand image is theoretically and practically important.

The most direct theoretical explanation is provided by Keller (1993) himself, who explicitly acknowledged that brand awareness constitutes a necessary but not sufficient condition for brand image formation. Awareness must be accompanied by favorable, strong, and unique brand associations to generate meaningful image effects. In the Algerian telecommunications market, where Ooredoo, Djazzy, and Mobilis all enjoy universal brand recognition, the incremental awareness gain produced by Ooredoo's sponsorship adds little to consumers' existing brand knowledge and therefore fails to generate a differential image advantage. This ceiling effect, documented by Romaniuk and Sharp (2004) through salience theory, occurs when awareness reaches parity across competing brands and loses its discriminating power.

This finding is also consistent with Joana Cesar Machado et al. (2012), who found that brand recall does not always significantly influence consumer preferences in highly competitive markets, and with the structural model finding of Grohs and Reisinger (2014), who noted that awareness gains from sponsorship produce limited direct image effects when competing with stronger affective and symbolic mechanisms.

The apparent paradox high descriptive awareness ( $M = 3.92$ ) combined with structural non-significance ( $p = 0.102$ ) resolves when viewed through the lens of competitive market dynamics. In a market where all three operators are universally recognized, awareness is a necessary but non-differentiating brand attribute. Consumers are fully aware of Ooredoo, but this awareness alone does not explain why they would evaluate Ooredoo's brand image more favorably than Djezzy's or Mobilis's. Brand image differentiation in this context depends on what consumers feel about the brand (emotional attachment), whether they trust it (credibility), and whether they believe it delivers quality (perceived quality) none of which follow automatically from awareness alone.

The non-significant awareness effect introduces an important boundary condition to the established theoretical literature: brand awareness contributes to brand image formation only when it constitutes a meaningful informational differentiator for consumers. When awareness reaches parity across competing brands in a mature market, the image-building burden shifts entirely to deeper, relational brand dimensions emotional attachment, credibility, and perceived quality. This specification of the conditions under which awareness drives (or fails to drive) brand image represents a theoretical contribution that extends and contextualizes the foundational frameworks of Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993).

## **2.4 General Interpretation**

Collectively, the findings of this study provide a multidimensional and empirically grounded account of how sports event sponsorship shapes brand image in the Algerian telecommunications sector. Three overarching theoretical contributions emerge from this comparative analysis.

First, the study confirms that sports event sponsorship in the Algerian telecommunications context operates primarily through affective and symbolic pathways emotional attachment and credibility rather than purely cognitive ones such as brand awareness. This finding is consistent with the broader theoretical shift in the sponsorship literature from a visibility paradigm to a relational and experiential engagement paradigm (Cornwell, 2019), and adds empirical evidence from a North African emerging market context that has been largely absent from the existing literature. The substantial  $R^2$  of 0.688 demonstrates that sponsorship-induced consumer perceptions collectively account for a very large portion of brand image variance, validating the multidimensional framework proposed in this study.

Second, the relative importance of the four brand image dimensions is context-sensitive. Emotional attachment's primacy in this study with a beta coefficient ( $\beta = 0.369$ ) and effect size ( $f^2 = 0.203$ ) higher than those typically reported in Western sponsorship research reflects the exceptionally high cultural charge of football in Algeria. Sports, and particularly football, function as powerful vehicles of collective national identity and social belonging in the Algerian context, creating an amplified emotional environment for brand image transfer. This contextual amplification suggests that generic sponsorship effectiveness models developed in Western market contexts may systematically underestimate the emotional transfer potential of sports sponsorship in high-identity cultural settings.

Third, the non-significant effect of Brand Awareness on Global Brand Image introduces an important and specific theoretical contribution: a boundary condition for awareness-based brand image models. Awareness drives brand image when it represents a meaningful informational differentiator for consumers. In saturated, high-awareness markets where all major competitors enjoy universal recognition, brand image differentiation depends entirely on deeper relational and affective dimensions. This finding specifies the conditions under which Keller's (1993) theoretical proposition that awareness is a necessary precondition for brand image holds, and identifies the conditions under which this relationship breaks down. This boundary condition specification constitutes a substantive contribution to the theoretical literature on brand equity and sponsorship effectiveness.

### **Conclusion of Chapter 03**

This chapter presented and discussed the empirical results of the study. The measurement model was validated through satisfactory indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The structural model revealed that Emotional Attachment ( $\beta = 0.369$ ), Credibility ( $\beta = 0.263$ ), and Perceived Quality ( $\beta = 0.223$ ) are significant predictors of Global Brand Image, collectively explaining 68.8% of its variance. Brand Awareness, while descriptively high, did not exert a statistically significant effect in the structural model, suggesting that awareness alone is insufficient for brand image formation in competitive market contexts, these findings confirm the significant contribution of sponsorship-induced brand awareness, perceived quality, brand credibility, and emotional attachment to Ooredoo Algeria's brand image formation among Algerian consumers

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

### 1.1 Summary of Findings

This dissertation aimed to examine the contribution of sponsorship-induced brand dimensions to brand image formation within the Algerian telecommunications sector through the case of Ooredoo Algeria. Grounded in established theories related to sponsorship, brand equity, and consumer perception, the research adopted a quantitative approach based on a sample of 196 respondents exposed to Ooredoo Algeria's sports sponsorship activities.

The empirical findings provide strong evidence that sponsorship-induced brand dimensions play a significant role in shaping Ooredoo Algeria's brand image. More specifically, the results demonstrate that Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment, Sponsorship-Induced Brand Credibility, and Sponsorship-Induced Perceived Quality exert statistically significant positive effects on Brand Image Formation. These dimensions emerged as the principal determinants influencing consumers' overall perception of the brand.

In contrast, Sponsorship-Induced Brand Awareness did not demonstrate a statistically significant direct effect on Brand Image Formation within the structural model. This finding suggests that although sponsorship exposure contributes to increasing brand recognition and familiarity, awareness alone is insufficient to generate a strong and favorable brand image in highly competitive and mature market environments.

Overall, the study confirms that sports sponsorship should not be viewed merely as a visibility or exposure tool, but rather as a strategic communication mechanism capable of generating cognitive and affective consumer perceptions that contribute to brand image formation. The substantial explanatory power of the structural model validates the multidimensional nature of brand image and highlights the importance of emotional and credibility-related factors in sponsorship effectiveness.

From a managerial perspective, the findings indicate that companies such as Ooredoo Algeria should move beyond passive sponsorship visibility and focus instead on sponsorship activation strategies capable of strengthening emotional engagement, reinforcing credibility, and enhancing consumers' perceptions of service quality. Merely being associated with sports events is no longer sufficient; brands must create authentic and meaningful consumer experiences capable of generating lasting psychological connections.

Finally, this research contributes to the relatively limited academic literature concerning sponsorship and brand image within the Algerian context. It provides both theoretical and



managerial insights regarding the role of sponsorship-induced perceptions in brand image formation while opening perspectives for future research in this field.

## **1.2 Managerial Implications and Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, several strategic and operational recommendations can be proposed for Ooredoo Algeria and companies operating in similarly competitive environments.

First, Ooredoo Algeria should prioritize sponsorship activation strategies aimed at strengthening emotional engagement with consumers. Since Sponsorship-Induced Emotional Attachment emerged as the strongest predictor of Brand Image Formation, the company should develop immersive and interactive experiences during sponsored sporting events. These initiatives may include fan zones, live digital interactions, contests, behind-the-scenes content, athlete storytelling campaigns, and experiential activities designed to create memorable emotional connections with consumers.

Second, Ooredoo Algeria should adopt more precise segmentation strategies in its sponsorship communication. Different consumer groups may respond differently to sponsorship initiatives depending on their age, digital behavior, sports interests, and level of brand involvement. Consequently, the company could develop differentiated campaigns targeting young digital consumers, football fans, esports audiences, and highly connected social media users through personalized communication and tailored sponsorship content.

Third, the company should reinforce its digital engagement strategies in order to maximize sponsorship effectiveness across multiple touchpoints. Sponsorship communication should no longer rely exclusively on event visibility but should integrate social media marketing, influencer collaborations, user-generated content, mobile applications, and real-time digital interaction during sporting events. Ooredoo Algeria could also leverage data analytics and artificial intelligence tools to personalize sponsorship-related content and improve audience engagement.

Fourth, Ooredoo Algeria should optimize sponsorship selection by ensuring a stronger alignment between sponsored events and its brand identity, technological positioning, and corporate values. Sponsoring nationally significant sporting events, youth-oriented competitions, and socially impactful initiatives could reinforce perceptions of credibility, innovation, and social responsibility.

Fifth, the company should use sponsorship as a platform to communicate service quality and technological performance. Since telecommunications services are intangible, sponsorship campaigns should emphasize network reliability, digital innovation, customer experience, and technological advancement through integrated communication strategies linked to sporting events.

Finally, Ooredoo Algeria should continuously evaluate sponsorship performance using measurable indicators such as engagement rates, social media interaction, brand sentiment analysis, customer retention, and sponsorship return on investment. This would enable the company to optimize resource allocation and improve the long-term effectiveness of its sponsorship strategies.

### **1.3 Limitations of the Study**

Despite its contributions, this study presents several limitations that should be acknowledged.

First, the study relied on a relatively limited sample size of 196 respondents, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the research adopted a non-probability sampling approach, which may limit the representativeness of the sample and reduce the possibility of generalizing the findings to the broader Algerian population.

Second, the study focused exclusively on Ooredoo Algeria, limiting the possibility of extending the findings to other telecommunications operators or economic sectors. Furthermore, the sample was geographically concentrated, which may not fully reflect the diversity of consumer perceptions across different Algerian regions.

Third, the research adopted a cross-sectional design by measuring consumer perceptions at a single point in time. Consequently, the study does not capture the long-term evolution of sponsorship-induced perceptions and their influence on brand image formation over time.

Fourth, the data collection process relied on self-reported questionnaires, which may introduce several forms of respondent bias, including social desirability bias, response consistency bias, and subjective interpretation of questionnaire items. Respondents may have overestimated or underestimated their perceptions and attitudes toward sponsorship activities.

Fifth, the study may also be exposed to common method bias, since all variables were measured using the same questionnaire instrument and collected from the same respondents during a single period of time. Although procedural precautions were taken during

questionnaire design, the possibility of inflated relationships between variables cannot be entirely excluded.

Finally, sports sponsorship exposure was treated as a contextual condition controlled through respondent selection rather than as a directly measured latent construct within the structural model. While this methodological choice ensured that all respondents were familiar with Ooredoo Algeria's sponsorship activities, it did not allow for the measurement of variations in sponsorship intensity, involvement, or individual exposure levels.

#### **1.4 Perspectives for Future Research**

Based on the limitations identified, several avenues for future research may be proposed.

First, future studies could conduct comparative analyses between Algerian telecommunications operators such as Ooredoo, Mobilis, and Djezzy in order to better understand differences in sponsorship effectiveness, consumer perception, and brand image formation strategies across competing brands.

Second, future research could adopt longitudinal research designs to examine the long-term effects of sponsorship activities on brand image formation and investigate how sponsorship-induced perceptions evolve over time. Such studies would provide deeper insights into the sustainability and durability of sponsorship outcomes.

Third, researchers could broaden the geographical scope by conducting comparative studies across Maghreb countries such as Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. Comparative regional analyses could help identify cultural, social, and market-specific factors influencing sponsorship effectiveness in North African markets.

Fourth, future studies could integrate emerging variables related to digital marketing and influencer marketing. The growing importance of social media influencers, online fan communities, esports sponsorship, and digital engagement strategies represents an important research avenue for understanding modern sponsorship effectiveness.

Fifth, future research could investigate the role of artificial intelligence and data-driven sponsorship strategies in enhancing consumer engagement and personalization. Examining AI-powered sponsorship activation, predictive consumer analytics, and personalized digital experiences could provide valuable insights into the future evolution of sponsorship marketing.

Finally, future studies could adopt mixed-method approaches combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies such as interviews, focus groups, ethnography, or sentiment

analysis. Such approaches could provide richer insights into the emotional, symbolic, and psychological mechanisms underlying consumer responses to sports sponsorship activities.

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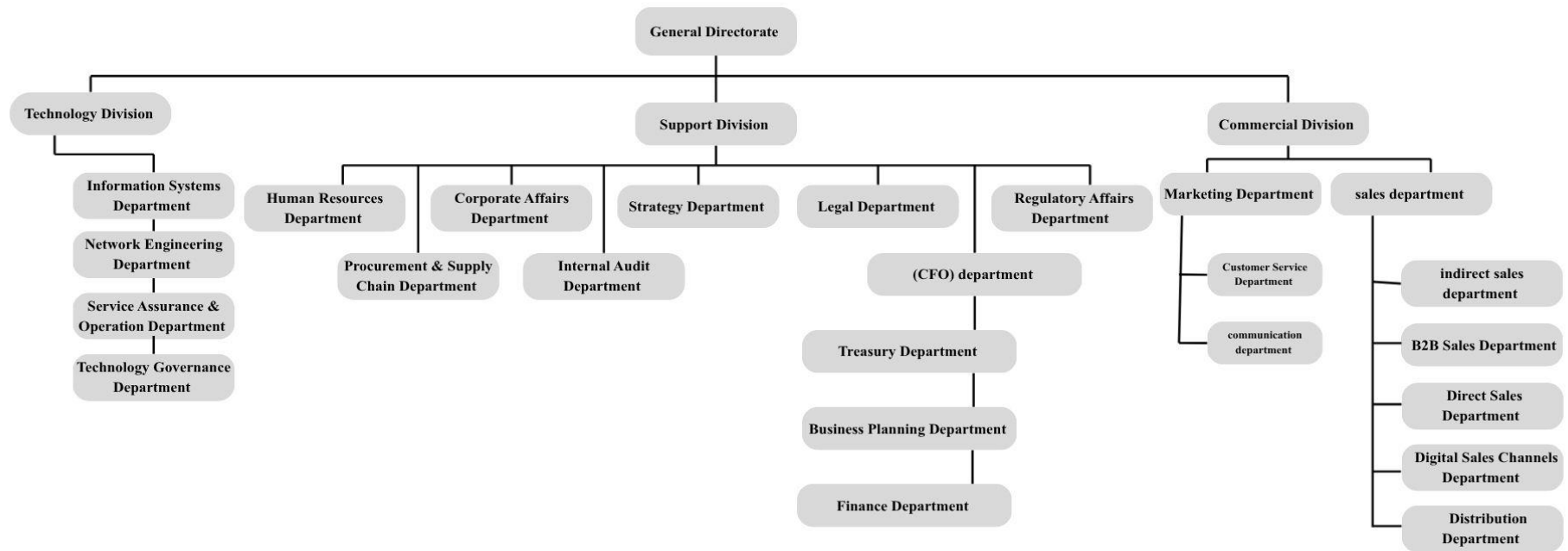


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# **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A: Organizational Chart



## APPENDIX B: Table of measurement items

| Variables                   | Items                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Authors                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Brand Awareness (BA)</b> | <p>-Sports event sponsorship helps me remember the Ooredoo brand more easily.</p> <p>-Through its sports sponsorship, Ooredoo comes to my mind spontaneously when I think about telecommunications operators in Algeria.</p> <p>-Ooredoo's sponsorship of sports events has helped me better recognize its logo, colors, and visual identity.</p> <p>-Ooredoo's presence in sports events increases its visibility and makes it more present in my daily life.</p> | <p>(Adapted from: Yoo &amp; Donthu (2001). Developing and validating a multidimensional consumer-based brand equity scale. Journal of Business Research, 52(1), 1–14.)</p> |
| <b>Credibility (CR)</b>     | <p>-Ooredoo's sponsorship of major sporting events strengthens my perception of the brand's seriousness and professionalism.</p> <p>-Ooredoo's support for sports gives me the impression that it is a reliable company that fulfills its commitments to its customers.</p> <p>-Sponsorship increases my confidence in Ooredoo's ability to deliver on its promises as a telecommunications operator.</p>                                                          | <p>(adapted from: Erdem, T. &amp; Swait, J. (2004). Brand credibility, brand consideration, and choice. Journal of Consumer Research, 31(1), 191–198.)</p>                 |

|                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                         | <p>-Ooredoo's sports sponsorship strengthens my trust in the brand's ability to provide services that meet its promises.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <p><b>Perceived Quality (QP)</b></p>    | <p>The fact that Ooredoo sponsors major events leads me to believe that its telecommunications services are of high quality.</p> <p>The professional way in which Ooredoo organizes and supports sporting events reflects the overall quality of its services. Seeing Ooredoo associated with prestigious sporting events strengthens my confidence in the reliability and performance of its network.</p> <p>I consider Ooredoo to be a high-quality operator, partly due to its involvement in sports.</p> | <p>Adopted from: Yoo &amp; Donthu (2001). Developing and validating a multidimensional consumer-based brand equity scale. Journal of Business Research, 52(1), 1–14.)</p>                                           |
| <p><b>Emotional Attachment (EA)</b></p> | <p>The sporting events sponsored by Ooredoo evoke positive and warm feelings in me toward this brand.</p> <p>: I feel personally connected to the values (excellence, team spirit, self-surpassing) conveyed by Ooredoo's sports sponsorship.</p> <p>Ooredoo's support for sport (clubs, competitions, equestrian) creates in me an</p>                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>(Adapted from: Thomson, M., MacInnis, D.J. &amp; Park, C.W. (2005). The ties that bind: Measuring the strength of consumers' emotional attachments to brands. Journal of Consumer Psychology, 15(1), 77–91.)</p> |

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                         | <p>emotional attachment to this brand.</p> <p>Ooredoo's sports sponsorship activities strengthen my desire to remain loyal to this brand</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Brand image (BI)</b> | <p>I have a positive image of Ooredoo thanks to its commitment to sports sponsorship.</p> <p>Ooredoo's sports sponsorship contributes to giving it a modern, dynamic image that is close to Algerian citizens.</p> <p>I consider Ooredoo to be a reference brand in the telecommunications sector in Algeria, partly due to its investment in sport.</p> <p>My overall image of Ooredoo is more favorable than that of other telecom operators in Algeria, due to its sports sponsorship activities."</p> | <p>(adapted from: Speed, R. &amp; Thompson, P. (2000). Determinants of sports sponsorship response. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 28(2), 226–238.)</p> |

## **APPENDIX C: Questionnaire**

<https://forms.gle/7e4evuyVE5ZktACL7>



## APPENDIX D: PLS Model

