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## Article

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## THE ADOPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING BY HOME-BASED BUSINESSES IN SAUDI ARABIA

**Abstract.** *Social media applications have revolutionized doing business and attracted the attention of practitioners, scholars, and policymakers. Social media applications offer business owners plenty of benefits as it enables businesses to get exposed, gain competitive advantage, and communicate with customers. However, limited studies have considered measuring the adoption of social media marketing by micro-businesses, such as home-based businesses (HBBs). This research examines social media adoption by home-based companies in Saudi Arabia using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). A self-administered online questionnaire is utilized to collect data. A total of 188 home-based business owners completed the questionnaires. Structural equation modeling using SPSS, Amos is utilized for data analysis. The findings show that perceived usefulness and social influence positively impact the Intention to use social media marketing. Ease of use positively influences perceived usefulness. Further, the Intention to use has a subsequent impact on user behavior. The study has implications for policy, decision-makers, and the General authority of SMEs (Monsha'at) in Saudi Arabia. The research results show that social influence is a significant positive predictor of social media marketing usage. Besides, the Intention to use social media marketing has a statistically positive impact on user behavior. The study validates the TAM model in a rarely studied context due to its invisible nature. The authors also describe a profile of HBBs owners in Saudi Arabia by explaining their demographic and behavioral characteristics regarding owners' gender, age and education, and prior experience. This paper contributes original empirical evidence on the adoption of social media marketing by the HBBs in Saudi Arabia. Given the lack of previous studies on this micro-business sector in general and Saudi Arabia, these findings are essential. The present study demonstrates several managerial implications. First of all, policymakers should consider this micro-business sector when developing policies and strategies to provide support and support. The government should establish an electronic platform that connects all business owners.*

**Keywords:** *home-based businesses, micro-businesses, social media marketing, social influence, technology acceptance model, usefulness.*

**Introduction.** Social media has revolutionized different aspects of individuals' lives and thus attracted much attention, not only from practitioners but also from academia (Alalwan et al., 2017; Olanrewaju et al., 2020; Hossain et al., 2019). Thanks to rapid advancements in internet and mobile technology and applications, a wide range of business tasks can now be conducted, managed, and controlled electronically (Dwivedi et al., 2020). Entrepreneurs have recently been using social media to conduct business functions such as marketing, advertising, and customer relationship management (Alalwan et al., 2017; Alhothali, 2020a).

Entrepreneurs' social media use has exceeded marketing activities for information search, business networking, and crowdfunding for their businesses (Olanrewaju et al., 2020). Other entrepreneurs have

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used social media to hire potential employees (Kaur et al., 2015) and learn and develop new skills (Vivakaran and Maraimalai, 2016). Microbusinesses that operate from the owner's home are known as home-based companies (HBBs). The business owner is self-employed and generates money from parts of his or her key business activities from his or her home (Monin and Sayers, 2005). Prior research has highlighted the importance of work-life balance (Luckman, 2016), start-up costs (Good and Levy, 1992), low obstacles to entry (Newbery and Bosworth, 2010), and location convenience (Carter et al., 2003) as key reasons for the HBB sector's rise. The study by Good and Levy (1992) summarized the main reasons for the growth of HBB as a lifestyle trend, balancing family and work responsibilities, experiencing unprecedented growth of the service sector and living in the age of advanced communication technologies. The small business sector in Saudi Arabia is supported and widely encouraged by the government as a current strategy to diversify its resources. The encouragement of entrepreneurship is intensified by the country's Vision 2030 as one of the critical objectives that the country strives to achieve. Although HBBs are a promising sector with extensive economic contributions, their invisible nature limits their potential growth. Hence, the current study explores the characteristics of this sector and describes the preferred means of communication.

Furthermore, prior studies on social media adoption and entrepreneurship are "relatively new and fragmented in their focus"; hence, scholars and practitioner have recommended future studies and further investigation within this field (Olanrewaju et al., 2020, p. 90). Although prior studies have attempted to explore the phenomenon of HBB in Saudi Arabia (Alhothali, 2020a; Alhothali, 2020b), limited research investigating the factors influencing social media adoption among HBBs is evident (Clark and Douglas, 2011). This study fills several gaps in the literature. First, it explores the characteristics of HBBs concerning their means of communication. Second, it investigates the factors encouraging the adoption of social media by HBBs in Saudi Arabia.

This study explores the adoption of social media by HBB by using the technology acceptance model (TAM). In previous studies, researchers have found conflicting evidence about the role of social influence on intentions (Lee et al., 2003). As a result, this research examines the effect of social influence on HBBs' intentions to utilize social media marketing. First, prior literature on HBBs with social media marketing adoption and the technology acceptance model (TAM) will be reviewed. Second, the methodology for the empirical survey will be outlined. Third, the key findings will be interpreted and discussed. Finally, conclusions and implications of the findings will be presented.

**Literature Review.** Home-based businesses (HBBs) are microbusinesses that operate mostly from the owner's home. The owner, in particular, makes money by using his or her house for some of the core business tasks (Monin and Sayers, 2005; Vorley and Rodgers, 2014). According to Jay and Schaper (2003), there are two major forms of HBB:

First, home-based businesses, in which most business activities, such as marketing or accounting, are performed at the owner's house. Second, companies that function in the field, however; routine tasks such as administrative and secretary are handled from the home. Good and Levy (1992) defined the HBB sector as "a cottage industry where entrepreneurs work independently in their homes, using either family or hired labor to manufacture a product or service on a small scale" (p. 35). Mason and colleagues describe it as a "commercial activity engaged in the sale of goods or services, operated by a self-employed person, with or without workers, and that uses a home as a primary place of operations" (2011, p. 629).

The use of the home as a workspace can provide a considerable advantage in creating a business. For example, it can reduce start-up costs. However, establishing an HBB depends upon clients accepting the home as the space in which business will take place and, more broadly, accepting HBBs as serious business entities. Although there has been heightened interest in HBBs, there has been comparatively less research into the reasons for establishing HBBs. Of those studies that have addressed this topic, Peacock (1994) found that 55% of respondents indicated that lower cost is the primary reason for

establishing an HBB, with the other reasons being convenience (20%) and family or domestic reasons (18%). Similarly, Walker and Brown's (2004) study of Australian HBBs in the property and business services sectors found that the impetus of owner entrepreneurs included a range of both economic and lifestyle drivers. Many researchers have shown an increased interest in understanding the motivating factors that impact entrepreneurs' decisions to create new ventures (Shane et al., 2003; Carsrud and Brännback, 2011; Fayolle et al., 2014). Attempting to review the empirical studies exploring entrepreneurial motivations, Shane et al. (2003) identified several significant motivators in encouraging entrepreneurship: need for achievement, tolerance of ambiguity, locus of control, self-efficacy, and goal setting. Furthermore, Shane et al. (2003) identified the motivational factors which are critical in determining the entrepreneurial process and Intention, namely independence, drive, passion. These motivators are also called classic motivators (Jean and Forbes, 2012). Home has become a crucial center for work in the post-industrial age, reversing the dynamics of the industrial era that divided home and work areas (Felstead et al., 2005). The home is no longer a refuge from work, but rather the core location for it, as Pink points out (2001, p. 41). Work-from-home jobs now account for 11% of all jobs in the UK. This is a 35% increase from 1997 according to the Labour Force Survey conducted in 2005. (Ruiz and Walling, 2005). Two trend may be witnessed in the rise of home-based working. To begin, large corporations have realized the cost savings and productivity gains that can be realized by having people work from home instead of an office (Donkin, 2008). There has also been an increase in the number of enterprises that can be run from home. In fact, home-based business owners outnumber home-based employees.

A study by Alhothali (2020b) explored the challenges experienced by Saudi HBBs and demonstrated three critical challenges faced by female entrepreneurs to start and sustain their HBBs. Financial challenges were the main impediment facing HBBs in their business journey. The respondents emphasized that a shortage of money is the main challenge facing them during the seed, prestart-up, and expansion stages. Societal challenges were also found to be critical to female-owned HBBs during the seed stage, such as family disapproval. Psychological challenges were among the difficulties faced by home-based businesswomen, where they are critical during the seed stage. Specifically, the apparent psychological challenge was unequivocal fear related to the temporary cognitive and emotional experience of anxiety. Social media adoption to improve and support business functions has been widely recognized and studied (Abed et al., 2016; Alwan et al., 2017; Tripopsakul, 2018). A series of internet-based apps built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allowing the creation and exchange user created content are referred to as "social media" by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010, p. 61). Social media benefits transcend simple social communication to strengthen reputations, generate opportunities, and increase monetary revenues (Tang et al., 2012). Mohamad and Ismail (2009) classified prior studies concerning technology adoption into categories of readiness, adoption, diffusion, and impact studies. Adoption research focuses on the elements and drivers that influence adoption, which can be classified into numerous categories such as managerial, organizational, environmental, and technological. Adoption research examines the elements that operate as adoption motivators and barriers, as well as their potential impact on adoption decisions. Chen and McQueen (2008) conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the previous literature on the adoption of e-commerce in small firms. Users of information communication technologies (adopters and nonadopters) (Egan et al., 2003; Ramsey and McCole, 2005), the time of adoption (i.e., adopters, prospectors, and laggards) (Lertwongsatien et al., 2003), and levels of use (i.e., adoption-exploitation continuum) have all been scrutinized in adoption studies (Offstein and Childers, 2008) to differentiate between patterns of using technologies in small business. According to previous research, social media can be useful for reaching out to potential customers, listening to their voices, building massive business networks (Constantinides et al., 2010), fostering reputation, and gathering marketing intelligence (Nakara et al., 2012). Social media is essential for corporate communication and building long-term relationships with customers (Zekan et al., 2011). It has been recently emphasized that

most HBBs in Saudi Arabia have adopted social media applications as their marketing tool (Alhothali, 2020a). Pentina, Koh and Le (2012) found that social media marketing adoption is strongly affected by social impact from competitors, experts, and customers.

Word-of-mouth and peer recommendation are becoming increasingly important for companies participating in an online interaction with customer groups due to the expansion of social media websites. Consumers can use social media to discuss their experiences and assess businesses by posting reviews and suggestions on their favorite items and services. Posting material on widely accessed websites can either help or hurt a company's reputation. To build relationships of trust with their customers, firms must first construct open communication lines and clearly outline what is expected of their customers (Gligorijevic and Leong, 2011). E-word-of-mouth marketing allows SMEs to strengthen their reputation and enforce their brand identity. The quality of a brand's marketing efforts relies heavily on social media. Ahmad et al. (2019) conducted a research to determine the effects of SME use of social media on UAE business performance. According to these results, there is no significant connection between organizational success and social media use. This could be due to the fact that many businesses joined social media as a result of bandwagon effects. As a consequence, adoption is unplanned and unrelated to company strategy or goals. This also implies that many businesses may have been unaware of the potential benefits of social media (Meske and Stieglitz, 2013; Wamba, 2013).

A recent study, which was conducted by Gavino and colleagues (2019), sought to understand Latino/Hispanic entrepreneurs' social media adoption (SMA) for business purposes as well as the influence of culture on the preference for personal social network platforms (SNP) vs. business social network platforms (SNP). Latinos/Hispanics were discovered to favor personal SNPs above business SNPs when it comes to working. In particular, Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) were not significant determinants of personal SNPs for Latino/Hispanic entrepreneurs. However, for non-Latino/Hispanics, PU was significant, while PEU was slightly significant. Findings for PU and PEU as indicators of business SNPs show similar results for Latino/Hispanic and non-Latino/Hispanic entrepreneurs, where only PEU was significant. In this study, the adoption of social media marketing by HBBs is examined using the technology acceptance model (TAM).

**Methodology and research methods.** A quantitative approach was utilized to collect data for this study. Participants were recruited online through Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and Facebook. An invitation message with the link to the survey was sent to a convenience sample of business accounts. The data were collected during July 2020. The survey asked the participants to answer questions related to demographics and business information. In particular, the respondents were asked whether they use social media in marketing. The respondents were also asked to mention which social media application they use. Then, respondents were asked about their perceptions of social influence and the concepts related to TAM (i.e., perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and behavioral Intention). Three hundred invitations were sent, and 181 participants (163 women, 18 men) agreed to participate, yielding a 60% response rate. Privacy was maintained throughout the process of data collection. The names of the participants and the brands that they represent were kept anonymous. Participants were informed that the collected information would be handled in the strictest confidence. Structural equation modeling (SEM) using SPSS V.26 and AMOS was utilized to analyze the data. Scales to measure TAM constructs (i.e., perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social influence, Intention to use and use behavior) were adopted from the studies of Davis et al. 1989, Venkatesh and Davis (2000) and Venkatesh et al. (2003).

Technology acceptance model (TAM). TAM is one of the most widely used models in information science research. Although several studies investigate the adoption of technologies using the TAM model, none are conclusive about adopting social media by home-based businesses. Davis (1989) developed TAM to help researchers gauge individual's attitudes toward adoption. Extensive use of TAM has been noted in social media studies that address differing social media technologies; For example, the studies

by Khan et al., (2021); Hussein et al., (2021); Hossain and de Silva (2009); Hsu and Lin (2008); Kwon and Wen (2010); and Steyn et al., (2010).

Perceived ease of use is one of the major constructs in TAM, is defined as “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort,” and has been positively associated with perceived usefulness and behavioral intentions to use technology in hundreds of studies (Davis, 1989; Taylor and Todd, 1995). Hence, we hypothesize that:

- H1 Perceived ease of use relates positively to perceived usefulness;
- H2 Perceived ease of use relates positively to Intention to use social media.

Perceived usefulness, or “the degree to which a person believes that adopting a certain system will increase his or her job performance,” is one of the primary components of the TAM model that is connected to behavioral intentions to utilize technology (Davis, 1989). The use of social networking technology could be considered counterproductive and is not an appropriate measure of the value that this technology provides. Instead, this construct has been conceptualized to ask questions about social effectiveness. The majority of prior research has applied the TAM model to study the perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of social media. As an example, the study by Khan and colleagues (2021) investigates the factors motivating health professionals to use social media using TAM as the theoretical framework. The study found that perceived usefulness exerts significant impact on use behaviour. Further, Hussein et al., (2021) found that perceived enjoyment, connectedness, and trust exert critical influence on social media usage. Moreover, Parra-López et al. (2011) studied the influence of perceived benefits on intentions to use social media from a consumer perspective. Hence, we hypothesize that:

- H3. Perceived usefulness relates positively to Intention to use social media.

Social influence. Prior research has shown the importance of social influence as a motivating factor in behavior change. Research has shown that socio-psychological motives of consumers can be explained using factors like social influence and social capital (Wang and Lin, 2011). The social influence model, for instance, which incorporates values such as identification and group norms, has often been used to understand why users act a given way or behave in a specific manner (Ngai et al, 2015). A recent study by Al Kurdi et al. (2021) investigated the impact of social norms in influencing students intention to use social media networks. Furthermore, a study by Rahman et al. (2021) has found social influence as one of the determining factors to use social media based learning.

Social elements, such as social influence and social capital, play a part in deciding whether antecedents affect outcomes and, if so, the magnitude and direction of that influence. A recent study by Collin-Lachaud and Diallo (2021) examined the role of social influence on smart phone use during shopping experience. In-store smartphone use has a major effect on customers' store loyalty when social influence is low. A study by Sedera et al. (2017) demonstrated the moderating role of social influence on travel experience. In particular, Hossain and de Silva (2009) measured the moderating effect of social capital on the relationship between customer attitude toward use and customer behavioral intention. The study found that both weak and strong social ties strongly correlated with attitude toward using social factors. Askool (2013) has also investigated the impact of culture on individuals' motivation and uses of social media in Saudi Arabia. The author has defined the attraction elements of social media use, such as connection, communication, participation, and collaboration and the findings show that culture was a significant factor affecting technology usage. The results also show that Saudi individuals preferred to build a relationship between businesses and family members. Hence, we hypothesize that:

- H4 Social influence relates positively to Intention to use social media.

Intention to use social media and actual use behavior. The impact of Intention on social media usage behavior is demonstrated in the TAM and validated empirically by several studies, such as Venkatesh and Davis (2000) and Venkatesh et al. (2003). Hence, we hypothesize that:

- H5 Intention to use relates positively to usage behavior.

**Results.** The findings below (Table 1) display the descriptive analysis of the participants' demographic data and their business profiles.

**Table 1. Frequency distribution of socio-demographic variables and business characteristics**

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	163	90.1%
	Male	18	9.9%
Business activity	Fashion	34	18.8%
	Art and painting	15	8.3%
	Handicrafts	26	14.4%
	Cooking	55	30.4%
	Cosmetics	32	17.7%
	Import and Export	8	4.4 %
	Advertising	11	6.1 %
Education	High school	53	29.3%
	Bachelor	116	64.1%
	Master	12	6.6%
	PhD	0	0
Age	18-24	25	2%
	25-34	101	49.3%
	35-44	57	27.9
	45-54	15	7. %
	55 and more	6	2.9%
Management experience	Less than a year	63	34.8%
	1 to 5 years	23	12.7
	6 to10 years	60	33.1%
	11 to 15	19	10.5%
Business characteristic	16 to 20	16	8.8%
	Less than a year	52	28.77%
	1 to 5	111	61.3 %
	6 to 10	16	8.8%
	11 to 20	2	1.1 %
Age of Business	No employees	117	64.6%
	1 to 5	59	32.6%
	6 to 10	3	1.7 %
	11 to 15	1	0.6%
# of employees	16-20	1	0.6%
	Snapchat	80	42.5%
	Instagram	167	88.8%
	twitter	28	14.8%
social media used to marketing the business	LinkedIn	2	1%
	Facebook	17	9%
	WhatsApp	103	54.8%
	telegram	5	2.6%

The results show that 90% of the participants were female, while 10% were male. We could infer that the HBB sector is dominated by females. This also might confirm that the primary reason for establishing HBB is that it is more convenient for women. Furthermore, 30% of the home business activity was in the food industry, 18.8% of the participants were in fashion, and 17.7% were in the cosmetics business sector. Handicraft and art represented 22.7% of the sample, whereas advertising, export and import represented

only 10.5%. The majority of the sample was relatively young, as 77.7% of the participants were aged between 25 and 44 years old, while 9.9% of the participants were aged more than 45 years old. Seventy-one percent of the participants were educated; however, 29.3% of them were high schoolers. The data show that 45% of the participants were experienced in managing businesses, as their experience ranged from 1 to 10 years, whereas 34% of the sample was less experienced.

The data describing home-based business characteristics indicate that 52% of the businesses were relatively new (less than a year), whereas 61% were in their early stage (1–5) years old. Although 8.8% exceeded their early stage of business and ranged between 6 and 10 years old, only 1.1% were able to exceed 10 years of the age of the business. Regarding employees, the majority (64.6%) handle their business with no employees, (32%) employ from 1 to 5 employees to help them manage their HBB, and 2.9% employ more than 6 employees. Regarding the diffusion of social media among HBBs, the descriptive findings demonstrate that 88.8% of HBBs use Instagram as a tool to market their products and communicate with customers. Snapchat was the second most frequently used application, representing 42.5% of the participants, whereas 54.8% of the participants were using WhatsApp applications, 17% were using Facebook and 14.8% were using Twitter.

Table 2 shows that all scales were reliable; the Cronbach alpha ranged from .663 to .911, showing convergent validity. The correlation between the constructs ranges between .498 and .642. The correlations were lower than the corresponding square root of AVE, showing discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), except for two constructs. Hence, where the correlation between latent variables is higher than the square root of AVE, a chi-square difference test was performed. In all cases, discriminant validity was supported. Testing the full model yields the following: The model fit:  $\chi^2=422.637$ ; (DF=144;  $p<0.001$ ); CMIN/DF=2.935; GFI=0.818; NFI=0.842; TLI=0.868; CFI=0.889.

**Table 2. Correlations and Reliabilities**

	PEU	PU	SI	BI	USB
PEU	0.600				
PU	.542	0.886			
SI	.642	.560	0.559		
BI	.525	.671	.609	0.876	
USB	.498	.506	.568	.505	0.411
Cronbach Alpha	.911	.873	.728	.951	.663
I Mean	4.366	4.561	4.355	4.581	4.086
Standard error of the mean	.0567	.0549	.0567	.0579	.0636
Standard Deviation	.763	.739	.763	.779	.856
Skewness	-1.825	-1.884	-1.830	-2.090	-1.041

Note: \* $p<0.05$ ; \*\* $p<0.01$  \*\*\* $p<0.001$ , figures on the diagonal are square root of AVE, off diagonal entries are correlations.

The results in Table 3 show that perceived ease of use significantly influences perceived usefulness ( $b=.663$ ;  $t=7.769$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), supporting H1a. Thus, the perceived ease of using social media marketing increases social media’s usefulness for marketing purposes. This result is consistent with prior empirical studies that demonstrate the positive impact of ease of use on perceived usefulness (Cho and Sagynov, 2015). However, the impact of perceived ease of use on Intention (H2) was not statistically significant ( $b=.073$ ;  $t=.704$ ). Perceived usefulness is a significant positive predictor of Intention to use social media marketing ( $b=.535$ ;  $t=6.559$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), supporting H3. This finding confirms prior studies into the impact of perceived usefulness on behavioral intentions. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that social influence has a substantial, positive effect on intentions ( $b=.227$ ;  $t=3.378$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), supporting H4. These findings corroborate prior studies into the positive impact of social influence on behavioral intentions (Wang and



Lin, 2011). The final result is that Intention is found to have a statistically positive impact on use behavior (b=.490; t=5.211, p<.001), supporting H5. The positive impact of behavioral Intention on use behavior is confirmed in the literature (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000; Venkatesh et al., 2003).

**Table 3. The relationship between TAM, social influence and Intention to use and usage behavior**

Hypotheses	b(se)	t-value	Support/no support
H1: Perceived ease of use relates positively to perceived usefulness	.663(.085)	7.769***	Support
H2: Perceived ease of use relates positively to Intention to use social media	.073(.104)	.704	no support
H3: Perceived usefulness relates positively to Intention to use social	.535(.082)	6.559***	Support
H4: Social influence relates positively to Intention to use social media	.227(.076)	3.378 ***	Support
H5: Intention to use relates positively to use behavior	.490 (.094)	5.211***	Support

Note: \*p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001 B Coefficient refers to unstandardized regression coefficient, standard error shown in brackets

**Conclusions.** The development of a wide range of information and communication technologies has created various opportunities and challenges for businesses. Social media applications offer business owners plenty of benefits, as they enable businesses to become exposed, gain a competitive advantage, and communicate with customers. However, limited studies have considered measuring social media marketing’s adoption by microbusinesses, such as home-based business. Hence, this research examines social media adoption by home-based businesses in Saudi Arabia using the technology acceptance model (TAM) for marketing purposes. A quantitative approach was utilized to collect data for this study. Participants were recruited online through Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and Facebook. One hundred eighty-one participants (163 women, 18 men) agreed to participate, which yielded a 60% response rate. Structural equation modeling using Amos was used to analyze the data for this study. The findings reveal the characteristics of the home-based business profile in Saudi Arabia. The results show that females dominate this microbusiness, as they represent 90% of the sample. It has also been found that the food industry represents 30% of the sample. Furthermore, the results show that perceived ease of use significantly influences perceived usefulness. While perceived usefulness was found to be critical to Intention to use social media marketing, ease of use in this context was found to have no significant impact on the Intention to use social media marketing.

Social influence also plays a role in the Intention to use social media marketing, as the study shows. Additionally, the Intention to use social media marketing is found to have a statistically positive impact on usage behavior. This research has made several contributions to the literature. First, the study validates the TAM model in a rarely studied context due to its invisible nature. The study also describes a profile of HBB owners in Saudi Arabia by explaining their demographic and behavioral characteristics regarding owners’ gender, age and education and prior experience. The study also depicts the aspects of business in terms of age, industry, and employment structure. The study was limited to HBBs that have online connections and an account on social media. This study adds to the body of knowledge about how HBBs in Saudi Arabia use social media marketing. Given the scarcity of earlier research on the microbusiness sector in general, and Saudi Arabia in particular, these findings are critical.

**Managerial implications.** The present study demonstrates several managerial implications. First, policymakers should consider this microbusiness sector when developing policies and strategies and should provide support to HBBs. Specific strategies and plans should be designed and implemented to encourage and support this microbusiness sector’s growth. Furthermore, the government should establish

an electronic platform that connects all business owners. This platform enables them to be identifiable by potential customers and other businesses. The platform will also enable the government to establish a database with HBB owners' information and decrease their invisibility. Since perceived usefulness is of critical importance in encouraging usage, government agencies should target HBBs via social media and provide support to them on improving their digital marketing practices.

Managerial implications for the General Authority of SMEs (Monsha'at). Monsha'at is a government authority established in 2016 to provide advice, support, and encouragement to Saudi SMEs. The findings would help this authority understand more about these microbusinesses regarding their demographic and behavioral characteristics. Hence, the authority would target them with special programs specifically dedicated to their needs and designed to overcome their challenges. Since most of them prefer to use Snapchat in communicating and marketing, the authority can target them with ads about the programs and services specifically designed for them.

This study is cross-sectional and is limited to HBBs, and future studies can examine social media adoption to other types of entrepreneurs. The study was also limited to TAM dimensions; future studies can examine other factors that might affect adoption, such as personality traits and self-efficacy. Further research can also investigate the influence of COVID-19 on the adoption of social media. Future studies should explore the business models that are more effective with the microbusiness sector. Further studies should explore success factors and the factors that contribute to this sector's growth and sustainability. Finally, it should be noted that further research is required to discover the effect that social media has on HBBs's business performance.

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**Просування сімейного бізнесу через соціальні мережі: досвід Саудівської Аравії**  
Соціальні мережі певною мірою обумовили трансформацію бізнес-процесів та привернули увагу практиків, науковців та політиків. Авторами визначено, що використання соціальних мереж бізнесом дозволяє отримати низку позитивних ефектів, а саме підвищити рівень відкритості та лояльності споживачів до компанії, Крім цього використання соціальних мереж забезпечує пряму комунікацію зі споживачами. Авторами наголошено, що існуючі дослідження переважно фокусуються на

аналізі використання соціальних мереж великими компаніями, а не мікропідприємствами (у тому числі сімейними підприємствами). У статті проаналізовано ефективність та перспективи використання соціальних мереж сімейними підприємствами в Саудівській Аравії. Дослідження базується на моделі прийняття технологій (Technology Acceptance Model). Вибірku дослідження сформовано на основі онлайн-опитувальник 188 власників сімейного бізнесу. Для емпіричного підтвердження висунутих гіпотез застосовано структурне моделювання та програмне забезпечення SPSS, Amos. Результати дослідження засвідчили, що рівень очікуваної корисності від використання соціальних мереж має позитивний статистично значущий вплив на наміри використовувати маркетингових інструментів у соціальних мережах. При цьому легкість застосування соціальних мереж позитивно впливає на рівень очікуваної корисності від їх використання. У статті описано профіль власників сімейного бізнесу в Саудівській Аравії, визначено їх демографічні та поведінкові характеристики (гендер, вік, освіта, професійних досвід). Результати дослідження можуть бути використанні урядом Саудівській Аравії при формуванні інструментів стимулювання розвитку мікропідприємництва, зокрема сімейного бізнесу. Авторами запропоновано сформулювати онлайн-платформу, що дозволить об'єднати інформацію про діючі сімейні підприємства в країні.

**Ключові слова:** корисність, маркетинг соціальних мереж, мікробізнес, модель прийняття технологій, соціальний вплив.