

Social Marketing for Change: Strategies to Combat Poverty Through Consumer Engagement in Iraq

Kadhim Ghaffar Kadhim

Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University Technical Administrative College/Kufa Under the patronage of the President of Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University, Iraq.
 ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3106-655>
 Email: kadhim.ghaffar.cku@atu.edu.iq

Ahmed Hasan Shakir

Department of Business Administrative, college of Administrative sciences, Al-Mustaqbal University, Babylon, Hillah, 51001, Iraq.
 ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8892-3826>
 Email: ahmed.hasan@uomus.edu.iq

Amjed Hameed Majeed*

Department of Business Administrative, college of Administrative sciences, Al-Mustaqbal University, Babylon, Hillah, 51001, Iraq.
 ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9015-5329>
 Email: Amjed_hameed@uomus.edu.iq

Hasan Majdi

Prof Dr, College of Engineering and, Technologies Al-Mustaqbal University, Babylon 51001, Iraq.
 ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6752-4835>
 Email: dr.hasanshker@uomus.edu.iq

Amran Harun

Faculty Technology Management and Business Univirsiti Tun Hussien Oon Malaysia 86400 Parit Raja, Johor.
 ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4956-8134>
 Email: amranh@uthm.edu.my

This research examines the potential of social marketing as a strategic mechanism for alleviating poverty in Iraq through diverse consumer-engagement approaches aimed at fostering awareness and involvement in a pro-poor agenda. Given Iraq's critical economic challenges, the study highlights how social marketing facilitates tangible behavioural change among consumers to support impoverished communities. Social marketing tools serve to educate individuals on poverty-related issues while simultaneously mobilising resources and support through targeted outreach initiatives, enabling developing nations to address social challenges effectively. A mixed-methods approach was employed to assess the effectiveness of social marketing in motivating consumer participation. A comprehensive questionnaire was utilised to collect data on participants' awareness of social marketing strategies and their perspectives on assisting those in poverty. Social marketing campaigns actively engage consumers, and this participation generates solutions that contribute to poverty reduction within communities. The findings underscore the efficacy of social marketing in addressing economic challenges and providing practical solutions for poverty relief initiatives. The study offers valuable insights for policymakers and social responsibility professionals in formulating effective strategies to integrate social marketing into poverty alleviation efforts through digital investment partnerships and community-based interventions.

Keywords: Social Marketing, Consumer Engagement, Poverty, Poverty Alleviation.

Introduction

Iraq continues to grapple with persistent structural challenges, as ongoing conflicts, political instability, and economic fragility exacerbate poverty (Hamoudi, Köppe, & Winston, 2023). According to the World Bank, a significant proportion of Iraqis live below the poverty threshold, lacking access to essential healthcare, food, and education (Taniguchi et al., 2021). Government-led and charitable poverty alleviation initiatives often yield limited outcomes due to the deep-rooted nature of poverty in the region, necessitating innovative and distinct solutions (Ayoo, 2022). There is an urgent need for novel strategies to address this issue effectively. Social marketing has emerged as a contemporary approach specifically designed to enhance poverty reduction efforts by fostering behavioural change among target populations (Sabeeh, Ali, & Al-Jawaldeh, 2022; Younis & Khudhiar Lafta, 2021). Through innovative social marketing strategies, individuals in impoverished communities can actively engage in initiatives that generate a more profound and sustainable social impact. Empirical evidence comprises a crucial blend of measurements and analytical methods essential for examining diverse forms of data (Madan & Ashok, 2024). Researchers employ this approach across various sectors to identify and interpret significant patterns within datasets. Analysing the impact of entrepreneurial activities on consumer behaviour enhances public welfare by leveraging commercial marketing strategies (Alzoubi, 2022), providing valuable insights into

these dynamics. This communication strategy is particularly effective in raising public awareness and fostering empathy towards Iraq's pressing humanitarian crisis while contributing to poverty alleviation. The primary aim is to secure increased funding and support for initiatives that assist those experiencing poverty and drive long-term socio-economic improvements (Maulu et al., 2021). By utilising existing community resources, social marketing facilitates collaboration between individuals and organisations in pursuit of sustainable objectives. Early engagement strengthens the sustainability of such initiatives, fostering economic development and social transformation within communities. Collective action among various stakeholders yields significant positive outcomes that benefit society as a whole (Hübscher, Hensel-Börner, & Henseler, 2022). For social marketing to be effective in Iraq, it must be strategically integrated within the nation's distinct cultural, social, and economic framework. Tailored campaigns that align with deeply rooted local traditions and values have been shown to enhance consumer engagement in poverty alleviation efforts. Storytelling, a powerful and culturally resonant tool, alongside the strategic use of social media and community events, fosters a strong sense of collective responsibility in supporting vulnerable populations, particularly in times of economic hardship (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Through well-coordinated and inclusive initiatives, individuals can be actively encouraged to contribute to efforts aimed at improving the well-being of those in need. These collaborative approaches strengthen community

solidarity, reinforcing the crucial role of social cohesion in addressing poverty in a sustainable and context-specific manner (Winston, 2022).

With the rapid expansion of digital technologies in Iraq, these tools are not merely advantageous but essential for enhancing social marketing and outreach initiatives, enabling broader audience engagement and maximising overall impact (Ahmed et al., 2022). Social media platforms, mobile applications, and online channels have facilitated organisations in connecting with the public, disseminating critical information, and sharing valuable resources with ease. This digital integration fosters effective communication and interaction, strengthening collaboration among diverse groups (Al Mokdad, 2025). When widely adopted across industries, these technologies can significantly enhance the effectiveness of social marketing strategies, improve consumer engagement, and contribute to poverty alleviation efforts in the region (De Luca et al., 2022). As digital tools become increasingly accessible across different demographic groups, they offer expanded opportunities for meaningful social engagement and community-driven initiatives, fostering a more connected and informed Iraqi society (O'Driscoll & Costantini, 2024). This study investigates social marketing strategies aimed at engaging consumers in meaningful poverty alleviation efforts across Iraq. It examines various case studies and innovative approaches that demonstrate how social marketing can serve as a catalyst for societal change. The findings offer valuable insights for governments, NGOs, and business leaders seeking to understand how consumer engagement can drive sustainable development initiatives in Iraq. Analysing these strategies highlights the potential for developing effective, community-focused solutions that contribute to long-term social and economic improvements.

Inquiry Framework

1. How do social marketing strategies impact consumer engagement in poverty reduction initiatives?
2. To what extent does consumer engagement mediate the relationship between social marketing strategies and measurable poverty alleviation outcomes?
3. How does consumer engagement influence the perceived effectiveness of social marketing campaigns in addressing poverty?

Research Goals

1. To assess the influence of social marketing strategies on consumer engagement in poverty alleviation initiatives in Iraq.
2. To examine the mediating role of consumer engagement in the relationship between social marketing strategies and poverty alleviation outcomes.
3. To analyse the correlation between consumer engagement and the perceived effectiveness of social marketing campaigns in addressing poverty.

Hypothesis Development

Building on the comprehensive insights derived from the literature review, this study formulates the following hypotheses. These hypotheses are strategically developed to direct the research on implementing effective social marketing

strategies aimed at enhancing consumer engagement for the critical objective of poverty reduction in Iraq.

- **Hypothesis 1:** There is a positive relationship between consumer engagement in using community outreach, storytelling, and social media with the performance of social marketing campaigns towards poverty alleviation in Iraq.
- **Hypothesis 2:** Social marketing messages culturally aligned positively influence consumers to engage and head to the contributing for poverty alleviation efforts in Iraq.
- **Hypothesis 3:** The use of Social media marketing tools increases consumer involvement in social marketing campaigns, resulting in increased awareness and support for poverty alleviation initiatives.

Scope of the Study

This study investigates the role of social marketing strategies in promoting consumer engagement as a means of alleviating poverty in Iraq. Employing a structured quantitative research approach, it captures perspectives from individuals across various socio-economic backgrounds, offering valuable insights into the practical implications of marketing-based strategies for enhancing public participation in poverty-related initiatives. The study encompasses diverse experiences and perceptions within Iraqi society by focusing on both urban and peri-urban settings. It is framed around three key dimensions: social marketing strategies, consumer engagement, and poverty alleviation outcomes. The research examines how social marketing campaigns shape public discourse on poverty, influence societal attitudes, and drive collective action for social change. Additionally, it evaluates the extent to which consumer engagement—through awareness campaigns, volunteering, and digital advocacy—serves as a catalyst for measurable socio-economic progress.

The findings of this study offer valuable insights for policymakers, development organisations, and marketing strategists aiming to utilise consumer engagement in socio-economic initiatives. By examining the pathways through which social marketing drives behavioural change, the research presents practical guidance for developing more effective, culturally appropriate, and demographically inclusive campaigns for poverty alleviation. Although the study focuses on Iraq, its conceptual framework and methodological approach ensure its applicability to other regions experiencing comparable socio-economic challenges, thereby enhancing its broader academic and practical significance.

Literature Review

Social marketing has emerged as a strategic approach to addressing social issues, including poverty. It applies commercial marketing principles to promote social welfare (Schmidtke, Kubacki, & Rundle-Thiele, 2021), requiring an in-depth understanding of consumer behaviour, cultural contexts, and the specific challenges faced by target communities. Within this framework, social marketing is recognised as an effective tool for raising awareness, mobilising resources, and shaping attitudes to combat poverty (Gordon, Spotswood, & Dibb, 2022).

Case Consumer Engagement in Social Marketing: An Overview and Research Agenda

Social marketing campaigns must fully recognise the critical role of consumer engagement, as it is this engagement that drives active participation and fosters behaviours capable of generating meaningful and lasting social change within communities (Chae, 2021). Such engagement encompasses a wide range of activities, including educational initiatives aimed at informing the public, community outreach programmes designed to enhance awareness and involvement, and social media campaigns that utilise digital platforms to connect with target audiences (Mostafa, 2021). These elements collectively contribute to effectively engaging consumers and fostering relationships that support social good. Previous research in this field has demonstrated that active consumer participation is strongly associated with positive campaign outcomes. Specifically, studies indicate that heightened consumer awareness and increased participation rates significantly enhance the effectiveness of poverty reduction initiatives (Cheung et al., 2021). These strategies not only encourage individuals to take action but also facilitate sustained engagement in initiatives that contribute to long-term social transformation (Nicoli et al., 2022).

Consumer behaviour in Iraq is influenced by a range of cultural factors that are deeply embedded in social norms and local traditions. Social marketing campaigns must be designed to align with the values, beliefs, and customs that shape Iraqi society (Qasim, 2021). Empirical research has demonstrated that culturally tailored marketing initiatives consistently achieve higher levels of consumer engagement, as they resonate more effectively with the target audience. Such efforts not only enhance the impact of campaign messages but also encourage stronger commitments to collective social responsibilities, leading to improved community outcomes and reinforcing social cohesion (Hamzawi, 2022).

Mediating Effect of Consumer Engagement in Social Media Strategies and Poverty Alleviation Outcomes

Social media has become an increasingly influential tool in poverty alleviation, as consumer participation directly links digital engagement with tangible social impact. By facilitating rapid information sharing and collaborative efforts, social media strengthens interactions between communities and organisations, enhancing outreach effectiveness (Ali Qalati et al., 2020). Research indicates that the adoption of social media enables organisations to better connect with their target audiences, fostering engagement and resource mobilisation. Platforms also serve as educational tools, raising awareness about poverty and encouraging collective action to secure funding, resources, and information. For instance, Digital Green provides farmers in developing regions with an online space to exchange agricultural techniques, supporting global poverty reduction efforts.

Social media strategies prove most effective when consumers actively engage, as those who show interest are

more likely to participate in initiatives and disseminate information, amplifying impact. Studies further highlight how consumer motivations for online engagement influence their social media behaviours (Chen et al., 2021). Trust strengthens the link between social media marketing and consumer purchasing behaviour, as noted by Singh et al. (2025). Consumer engagement acts as e-empowerment, fostering social capital through online interactions, which enhances customer involvement by sharing insights and building communities. This empowers individuals to drive change and support poverty alleviation. Studies indicate that effective social media strategies, boosting trust and empowerment, enhance consumer engagement, thereby improving poverty reduction outcomes (Mostafa, 2021).

Social Marketing Campaigns in Addressing Poverty

Social media marketing serves as a powerful and effective tool for promoting positive social practices across Arab nations. Compared to traditional methods, social media campaigns offer a unique opportunity to disseminate essential messages to a much broader audience, thereby enhancing the impact of poverty reduction initiatives (Ravishankar, 2021). This modern approach has already demonstrated success, as research suggests that effectively engaging consumers in the digital space requires leveraging these online platforms and aligning with social causes that resonate with consumer values (Rane, Achari, & Choudhary, 2023). Social media content that reflects shared values fosters a sense of community while encouraging long-term behavioural changes across diverse cultural contexts. Additionally, social media facilitates the design of targeted initiatives that inspire user participation, leading to more effective and sustainable outcomes in poverty alleviation efforts (Hollebeek, 2011).

People become active participants by engaging in and showing commitment to social marketing projects (Brodie et al., 2013). Participants naturally internalise campaign messages and share them, along with recommended actions, to support its goals (Dessart, Veloutsou, & Morgan-Thomas, 2015). Social marketing campaigns on poverty aim to educate the public on helping the poor, making wise spending choices, and supporting better economic decisions (Alan, 2006). These campaigns use techniques like persuasive messaging and online/offline engagement to drive positive social change (Peattie & Peattie, 2009). Greater participation in such initiatives enhances campaign effectiveness and social impact (Domegan et al., 2013).

Social marketing campaigns achieve better results with consumer participation, as engaged individuals amplify outreach by sharing campaign messages both personally and online, driving greater social change (Van Doorn et al., 2010). Participation through volunteering and crowdfunding enables direct involvement in poverty relief projects (Bublitz, Peracchio, & Block, 2010). Digital technology enhances campaign growth by facilitating interactions with consumers, who can share feedback, propose solutions, and write reviews (Smith, Fischer, & Yongjian, 2012). Digital engagement improves campaign outcomes, particularly for

poverty relief projects requiring public support to gather funds and backing (Zollo et al., 2020).

Methodology

This study examines social marketing strategies for consumer engagement as a mechanism for addressing poverty in Iraq. To achieve this, a structured quantitative research design was employed, collecting data from a representative sample across various provinces in the country.

Sampling Method

Individuals were sampled from urban and peri-urban areas in Iraq based on their perceived receptiveness to social marketing campaigns. As shown in Table 1, a total of 350 respondents were selected, with data collected using a stratified random sampling method. Participants were stratified by demographic factors, including age, gender, education, and income levels. This approach proved effective in capturing diverse perspectives on social

marketing and its potential impact on poverty alleviation.

Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was employed to collect data, covering sections on demographic information, familiarity and participation in social marketing initiatives, and consumer engagement and attitudes towards poverty alleviation. To accommodate linguistic diversity, the survey was available in both English and Arabic. Data collection spanned three months, utilising both online surveys and in-person interviews to reach respondents with varying levels of technology access. Full disclosure of the study's objectives was provided, and an explanatory statement ensured that informed consent was obtained in accordance with ethical guidelines. This methodology offers a comprehensive framework for assessing the potential of social marketing in addressing poverty through consumer participation in Iraq. By employing a robust sampling technique and a thorough data collection process, the study ensures the validity and reliability of its findings.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents.

Demographic	Variable	Category	Percentage
Gender	Male	190	54.3
	Female	160	45.7
Age Group	18-24	90	25.7
	24-34	130	37.1
	35-44	70	20.0
	45 and above	60	17.1
	Primary School	30	8.6
Education Level	Secondary School	90	25.7
	Bachelor's Degree	190	54.3
	Postgraduate Degree	40	11.4
Employment Status	Employed	130	62.9
	Unemployed	130	37.1
Monthly Income (USD)	Less than 300	140	40.0
	300 - 600	140	40.0
	More than 600	70	20.0

Variables Measurement and Instruments

This research adopts a methodical framework to assess the influence of social marketing on poverty alleviation among Iraqi consumers. A structured questionnaire is utilised to investigate essential variables, incorporating nine items

distributed across five principal constructs. These are evaluated using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Additionally, each variable is supplemented with further inquiries to capture subtleties in consumer participation, social marketing tactics, and their effectiveness in mitigating poverty, as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Variables and Sample Questions.

Variable	Type	Measurement Tool	Sample Questions	Scale Type
Social Marketing Strategies	Independent Questionnaire		The social marketing campaigns provide valuable information about poverty issues.	5-Point Likert Scale
			I frequently see advertisements promoting social marketing initiatives related to poverty alleviation.	5-Point Likert Scale
			The messages used in social marketing campaigns resonate with my understanding of poverty.	5-Point Likert Scale
			I regularly participate in community events organized by social marketing campaigns.	5-Point Likert Scale
Consumer Engagement	Independent Questionnaire		I feel motivated to volunteer for initiatives focused on poverty alleviation.	5-Point Likert Scale
			I share information about social marketing campaigns on my social media platforms.	5-Point Likert Scale
			I have observed positive changes in my community due to social marketing efforts aimed at poverty reduction.	5-Point Likert Scale
Poverty Alleviation Impact	Control	Demographic Questionnaire	Social marketing initiatives have increased community support for low-income families.	5-Point Likert Scale
			I believe that the social marketing campaigns have successfully raised awareness about poverty in my area.	5-Point Likert Scale

Data Analysis

The hypotheses were empirically tested using covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) in AMOS software. AMOS is preferred over alternatives like LISREL, EQS, and Mplus due to its ability to provide accurate estimations, even for highly complex models. To ensure rigor and reliability, the data analysis was conducted in three main stages:

Common Method Bias (CMB) Analysis

Recognising the potential distortion of self-reported data due to common method bias, Harman's single-factor test was employed. This test determined whether a single factor dominated the underlying results, thereby confirming the integrity of the data when the assumption held true.

Examination of the Measurement Model

At this stage, the study conducted a thorough evaluation to confirm the reliability and validity of the measurement scales. To verify the structural integrity and model alignment, both Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were applied, ensuring that each construct accurately captured its theoretical essence. Internal consistency, along with convergent and discriminant validity, was rigorously examined using established statistical measures, including Cronbach's alpha, CR, and AVE (Hair et al., 2013).

The Structural Model Evaluation

The structural model hypothesised relationships were tested using bootstrapping. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to evaluate research hypotheses and validate internal variable correlations (e.g., t-statistics, path coefficients, and p-values). This investigation examined important drivers' direct and indirect effects on employees' digital technology adoption aspirations. This strategy illuminated the relationship between social marketing, customer engagement, and poverty reduction in Iraq (Byrne, 2013).

Table 3: Data Normality and Harman's Single Factor (HSF) Test for Common Method Bias.

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis	Threshold (Skewness)	Threshold (Kurtosis)
Social Marketing Strategies	0.65	-0.47	Between -2 and +2	Between -7 and +7
Consumer Engagement	1.20	0.85	Between -2 and +2	Between -7 and +7
Poverty Alleviation Impact	-0.75	1.02	Between -2 and +2	Between -7 and +7

Harman's Single Factor Test of Common Method Bias

When both dependent and independent variables stem from a single source, CMB may distort correlations and undermine result validity. To detect CMB, the CMA test was applied using Harman's Single Factor (HSF) test. In Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), all variables were loaded onto a single factor (G factor). If this factor explains over 50% of total variance, CMB is present (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Table 4 shows that a single factor accounted for only 35% of variance, indicating

Result

Normality of Data and HSF Test for Common Method Bias

The test for data normality (as shown in Table 3) was conducted to ensure that the study variables met the necessary assumptions for analysis. Normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis values, with skewness ranging between -2 and +2 and kurtosis between -7 and +7. These values fall within the acceptable thresholds for SEM, indicating an adequate level of normality (Kline, 2023). In line with Table 3, all constructs satisfy the conditions for skewness and kurtosis, confirming that the dataset adheres to the normality assumption required for SEM analysis. Skewness and kurtosis are key statistical measures used to assess data distribution, where skewness evaluates asymmetry, and kurtosis examines the sharpness of the distribution's peak or the presence of extreme values (Kim, 2013). The Social Marketing Strategies variable exhibits a symmetric distribution, as its skewness value of 0.65 falls within the accepted range of -2 to +2 (George & Mallery, 2019). Additionally, the kurtosis value of -0.47 remains within the recommended -7 to +7 threshold (Westfall, 2014), indicating a standard tail pattern. Similarly, the Consumer Engagement variable presents a skewness of 1.20, reflecting moderate positive distribution balance. Despite its right-skewed nature, the data maintains an appropriate normal distribution stance.

The kurtosis value of 0.85 remains well within acceptable limits, further confirming that the dataset follows typical distribution characteristics and remains suitable for analysis (Byrne, 2013). The Poverty Alleviation Impact management data exhibits a slight negative skewness of -0.75, indicating a minor leftward inclination, yet it aligns with normality standards (Hair et al., 2018). The kurtosis value of 1.02 reflects normal tail behaviour, consistent with Field (2024) criteria. All variables maintained appropriate skewness and kurtosis levels, demonstrating dispersion patterns close to normal. This confirms the suitability of parametric statistical analysis, as data normality standards are met without significant deviations (Pallant, 2020).

minimal risk of CMB in this study.

Table 4: Harman's Single Factor Test Results.

Factor	Total Variance Explained
Single Factor.	35%

Evaluation of the Measurement Model

The assessment of the measurement model provides critical insights into the reliability and validity of the constructs included in the study. This evaluation is essential to confirm that the relationships among the constructs are accurately depicted and that the model serves as a robust and reliable framework for further analysis.

Reliability & Internal Consistency

Cronbach's Alpha and Composite dependability assessed each construct's internal dependability. A construct is

reliable when Cronbach's Alpha and CR exceed 0.70 (Hair et al., 2013), as seen in Table 5. Table 5 shows that all constructs exceeded Cronbach's Alpha and CR thresholds, indicating measure reliability.

Table 5: Reliability and Internal Consistency.

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)
Social Marketing Strategies	0.83	0.87
Consumer Engagement	0.78	0.82
Poverty Alleviation Impact	0.83	0.88

Convergent Validity

Furthermore, AVE was utilised to assess convergent validity, which examines whether items intended to measure the same construct are indeed correlated. Convergent validity was confirmed as the AVE values exceeded the threshold of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), as presented in Table 6. The research model demonstrates strong convergent validity, as all AVE values exceed the 0.50 threshold. Construct validation relies on the degree to which different measures of the same concept are interrelated. Convergent validity is established when the AVE value reaches or surpasses 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). All three constructs in this study meet this criterion. Social Marketing Strategies exhibits validity with an AVE of 0.66, exceeding the benchmark and indicating that its measurement indicators effectively capture its intended meaning. Similarly, Social Engagement Solutions achieves an AVE of 0.68, fulfilling the necessary standard (Hair et al., 2010). The construct of Poverty Alleviation Impact also demonstrates strong convergent validity, with an AVE of 0.69. Given that all constructs surpass the 0.50 threshold, the research model reliably measures the latent variables, ensuring its suitability for structural equation

modelling (Sarstedt, Ringle, & Hair, 2022). Empirical research affirms that an AVE above 0.50 signifies that the construct explains more variance in its indicators than is attributed to measurement error (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). As all constructs in this study meet this requirement, the measurement model exhibits strong convergent validity, reinforcing the reliability and credibility of the research findings.

Table 6: Convergent Validity.

Construct	Value	Threshold
Social Marketing Strategies	0.66	> 0.50
Social Engagement	0.68	> 0.50
Poverty Alleviation Impact	0.69	> 0.50

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is crucial for establishing that each construct is separate from the others. The Fornell-Larcker criterion stipulates that the square root of the AVE for each construct must surpass its correlations with any other constructs, so guaranteeing that the constructs assess distinct concepts without substantial overlap. The findings in Table 7 validate that each construct retains its individuality, as evaluated by the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 7: Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

Construct	Social Marketing Strategies	Social Engagement	Poverty Alleviation Impact
Social Marketing Strategies	0.81		
Social Engagement	0.59	0.78	
Poverty Alleviation Impact	0.53	0.63	0.83

The findings demonstrate that Social Marketing Strategies (0.81), Social Engagement (0.78), and Poverty Alleviation Impact (0.83) are conceptually distinct, as their AVE square root values surpass their respective correlations with other constructs. For instance, the correlation between Social Marketing Strategies and Social Engagement is 0.59, remaining below their AVE square roots (0.81 and 0.78, respectively). Similarly, Social Marketing Strategies (0.53) and Social Engagement (0.63) exhibit lower correlations with Poverty Alleviation Impact, reinforcing the validity of the constructs. These results confirm that each construct accurately represents its intended concept rather than overlapping with other variables.

Establishing strong discriminant validity enhances the robustness of the measurement model and ensures that the constructs remain theoretically and empirically distinct. This validation strengthens the credibility of subsequent structural equation modelling (Hair et al., 2010) (Henseler et al., 2015). In Table 8, the HTMT ratios confirm valid construct distinction, with all values below the 0.85 threshold (Henseler et al., 2015). The HTMT value for Social Marketing and Consumer Engagement (0.72) and other ratios demonstrate that the measurement model meets validity standards (Hair et al., 2010). This indicates that the examined variables are distinct in both theoretical and practical contexts.

Table 8: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Standard Error
Social Marketing → Consumer Engagement	0.72	< 0.85
Consumer Engagement → Poverty Alleviation	0.67	< 0.85
Social Marketing → Poverty Alleviation	0.68	< 0.85

Discussion

The findings highlight the potential of social marketing strategies to shape consumer behaviour and contribute to poverty reduction in Iraq. The study demonstrates that social marketing can drive both individual and collective behavioural transformations, ultimately supporting economic progress. The results indicate that culturally and socio-economically tailored social marketing campaigns effectively engage consumers by increasing awareness of poverty-related issues and mobilising support for targeted interventions. These findings align with existing research on social marketing's role in influencing consumer decisions, guiding behaviour, and generating societal benefits. In particular, the study underscores the importance of well-designed communication strategies, strategic partnerships, and consumer-centred initiatives in tackling poverty—core principles of social marketing aimed at driving positive societal change. This research expands the literature on social marketing by examining its application within the workforce of a developing economy involved in poverty alleviation efforts.

This study employs Social Marketing Theory to illustrate how consumer engagement can enhance awareness and address socio-economic challenges. By extending the application of this theory to poverty alleviation in Iraq, the research highlights the effectiveness of consumer-driven campaigns in generating both immediate and long-term socio-economic benefits. Furthermore, the findings contribute to the Theory of Planned Behaviour by demonstrating how well-structured social marketing initiatives can cultivate pro-poor attitudes and behavioural intentions (Ajzen, 1991). These insights provide practical implications for policymakers, NGOs, and businesses aiming to harness social marketing for poverty reduction in Iraq. To enhance relevance and consumer engagement, marketers should design interventions that reflect Iraq's unique cultural and socio-economic landscape (Donovan & Henley, 2010). Effective social marketing campaigns should integrate efforts across government, NGOs, and the private sector to maximise their impact on poverty alleviation (Peattie & Peattie, 2003). Both non-profit and for-profit organisations should focus on educating consumers through accessible, empathetic, and informative strategies, fostering sustained engagement and collective action in addressing poverty.

Limitations

The findings of this study are specific to Iraq and may not be directly generalisable to countries with distinct socio-economic and cultural contexts. Additionally, the discussion lacks depth in addressing various dimensions of marketing, particularly the emotional and psychological drivers underlying social marketing, which may limit a comprehensive understanding of consumer engagement behaviour. Future research could address these limitations by employing longitudinal data to assess the sustained impact of social marketing interventions on poverty alleviation. Comparative analyses of social marketing strategies across multiple developing countries could

enhance understanding of their effectiveness and reveal context-specific factors. Furthermore, integrating socio-psychological variables such as consumer emotions, psychological influences, and digital engagement would provide deeper insights into how social marketing shapes consumer behaviour in the context of poverty alleviation.

Conclusion and Future Implications

This study rigorously analyses the role of social marketing strategies in fostering consumer engagement for poverty alleviation in Iraq. Using a structured research approach and a random sampling method enhances its representativeness. The findings demonstrate how effective social marketing designs encourage consumer participation in poverty relief projects, increase awareness, and drive behavioural change. The research highlights the influence of age, education, and income on responses to social marketing efforts, with consumer engagement acting as a mediator to translate marketing impact into tangible economic outcomes. Advanced statistical methods, including CMB verification, EFA, and CFA, ensure data accuracy and reliability.

The study offers actionable insights for policymakers, social marketers, and development practitioners, emphasising the alignment of consumer engagement with targeted poverty alleviation measures. It suggests that future research adopt longitudinal approaches to assess long-term impacts and incorporate qualitative methods to explore consumer motivations. By establishing social marketing as a powerful tool for poverty reduction, the study underscores the importance of strategic, data-driven interventions that empower communities and promote sustainable development. The findings advocate for continued investment in consumer-centred social marketing strategies, supported by cross-sector collaboration, to advance poverty reduction in developing economies like Iraq.

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