



SOCIAL MEDIA AND FIRM PERFORMANCE: REFLECTIONS FROM THE JORDANIAN TOURISM SECTOR

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Abstract

The research aims to find out the Influence of Connectedness, Participation, and Accessibility of Social Media on Firm Performance in Jordanian tourism Sector. The data was collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 550 employees of travel agency in Jordan. Statistical analysis was performed using smart PLS to find out the influence of social media on firm Performance. The paper finds that there is a significant influence of the (Accessibility, Connectedness and Participation of social media) on the Rapid Adaptation, and Innovation. While there is no influence (Accessibility, Connectedness and Participation of social media) on satisfaction.

Keywords: Connectedness of social media, Participation of social media, Accessibility of social media and Firm Performance

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the increasing technological advances are making service organizations have a competitive advantage and are devoting a lot of market share to themselves (Ali & Omar, 2016a). The use of the usefulness of technology is a wide range of knowledge that different organizational users need (Ali, Bakar, & Omar, 2016; Ali, Omar, & Bakar, 2016). It has an influence on decision-making and helps the company organize administratively. Effective decision-making is therefore necessary for business success and to business performance (Ali, Bakar, et al., 2016). Social media are key to the success of business organizations in the 21st century, as pointed out by (Etim, Uzonna, & Worgu Steve, 2018), Social networking is aimed at growing the interest of companies by helping to attract computer-based consumers who can encourage branding of goods, higher sales, improved customer service and produce new products. According to (Lam, Yeung, & Cheng, 2016), the use of social media by organizations could accelerate the dissemination of information and the acquisition and distribution of knowledge within and outside organizations, enhance relationships with customers, suppliers and enhance other external collaborations. Internet innovations have played an important role in business performance over the last two decades (Kim, Li, & Brymer, 2016). A social network is a social system composed of a variety of social players (i.e. people or organizations). It consists of a number of actors with a connecting device (Pangil, AlSondos, & Othman, 2018). Web 2.0 applications offer the opportunity to transfer internet capabilities to a social environment where people can interact online using social media (Sigala & Chalkiti, 2015). Tourism today is considered one of the most important sectors since the civilization of tourism and a social phenomenon that represents the basic axis of service activities (Alghizzawi, Habes, & Salloum, 2019). It is one of the fastest-growing economic sectors; it has become known as the world's first industry, and an effective instrument for achieving sustainable development. Of these reasons, many countries have made this sector the cornerstone of their national economy because tourism marketing services are of great importance as they are targeted at the consumer (the tourist)(Ricafort, 2011). The tourism industry is closely linked to the production of specific marketing components (Alghizzawi, Salloum, & Habes, 2018). According to (Ali, Bakar, et al., 2016; Ali, Omar, et al., 2016) Information technologies have a great impact on business performance. The impacts on visitors of social media platforms include: 1. Providing visitors with the requisite details on tourist sites. 2. Benefit from the company's strong customer service. 3. Provision of safe channels for tourists to buy and book various trips. 4. To help to disseminate accurate knowledge about the journeys and the future improvements. But (Ali & Omar, 2016b) argued that Before developing countries may embrace global technologies to meet their local needs, there is a need to build up infrastructure and human resources to a large extent. Many

consumers in developed countries either do not trust or do not have the infrastructure to process electronic payments. Therefore this study tries to investigate the impact of Connectedness, Participation, and Accessibility of Social Media on the tourism sector's business performance in Jordan.

Research Questions

It is clear from the context of this research that there is still no understanding of the effect of social media on Jordan's tourism results. And by addressing the following questions, the issue of the analysis can be resolved;

1. What is the influence of Connectedness of social media on the performance of tourism companies in Jordan?
2. What is the influence of Participation of social media on the performance of tourism companies in Jordan?
3. What is the influence of Accessibility of social media on the performance of tourism companies in Jordan?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kim et al. (2016) analyzed the impact of social media reviews and operating efficiency metrics financial performance of restaurants, and discussed the moderating role of excellence certificate. The findings of this study reveal that there is a significant positive impact on restaurant performance from the number of online reviews customers do. The moderating influence of the restaurant's certificate of excellence is found to be important between the amount of reviews and restaurant results. Consequently, restaurant operators with an Excellence Certificate should keep the number of customer reviews high and constructive in order to improve the top line of a restaurant. Other study carried out by the Singh and Sinha (2017) On "Social media impacts on company growth and performance in India" This study understands the benefits, effect and value of social media on business success and growth Social media is becoming an important resource for marketers, at a very minimum investment. Consumers judge a company based on their online presence in today's scenario, so businesses can evolve and at the same time build a strong social presence by always listening to the needs and concerns of their consumers. Companies have embraced Social Media as an important tool for their marketing campaign internationally; however, the same is still not adapted in India. Icoz, Kutuk, and Icoz (2018) explored the impact of social media on the decision-making process and online buying patterns of tourism consumers, as well as the possible relationships between participant demographics and some variables such as social media information, usage

of social media for tourism services, buying, influencing and sharing of travel experiences. A survey approach was used to collect data from various social media users, and Structural Equation Modeling was used to analyze the data. According to the results; statistically significant relationships have been identified between the variables of knowledge about tourism services in the media and perceptions of usage, effect on consumers, intention to share experiences and the act of buying tourism and hospitality services.

Koori, Muriithi, and Mbebe (2018) studied the impact on organizational performance in Kenya of social media usage. The sample was selected from 132 respondents using simple random sampling technique. The researcher used descriptive statistics, using tabular, graphical, and numerical representations. The study results indicated that use of social media networking, knowledge sharing, information search and social media advertising is significantly and positively linked to organizational success. Usage of social media networking, knowledge sharing, information search and social media advertisement have been found to be adequate variables in the organizational Performance explaining. Etim et al. (2018) studied the effect of social media use on organizational success in Kenya. Using simple random sampling technique the sample was selected from 132 respondents. The study used descriptive statistics, using representations in tabular, graphical and numerical terms. Results of the study showed that the use of social media networking, knowledge sharing, information search and social media advertisement was related to organizational performance substantially and positively. Throughout the organizational performance, the use of social media networking, knowledge sharing, information search and social media advertisement were found to be adequate variables. Alalwan (2018) investigated the impact of social media advertising features on the purchase intention of the customer. The data was collected using a survey of 437 participants on the questionnaire. Results supported the current model's validity and the significant impact of performance expectancy, hedonic motivation, interactivity, informativeness, and perceived relevance on purchase intentions. In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Ahmad, Bakar, and Ahmad (2019) discussed factors affecting SMEs' adoption of social media and their effect on results. Survey questionnaires were used to collect data from a random sample of small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the UAE. 144 responses were analyzed using partial least squares and structural equation modeling techniques. The adoption of social media had no effect on the performance of SMEs. These findings could help managers and decision-makers in the SME sector to try to keep pace with social media innovation research and make it possible for them to benefit from social trade as it becomes more ubiquitous. In other hand Li, Kim, and Choi (2019) examined the effect of social media engagement's dimensionality on casual-dining restaurant performance. The findings also show that these measures have major

positive impacts on the performance of casual-dining restaurants. Pragmatically, the findings provided an assessment that allows casual-dining restaurant marketers to select the most effective SNSs and carry out the most appropriate promotional activities, given the limited marketing budget of small and medium-sized casual-restaurants. Daowd et al. (2020) studied the effect of social media on microfinance institutions operating in developing countries. The results show that the use of social media within microfinance has a positive and significant impact on key indicators for MFIs. Yasa, Adnyani, and Rahmayanti (2020) studied the effect of the use of social media on the perceived market interest and its effects on the performance of the business. The outcome of this research indicates that the use of social media and perceived market interest impacts company output substantially and positively. Suanpang (2020) examined factors affecting Thailand's use of social media for competition in tourism enterprises. This research had a mixed method of a quantitative approach that gathered information from a questionnaire of 490 tourism companies in five major tourism cities, and a qualitative approach that gathered interview data. The findings showed that there were 8 factors (provide information, contact customer, marketing, feedback, build network, brand building, increase income and customer engagement) of using social media in tourism businesses to gain competitiveness.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

The research design typically defines the blueprint for any specific research agency to solve or effectively fix the problem. Some of the leading methods of research are more commonly exploratory, informative, and descriptive (Chisnall, 1997). The purpose of this study is to introduce a quantitative approach with a positive philosophy of the analysis. The main prospects for this approach are to draw the issue into particular hypothesis variables, to test relationships in the form of concrete hypotheses, and to test them for statistical data and proof using observations and instruments. (2013). (Creswell). Usually, quantitative analysis accounts for the hypothesis testing whereby theoretical statements reflect variables evaluated in the sample. In quantitative analysis, random sampling methods are widely used to eliminate bias in response, sampling, and collecting data

Sampling and data collection

Population can be defined as any person or entity that you want to understand while sampling is the process of selecting for investigation a portion of the population. It is a method of selecting units from a data set to determine the characteristics, views and attitudes of individuals. Sampling the sample requires a structured questionnaire to assess the views and behaviors of

the individuals. The data collected may include an enumeration of the selected population or subgroup via a standardized questionnaire. The target audience for this research will be Jordanian business administrators and supervisors. 550 copies of the questionnaire have been distributed, and research data have been gathered via a questionnaire sent to managers-supervisors in tourism companies across Jordan. We administered 550 questionnaires using stratified random sampling. Stratified random sampling: a sampling process in which each subgroup labeled strata has an equal probability of being randomly selected. It endows every stratum with equal representation.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using a Partial Least Square, component-based approach, using SmartPLS 3.2. PLS is a computational technique that provides greater flexibility than covariance-based structural equation modeling (SEM) since data need not be distributed normally, and PLS also allows for the study of smaller sample sizes (Hair Jr et al., 2014). It also has a high standard deviation tolerance and is suitable for theoretical growth (Bassellier and Benbasat, 2004). It is necessary to conduct a series of analyzes before estimating the PLS model to ensure the accuracy and validity of the measurements and to calculate the system's common bias.

Research Framework

Social media in this study are considered in light of its three dimensions namely, Connectedness, Participation, and Accessibility. With regards to the firm performance aspects to be measured, they are divided into three indicators, which are Rapid Adaptation, Satisfaction and Innovation. Connectedness, Participation, Accessibility are exogenous variables, while firm performance are endogenous variables. Figure 1 presents the study framework mapping out the Social media –firm performance relationship:

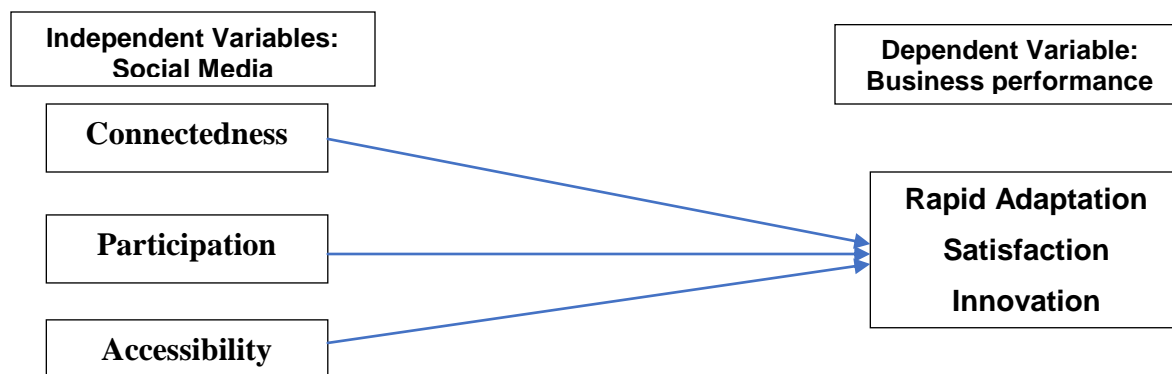


Figure 1: Research framework of the study

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Response Rate

The resolution of this research design study is to give questionnaires to 550 managers/employees of tourism companies in the Jordanian context, 389 questionnaires representing a 70.7 per cent response rate have been returned. Achieving the required response rate means continuous follow-up via phone calls and SMS to the recruited research assistants and managers of the different firms to facilitate the return of questionnaires. The response rate is therefore considered to be appropriate for the analysis of this study in accordance with the perspective of (Jobber, 1989).

A total of 389 responses are therefore appropriate for analysis in this study. In addition to its ability to take care of small sample sizes, the predictive power of the PLS-SEM technique is enhanced by a higher sample size (Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014). The response rate of 70.7% achieved in this study is therefore considered excellent in view of the suggestion made by Sekaran and Bougie (2016) that no less than 30% of the response rate is acceptable in the survey research.

Data Screening

The data screening of the questionnaire survey was carried out by the researcher for the accuracy of the data input, the missing data, the identification of the outliers and the statistical assumptions for the multivariate analysis of the constructs in this research (Hair Jr et al., 2014; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

The SPSS version 23 was carefully coded and contained a total of 389 questionnaires that provided the correct answers. However, each object used for questioning was coded according to its originals and its position in the various non-observed latent buildings to achieve a high degree of precision. For instance, 24 items (independent variables) measuring social media (Connectedness, Participation, Accessibility) were coded as CONN 1, CONN 2, CONN 3, CONN 4, Part1, Part2, Part3, Part4 etc. and the same process was applied for the performance of dependent tourist variable companies (Rapid adaptation, Satisfaction, Innovation).

Assessment of Outliers

The detection of outlier was conducted on the data set of this study as recommended by (Aggarwal, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Among various methods of detecting outliers, classifying data points based on an observed distance, that is, Mahalanobis distance (D2) was employed in this study. However, based on the 40 observed items, the threshold of chi-square estimates with $p < 0.005$ and $df = 40$ is 66.766. Therefore, No cases were deleted because their

Mahalanobis distance values not exceeded the threshold value of 66.766 obtained from the chi-square table, leaving 389 cases as final data for analysis of the study.

Multicollinearity Test

However, correlation matrix was examined in order to identify any occurrence of high correlation, that is, multicollinearity among the independent latent variables of this study (Peng & Lai, 2012). As shown in table 1, there is no existence of multicollinearity because the correlation between all the unobserved latent independent constructs fall below the threshold of $r = 0.9$. Additionally, tolerance level was further used to confirm that there are no multicollinearity issues with the data of this study. Accordingly, the tolerance values exceeded the minimum recommended 0.10 as shown in Table 2, thus a further confirmation that this study's data did not have issues of multicollinearity.

Table 1: Inter-Constructs Correlations for Multicollinearity Test

	Accessibility	Connectedness	Participation
Accessibility:	1.000		
Connectedness:	.349	1.000	
Participation:	.283	.298	1.000

Table 2: Test multicollinearity

Constructs	Tolerance value	VIF
Accessibility:	.822	1.216
Connectedness:	.815	1.227
Participation:	.872	1.147

Descriptive Analysis of Constructs

A descriptive analysis is used to examine the general statistical description of the structures used in this study (Table 3). The moderate level of satisfaction was between 2.26 and 3.75, and the high level of satisfaction was between 3.76 and 5.00.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Constructs

LATENT CONSRUCTS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Connectedness	389	4.09	.460	High
Participation	389	4.18	.508	High
Accessibility	389	4.25	.497	High

These findings clearly indicated from the Table 3 that Jordanian owners of tourism companies/managers display high management practices that could lead to performance.

Assessment of Measurement Model

As mentioned above, PLS-SEM used the SmartPLS 3. software app in this study to estimate the pattern (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015). PLS-SEM lies on two important multivariate techniques including factor analysis, and multiple regressions.

Construct Reliability and Validity

The threshold of 0,70 for item loading suggested by Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2011) was acceptable but stated further that 0,60 is acceptable if including an item increases the average variance extracted (AVE) from the construct it measures (Hair Jr et al., 2014). With respect to the thresholds listed below, items with loads below 0.6 have been excluded, while items loaded under 0.7 that have increased the AVE have been retained. Table 4 shows that all items loaded above 0.6 indicate the reliability of the products.

Internal Consistency Reliability

For the structures of this study, composite reliability exceeds as suggested all 0.7, which indicates that the internal coherence reliability of the components is adequate and is shown in Table 4.

Convergent validity

Accordingly, average variance extracted (AVE) is the most common method used by researchers to establish convergent validity of the construct (Hair Jr et al., 2014). Thus, the value of AVE of 0.50 and above signifies that the variable has a convergent validity (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2011). With this argument, all the AVE values in this study exceeded the recommended value of 0.50 on their respective variables which indicates adequate convergent validity. Table 4 shows the convergent validity of every variables in this study.

Accordingly, the most common approach used by researchers to determine convergent construct validity is the extracted average variance (AVE) (Hair et al. 2014). Therefore the AVE value of 0.50 and above suggests a convergent validity of the variable (Hair et al., 2011). With this argument, all of the AVE values in this study exceeded the recommended value of 0.50 for their respective variables which indicates adequate convergent validity.

Table 4: Summary of Items Loading, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Constructs	Items	Loading	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Accessibility			0.891	0.676
	ACC1	0.970		
	ACC2	0.776		
	ACC3	0.834		
	ACC4	0.681		
Connectedness			0.818	0.528
	CONN1	0.734		
	CONN2	0.717		
	CONN3	0.712		
	CONN4	0.744		
Participation			0.838	0.564
	PART1	0.722		
	PART2	0.735		
	PART3	0.772		
	PART4	0.774		
Innovation			0.889	0.669
	INNO1	0.727		
	INNO2	0.852		
	INNO3	0.838		
	INNO4	0.848		
Rapid adaptation			0.950	0.790
	RAD1	0.900		
	RAD2	0.914		
	RAD3	0.887		
	RAD4	0.882		
	RAD5	0.860		
Satisfaction			0.852	.500
	SAT1	0.730		
	SAT2	0.728		
	SAT3	0.704		
	SAT4	0.710		
	SAT5	0.632		
	SAT6	0.693		

Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity is the extent to which a construct is different from other constructs. Discriminant validity confirms that a set of items measures a construct distinctly from other set of items measuring other constructs (Chen & Rossi, 1987; Lo, Ramayah, De Run, & Ling, 2009). The results of discriminant validity indicating that all the constructs meet Fornell-Lacker criterion are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Accessibility	Connecte	Innovat	Particip	Rapid	Satisfa
Accessibility	0.822					
Connectedness	0.352	0.727				
Innovation	-0.033	-0.052	0.818			
Participation	0.284	0.301	-0.032	0.751		
Rapid adaptation	0.096	0.139	-0.140	0.123	0.889	
Satisfaction	0.312	0.321	-0.092	0.456	0.161	0.700

Assessment of Structural Model

The outcome of this study's structural model for the direct relations between independent and dependent variables is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Direct Path Coefficients

Paths	Beta	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values	Remark
ACC -> INNO:	0.072	0.045	1.602	0.110	Accepted
ACC -> RAD:	0.022	0.037	0.592	0.554	Accepted
ACC -> SAT:	0.142	0.046	3.113	0.002	Rejected
CONN -> INNO:	-0.025	0.043	0.579	0.563	Accepted
CONN -> RAD:	-0.005	0.037	0.140	0.889	Accepted
CONN -> SAT:	0.156	0.047	3.312	0.001	Rejected
PART -> INNO:	-0.019	0.040	0.474	0.636	Accepted
PART -> RAD:	0.077	0.036	2.113	0.035	Rejected
PART -> SAT:	0.381	0.056	6.781	0.000	Rejected

Table 6 displays the findings of the direct relationship hypothesis test as suggested in this report. The discussion on this table about the findings is as follows:

Main Hypothesis:

H01: There is no significant relationship between Social media (Connectedness, Participation, and Accessibility) and the Jordanian tourism companies Performance (Rapid adaptation, Satisfaction, Innovation).

Sub Hypothesis:

H01: There is no significant relationship between Connectedness and the Rapid adaptation:

Is represented by path linking CONN -> RAD in table 6. The path estimates for this relationship reveals beta ($\beta = -0.025$), t statistics ($t = 1.119$) and p value ($p = 0.264$). The hypothesized relationship between CONN and INNO is accepted based on these values, indicating a negative and no significant relationship at 5% level of significance.

H02: There is no significant relationship between Connectedness and the Satisfaction:

Is represented by path linking CONN -> SAT with path estimates of beta ($\beta = 0.156$), t statistics ($t = 3.312$) and p value ($p = 0.001$) as shown in table 6. The result signifies a positive and significant relationship between CONN and SAT at 1% significance level, thus the proposed hypothesis H01K is rejected.

H03: There is no significant relationship between Connectedness and the Innovation:

Is represented by path linking CONN -> INNO in table 6. The path estimates for this relationship reveals beta ($\beta = -0.043$), t statistics ($t = 0.579$) and p value ($p = 0.563$). The hypothesized relationship between CONN and INNO is accepted based on these values, indicating a negative and no significant relationship at 5% level of significance.

H04: There is no significant relationship between Participation and the Rapid adaptation:

Is represented by path linking PART -> RAD with path estimates of beta ($\beta = 0.077$), t statistics ($t = 2.113$) and p value ($p = 0.035$) as shown in table 6. The result signifies a positive and significant relationship between PART and RAD at 5% significance level, thus the proposed hypothesis H01M is rejected.

H05: There is no significant relationship between Participation and the Satisfaction:

Is represented by path linking PART -> SAT with path estimates of beta ($\beta = 0.381$), t statistics ($t = 6.781$) and p value ($p = 0.000$) as shown in table 6. The result signifies a positive and significant relationship between PART and SAT at 1% significance level, thus the proposed hypothesis H01N is rejected.

H06: There is no significant relationship between Participation and the Innovation:

Is represented by path linking PART -> INNO in table 6. The path estimates for this relationship reveals beta ($\beta = -0.019$), t statistics ($t = 0.474$) and p value ($p = 0.636$). The hypothesized relationship between PART and INNO is accepted based on these values, indicating a negative and no significant relationship at 5% level of significance.

H07: There is no significant relationship between Accessibility and the Rapid adaptation:

Is represented by path linking ACC -> RAD on table 6. The path estimates for this relationship reveals beta ($\beta = 0.022$), t statistics ($t = 0.592$) and p value ($p = 0.554$). The hypothesized relationship between ACC and RAD is accepted based on these values, indicating a positive and no significant relationship at 5% level of significance.

H08: There is no significant relationship between Accessibility and the Satisfaction:

Is represented by path linking ACC -> SAT with path estimates of beta ($\beta = 0.142$), t statistics ($t = 3.312$) and p value ($p = 0.002$) as shown in table 6. The result signifies a positive and significant relationship between ACC and SAT at 1% significance level, thus the proposed hypothesis H01Q is rejected.

H09: There is no significant relationship between Accessibility and the Innovation:

Is represented by path linking ACC -> INNO in table 6. The path estimates for this relationship reveals beta ($\beta = 0.072$), t statistics ($t = 1.602$) and p value ($p = 0.110$). The hypothesized relationship between ACC and INNO is accepted based on these values, indicating a positive and no significant relationship at 5% level of significance.

Coefficient of Determination (R-squared)

Coefficient of determination R-squared (R^2) is part of structural model assessment that represent the amount of variance in dependent variable that is jointly accounted for by the independent variables (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012).

According to Chin (1998), R^2 values of 0.19, 0.33 and 0.67 are regarded weak, moderate and substantial respectively (Table 7).

Table 7: R^2 Coefficient of Determination for dependent variables

Dependent Variable	R Square
Innovation	0.359
Rapid adaptation	0.628
Satisfaction	0.285

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether different types of social media usage would either increase or decrease firm performance in tourism sector in Jordan, to gain a richer picture of the positive effects social media usage may yield. Today, technology has brought many improvements in our everyday lives; the benefit of IT is that we can do our job in a new, more effective and productive manner, which has not been possible in the past (Ali, Bakar, et

al., 2016; Ali, Omar, et al., 2016; AlSondos & Salameh, 2020). The findings suggested that there is a positive relationship there is a significant influence of the (Accessibility, Connectedness and Participation of social media) on the Rapid Adaptation, and Innovation. While there is no influence (Accessibility, Connectedness and Participation of social media) on satisfaction. Furthermore, this study helps managers and decision makers especially in the Jordanian tourism firms to understand the real importance of social media usage which will improve the performance of the organization in various areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The study was conducted only on the tourism sector in Jordan. It would be recommended that future research be performed on other sector than tourism for more precise results. A replication of this study on another sample would benefit the research. And also using more variables or moderator variable in future. In addition, future research may consider the inclusion of other sectors, such as banking, industrial and manufacturing. Practitioners should continue to make use of and increase investment in the effectiveness of social media because of its effect on corporate success in terms of leadership, increased consumer attraction, market share, profitability and growth led by managers to integrate social media use into their company's marketing strategy.

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