



Small and medium-sized enterprises coping with the effects of health crises: using innovation in social media marketing

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ABSTRACT

This research was done with the aim of designing and explaining the framework of innovative social media marketing strategies to deal with the effects of health crises on small and medium-sized companies. This research is applied in terms of purpose, exploratory in terms of approach, and mixed (qualitative-quantitative) in terms of data analysis. In the qualitative phase of the research, a group of experts including university professors, senior managers of small and medium companies, and experienced consultants in this field of social media based marketing were considered as the statistical population. In this phase, 15 experts were selected using the theoretical sampling method. The main tool of data collection in the qualitative phase of the research was in-depth and semi-structured interviews with experts. In the quantitative phase of the research, the data obtained from the interviews were analyzed based on the theme analysis method. In the quantitative phase, senior marketing managers of small and medium-sized companies operating in the country were considered as the population, and among them, 380 people were selected as a statistical sample based on the available random sampling method. In the quantitative phase of the research, a closed and researcher-made questionnaire consisting of 54 items was used as the main tool for data collection. The validity and reliability of this questionnaire was checked and confirmed in different ways. In the quantitative phase of the research, SPSS and Imus software were used to perform descriptive and inferential analyses. Finally, the results of the research led to the presentation of a comprehensive model consisting of five main themes and eighteen sub-themes. The main and sub-themes are presented below: Driving factors (online brand communities, social listening, customer participation marketing, prosumer, influencer marketing, gamification); Strategic factors (increasing engagement, product/service development, increasing brand awareness, creating word-of-mouth advertising, increasing brand credibility); Facilitating factors (brand associations, strengthening brand identity); Primary outcomes (correctly understanding consumer needs and opinions, creating value for consumers); Secondary outcomes (market development and new customer acquisition, sales promotion, loyalty promotion).

Keywords: Social Media Marketing Strategies, Health Crises, Small and Medium Enterprises

1. Introduction

The experience of recent years shows that with the intensification of the effects of Covid-19, things like social discrimination, violence (public and domestic), the impact of social distancing on citizenship rights (including freedom, privacy and freedom of expression, religion and community), chain disruption Supply, stock market stagnation, etc. are increasing, therefore, the global economy is also affected (Shah and Farrow, 2020). The corona pandemic has caused fundamental changes in the way businesses operate, which will have long-term consequences. Research has shown that marketing innovations can help firms survive risks (Naidoo, 2010).

Marketing innovation strategies are defined as firms' commitment to use new or improved marketing methods that enable firms to use their resources to meet customer demand and create superior customer value. Strategy is recognized as a focal organizational resource in determining the company's decision, capabilities, competitive advantages and performance in the crisis period (Mahani and Suraiya, 2019; Azmi et al., 2020).

Svatošová (2017) emphasizes the importance of crisis, reform and rescue strategies for small and medium enterprises in times of business turmoil. Such strategies minimize the risk of bankruptcy and bad financial effects. According to Mahani and Suraiya (2019), small and medium-sized companies should use new marketing platforms and technologies in order to be able to withstand unexpected situations. Internal strategic resources and different capabilities are different in different SMEs. As a result, some of these businesses are able to change their strategic financial and marketing approaches, while others are unable to do so. In many developing and rapidly growing economies, small and medium enterprises are considered as the main source of innovation and development. This can be attributed to the fact that SMEs have so far been the biggest factor in stimulating competition, diversifying products and services, and creating flexibility in internal and external systems. In this regard, small and medium-sized companies may be considered as the lifeblood of modern economies and the cause of creating many more jobs than the jobs created by large companies, which have a significant contribution to global economic growth (Azmi et al., 2020).

For over a decade, small business leaders have increased their visibility through social media marketing, thereby increasing the viability and sustainability of their businesses. Evidence shows that the more active small businesses are in social media marketing, the more market intelligence they acquire (Atanassova and Clark, 2015). However, choosing the best social media marketing practices in small business is still ineffective (Lupo, 2018).

Social media marketing is a strategy that involves using social media to create a two-way exchange between customers and businesses. Adoption of social media is a relatively new trend, and adopters are usually referred to as innovators or early adopters (Delerue and Cronje, 2015). Increasing the use of social media is the beginning to play a major role in brand-consumer interaction (Yazdanparast et al., 2016). Social media marketing is different from digital marketing that follows the traditional marketing platform of one-way exchanges. One of the unique aspects of social media marketing is promoting two-way communication between businesses and consumers (Chang et al., 2014).

Changes in the economy in the first decade of the 21st century led to innovations in information communication technologies, including social media (Charalabidis et al., 2014). The use of social media has changed the way business leaders perform customer relationship management (Felix et al., 2016). Social media can take many forms, from microblogs to blogs, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, wikis, podcasts, and more (Delerue and Cronje, 2015).

Online social networks are considered an ideal platform for social exchanges due to creating an opportunity to form new and continuous business-customer relationships (at a relatively low cost for businesses), and creating important social exchanges that lead to the creation of content and value. (Hamilton et al., 2016). Social media marketing has emerged as a powerful marketing channel that enables information dissemination, cohesion and relationship building (Ananda et al., 2016).



Social media and other online marketing strategies can be a powerful and low-cost marketing tool that small business owners can use to have a stronger presence in business relationships (Setiowati et al., 2015). discussed organizational factors and innovation among small and medium businesses in Indonesia and found that adopting cost-effective marketing strategies on the Internet has a positive effect on marketing and improving business performance. The importance of small and medium enterprises reflects their ability to create wealth based on their role in creating employment. They are responsible for the largest private sector employment worldwide.

Based on this, the upcoming research aims to answer the following main question by using qualitative methodology: "What is the pattern of innovative social media marketing strategies in order to deal with the effects of health crises on small and medium-sized companies?".

2. Research background

Bowden and Mirzaei (2021), published an article entitled "Consumer Engagement and Participation in Retailers' Communication Channels: An Investigation of Online Brand Communities and Digital Content Marketing Initiatives". This research was done in Australia. The results of this research showed that the design and production of suitable digital content can greatly strengthen the behavioral, cognitive, emotional and social interaction of customers with the brand. Bu et al. (2020), published an article titled "Digital Content Marketing as a Catalyst in Electronic Word-of-Mouth Advertising in the Food Tourism Industry". This research was done on 707 Chinese tourists. The results of this research showed that content entertainment, content information and social interaction positively affect electronic word-of-mouth advertising in social media advertising space. Florenthal (2019), published an article entitled "Motivators of young consumers for the emergence of interactive behavior with the brand in social networks". The results of this research showed that in the space of social networks, due to some motivational factors such as brand power, presence in groups of the same age and opinion, presenting themselves in the presence of others, etc., young consumers try to establish interactive behaviors with the brand. Ghorbani Dinani and Mohammadi Hasanloui (2019) published an article titled "Effect of using social media in industrial marketing on competitive advantage and adaptive sales". The results of this research showed that various factors such as learning direction, attitude towards media use and media use skills have an effect on the use of social media, and on the other hand, the use of social media also affects the behavior of adapting to customers and improving the collection. Competitive advantage has an impact. Karimi and Karbasian (2019) published an article entitled "The effect of social media marketing activities on brand valuation and customer response (case study of the airline industry)". The results and findings of this research show that social media marketing activities on awareness It has an effect on the brand and image of the project, on the other hand, brand awareness has not had an effect on electronic word-of-mouth marketing in the airline industry, and brand image has no significant effect on electronic word-of-mouth marketing and commitment. Hussain et al. (2018), published an article titled "Online information acceptance behavior by consumers: motivators and influencing factors on electronic word-of-mouth communication". The results of this research showed that electronic word-of-mouth advertising, the validity of advertisements affects the quality of discussions and comments and the perceived risk, also, the quality of discussions and comments has an effect on the usefulness of information. Finally, the usefulness of information affects the



acceptance of information by the consumer. Toler (2017), published a research titled "Structural Equation Modeling of Advertising Engagement, Customer Attitude, and Engagement with Video Ads in Social Networks" in the form of a doctoral thesis. The results of this research showed that the effect of advertisements presented on social networks can directly affect the attitude of customers towards the brand and the attitude of customers towards the advertisement, and following this effect, the purchase intention of customers will also be affected. Hamidi and Fazeli (2017) published an article with the title "Investigation of factors affecting the acceptance of advertisements by customers in social media marketing". The results of the evaluation of the articles reviewed in this field study showed that electronic word-of-mouth advertising is the most important factor influencing the acceptance of advertisements by customers. It is in social media marketing. Using this survey and its results, suggestions can be made to improve the relationship between sellers and customers.

3. Research methodology

The current research is applied in terms of its purpose and applied-exploratory in terms of its approach. It should be noted that this research will be carried out in the following two general phases:

- Phase 1: Designing a framework for innovative social media marketing strategies to address the impact of health crises on small and medium enterprises. (Qualitative approach: theme analysis)
- Phase 2: Adapting and explaining the framework of innovative social media marketing strategies to deal with the effects of health crises on small and medium enterprises. (Quantitative Approach: Structural Equation Modeling)

3.1. The population and statistical sample of the research:

In the qualitative phase of the research, in order to conduct interviews and design a model based on the topic analysis method, a group of experts including university professors, senior managers of small and medium-sized companies, and experienced consultants in this field of social media-based marketing as a statistical population in were considered The desired characteristics for people to be experts included the following: mastering the field of marketing management and marketing based on social networks, familiarity with the marketing processes of small and medium-sized companies. In this phase, the theoretical sampling method was used. In this method, the number of samples is a function of the researcher's theoretical saturation. The sampling process continued until the theoretical saturation of the researcher was reached and a total of 15 interviews were conducted. In the quantitative phase of the research and in order to fit the model, a large community was needed. Therefore, in this phase, all senior marketing managers of small and medium-sized companies active in the country were considered as the community. According to the surveys, the number of this community was between 4,000 and 5,000 people, and according to the Karjesi and Morgan table, at least 380 statistical samples were needed for a community with this size. In this research, the available random sampling method was used to select statistical samples.

3.2. Data collection tool:

In the qualitative phase of the research, since the theme analysis method was used, the main data collection tool was in-depth and semi-structured interviews with marketing experts. In the



quantitative phase of the research, the main tool for data collection was a closed and researcher-made questionnaire consisting of 45 items, which was designed based on the initial conceptual model. It should be mentioned that in this questionnaire, the answers were designed based on a five-choice Likert scale and a scale of "degree of agreement" was used. The structure of this questionnaire based on its different dimensions can be seen in Table 1:

Table 1) Structure of the questionnaire for the quantitative phase of the research

Main variables	Sub variables	Label	Relevant items in the questionnaire
Driving Factors	Online brand communities	Variable 1	1-3
	Social Listening	Variable 2	4-6
	Customer engagement marketing	Variable 3	7-9
	Prosumer (producer-consumer)	Variable 4	10-12
	Influencer Marketing	Variable 5	13-15
	Gamification	Variable 6	16-18
Strategic Factors	Enhanced interaction	Variable 7	19-21
	Service/Product development	Variable 8	22-24
	Enhanced brand awareness	Variable 9	25-27
	Word-Of Mouth marketing plan	Variable 10	28-30
	Enhanced brand credibility	Variable 11	31-33
Facilitating Factors	Brand associations	Variable 12	34-36
	Brand identity boosting	Variable 13	37-39
Primary Outcomes	Proper understanding of consumer needs and opinions	Variable 14	40-42
	Value Creation for consumer	Variable 15	43-45
Secondary Outcomes	Market development and new customers attraction	Variable 16	46-48
	Sales promotion	Variable 17	49-51
	Loyalty improvement	Variable 18	52-54



3.3. Data analysis method:

In the qualitative phase of the research, the theme analysis method and Atlas.T.I software were used to obtain the conceptual model of the research. In the quantitative phase of the research, in order to analyze the data and test the research hypotheses, SPSS and smart-PLS statistical software, and descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, etc.) and inferential tests (Cronbach's alpha, construct validity, analysis confirmatory factor and path analysis) were used.

4. Data analysis

4.1. Qualitative phase (design of the primary model with theme analysis approach):

As mentioned in the previous sections, the data were obtained from texts related to the theoretical foundations and backgrounds of the research, as well as the text of the interview with experts. The content analysis of the theoretical foundations and the background of the research led to the identification of six variables or new methods in the field of social media marketing, including:

- Online brand communities
- Social Listening
- Customer engagement marketing
- Prosumer (producer-consumer)
- Influencer marketing
- Gamification

But in the interview analysis process, the first step was to identify and extract basic concepts. Accordingly, after each interview, the concepts were identified and recorded in the interview. A total of 15 interviews were identified, 86 initial concepts were identified. Next, it was attempted to create more general categories called "sub -themes" through deep attention to the identified concepts and identifying their similarities and differentiating them together, and the concepts of the same type and alignment. The result of this process was to identify 12 sub -themes. Next, the sub -themes were tried to place the same category in the form of more general categories and to be named "main themes":

Table 2) Main and sub themes identified and named

Main themes	Sub themes
Strategic Factors	Enhanced interaction
	Service/Product development
	Enhanced brand awareness
	Word-Of Mouth marketing plan
	Enhanced brand credibility
Primary Outcomes	Proper understanding of consumer needs and opinions
	Value Creation for consumer
Driving Factors	Online brand communities
	Social Listening
	Customer engagement marketing
	Prosumer (producer-consumer)
	Influencer Marketing

Main themes	Sub themes
	Gamification
Secondary Outcomes	Market development and new customers attraction
	Sales promotion
	Loyalty improvement
Facilitating Factors	Brand associations
	Brand identity boosting

Based on the measures taken in the previous stages and the identification of sub -themes, as well as the researcher's intuitive perception of the main themes and their position within the context of innovative social media marketing strategies to counter the effects of health crises on small and medium -sized companies, The proposed pattern of the research was drawn in Figure 1:

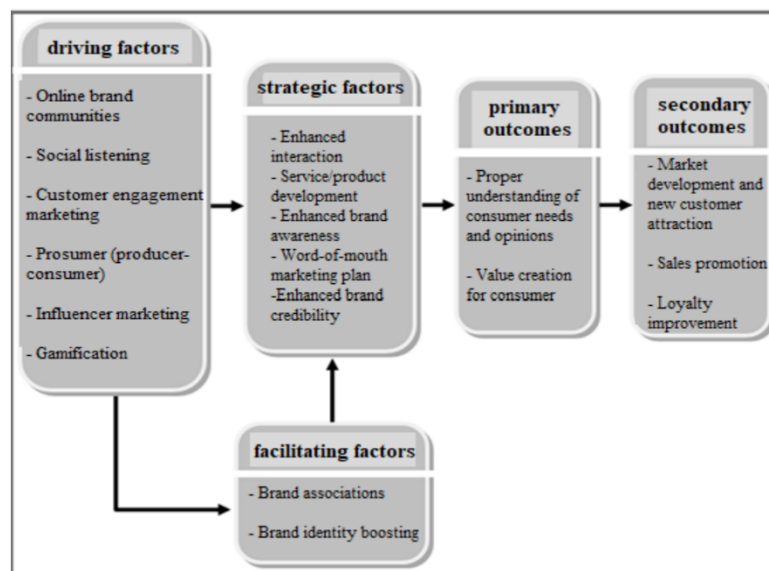


Figure 1) Proposed framework of the research

As the proposed pattern of the research is known, the propulsion factors act as the main driving force of the model and provide strategic factors. Along the way, facilitating factors also make the strategies formed and operational in better conditions. The outcome of the implementation of strategic factors will first provide the initial consequences and then form the final consequences of the model. According to Figure 1, five hypothetical relationships were established between the main variables of the research. These relationships were each regarded as a hypothesis and it is necessary to test their accuracy. Below are these five assumptions specifically:

- *Hypothesis 1: Driving factors have a significant impact on strategic factors.*
- *Hypothesis 2: Driving factors have a significant impact on facilitating factors.*
- *Hypothesis 3: Facilitating factors have a significant impact on strategic factors.*
- *Hypothesis 4: Strategic factors have a significant impact on the primary outcomes.*

- Hypothesis 5: Primary outcomes have a significant impact on secondary outcomes.

4.2. Quantitative phase (model testing and hypothesis testing):

In this phase, in order to evaluate the conceptual model of the research and also to ascertain the existence or non-existence of a causal relationship between the research variables and to check the fit of the observed data with the conceptual model of the research, the research hypotheses were tested using the structural equation modeling:

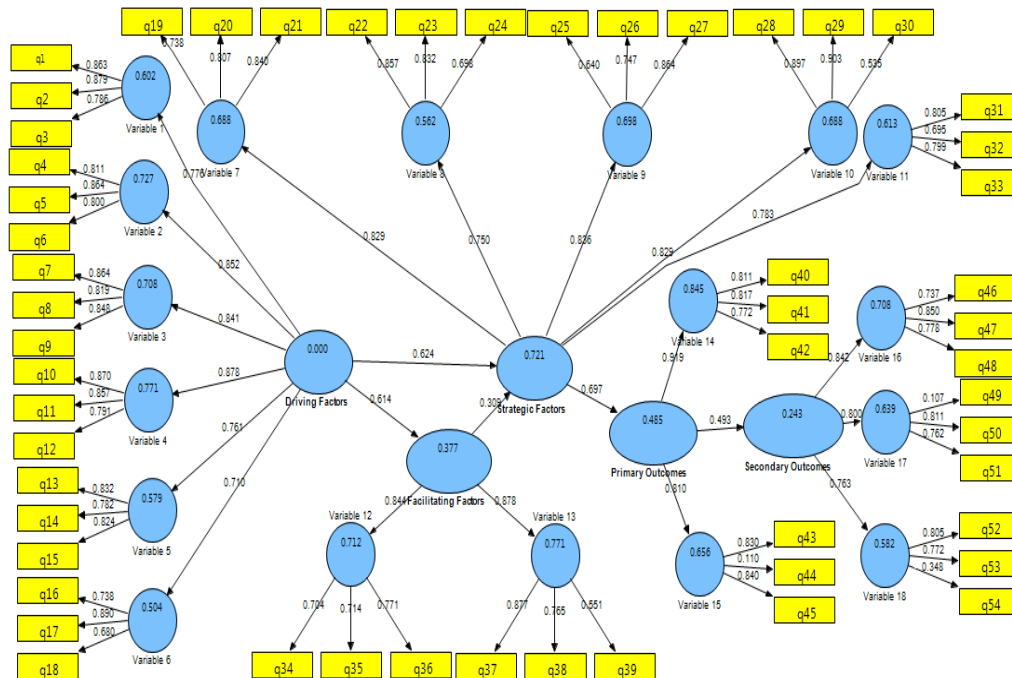


Figure 2) Measuring the research model in standard mode

Figure 2 shows the research path analysis model in the standard mode. In this figure (which is the output of smart-PLS software), the numbers on the arrows indicate the intensity of the cause and effect relationship between the variables.

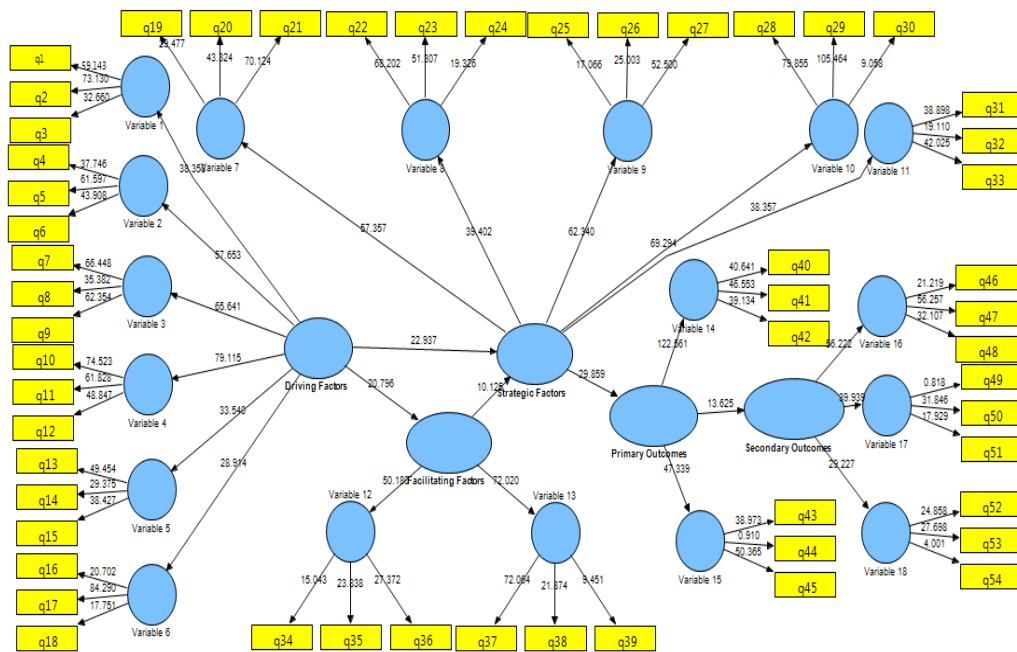


Figure 3) Measurement of the research model in significance mode



Figure 3 shows the model of the research path analysis in the significance mode. In this figure (which is the output of smart-PLS software), the numbers on the arrows indicate the significance of the cause and effect relationship between the variables.

Hypothesis 1 of the research states that driving factors have a significant effect on strategic factors. Table 3 shows the test result of this hypothesis. As it is clear in Table 3, considering that the significance of this hypothesis is more than 1.96 (22.93), therefore the hypothesis is confirmed. In addition, the standard coefficient also shows the positive influence of driving factors on strategic factors with a strength of 0.62:

Table 3) Result of hypothesis 1 test

Number of the hypothesis	Path	Standard coefficient	Significance coefficient	Result
1	The effect of driving factors on strategic factors	0.62	22.93	Confirm

Hypothesis 2 of the research states that driving factors have a significant effect on facilitating factors. Table 4 shows the test result of this hypothesis. As it is clear in Table 4, considering that the significance of this hypothesis is more than 1.96 (20.79), therefore the hypothesis is confirmed. In addition, the standard coefficient also shows the positive influence of driving factors on facilitating factors with a strength of 0.87:

Table 4) Result of hypothesis 2 test

Number of the hypothesis	Path	Standard coefficient	Significance coefficient	Result
2	The effect of driving factors on facilitating factors	0.87	20.79	Confirmed

Hypothesis 3 of the research states that facilitating factors have a significant effect on strategic factors. Table 5 shows the test result of this hypothesis. As it is clear in Table 5, considering that the significance of this hypothesis is more than 1.96 (10.15), therefore the hypothesis is confirmed. In addition, the standard coefficient also shows the positive influence of facilitating factors on strategic factors with a strength of 0.30:

Table 5) Result of hypothesis 3 test

Number of the hypothesis	Path	Standard coefficient	Significance coefficient	Result
3	The effect of facilitating factors on strategic factors	0.30	10.15	Confirmed

Hypothesis 4 of the research states that strategic factors have a significant effect on primary outcomes. Table 6 shows the test result of this hypothesis. As it is clear in Table 6, considering that the significance of this hypothesis is more than 1.96 (29.85), therefore the hypothesis is confirmed. In addition, the standard coefficient also shows the positive influence of strategic factors on primary outcomes with a strength of 0.69:

Table 6) Result of hypothesis 4 test

Number of the hypothesis	Path	Standard coefficient	Significance coefficient	Result
4	The effect of strategic factors on primary outcomes	0.69	29.85	Confirmed

Hypothesis 5 of the research states that primary outcomes have a significant effect on secondary outcomes. Table 7 shows the test result of this hypothesis. As it is clear in Table 7, considering that the significance of this hypothesis is more than 1.96 (13.62), therefore the hypothesis is confirmed. In addition, the standard coefficient also shows the positive influence of primary outcomes on secondary outcomes with a strength of 0.49:

Table 7) Result of hypothesis 5 test

Number of the hypothesis	Path	Standard coefficient	Significance coefficient	Result
5	The effect of primary outcomes on secondary outcomes	0.49	13.62	Confirmed

5. Discussion and conclusion

Based on the analysis, finally the proposed research framework was formed based on five main themes. The first main theme that forms the initial part of the proposed research framework is called driving factors, which has six sub-themes including online brand communities, social listening, customer engagement marketing, prosumer (producer-consumer), influencer marketing, and finally gamification accommodated. This theme generally acts as a driving force and a driving philosophy and makes the operational strategies of the social media marketing field well formed and strengthened. Taking advantage of the rapid advancements in Internet technology, many brand communities have been created on the World Wide Web to bring people together from many parts of the world. These communities are referred to as online brand communities or virtual brand communities. A brand community is a specialized, non-geographical community based on a set of social relationships between fans of a brand that allows an organization to establish a set of links with its consumers. Small and medium-sized companies can also use this approach to strengthen their brand and improve their social media marketing during the Covid-19 epidemic and other possible epidemics and social crisis situations. Also, the social listening approach allows SMB marketers to track what consumers are saying about their brand across one or more social media platforms. Social listening tools can collect data from various social media venues and provide it to marketers to get a complete picture of everything that is being said about a company's brand. In addition, customer involvement marketing is defined as a company's conscious effort to motivate, empower, and measure customer contributions to marketing operations, which represents an evolution in marketing research and company business practice. Small and medium-sized companies can take steps towards co-creating value in their social media marketing by empowering customers and getting their participation. Continuing to examine the sub-themes of this section, it should be mentioned that prosumer (producer-consumer) is a significant new approach of business entities in cooperation with producer-consumers. A producer-consumer oriented communication model offers a new perspective in marketing communication. The participation of consumers in the production process provides many advantages to small and medium-sized companies, which gain knowledge from their potential producer-consumer and are able to provide innovative products or services that are perfectly suited to market needs. In this regard, it should be noted that influencer marketing is another important approach that small and medium-sized companies can use to shape and strengthen their advertising campaigns on social media. Influencers are people who have the power to influence consumers' purchase decisions due to their authority, knowledge, social status, political status, economic status, etc. The last sub-theme of the set of driving factors is gamification. Gamification refers to the use by small and medium-sized companies of game design elements in non-game fields, with the aim of increasing participation, activity and user enjoyment. The mechanism of the game system



consists of a set of tools (including points, levels, leaderboards, badges, challenges/attempts, participation rings and processors) that small and medium-sized companies can better attract audiences by designing and applying this approach carefully and intelligently. Achieve social media marketing. The results of this part of the proposed research framework, are consistent with the results of the research conducted by Casidy et al. (2022), Le and Aydin (2022), Bowden and Mirzaei (2021), Westermann and Forthmann (2021), Vohra and Bhardwaj (2019), and Bayuk and Altobello (2019).

The second part of the proposed research framework was dedicated to strategic factors and contained five sub-themes including increasing engagement, product/service development, increasing brand awareness, creating word-of-mouth advertising, and increasing brand credibility. These factors are actually strategies that help increase the effectiveness of social media marketing for small and medium-sized companies. Based on this part of the research framework, if small and medium-sized companies can, through strengthening their communication and interaction with customers and involving them in the process of value creation, develop their services and products based on special innovation, improve the level of society's awareness of the history and characteristics of the brand. The company, encouraging members of the community, including actual customers, to spread positive word-of-mouth about the company's brand, and taking measures to improve the brand's credibility index in the customer community, will make small and medium-sized companies perform better in the social media marketing system as a result of health crises. Leave it behind and do not reduce its effectiveness. The results of this part of the proposed research framework are consistent with the results of the research conducted by Peñalba et al. (2022), Noor et al. (2022), Gorbanzadeh et al. (2021).

The third part of the proposed research framework was dedicated to facilitating factors, which included two sub-themes, i.e. brand associations and strengthening brand identity. These factors actually play the role of mediator between driving factors and strategic factors and make driving factors form strategies in a more appropriate context. Accordingly, if small and medium-sized companies try to strengthen the associations connected to their brand and in addition to create and strengthen their brand identity in a strong way, we can expect to be more successful in designing and implementing social media marketing strategies. do The results of this part of the proposed research framework are consistent with the results of the research conducted by Osakwe et al. (2020), Jin et al. (2019), Devigili et al. (2018).

The final parts of the proposed research framework refer to the implications of innovative social media marketing strategies to deal with the effects of health crises on small and medium enterprises. In this regard, the preliminary results show that the correct design and implementation of the aforementioned strategies lead to a correct understanding of consumer needs and opinions and create value for consumers in small and medium-sized companies. In addition, the secondary consequences of the proposed framework also show that the design and implementation of innovative social media marketing strategies in order to deal with the effects of health crises on small and medium enterprises, can produce three important outputs and achievements, including market development and new customer attraction, sales promotion , and promote loyalty in the mentioned companies. These results are consistent with the results of



research conducted by Azmi et al. (2020), Mahani and Suraiya (2019), Lupo (2018), Svatošová (2017), and Hamilton et al. (2016).

6. Implementation suggestions

The first group of suggestions can be presented based on the results of hypotheses No. 1 and 2 regarding the positive influence of driving factors on strategic factors and facilitating factors. The qualitative and quantitative results of the research proved the effectiveness of six driving factors. Based on this, it is suggested that small and medium-sized companies organize their active and even potential customers in the form of online groups and communities. In this way, the formation of Instagram fan pages can be a useful and effective solution so that in this way the customers can be together as an online community and the company can understand the open and hidden needs of the customers through the dialogues formed in this community. Day by day, take steps to respond to these needs. In addition, small and medium-sized companies are suggested to provide the hardware and software infrastructure needed to implement social listening (listening to social networks) so that they can collect all the voices (opinions, opinions) related to their brand, products and services. observe and realize their strengths and weaknesses through these sounds. In order to better implement this strategy, it is suggested that the mentioned companies must carefully check and read the comments under their advertising posts on Instagram. Because through the scientific analysis of these comments, you can find out useful information about the opinions of customers and audiences about the product/service and brand. Also, small and medium-sized companies are suggested to welcome the involvement and mixing of customers in value creation processes and consider it as a social capital. Because the more the customer finds a stronger connection with his popular brand and considers the brand as his own, the special value of the brand will be enhanced and the customer's loyalty will be strengthened. Further, based on the identification of the prosumer (producer-consumer) strategy as a driving factor, small and medium-sized companies are suggested to be aware of the opinions of their actual and even potential customers in the design phase of their new products and services, and to incorporate their ideas into Check carefully to improve the design process. Also, the mentioned companies can use this strategy as a very important source of information to modify and improve their current products and services. In addition, it is suggested that small and medium companies should not ignore the power of influencer marketing strategy. In this regard, after designing the visual and non-visual elements of their brand, the mentioned companies should identify the influencers who can somehow help to strengthen the Shakt brand identity and personality and try to achieve their marketing goals by including them in the advertising content. Help in social media. The last suggestion in the field of driving factors is also related to the need for small and medium companies to use gamification strategy. In this context, the aforementioned companies should try to engage their audience on social media in a win-win game in a completely intelligent and of course ethical way, and through the design of special software based on social networks (including Instagram) and try to Through entertaining them, injecting them with excitement, inducing a sense of progress and winning in them, etc., they will achieve their marketing goals and shape consumer behavior for the benefit of both parties. The second group of suggestions can be presented based on the result of the test of hypothesis No. 3 regarding the positive influence of facilitating factors on strategic factors. In this context, small and medium-sized companies are suggested to link certain associations to their brand in



the form of image, sound, scent, color and even light, so that through these associations, the position of the company's brand in the minds of the audience will gradually be improved. Make the brand to be remembered in the mind of the audience in different places and times. In addition, small and medium-sized companies are suggested to properly design their brand identity based on their vision, mission and macro goals.

The third group of suggestions can be presented based on the result of hypothesis 4 test on the positive influence of strategic factors on primary outcomes. In this regard, small and medium-sized companies are suggested to improve the level of their interactions with customers in different ways (including the customer relationship management system) and during these interactions, the more and better the process of understanding the obvious and hidden needs of customers. to follow Because effective interaction with customers and proper understanding of their needs is the foundation of market share development and success in competitive markets. In addition, small and medium-sized companies are suggested to actively develop new products and services, or improve and modify their current products and services, in accordance with environmental changes, technological changes, social changes, and changing customer needs. Always try to play a role in their industry as a leader in providing new products and services. The next important suggestion to small and medium companies is to try to improve the society's awareness of the company's brand. This can be done through public relations or participation in conferences and festivals. In addition, in line with strategic factors, small and medium-sized companies are suggested to motivate and encourage their customers and audiences towards word-of-mouth advertising. Word-of-mouth advertising can be implemented both in the real space and in the online space and helps to reduce marketing costs, attract new customers and increase the company's market share. As the last case in the field of strategic factors, it is suggested to small and medium-sized companies through continuous improvement of the quality of services and products, correct and timely fulfillment of social responsibilities, providing regular after-sales services, paying attention to customers' criticisms and suggestions, and also establishing channels. In order to hear the voice of customers, take steps day by day to improve the reputation of their brand in society.

Finally, the last group of suggestions can be presented based on the result of hypothesis test No. 5 regarding the positive influence of primary outcomes on secondary outcomes. In this regard, it is suggested that small and medium-sized companies make all their efforts to know and correctly understand the diverse and changing needs of consumers. For this purpose, electronic customer relationship management systems can be used well. In addition, it is suggested that small and medium companies try to take steps in different ways to create value for consumers and always try to provide more values than through their services and products, even though they are small. By doing this, while creating a competitive advantage, they can create more satisfaction and loyalty in their customers.

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Conflict of Interest:

Funding:

Ethical statements :



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