

**The Effect of Social Media Usage on Marketing Performance: The Mediating Role of Market Orientation****Lina Nasser Ali\*, Salah Ahmed**

Faculty of Administration &amp; Economics, Shabwah University, Ataq, Yemen

\*Email: alahmadilina1n@gmail.com

**Abstract**

Social media usage promotes SMEs' efforts to enter new markets and gain more customers through effective marketing performance, while still surviving in the market and keeping loyal customers through responsive and proactive market orientation. This study aims to examine the direct relationship between social media usage and the marketing performance of SMEs in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In addition, examining the mediating role of market orientation on the relationship between social media usage and marketing performance. This study applied quantitative methods and SEM analysis to test the relationship between the variables. Focus on SMEs in the business, trading, and manufacturing sector. The overall number of SMEs who conduct business in the city of Abu Dhabi is 9057. The population is executive and general managers. The stratified random sampling technique was used to sample a heterogeneous population. The data instrument is a questionnaire. The number of questionnaires distributed = 600, then 546 valid copies have been used in the data analysis. The result shows that the use of social media has a direct effect on market orientation and marketing performance, while market orientation mediates the influence of social media on SMEs' marketing performance through proactive and responsive market orientation. Furthermore, the implementation of social media in the marketing plan of SMEs will contribute to their marketing performance, since it allows the organization to reach potential customers without borders or distance limits. Market orientation helps SMEs to satisfy their prospect and current customers through proactive and responsive marketing. Therefore, this study recommends that SMEs should consider the significant role of market orientation before thinking to use social media in promoting their products or service. Doing so will add value to their business and boost marketing performance. Moreover, executive managers of SMEs should instruct their personnel on how to use online marketing tools effectively to recognize the needs of the market at the present and in the future, because social media platforms become the pillar of success and help companies boost their performance in the domestic and international market.

**Keywords:** Social media usage, Market orientation, Marketing performance**1 Introduction**

Today, economics all over the world depends on the growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). These firms face severe competition from peers in the domestic and international markets as the effect of globalization accelerates the competition. The majority of SMEs,

especially small companies have limited resources so they must search for other means to survive in the market, e.g., technology adoption can assist SMEs to overcome a variety of issues (Kumar and Ayedee, 2019). In this context, the usage of social media can help SMEs expand their business without limits and improve their overall performance in terms of profitability and market growth. Social media is a principal tool for marketing and become part of SMEs business plans to increase product sales, earnings, and customer loyalty (Musa et al., 2016). Social media afford great tools to help SMEs not just with marketing but also to increase their sales and profitability (Kumar & Aggarwal, 2018). Due to the widespread usage of technology at present, SMEs can achieve their goals without the need for large capital. As the governments of developing countries encourage SMEs to increase income and sales while maintaining development through innovation in marketing, social media usage helped a large number of SMEs to achieve dramatic change in their business and turn from losers to winners, but they require an effective marketing orientation strategy to integrate social media into the business plan. As a result, social networking enhances the company's ability to detect and capitalize on business opportunities, as well as develop marketing performance (Gainous & Wagner, 2013; Ndiege, 2019), whereas businesses utilize social media to develop their relationships with customers in terms of product, brand, engagement, and services, which leads to increased brand trust, and gain more loyal customer, all these activities enhance the marketing performance (Trainor et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2018; Ebrahim, 2019). In this article, the mediating role of marketing orientation on the relationship between social media use and marketing performance will highlight the significant role of proactive and responsive marketing orientation in fostering the marketing performance of SMEs in the UAE.

## **2 Social Media in SME Domain**

The impact of social networks, according to Wang et al. (2016), has been shown to be a significant means of engagement between businesses and their customers. The usage of social media applications by SMEs boosts their performance and has been widely cited in the literature, with the conclusion that SMEs can use social media to market products or services as well as improve their organizational performance. Social media serves as a simple contact medium for customers and help SMEs to build a useful relationship with customers. In other words, social media usage strengthens ties between online customers and the company, fostering internal and external communication (Oztamur & Karakadlar, 2014; Alsharji et al., 2017). In this regard, it is evident that the usage of social media will help SMEs to establish a profitable business, and it is now a vital aspect of daily life for customers and organizations to communicate and exchange information about everything they are interested in (Dwivedi et al., 2017). Academics who studied the effect of social media on the business and focused on the factors that may increase its usage by customers (Bonsón & Ratkai, 2013; Partanen et al., 2018). Some scholars contend that digital marketing using social media platforms assists small-size companies in achieving long-term growth (Low et al., 2020). In other words, organizations that utilize information and communication technology will increase their sales and enhance marketing performance, while SMEs that do not invest in information and

communication technology will become weak in the market and may not survive in the future (Sunny et al., 2020).

Amoah (2020) suggested that SMEs in the last decade have boosted their usage of the marketing tools of social media to promote their products and services through sharing events, monitoring the interests of potential customers, and gaining a deeper knowledge of proactive market needs from the large volume of shared data on social media networks. Hence, increasing the usage of social media helps SMEs attain organizational goals, such as brand engagement, revenue, advertisement, creativity, issue recognition, customer care, and creating cultural shifts (Ainin et al., 2015). The significant relationship between the adoption of social media for SMEs and their market performance is recognized (Bianchi & Andrews, 2015) because social media is an affordable means for exchanging information on certain products between customers in a quite friendly platform, which in turn positively affecting the performance of firms in the market. Furthermore, Muslim et al. (2020) reported that customers who are distant from each other can communicate via social media with the sales departments of firms; this way of communication promotes the products at a minimum cost. In the same context, Algharabat et al. (2020) stated that social media might help SMEs promote and sell their goods and services at a reasonable cost. As a result of greater acceptability of social media could be due to several factors, e.g., promotion of products by tagging methods, texting, making comments, and notifying clients, all these methods introduce the business and contribute to increasing the revenues and sales volume (Amoah, 2020).

Customers may now utilize social media networks for free and easily, which can give improved prospects for SMEs by providing relatively rapid and low-cost tools for conducting business and effective techniques for engaging with customers (Abdullah et al., 2019). In addition, social media connects organizations, partners, clients, and people from different cultures, allowing clients to interact and engage via internal and external information resources (Papa et al., 2018), so that the people on social networks will communicate and exchange information in order to learn new things and gain new experiences about certain products in a way to share information on these products without a direct interfere by the company who produces them (Martn-Rojas et al., 2020). Millions of customers engaged with new products every day on well-known social media brands, e.g., Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube; the companies can benefit from a variety of forums and online communities to promote their products. As a result, these well-known social media platforms have now become a vital component of business (Hassan et al., 2019). Accordingly, social media emerged as a cultural phenomenon that helps businesses (Bansal et al., 2014), lowering marketing expenditures, and enhancing consumer retention. Jacobson et al. (2020) claimed that potential consumers are more comfortable engaging through social media for searching reliable products because they can read comments on that particular product, and also communicate with SMEs' online buying platforms via social media to get more information. In brief, many studies have shown that SMEs are aware of the great benefits of social media commercial practices (Aral et al., 2013; Abdullah et al., 2019; Ndiege, 2019). To gain commercial benefits, social media should be used to improve organizational performance at all

levels, i.e., financial, marketing, and technology (Aral et al., 2013; Lückmann & Feldmann, 2017).

### **3 Literature review**

#### **3.1 Social Media Usage**

The platforms of social media generate data-rich platforms, allowing for increased customer engagement and faster invention in production and sales, as well as commercial activities (Ndiege, 2019). Through social media networks, users can share ideas, photos, videos, interests, and even sales of products and services (Jibril et al., 2019). The data generated by social media allows SMEs and their partners to form special relationships with customers. Nowadays, social media is considered as one of the top data-driven for marketing innovations (Bhimani, 2018). In fact, the volume of investment of large firms is higher c to SMEs who are hampered by limited resources (Zhou, 2016; Ali & Suleiman, 2016). Thereby, social media is a low-cost marketing tool that helps SMEs to compete well in the market regardless of small financial capabilities (Abdullah et al., 2019). Furthermore, academics and practitioners have acknowledged the growing significance of customer involvement in the new product/service creation process through connection with enterprises via social networks (Mahr et al., 2014; Cui & Wu, 2016; Wang & Kim, 2017). Advances in technology, in particular, have resulted in the growth of groundbreaking firms that have become a vital part of one's life (Ostrom et al., 2015; Adam et al., 2016). Clearly, the Internet has pushed customers to use the internet more, resulting in a huge shift in corporate behavior. As the phenomenon has spread, more research across multiple business stages, firms, and contexts is needed to examine the adoption, utilization, methods, and outcomes of social media in order to develop a new theory (King et al., 2014; Ratchford, 2015; Shaltoni et al., 2018). According to Antikainen et al. (2015), utilizing social media platforms in strategic business plans takes three forms: within the company, between the organization's partners, and between the organization and its clients. Around 2.5 billion people use social technology worldwide, including 1.3 billion Facebook users and 54.2 million pages. Social media usage increased by 22% between 2002 and 2013, with 56 percent of individuals currently using social media to discover new goods (Pechrová et al., 2015; Ahmad et al., 2019). As a result, social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Blogs) are a revolution that society has devotedly embraced, and there is a lot of evidence of the role of social media in achieving modern marketing (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Jacobson et al., 2020).

#### **3.2 Market Orientation**

Market orientation contributes significantly to a wide range of business activities (Bylon & Jerry, 2019). It is an acronym that stands for customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter-denominational coordination. Its focuses on customers and organizational awareness of competitors' actions, as well as integrated market knowledge. Firms tailor their products and services to satisfy the needs of their clients in order to earn a large market share and create a long-term competitive advantage (Hina et al., 2016). In addition, market orientation helps

organizations satisfy clients by providing products or services they need for the present and the future. It is critical that organizations maintain a continuous relationship with clients by updating the requirements of the market, especially in terms of consumer needs and rival behavior (Ana et al., 2018). Companies that implement market orientation concepts increase customer loyalty and provide top client value, resulting in increased organizational performance (Dadfar et al., 2013). As a result, to compete, SMEs, particularly those in developing countries, must embrace the concept of market orientation and its application in their field of business (Bylon & Jerry, 2019). Because of the nature of market orientation philosophy, numerous scholars and writers have contributed to various aspects of business discussing its implementation. Market orientation can also be utilized in this context as a value innovation, in that it creates a new non-competitive market for a service or good while simultaneously contributing to competitiveness from current to new markets. Market orientations could be considered disruptive innovation (Youn et al., 2019). Market orientation integration is becoming increasingly important in marketing and management, and expansion and extensive research are occurring. To that end, Jang (2013) emphasized that the main objective of market orientation is to identify how the company should work in a competitive market and that competitiveness emphasizes the consistency of the partnership with other organizations and even customers. Through its external focus on clients and competitors, Market orientation in SMEs contributes to supporting innovation and knowledge expansion (Dibrell et al., 2011). It is clear that market orientation can be measured through proactive market orientation so that to focus on customers' latent desires, whereas responsive market orientation focuses on market necessities at the present. As a result, the role of these two dimensions must be assessed in order to have a bigger picture of the role of market orientation as several empirical research have found a significant association between market orientation (i.e., proactive and responsive market orientation) and the performance in the market (Saeed et al., 2014; Cantaleano et al., 2018; Anshuman et al., 2019). These two dimensions are described below.

### **3.2.1.1 Responsive market orientation**

The ability to respond to market dynamics is a vital aspect in guaranteeing safety and stable growth in a competitive environment, and consequently shows a firm's dynamism (Anshuman et al., 2019). According to Wei et al. (2014) responsive market orientation is the degree to which organizations respond to market signals, impending market threats, and opportunities, and it help organization to understand the need of the market in response to market stimuli and have the capacity in their business plans to do so (Anshuman et al., 2019). Market-oriented responsiveness typically necessitates a high level of interdepartmental collaboration in order to commercialize products in a timely manner that meets current market expectations (Paul et al., 2013). While learning customer trends is commonly associated with responsive marketing orientation (Narver et al., 2004). Responsive market orientation focuses on adaptive learning based on market demand. It has the potential to minimize radical innovation since it frequently translates to adaptive learning. While market orientation is linked to new and inventive ways to contact customers, responsive market orientation is directly impacting the innovation

characteristic, which is also observed in current market practices of offering new ways to conduct marketing to attract reliant customers (Baker & Sinkula, 2007). Proactive inquiry, creativity, and the willingness to take reasonable risks are also encouraged by the market response (Saeed et al., 2014). According to the preceding argument, responsive market orientation is more popular due to its simplicity of implementation; yet firms that rely solely on responsiveness may miss later market opportunities. As a result, Narver et al. (2004) concluded that in order to create and retain a continued competitive advantage, a company must constantly increase its proactive market orientation, as well as rely on both types of marketing orientation to survive in the market and to be more competitive.

### **3.2.1.2 Proactive market orientation**

A proactive market orientation assists the organization in identifying clients' unexpressed or implicit demands. Barrales-Molina et al. (2014) contended that proactive market orientation is a dynamic marketing capability because of its connection to information search and market comprehension. The primary objective of proactive market orientation is to identify and serve both the general market and consumers, as well as to supply products and services through innovation (Cantaleano et al., 2018). According to Narver et al. (2004), proactive market orientation can be viewed as an attempt to uncover and comprehend customers' hidden demands. It enables a company to update capabilities and reconfigure its business in an unstable market. In contrast to responsive market orientation, proactive market orientation has been positively associated with market performance (Paul et al., 2013). According to Barrales-Molina et al. (2014), proactive market orientation (Narver et al., 2004) is a dynamic marketing capability by definition. Proactivity enables firms to detect unrevealed client demands and build unique solutions to meet those needs (Harald & Daniel, 2020). In the same context, Kareen et al. (2018) assumed that proactive market orientation is viewed as an organizational marketing capability rather than a strategic approach, while responsive market orientation, on the other hand, is more focused on the company's existing knowledge and expertise. In another sense, proactive market orientation is more closely associated with fundamental innovation, and it is significantly connected to product innovation (Lin et al., 2020).

### **3.3 Marketing Performance of SMEs**

Performance is a general term that can be classified into different categories, while marketing performance is one of the types of organizational performance, and it is a metric of how an organization succeeds in the market and promote its products and services (Katsikeas et al. 2016). Recent developments in digital channels show the significant impact of digital marketing, for example, social media networks in the explosion of data and the emergence of marketing automation, market globalization, and the rise of customer online experience as a key factor in understanding how potential customers could influence the organizations to satisfy market demand (Mintz et al. 2020). Marketing performance is a factor that is frequently used to assess the effectiveness of a company's strategy (Erlangga, 2022). Despite that professionals utilized various tools to assess marketing performance, understanding how these

indicators explain marketing performance and address these concerns remain an unsolved issue (Morgan et al., 2022). In this regard, marketing performance is a measure for analyzing the success of a company in the market, which is a combination of various factors, such as innovation capabilities and market share, whereas these factors can be influenced by market orientation. Businesses and SMEs rely heavily on their performance in the market. Some critical aspects can have an impact on marketing performance, e.g., employee creativity, technology innovation, responsive and proactive market orientation. Over the last few years, innovation has resulted in the greatest level of business growth for small and medium-sized firms (McDermott et al., 2012). In other words, the success of SMEs in the market depends on how they use marketing innovation like social media in favor of profitability and business growth (Ardyan, 2016). SMEs can add value to their business from digital marketing through social media platforms in a variety of ways, both real and intangible, and they need to prepare themselves effectively to use the technology. Managers of SMEs should seriously consider technology adoption since it has the potential to elevate marketing to a new level. Managers should instruct their personnel on how to use online marketing tools effectively because it becomes the pillar of success at the present time and help companies to boost their performance in the domestic and international market.

#### **4 Hypotheses Development**

Marketing via the platforms of social media is highly effective in promoting the brands of firms, raising clients' awareness, attracting more and fresh customers, establishing long-term loyalty, and expanding the areas for reaching potential customers. Today, the applications of social media help SMEs to establish strong links with customers and reshape their marketing strategies (Radhakrishnan et al., 2019). Hence, the increase in usage by customers improves SMEs' marketing performance (Dahnil et al., 2014). The utilization of social media marketing strategy helps SMEs to boost their performance in the recent decade (Omar et al., 2011). The advantages of employing this technology in marketing have shown a tremendous rise in sales volume, valuable consumer feedback, customer support, and more customer participation (Pentina & Koh, 2012). The content on Facebook and the social networking sites such as Twitter plays an important role in drawing clients towards certain products because social media enhances the communication between customers and the supply of goods (ztamur & Karakadlar, 2014). Facebook usage has a favorable impact on organizations' non-financial performance because it helps to reduce marketing costs. Information flow reaches a significantly larger audience and strengthens customer relationships with suppliers (Ainin et al., 2015). But marketing through digital channels presents some obstacles, there are distinct challenges linked to digital marketing technologies, yet the approach is beneficial in raising awareness (increasing & Arisandi, 2019), and the digital marketing channels provides SMEs with more opportunity to reinvent their business performance and to redefine client categories (Jones et al., 2015). In conclusion, the firms who adopted social media in their marketing strategy were more capable to boosts their competitiveness by allowing two-way engagement with clients. In other sense, the market expansion is aided by social media marketing (Rambe,

2017). Digital marketing is making life easier for SMEs by allowing them to provide accurate and timely information. The information flow became more comfortable and natural as a result of digital marketing. In the same context, Bazi et al. (2020) claimed that companies selecting social media tools in their marketing strategy are always successful in the market because social media networks help companies develop close interactions and good contacts with potential customers. Based on the previous arguments and findings, the following hypotheses will be tested on SMEs of the UAE.

*Hypothesis 1:*

*“Social media usage has a significant effect on marketing performance”*

The empirical evidence and reports show that social media networks are fortunate tools to produce rich-data created with extraordinary composite visions to drive faster ideation for commercial purposes based on client-centric innovations (Bhimani, 2018). In other words, social media networks can help an organization respond to clients' needs in the market swiftly, as well as predict clients' expectations in the future. Thus, social media networks help SMEs to achieve responsive and proactive market orientation. In addition, customers are attracted to specific companies based on recommendations from other customers who have similar needs. Thus, the large area of sharing knowledge that social media provide helps SMEs to reduce the cost of marketing campaigns, as well as improve market orientation through fast response to market needs (Lee & Falahat, 2019). Thereby, more adoption of social media tools will definitely help businesses to expect and attract more customers (proactive market orientation). In addition to that, social media networks help SMEs to develop cheap communication and marketing tools with customers and gain a competitive advantage in the market, which turns their marketing for products and services responsive. That is why market orientation and social media are connected (Chin-Wen et al., 2020). SMEs have realized that social media applications can bring great advantages to predicting the demand of customers in the future through their comments and suggestions and use their feedback to explore new markets while they are trying to satisfy their present needs (Uribe-Saavedra et al., 2012). Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis will be examined in SMEs of the UAE.

*Hypothesis 2:*

*“Social media usage has a significant effect on market orientation”*

The rise of social media worldwide has changed the way of doing marketing and communication between potential customers and suppliers through the internet and cell phones. Moreover, market orientation is a critical success factor in the market and thus promotes marketing performance (Jogaratnam, 2017; Najafi-Tavani et al., 2016). The literature indicates the strength of association between market orientation and SMEs' performance (Carlos, 2008; Margaretha & Supartika, 2016). While market orientation promotes the coordination of all organizational functions and helps the organization to search for potential customers and collect valued market information, which helps firms to improve



productivity and boost marketing performance (Halim et al., 2019). In this regard, Julian et al. (2014) suggested that marketing strategies are implemented by companies to improve business performance. Likewise, Udriyah et al. (2019) found that market orientation promotes marketing performance (Udriyah et al., 2019). It is evident that the association between market orientation and marketing performance has been thoroughly studied (Baker & Sinkula, 2007; Tajeddini et al., 2006), and many studies have reached a favorable conclusion that both variables are linked to each other (Lee & Tsai, 2005; Shehnaz & Sulaiman, 2017). Some studies emphasizing the market orientation of large firms in comparison to SMEs should be cited (Bylon & Jerry, 2019). In brief, proactive market orientation has been positively associated with market performance (Paul et al., 2013). Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis will be examined in SMEs of the UAE.

*Hypothesis 3:*

*“Market orientation has a significant effect on marketing performance”*

The findings from empirical reports suggest that the usage of social media (independent) will contribute to marketing performance (dependent) and this relationship is hypothesized to be mediated by the market orientation (mediator). The proposed framework is shown in Figure-1.

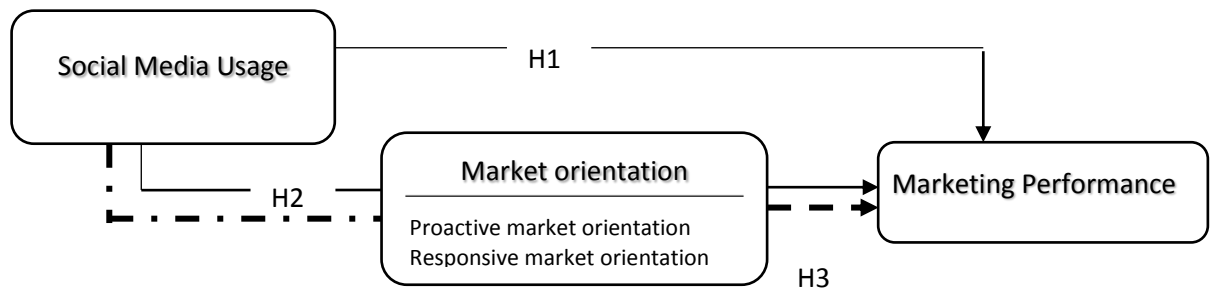


Figure-1: The conceptual framework of social media usage in the SME domain.

## 5 Methodology

This study applied quantitative methods and SEM analysis to test the relationship between the variables. Focus on SMEs in the business, trading, and manufacturing sector. The overall number of SMEs who conduct business in the city of Abu Dhabi = 9057. The population is executive and general managers. The stratified random sampling technique was used to sample a heterogeneous population. The data instrument is a questionnaire. The total number of distributed questionnaires to the study samples (executive and general managers) = 600, 546 valid copies have been used in data analysis.

## 6 Results and Discussions

To test the research hypotheses, this study utilized the path analysis technique (SEM) to evaluate the significance of relationships between three constructs, i.e., social media usage, market orientation, and marketing performance. To evaluate the strength of relationships, the

standardized regression coefficient (Beta) is applied. Table-1 indicates the scale of correlation between social media usage and market orientation is relatively high ( $\beta = 0.75$ ), and between social media usage and marketing performance ( $\beta = 0.54$ ), and finally the association between marketing performance and market orientation ( $\beta = 0.51$ ). All relationships are significant ( $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$ ).

Table - 1: Significance and strength of relationships between variables

Directions of effects	Beta coefficient	Sig.
Social media usage $\rightarrow$ Marketing performance	0.55	0.00
Social media usage $\rightarrow$ Market orientation	0.73	0.00
Market orientation $\rightarrow$ Marketing performance	0.53	0.02

The next step is testing the Critical Ratio (C.R) to examine the validity of the hypotheses (Hair et al., 2019). If C.R is greater than 1.96 for a particular relationship, a hypothesis should be accepted; otherwise, a hypothesis will be rejected. As shown in Table-2, Hypothesis (1) is accepted ( $C.R = 2.61 \geq 1.96$ , Sig. = 0.00); Hypothesis (2) is accepted ( $C.R = 5.28 \geq 1.96$ , Sig. = 0.00); finally, Hypothesis (3) is accepted ( $C.R = 2.24 \geq 1.96$ , Sig. = 0.00).

Table - 2: The result of hypotheses analysis

Hypotheses #	Statements	C.R	Result
Hypothesis 1	Social media usage has a significant effect on marketing performance	2.61	Accepted
Hypothesis 2	Social media usage has a significant effect on market orientation	5.28	Accepted
Hypothesis 3	Market orientation has a significant effect on marketing performance	2.24	Accepted

The next step is to test the mediating influence of market orientation by measuring the indirect and total effects of social media usage on marketing performance through market orientation, which should be significant. The bootstrapping technique is applied to evaluate the mediation influence of market orientation. As shown in Table – 3, the outcome of bootstrapping statistics reveals the indirect effect is significant, i.e., social media usage  $\rightarrow$  market orientation  $\rightarrow$  marketing performance. where 0 is out of the confidence interval of bootstrapping (0.144, 1.282). This criterion is necessary to consider the indirect path of social media use marketing performance is partially mediated by market orientation. The same statement is applied to evaluate the total effect between social media usage and marketing performance, i.e., 0 out of interval 0.662-1.621; Sig. = 0.00.

Table - 3: The summary of total and indirect mediating effects

Types of effect	Sig.	Effect	Lower bound	Upper bound	0 out of interval
-----------------	------	--------	-------------	-------------	-------------------

Standardized indirect effect	0.02	0.394	0.149	1.083	Yes
Unstandardized indirect effect	0.00	0.441	0.144	1.282	Yes
Standardized total effect	0.01	0.947	0.811	1.120	Yes
Unstandardized total effect	0.00	1.061	0.662	1.621	Yes

The key finding from the result is that implementing social media into the marketing plan of SMEs will contribute to their marketing performance since it allows the organization to reach potential customers without borders or distance limits. In addition, market orientation helps SMEs to satisfy their prospect and current customers. Social media usage promotes SMEs' efforts to open the door for new markets and gain more customers through proactive market orientation (Kumar & Ayedee, 2018) while surviving in the market and keeping loyal customers through responsive market orientation (Low et al., 2020). In brief, SMEs should consider the role of market orientation as an effective way for boosting social media usage and promoting their products and service. Doing so will add value to their business model and foster marketing performance.

## **7 Conclusions**

In today's digital era, no firm, large or small, can disregard the use of technical sources for marketing. Online marketing technologies through social media networks assist SMEs in achieving their sustainability goals and advance marketing performance in many ways. As traditional marketing methods only allow for one-way communication between customers and companies; however, marketing using social media platforms can stimulate two-way dialogue between customers and SMEs. In other words, social media is a significant technological innovation designed for all people, and it supports businesses to enhance their competitiveness beyond traditional marketing tools. The result shows that social media usage has a direct effect on market orientation and marketing performance of SMEs, whereas market orientation mediates the influence of social media towards SMEs' marketing performance through proactive and responsive market orientation. The conclusions of this article will assist SMEs' owners/managers in the UAE in understanding how to leverage online resources to improve marketing on a tight budget. In other sense, social media technologies are critical to SMEs' business growth in all aspects of the marketing mix, customer relationship management, and business expansion. In addition, the present digital era reveals that marketing with social media tools helps organizations to save money, time, and lots of effort, and even downsize the workforce. Finally, it can be argued that SMEs can benefit much from technology adoption in terms of enhancing product and service marketing and sales if they achieve the right market orientation. Future studies should focus on the effect of social media on market orientation towards organizational performance (e.g., financial, marketing, business) of SMEs and other industries as well. However, the impact of social media usage on marketing orientation and performance of firms remains limited and not clear however more studies are needed. The

limitation of this study is the generalization of the findings, therefore, other countries in the Middle East region could be included and reveal similar results.

## **8 References**

- Abdullah, N. A. H., Ahmad, A. H., Zainudin, N., & Rus, R. M. (2019). Predicting Financially Distressed Small-and Medium-sized Enterprises in Malaysia. *Global Business Review*, 20(3), 627-639.
- Adam, A., Jizat, J., & Noor, M. (2016). A review of factors that influenced the intention of acceptance and use of social commerce among small and medium-sized enterprises in Malaysia. *Advances in Business-Related Scientific Research Journal*, 7(2), 15-26.
- Ahmad, S. Z., Abu Bakar, A. R., & Ahmad, N. (2019). Social media adoption and its impact on firm performance, the case of the UAE. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 25(1), 84-111.
- Ainin, S., Parveen, F., Moghavvemi, S., Jaafar, N. I., & Shuib, N. L. M. (2015). Factors influencing the use of social media by SMEs and its performance outcomes. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 115(3), 570-588.
- Algharabat, R., Rana, N. P., Alalwan, A. A., Baabdullah, A., & Gupta, A. (2020). Investigating the antecedents of customer brand engagement and consumer-based brand equity in social media. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53(October 2018), 101767.
- Ali, M. H., & Suleiman, N. (2016). Sustainable food, insights of halal small and medium sized enterprises. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 181, 303-314.
- Alsharji, Adel & Ahmad, Syed & Jabeen, Fauzia. (2017). Factors Affecting Social Media Adoption in SMEs: Evidence from the UAE. *Academy of Management Proceedings*. 2017. 12425. 10.5465/AMBPP.2017.12425abstract.
- Amoah, J. (2020, July). Social Media and its Impact on the Financial Performance on SMEs in Developing Countries: A Literature Review. In *7th European Conference on social media ECSSM 2020* (p. 37).
- Ana, C. O. W., Julia, C. N. V., & Daniel, J. J. (2018). Market orientation and innovation: do structure and environment moderate this relationship? Orientation al mercado and innovation. *Revista Journal*, 3(42).
- Anshuman, S., Zaheer, A. K., & Vikas, A. (2019). Exploring the mediating effect of responsive market orientation between the relationship of entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance. *International Journal of Engineering and Advanced Technology (IJEAT)*, 9(1).

- Antikainen, M. & Valkokari, K. (September 2015). Social media in networked innovation between B-to-B companies. In proceedings of the CINET conference, Stockholm, Sweden, 13–15, 13–15.
- Aral, S., Dellarocas, C., & Godes, D. (2013). Introduction to the special issue—social media and business transformation: a framework for research. *Information Systems Research*, 24(1), 3-13.
- Ardyan, E. (2016). Market sensing capability and SMEs performance: The mediating role of product innovativeness success. *DLSU Business and Economics Review*, 25(2), 79-97.
- Baker, W & Sinkula, J. (2007). Does market orientation facilitate balanced innovation programs? An organizational learning perspective. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 24(4), 316-334.
- Bansal, Rohit & Masood, Rana & Dadhich, Varsha. (2014). Social media marketing. A Tool of innovative marketing. *Journal of Organizational Management, Journal Organization Management*, 3(1), 01-07.
- Barrales-Molina, V., Martínez-López, F. J., & Gázquez-Abad, J. C. (2014). Dynamic marketing capabilities. Toward an integrative framework. *International Journal of management Reviews*, 16(4), 397-416.
- Bazi, S., Filieri, R., & Gorton, M. (2020). Customers' motivation to engage with luxury brands on social media. *Journal of Business Research*, 112, 223–235.
- Bhimani, H. (2018). Social media and innovation. A systematic literature review and future research directions. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 144, 251-269.
- Bhimani, H. (2018). Social media and innovation. A systematic literature review and future research directions. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 144, 251-269.
- Bianchi, C., & Andrews, L. (2015). Investigating marketing managers' perspectives on social media in Chile. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(12), 2552–2559
- Bonsón, E., & Ratkai, M. (2013). A set of metrics to assess stakeholder engagement and social legitimacy on a corporate Facebook page. *Online Information Review*, 37(5), 787-803.
- Bylon, Ab. B., & Jerry, J. K. (2019). Market orientation and performance of small and medium enterprises in Ghana: The mediating role of innovation. *Cogent Business & Management*, 6(1), 1.
- Cantaleano, K. R., Rodrigues, G. P., Martins, T. S. (2018). The mediating effect of proactive market orientation capability in entrepreneurial orientation and service innovation. *Revista de Administra Cao Mackenzie*, 19(1).
- Carlos, P.J. (2008). TQM and performance in small medium enterprises: The mediating effect of customer orientation and innovation. *International journal of quality & reliability management*, 25(3), 256-275.

- Chih- Wen Wu José Manuel Guaita Martínez José María Martín Martín. (2020). an analysis of social media marketing strategy and performance in the context of fashion brands: The case of Taiwan. Volume37, Issue9, 1185-1193.
- Cui, A. S., & Wu, F. (2016). Utilizing customer knowledge in innovation: antecedents and impact of customer involvement on new product performance. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 44(4), 516-538.
- Dadfar, H., Brege, S., & Semnani, S. S. E. (2013). Customer involvement in service production, delivery and quality: The challenges and opportunities. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, 5(1), 46–65.
- Dahnil, M. I., Marzuki, K. M., Langgat, J., & Fabeil, N. F. (2014). Factors influencing SMEs' adoption of social media marketing. *Procedia-social and behavioral sciences*, 148, 119-126.
- Dwivedi, Y. K., Rana, N. P., Tajvidi, M., Lal, B., Sahu, G. P., & Gupta, A. (2017). Exploring the Role of Social Media in e-Government. 13(3), 97–106.
- Ebrahim, R. S. (2019). The Role of Trust in Understanding the Impact of Social Media Marketing on Brand Equity and Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 1-22.
- Erlangga, H. (2022). The Effect of Product Promotion and Innovation Activities on Marketing Performance in Middle Small Micro Enterprises in Cianjur. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)*, 4(1), 528-540.
- Febriyantoro, M. T., & Arisandi, D. (2019, October). The role of digital marketing in improving sales to SMEs in dealing with ASEAN Economic Community. In *2018 international conference on Islamic economics and business (ICONIES 2018)* (pp. 350-355). Atlantis Press.
- Gainous, J., & Wagner, K. M. (2013). *Tweeting to power: The social media revolution in American politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Halim Perdana Kusuma, Aditya & Kadir, Abdul & Muis, Mahlia & Nurhilalia, & Jusni. (2019). Determinant of Market Orientation on SME Performance: RBV and SCP Perspective. 17. 34-45.
- Harald, B., & Daniel. (2020). *Industrial Marketing Management* Volume 84, January 2020, Pages 75-88.
- Hassan, S. H., Mohamed Haniba, N. M., & Ahmad, N. H. (2019). Social customer relationship management (s-CRM) among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia. *International Journal of Ethics and Systems*, 35(2), 284-302.
- Hina, Z., Hafeez, M. H., & Shariff, M. N. M. (2016). Relationship between market orientation, organizational learning, organizational culture, and organizational performance, mediating impact of innovation. *South East Asia Journal of Contemporary Business. Economics and law*, 9(2), 40-56.

- Jacobson, J., Gruzd, A., & Hernández-García, Á. (2020). Social media marketing: Who is watching the watchers? *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53.
- Jang, H.Y. (2013). Relationships among market orientation, marketing performance, and CRM Performance: Focused on the modulating effects of customer asset value. *Academy of Customer Satisfaction Management*. 15, 1–27.
- Jibril, A. B., Kwarteng, M. A., Chovancova, M., & Pilik, M. (2019). The impact of social media on consumer-brand loyalty: A mediating role of online based-brand community. *Cogent Business & Management*, 6(1).
- Jogaratnam, G. (2017). How organizational culture influences market orientation and business performance in the restaurant industry. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 31, 211–219.
- Jogaratnam, G. (2017). How organizational culture influences market orientation and business performance in the restaurant industry. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 31, 211–219.
- Jones, R., Alford, P., & Wolfenden, S. (2015). Entrepreneurial Marketing in the Digital Age: A study of the SME tourism industry. Available: <http://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/22932/1/Entrepreneurial%20Marketing%20in%20the%20Digital%20Age%20A%20study%20of%20the%20SME%20tourism%20industry.pdf>. [Accessed 17 August 2022]
- Julian, C. C., Mohamad, O., Ahmed, Z. U., & Sefnedi, S. (2014). The market orientation–Performance relationship: The empirical link in export ventures. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 56(1), 97–110.
- Kareen, C.R., Rodrigues, G.P., & Martins, T.S. (2018). The mediating effect of proactive market orientation capability in entrepreneurial orientation and service innovation. *Revista de Administração Mackenzie*, 19(1).
- Katsikeas, C. S., Morgan, N. A., Leonidou, L. C., & Hult, G. T. M. (2016). Assessing performance outcomes in marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(2), 1-20.
- King, R. A., Racherla, P., & Bush, V. D. (2014). What we know and do not know about online word-of-mouth: A review and synthesis of the literature. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 28(3), 167-183.
- Kumar, A., & Aggarwal, R. (2018). Sustainable development through social media tools. *Journal of Management*, 5(5), 47-51.
- Kumar, A., & Ayedee, N. (2018). Social Media tools for business growth of SMEs. *Journal of Management*, 5(3), 137-142.
- Kumar, A., & Ayedee, N. (2019). Sustainable development in SMEs through social media channels. *International Journal of Management, Technology, and Engineering*, 9(6), 1066-1075.

- Kumar, A., Syed, A. A., & Pandey, A. (2021). Adoption of online resources to improve the marketing performance of SMEs. *Asia Pacific Journal of Health Management*, 16(3), 137-144.
- Lee, T.S., & Tsai, H.J. (2005). The effects of business operation mode on market orientation, learning orientation, and innovativeness. *Industrial Management and Data Systems*, 105(3), 325-348.
- Lee, Y. Y., & Falahat, M. (2019). The impact of digitalization and resources on gaining competitive advantage in international markets: Mediating role of marketing, innovation and learning capabilities. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 9(11).
- Lin, C. W., Cheng, L. K., & Wu, L. Y. (2020). Roles of strategic orientations in radical product innovation. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*.
- Liu, L., Lee, M. K., Liu, R., & Chen, J. (2018). Trust transfer in social media brand communities: The role of consumer engagement. *International Journal of Information Management*, 41, 1-13.
- Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer marketing: how message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 19(1), 58-73.
- Low, S., Ullah, F., Shirowzhan, S., Sepasgozar, S. M., & Lin Lee, C. (2020). Smart digital marketing capabilities for sustainable property development: A case of Malaysia. *Sustainability*, 12(13), 5402. Proceedings
- Lückmann, P., & Feldmann, C. (2017). Success factors for business process improvement projects in small and medium-sized enterprises—empirical evidence. *Procedia computer science*, 121, 439-445.
- Mahr, D., Lievens, A., & Blazevic, V. (2014). The value of customer concreted knowledge during the innovation process. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 31(3), 599-615.
- Margaretha, F., & Supartika, N. (2016). Factors affecting profitability of small medium enterprises (SMEs) firm listed in Indonesia Stock Exchange. *Journal of Economics, Business and Management*, 4(2), 132-137.
- Martín-Rojas, R., García-Morales, V.J., Garrido-Moreno, A., Salmador-Sánchez, M.P. (2020). Social Media Use and the Challenge of Complexity: Evidence from the Technology Sector. *Journal of Business Research*, 129, 621-640.
- McDermott, C. M & Prajogo, D. I. 2012. Service innovation and performance in SMEs. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 32 (2), 216-237.
- Morgan, N. A., Jayachandran, S., Hulland, J., Kumar, B., Katsikeas, C., & Somosi, A. (2022). Marketing performance assessment and accountability: Process and outcomes. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 39(2), 462-481.



- Musa, H., Ab Rahim, N., Azmi, F. R., Shibghatullah, A. S., & Othman, N. A. (2016). Social media marketing and online small and medium enterprises performance: Perspective of Malaysian small and medium enterprises. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 6(7), 1-5.
- Muslim, A., Harun, A., Ismael, D., & Othman, B. (2020). Social media experience, attitude and behavioral intention towards Umrah package among generation X and Y. *Management Science Letters*, 10(1), 1-12.
- Najafi-Tavani, S., Sharifi, H., & Najafi-Tavani, Z. (2016). Market orientation, marketing capability, and new product performance: The moderating role of absorptive capacity. *Journal of Business Research*, 69 (11), 5059–5064.
- Najafi-Tavani, S., Sharifi, H., & Najafi-Tavani, Z. (2016). Market orientation, marketing capability, and new product performance: The moderating role of absorptive capacity. *Journal of Business Research*, 69 (11), 5059–5064.
- Narver, J. C., Slater, S. F., & MacLachlan, D. L. (2004). Responsive and proactive market orientation and new- product success. *Journal of product innovation management*, 21(5), 334-347.
- Ndiege, J. R. A. (2019). Social media technology for the strategic positioning of small and medium- sized enterprises: Empirical evidence from Kenya. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries*, 85(2).
- Omar, A., Ramayah, T., Lin, L. B., Mohamad, O., & Marimuthu, M. (2011). Determining factors for the usage of web-based marketing applications by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia. *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, 5(2), 70-86.
- Ostrom, A. L., Parasuraman, A., Bowen, D. E., Patrício, L., & Voss, C. A. (2015). Service research priorities in a rapidly changing context. *Journal of Service Research*, 18(2), 127-159.
- Öztamur, D., & Karakadılar, İ. S. (2014). Exploring the role of social media for SMEs: as a new marketing strategy tool for the firm performance perspective. *Procedia-Social and behavioral sciences*, 150, 511-520.
- Oztamur, D., & Karakadılar, S. (2014). Exploring the Role of Social Media for SMEs: As a New Marketing Strategy Tool for the Firm Performance Perspective. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 150, 511–520.
- Papa, A., Santoro, G., Tirabeni, L., & Monge, F. (2018). Social media as tool for facilitating knowledge creation and innovation in small and medium enterprises. *Baltic Journal of Management*.
- Partanen, J., Kauppi, O. P., Sepulveda, F., & Gabrielsson, M. (2018). Turning strategic network resources into performance: The mediating role of network identity of small- and medium- sized enterprises. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*.

- Paul, L., M., Huysman, M., Steinfield, C. (2013). Enterprise social media: Definition, history, and prospects for the study of social technologies in organizations. *Journal. Computer Community*, 19, 1–19.
- Pechrová, M., Lohr, V., & Havlíček, Z. (2015). Social media for organic products promotion. *Agris on-line Papers in Economics and Informatics*, 7(665-2016-45052), 41-50.
- Pentina, I., & Koh, A. C. (2012). Exploring social media marketing strategies in SMEs. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*, 7(4), 292-308.
- Rambe, P. (2017). Social media marketing and business competitiveness: evidence from South African tourism SMMs. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 15(2), 411-423.
- Ratchford, B. T. (2015). Some directions for research in interactive marketing. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, (29), 5-7.
- Saeed, S., Yousafzai, S. Y., & Engelen, A. (2014). On cultural and macroeconomic contingencies of the entrepreneurial orientation performance relationship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 38(2), 255-290.
- Shaltoni, A. M., West, D., Alnawas, I., & Shatnawi, T. (2018). Electronic marketing orientation in the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises context. *European Business Review*, 30(3), 272-284.
- Shehnaz, T., & Sulaiman, S. (2017). Impact of innovative practices on business growth under the moderating impacts of culture - a conceptual model. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, 5(2).
- Sunny, I. R., Augustina, E., & Otite Wisdom, I. (2020). Technology adoption and sales performance of manufacturing small and medium enterprises in port Harcourt. *Journal of Marketing Development*, 5(1), 44-56.
- Tajeddini, K., Trueman, M. & Larsen, G., (2006). Examining the effect of market orientation on Innovativeness. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 22(5-6), 529-551.
- Trainor, K. J., Andzulis, J. M., Rapp, A., & Agnihotri, R. (2014). Social media technology usage and customer relationship performance: A capabilities-based examination of social CRM. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(6), 1201-1208.
- Udriyah, U., Tham, J., & Azam, S. (2019). The effects of market orientation and innovation on competitive advantage and business performance of textile SMEs. *Management Science Letters*, 9(9), 1419-1428.
- Uribe-Saavedra, Felipe & Josep, Rialp & Llonch, Joan. (2012). Social media marketing intensity: Its impact on the relation among market orientation, entrepreneurial orientation and performance.
- Wang, W. Y. C., Pauleen, D. J., & Zhang, T. (2016). How social media applications affect B2B communication and improve business performance in SMEs. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 54, 4–14.

- Wang, Z., & Kim, H. G. (2017). Can social media marketing improve customer relationship capabilities and firm performance? Dynamic capability perspective. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 39, 15-26.
- Wei, Y. S., Samiee, S., & Lee, R. P. (2014). The influence of organic organizational cultures, market responsiveness, and product strategy on firm performance in an emerging market. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 42(1), 49-70.
- Youn, K. N., Sungmin, K., & Hye, Y. J. (2019). The Effect of Market Orientation on Performance of Sharing Economy Business: Focusing on Marketing Innovation and Sustainable Competitive Advantage. *Sustainability* 2019, 11, 729.
- Zhou, B. (2016). Lean principles, practices, and impacts: a study on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). *Annals of Operations Research*, 241(1-2), 457-474.