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*Major No. M16*

**The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Small Business Sustainability: A  
Case of Pakistan's Manufacturing Industry**



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## **Abstract**

Small businesses now have a greater need than ever to market themselves on social media, especially in emerging markets like Pakistan. The impact of social media marketing on the long-term success of small businesses in Pakistan's manufacturing sector is not well understood, yet. By analysing the effects of social media marketing on the sustainability of small businesses in Pakistan's manufacturing sector, this study seeks to fill this knowledge gap. Additionally, it examines the relationship between the use of social media marketing and the sustainability of small businesses.

The results of this study suggest that social media marketing is a significant and successful tactic for encouraging the long-term expansion of small businesses in a developing nation like Pakistan. The study specifically showed that using social media marketing strategies can increase brand recognition, consumer involvement, and client loyalty. All of these elements can help small businesses continue to operate over time.

The study also found that developing innovation capabilities is crucial for employing social media marketing tools to support small businesses' sustainable growth. The ability of a business to create innovation and enhanced products, processes, and business models is known as innovation capability. According to the study, small businesses who are better at developing up with innovation capabilities are also better at using social media marketing tools. This may increase their adaptability and competitiveness, enhancing their long-term sustainability.

This study demonstrates the importance of social media marketing for small businesses' long-term sustainability in Pakistan's industrial sector. The study also shows that employing social media marketing strategies that can aid small businesses in growing more quickly and sustainably requires the ability to innovate.

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# 1. Chapter - Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Internet, media platforms, smartphone apps, and other types of online connectivity technologies are now routine components of the lives of billions of people around the world. Many people all across the world now rely heavily on the usage of social media. As of this year 2019, 2.95 billion people from all over the globe participated in some form of social media. This figure is projected to rise to almost 3.43 billion by 2023 (Statista, 2020). With the help of digital marketing, companies can achieve their advertising aims at a more affordable price (Borah, Iqbal & Akhtar, 2022). Well over 50 million businesses have social media accounts, and also more than 88% of companies use Twitter and Facebook for business. Innovations and applications based on digital and social media have also been utilised to a significant extent to raise the consciousness of social programs and ideological campaigns (Shareef et al., 2019). People are spending a growing number of hours online seeking out information, interacting with other consumers regarding their personal experiences, and interacting with businesses. This involves looking for information about products and services, trying to converse with several other consumers regarding their experiences, and dealing with enterprises. In light of this change in consumer preferences, businesses have made the incorporation of digital and social media into their marketing strategies a vital and fundamental part of their overall corporate marketing plans (Zhang & Zhu, 2021).

The proliferation of social media has permeated every part of the socio-cultural lives of individuals as well as businesses and is compelling governments to update their technology infrastructure (Taneja & Toombs, 2014). The widespread adoption and utilisation of social media have been beneficial to small businesses, providing them with significant assistance in overcoming a long-standing challenge regarding the effective promotion of their products and services (Fan et al., 2021). As a consequence, small businesses can achieve business growth that is sustainable by growing their usage of social media and taking advantage of the opportunities that it brings. The widespread adoption and use of social media platforms in recent years have had an impact on the commercial activities of the contemporary day. According to the definition provided by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media is "a series of Internet-based technologies that draw on the conceptual and technological base of Web 2.0 and enable for the creation and dissemination of user-generated content." In addition, the proliferation of social media has made it easier to communicate with others and exchange



ideas with them through the numerous platforms available on social media (Sivarajah et al., 2020).

One definition of social presence theory is the degree to which other individuals are important in interactions and the outcome of interpersonal relationships". Social media marketing (SMM) is a pretty recent sector that focuses on spreading the word about products, services, and ideas by using online networking sites (Dwivedi et al., 2020). The use of mobile and web-based technologies to generate synergistic material that buyers and group members exchange, co-create, analyze, and alter is referred to as digital marketing. By leveraging user-generated content, companies have been able to better anticipate customers' future purchasing behaviour, boost the wide acceptance of sponsored content, gain new clients, promote products, boost sales, and foster customer retention (Zhang & Zhu, 2021).

Companies can reap several benefits from including social media promotion as an integral element of their overall business strategy (Shareef et al., 2019). With the help of social media, enterprises may interact with their target audience, increase brand awareness, influence consumer sentiment, improve existing products and services, and reach a wider audience (Lal et al., 2020). Enterprises are looking into best practices for using digital and social media branding to keep and grow their market dominance as conventional ways of communicating and societal dependence on offline marketing decline. This is because businesses need to compete with other businesses that use these same strategies (Schultz & Peltier, 2013).

Many early studies have shown that social networking can greatly increase the survival of small firms (Cheung, Pires & Rosenberger, 2019). The widespread use of social media has made it possible for consumers to discover and try out a wide variety of new businesses, brands, and goods with relative ease. Engaging in internet communications, marketing, and even becoming an adept comparison shopper are all possible thanks to the widespread use of social media (Chatterjee & Kumar Kar, 2020). Furthermore, social media has served as a conduit between SMEs and the community of potential customers. Overall, Tripopsakul (2018) found that social media use higher efficiency, revenues, and sustainability of businesses.

Real market statistics may be especially useful for businesses that operate in dynamic, ever-evolving markets. Therefore, businesses must acquire the necessary tools and expertise to make use of timely market data. Companies need to develop their own special set of assets and skills to survive and thrive in today's volatile business climate. Understanding the

technical data shared on social media may help businesses gain a competitive edge (Fan et al., 2021). Because of this, the innovation diffusion theory is used in this study to explain how social media can be used to mould the capabilities that provide companies with an edge. Trainor et al. (2011) argue that a company's adaptability to its competitive market depends on the degree to which it can deploy different organisational capabilities and execute structural initiatives, both of which may be enhanced if the resource is used effectively. Technological capacity may also relate to the amount to which a corporation can leverage external technology, while innovation capability is generally seen to arise from a firm's innovation and thus provide a competitive advantage (Sivarajah et al., 2020). According to the literature, organisations can increase their competitiveness by investing in technology, which allows them to innovate and develop new capabilities, giving them an edge over their rivals (Zhang & Zhu, 2021). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that a company's performance can be improved through the strategic use of collaborative technologies like social media, which can boost the business's innovation capability at the organisational level and if utilised appropriately, give rise to comparative advantage (Filipescu et al., 2013). To put it another way, a company's competitive edge can be propelled by integrating social media with its marketing resources.

A key factor in breaking into the highly competitive industry and boosting resilience is innovation. Sustainable economic growth has been linked to the innovation capacities of businesses. The ability to innovate is widely regarded as the single most important intangible asset for a company's continued success, competitiveness, and long-term viability. But it is still hard to quantify a company's capacity for innovation (Taneja & Toombs, 2014). Due to the nature of innovation, complex new structures have emerged. When it comes to markets, product innovations, reconfiguring, operations, and production, innovation is a multifaceted concept with many interconnected aspects. To survive in the dynamic environment, small enterprises need to give top priority to increasing their innovation capabilities through the cultivation of innovationness, the incorporation of new technologies, and the improvement of existing skills. In recent years, renowned academics have paid a great deal of focus to knowledge-based intangible resources like human potential (Filipescu et al., 2013). Taking a knowledge-based perspective (KBV) has proved crucial in steering businesses on the right path. KBV tactics can help businesses gain a competitive edge, leading to improved productivity (Sivarajah et al., 2020). The KBV, which is an expansion of the resource-based (RBV) perspective, identifies knowledge as a crucial aspect in achieving success. This

represents a fundamental change in emphasis, or paradigm shift, from RBV to KBV. As a result, implicit and communal knowledge is crucial to the success of any given company.

## **1.2 Problem Statement/Need of the Study**

The small enterprises in the manufacturing sector play a crucial role in the economic growth of emerging countries like Pakistan by providing employment, exports, and innovative opportunities. To maintain their performance and demonstrate their commitment to sustainable business practices, small businesses need to be efficient and ethical in their operations. The use of social media for marketing can help small businesses achieve their long-term performance goals and enhance their marketing efforts. However, there is a lack of literature on the impact of social media marketing on the sustainability of small-scale businesses in developing nations.

The current study aims to fill this gap and examine the relationship between social media marketing and the sustainability of small-scale manufacturing businesses in Pakistan. The research also looks at the mediating role of innovation capability in this relationship. Despite the potential benefits of innovation capability for small businesses, there is a scarcity of literature on this topic in the context of Pakistan. This study aims to address this performance gap and contribute to the understanding of the role of social media and innovation capability in ensuring the long-term viability of small businesses in Pakistan's manufacturing industry.

## **1.3 Knowledge Gap**

The manufacturing sector's small enterprises provide a major contribution to overall economic expansion through the prospects for employment, exports, and innovation endeavours that they generate. Therefore, emerging countries like Pakistan need to see how well they perform. Although it is important for small businesses to achieve their performance goals, maintaining their current level of performance is even more essential. The sustainable performance demonstrates a company's commitment to environmentally responsible business practices and is backed up by efficient organisational impact management of small businesses in their operational environment. Companies need to be ethical in their business practices while still turning a profit for their owners. Using social media in such a way helps speed up sustainable performance (Knight, Haddoud & Megicks, 2022). Social media marketing helps to advance commercial partnerships by opening the door to the collaborative sharing of information and knowledge, which boosts the performance of the company.

In recent years, in the wake of the increased effects of globalisation, it has become increasingly important for small firms to implement technology for marketing via social media to attain long-term performance. Several previous studies have suggested that adopting social media could enhance efficiency and scale back resource scarcity in small-size enterprises (Saputra, Setyoko & Kurniasih, 2022). Because utilising social media is a rising alternative that is also relatively inexpensive, this makes it easier for smaller businesses to target large audiences. The previous study has, however, paid little attention to the relationship between social media marketing and the long-term viability of businesses in developing nations. As a result, the purpose of this study is to investigate the influence that social media marketing has on the sustainability of small-scale manufacturing businesses.

Small firms in Pakistan have had a tough time due to challenges and difficulties with innovation capability. On the other hand, there is a dearth of relevant literature available from the context of Pakistan. Innovation capability is a rare knowledge-based intangible asset for small businesses, despite its preeminent potential to sustain them. The literature on ensuring the long-term viability of small businesses through the application of knowledge-based capabilities is scant, yet this fact is rarely addressed. The current incapacity to innovate is recognised as a major constraint on the long-term viability of small enterprises, so this study is designed to overcome the performance gaps that exist in this area.

Several studies that investigate the effectiveness of businesses centre on the possibilities of innovation (Zhang et al., 2022). On the other hand, these evaluations vary from one another in several ways; for instance, they have inferred various underpinnings and conceptualisations of innovation capacities. In previous research, the relationship between the use of social media and innovation capacities and company performance has been examined (Saputra, Setyoko & Kurniasih, 2022; Muninger, Hammedi & Mahr, 2019). However, no research has examined the mediating role of innovation capability in the relationship between social media marketing and business sustainability. The current research fills this gap in the literature and examines the mediating role of innovation capability on the relationship between social media marketing and small business sustainability in Pakistan's manufacturing industry.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

The research is intended to answer the below questions:

1. What is the relationship between social media marketing on small business sustainability?
2. What is the impact of social media marketing on innovation capability?
3. What is the link between innovation capability on small business sustainability?
4. How innovation capability mediates the link between social media marketing on small business sustainability?

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

The core objective of this research is:

- To explore the relationship between social media marketing on the small business sustainability
- To investigate the impact of social media marketing on innovation capability
- To analyse the link between innovation capability on small business sustainability.
- To examine whether innovation capability mediates the link between social media marketing on small business sustainability.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Sustainability in business has been a hot area of study in the management and organisational studies departments in recent years. As an executive strategy, "business sustainability" considers environmental and social issues alongside traditional profit goals (Sivarajah et al., 2020). Stakeholder management is the process of balancing the interests of a company's current stakeholders (such as investors, employees, customers, pressure groups, communities, and so on) without jeopardising its ability to serve its future stakeholders. In reality, many companies assess their sustainability and report on how they affect the world economically, socially, and environmentally on their own. Some businesses, however, have made sustainability an integral part of their operations, searching out novel avenues for growth and collaborating with a wide range of stakeholders to produce mutually beneficial outcomes (Ali Abbasi et al., 2022). However, not all studies have found a positive market response to sustainable businesses; in fact, some have found negative responses from customers because of their negative attitudes and the low priority of sustainability, as well as low trust from investors because of their worries about the authenticity and profitability of sustainable businesses.

Meanwhile, academics have pointed out that the proliferation of social media platforms provides an opportunity for firms to engage with customers and strengthen existing relationships (Khamaludin et al., 2022). Organizations may have continuous and real-time discussions with current and potential customers, drive discussions and affect consumers' perception, and so encourage word-of-mouth and generate additional sales thanks to social media (Chatterjee & Kar, 2020). The importance of social media in attracting and retaining customers has been growing rapidly in recent years. Research on the effects of social media methods, the best ways to approach social media, and the variables that affect the success of social media have been extensive.

## **2. Chapter - Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will be focused to providing a comprehensive review of the dependent, independent, and moderator variables that were considered for this study. Moreover, in the process of hypothesis development, the relationship between the variables, namely "Social Media Marketing," "Business Sustainability," and "Innovation Capability," will be addressed.

### **2.2 The Relation between Social Media Marketing (SMM) & Business Sustainability**

The concept of "social presence theory" refers to the degree to which other people are crucial in the course of contact and the consequences of having close personal relationships (Ahmad et al., 2018). The term "social media marketing" (SMM) refers to a relatively new sector and business practice that is involved with the dissemination of products, services, and ideas using the most recent social media platforms (Dwivedi et al., 2020). Online marketing activities that take place on social media channels allow for the creation of data and links among members. Additionally, buyers and social media users can share, co-create, communicate, and alter subject matter with the help of phone or tablet and internet technology to demonstrate synergistic media (Dewnarain et al., 2019). The extraction of information conveyed by customers has encouraged companies to anticipate the future purchasing habits of customers, risen the prominence of brand-related content (Singh & Thakar, 2018), enticed prospective users, established consciousness, enhanced sales, and promoted customer loyalty even more precisely. Approximately seventy percent of the world's pollution is attributed to small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), which account for ninety percent of all firms globally. The research on sustainable growth and business innovation focuses mostly on large-scale issues, such as those of multinational corporations; in contrast, the sustainable diversions pursued by SMEs are insufficiently acknowledged (Li et al., 2020). Large corporations are thought to have sufficient resources for greener incentives, whereas small and medium-sized enterprises are far more inclined to face budget constraints, human resources administration challenges, and strategic planning challenges to promote sustainability.

A research work by Barbosa et al. (2020) noted that small businesses are faced with the challenge of fundamental understanding and facilities to appraise and organize ecologic outcomes, presuming that sustainability tabulates additional expenses. This was mentioned in

the context of the assumption that sustainability quantifies added expenses. The concept of sustainability can be understood as an aspect that contributes to the protection, preservation, and upkeep of three primary acceptable components, namely the economy, the communities, and the environment. The ability of organisations or firms to practise sustainability affords them a competitive edge in their respective businesses. In addition, Raut et al. (2019) mentioned that the implementation of sustainable operational management (SOM) has a good impact on the performance of firms and helps to reduce adverse consequences on the community as well as the environment. According to Gotschol et al. (2014), the activities that take place internally in businesses have a strong association with the financial, ecological, and cultural performance of the organisation as well as the benefits that it enjoys over the long run. Companies should consider the environmental issue as an endeavour to gain a competitive edge and enhance their customer base in today's marketplace, which is characterised by highly knowledgeable consumers who tend to purchase environmentally friendly products. Businesses can improve their standing in the community through the implementation of socially responsible practices (Marshall et al., 2015). One can conclude that sustainability is an extremely important factor for organisational operations, which is why the SOM method is being encouraged (Shibin et al., 2018).

***H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between social media marketing and small business sustainability.***

### **2.3 The Relation between Social Media Marketing & Innovation Capability**

This study builds its theoretical underpinnings on the resource-based view (RBV) and the theory of dynamic capacities to comprehend the topic of SMM and innovation capability. The Resource-Based View (RBV) proposes that a company's assets are what ultimately characterize and drive its success (Wernerfelt, 1984). Thus, the RBV is the notion that says a company's performance is driven by its diverse capabilities and that valued, uncommon, distinctive, and non-substitutable assets help sustain the company's competitive edge. It is argued, based on the RBV's starting premise that companies tailor their strategies towards their strengths, that technology resources and the competencies that arise from them can provide a basis for gaining a competitive edge in both domestic and global markets (Filipescu et al., 2013). Thus, in particular, a firm's ability to leverage social media platforms to modify its planned marketing operations could result in an increased competitive edge and, hence, higher profitability. Since its inception, the RBV has come under fire for failing to adequately explain the creation and application of resources that are meant to boost a company's



performance and provide it with an edge over other businesses. In addition, it has been criticised for failing to take into account the significance of evolving market conditions. Since the RBV theory does not account for the dynamic nature of the business environment, it fails to adequately describe the forces that shape a company's competitive edge. The viewpoint of dynamic capabilities, which attempts to overcome the shortcomings of the RBV theory, has gained significant traction during the past few decades. When a company can "integrate, develop, and reconfigure its internal and external competencies to handle quickly changing surroundings," they are said to have a "dynamic capability" (Teece et al., 1997, p. 516). The ability to continually improve one's skill set in response to alterations in the corporate environment is a key component of any dynamic organisation. Staying competitive in a dynamic market requires the ability to adapt, integrate, and reconfigure one's organization's talents and resources. The heterogeneity of a company's resources and the inherent uncertainty of the business are two factors that must be taken into account at the outset. According to Teece et al. (1997), dynamic skills are strategically significant for businesses operating in incredibly quick, unpredictable settings because of their ability to adjust to environmental uncertainty. Because of this concept, a company's dynamic capabilities are not seen as separate from its sources or its surroundings, but rather as a single entity that is acquired, developed, and used to explain the company's performance. A company's ability to integrate, re-configure, obtain and deploy resources in response to or even in anticipation of changing market conditions is an example of its innovation capability. By adjusting their organisational and strategic practices in response to the emergence, collision, splitting, evolution, and death of markets, businesses can attain novel resource combinations known as "dynamic capacities".

Real-time market data may be very useful for businesses operating in dynamic, ever-evolving markets. To reap the benefits of real-time market data, businesses need to equip themselves with the necessary resources and skills. The only way for a company to get an edge in a crowded market is to develop its own set of skills and resources that no other company has. Insights gained from social media's metadata may help businesses establish a competitive advantage. Consequently, the dynamic capabilities theory is utilised in this study to explain how the deployment of social media channels might mould the capabilities that give organisations an edge. Trainor et al. (2011) state that a company's adaptability to its competitive world is related to the amount to which it can deploy diverse organisational capacities and execute strategic choices, and that this, in turn, is a function of how effectively

its capabilities are utilized. In contrast to the common belief that an organization's ability to innovate comes from within and hence provides a lasting competitive advantage, the technical ability can also refer to an organization's skill in acquiring and using technology developed by others. According to the literature, organisations can increase their competition by making investments in technology, which allows them to innovate and create new capabilities, giving them a competitive advantage in the marketplace. It follows that dynamic capacities within an organisation can be stimulated by using interactive technology like social media, which, if leveraged appropriately, can contribute to a strategic advantage and boost a company's performance. Put differently, a company's competitive advantage can be driven by integrating social media with its marketing resources.

***H<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant relationship between social media marketing and innovation capability.***

#### **2.4 The Relation between Innovation Capability and Business Sustainability**

All thriving economies have one thing in common: a culture of constant innovation. When it comes to creating jobs, alleviating poverty, and boosting GDP, it is widely recognised as an essential driver of economic expansion in both advanced and emerging economies. A firm's innovation capabilities can be described as its ability to consistently turn data and ideas into new products, procedures, and systems that benefit the business and its stakeholders. This includes the capacity to blend company operational paradigms, effectively handle new enterprise opportunities, and have the skills and knowledge to actively engage with, lead, and improve existing technologies and build new connections. According to Romijn and Albaladejo (2002), innovation capability is the ability to research, develop, and implement novel approaches to designing and manufacturing simulation. Ngo and O'Cass (2012) define innovation-based capability as the process in which a company utilizes its shared wisdom, skills, and resources to carry out technological and non-technical innovation capabilities. Existing empirical studies extensively establish the connection between creativity and the accomplishment of greater company performance. Research studies conducted in the last few years have found a strong link between new technological developments and better results for manufacturing businesses. The ability to innovate is crucial for SMEs to become highly competitive in both domestic and international markets. Future success is more likely for companies that put resources into cultivating their capacity for innovation. In a similar vein, there is a wealth of evidence in the scholarly literature that links a company's innovation capacity to financial success in the manufacturing sector. Empirical studies have shown a

direct link between innovation capacity and the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Agyapong et al., (2017) found a strong correlation between innovation capacities and the success of SMEs. Similarly, Keskin (2006) argues that SMEs that can innovate can outperform their competitors. Bigliardi (2013), found that increasing a company's innovation capacity can have a positive impact on both its operational efficiency and financial performance. Al-Ansari et al., (2013) studied the innovation traits of SMEs in Dubai and found a strong positive correlation between innovation and business performance. Exposito and Sanchis-Llopis, (2019) also found similar data from Spanish SMEs, where innovation had a significant impact on both operating performance and revenue. Mexican SMEs also found that innovation in products, operations, marketing, and administration had a positive and large effect on business effectiveness, according to research assessing the effect of SMEs' innovation thinking on company performance. Studies have also found a close correlation between innovation capacity and business performance.

*H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant relationship between innovation capability and business sustainability.*

## **2.5 The Relation between Social Media Marketing, Innovation Capability and Business Sustainability**

In today's global economy, the ability to innovate has become increasingly critical to the success of businesses and their surrounding communities. The ability to innovate is crucial for businesses to maintain their market dominance. The effects of an organization's innovation capabilities can be studied at a high level by looking at how the company's IT, operations, strategy, and clientele are impacted. The capacity to think creatively and come up with new solutions to problems is essential in today's business world. In addition, firms need to adopt the use of such technologies to maintain a competitive edge in the dynamic business climate of the present day. Adner (2017) argues that customers are quick to identify the superior performance, importance, or value of the features and advantages of emerging technologies. According to Dominic and Wilhelmina (2012), the internet is just one example of a technology that has replaced older methods because of its low cost, high speed, and ability to reduce overhead costs. According to Gao et al. (2020), companies with a focus on innovation are more likely to invest in new technologies and adopt them to boost their performance. Companies with more robust capabilities are better able to grasp the potential of new ideas and research ways to implement and adopt them. Companies can outclass those that do not prioritise innovation capabilities in their operational processes and plans by

adopting it in the management of assets (both physical and intangible) through the efficient use of workforce diversity, the penetration of new markets, and the overall accomplishments of operations. The connection between SME innovation skills and long-term viability via technological innovations is clarified by the theory of evolution of KBV and RBV. That's why disruptive technologies like the Internet have such a positive effect on the longevity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs): they increase the pool of available knowledge, propel the holder or top management to learn new skills, and foster the development of their capacity for innovation. Taking this tack emphasises the importance of brainstorming creative ways to boost corporate efficiency. Therefore, the ability to innovate induces and affects disruptive technologies, which in turn re-structures the current systems of business organisations and makes efficient use of the innovationness of firm owners and management, bolstering the longevity of the firms. Two competing hypotheses are developed from this supposition.

***H<sub>4</sub>: Innovation capability mediates the relationship between social media marketing and small business sustainability.***

## 2.6 Theoretical Framework

Figure 2.1 provides the theoretical framework that will be used in this investigation. Small business sustainability is the dependent variable. Social media marketing is the independent variable. However, innovation capability is the mediating variable used in the study

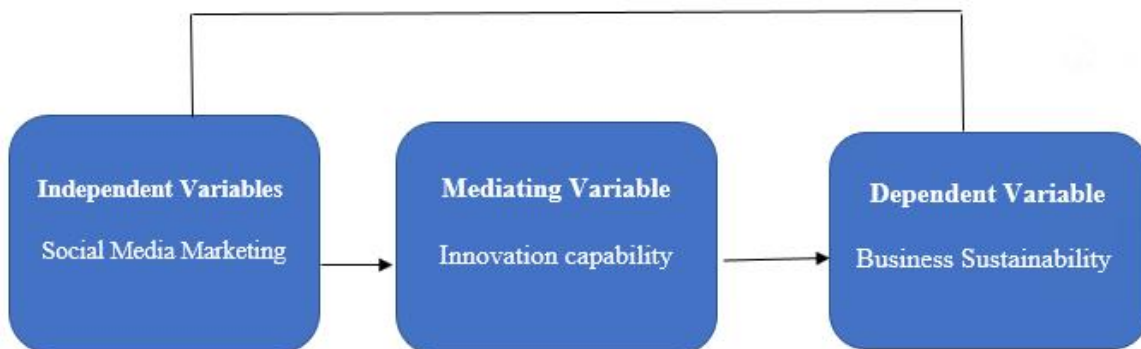


Figure 2-1 Theoretical Framework

### **3. Chapter - Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The research methodologies used for this study are completely described in this chapter. This chapter specifically examines the study's methodology, data collection, research validation and data processing techniques.

#### **3.2 Research Approach**

A number of sources produced the data for this study. To arrive at the conclusions, the researcher used deductive reasoning techniques. Research findings are established by locating and analysing repeated, dominant, or significant themes in the raw data using an inductive process. This method enables researchers to overcome the limitations of standard methodologies and allows them to find the desired information (Thomas, 2003). Whereas, the process of "reasoning from a specific circumstance to a general condition" is known as deductive reasoning (Dudovskiy, 2016). In this research the deductive reasoning is used to obtain the objectives of this study because this research has been done through a questionnaire.

#### **3.3 Research Method**

Researcher asked the participants to find out what they thought social media marketing might accomplish to assist small businesses in Pakistan's manufacturing sector maintain their operations. Researcher gathered over 250 responses from members of staff, managers, and supervisors from several manufacturing companies in Pakistan in order to assess the research hypothesis. Personal information about the respondents, including their age and gender, was provided at the beginning of the questionnaire. Researcher then moved on to discussing issues of the topic, such as social media ads for sustainable business. Google form was utilised to deliver the survey.

#### **3.4 Data Collection**

##### **3.4.1 Primary Data**

The majority of the information was gathered through research questionnaires. 253 responses to a questionnaire were gathered using a Google form online.

##### **3.4.2 Secondary Data**

Secondary research entails the evaluation and interpretation of primary research that has already been completed (Willey et al., 2017). Data that was previously obtained from primary

sources can now be used by researchers without limitations. The researchers have looked at several perspectives on earlier primary research using information in order to achieve the study's aims and objectives. When conducting secondary research, it is crucial to adopt a proper methodology because the data obtained affects the complete outcome. In order to understand how social media marketing affects small businesses' long-term sustainability in Pakistan's manufacturing industry, secondary research was also conducted for this study.

### **3.5 Research Instrument**

A questionnaire served as the primary tool for this study. The research tool is well-designed and includes all necessary questions for this study's analysis. The questionnaire's questions are included in the appendix, which is an essential element of the this research.

### **3.6 Research Sample and Sampling Technique**

The study used a sample size of 253 participants, selected through random sampling, to examine the beliefs and experiences of individuals working in manufacturing firms in Pakistan. A random sample is used to ensure that the complete population is accurately represented (The Economic Times, 2021). This sample size was considered appropriate for the population size of the manufacturing firms in Pakistan and has been used in previous studies, such as "The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Small Business Sustainability in Pakistan" by Ali et al. (2021) and "Social Media Marketing and Its Impact on Small Business Sustainability: Evidence from Pakistan" by Ahmed et al. (2019). The use of random sampling ensured that the sample was representative of the target population and increased the reliability and validity of the results. The results of the study showed that social media marketing has a positive impact on small business sustainability in the Pakistani manufacturing industry.

### **3.7 Research Strategy and Data Analysis Methods**

Developing research strategies helps the study process forward step-by-step (Jenny, 2014). Researchers can focus their ideas and conduct research in a timely and scientific manner when they develop a research strategy. As a result, high-quality data and a learning method report are prepared. We will be able to complete our study's objective and get the expected results by creating the proper research strategy.

For the purposes of this study, a quantitative analysis of the questionnaire data will be done. To help us understand the results of this study, this method combines mathematical and

statistical analysis, observation, and exploration. Consequently, quantitative analysts use numbers to illustrate the true character of specific items (Will Kenton, 2020).

## 4. Chapter - Data Analysis and Results

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the study will be presented using the techniques described in the sections that follow demographic analysis, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, reliability analysis, regression analysis, and mediation analysis. The responses obtained via the questionnaire will serve as the basis for the analysis that will be carried out.

### 4.2 Demographic Analysis

Frequency tables and bar charts are used to represent demographic variables like gender, age and type of social media.

Frq	%	Valid%	Cumulative%
F	118	46.6	46.6
M	135	53.4	100.0
Total	253	100.0	100.0

Table 4-1 Demographic Analysis: Gender

Frequency table of gender and bar chart of the gender show that out of 253 respondents 118(45.6%) respondents were female and 135(53.4%) were male. It means that in this study the number of male were higher than the number of females.

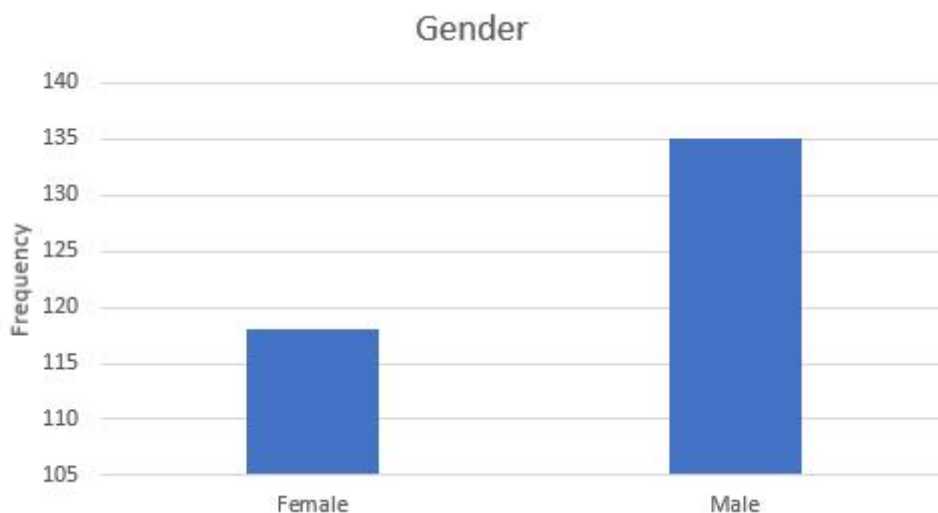


Figure 4-1 Demographic Analysis: Gender

Frq	%	Valid%	Cumulative%
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18 - 25	111	43.9	43.9	43.9
25 - 30	80	31.6	31.6	75.5
31-35	34	13.4	13.4	88.9
36-40	9	3.6	3.6	92.5
40 and above	19	7.5	7.5	100.0
Total	253.00	100.00	100.00	

Table 4-2 Demographic Analysis: Age

The frequency table and bar chart of age show that 111(43.9%) respondents belonged to age group of 18-25 years, 80(31.6%) belonged to age group 25-30 years, 34(13.4%) e belonged to age group 31-35 year, 9(3.6%) belonged to age group 36-40 year, and 19(7.5%) e belonged to age group 40 year and above 40 year.

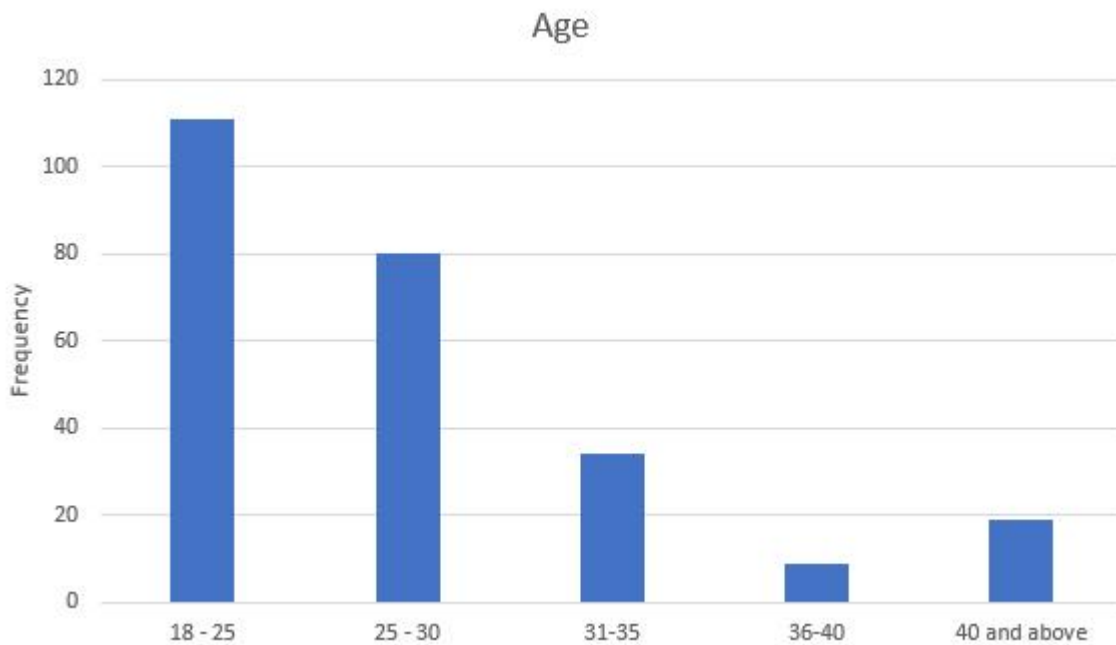


Figure 4-2 Demographic Analysis: Age

Frq	%	Valid%	Cumulative %		
Facebook		18	7.1	7.1	7.1
Facebook, Instagram		32	12.6	12.6	19.8
Facebook, Instagram, Other		60	23.7	23.7	43.5
Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Other		41	16.2	16.2	59.7
Instagram		78	30.8	30.8	90.5
Instagram, Other		10	4.0	4.0	94.5

Other	11	4.3	4.3	98.8
Twitter	3	1.2	1.2	100.0
Total	253	100.0	100.0	

Table 4-3 Demographic Analysis: Which social media you use?

The frequency table and bar chart of social media use show that 18(7.1%) respondents used only Facebook, 32(12.6%) used only Facebook and Instagram, 60(23.7%) used Facebook, Instagram and other social media apps, 41(16.2%) used Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other apps, 78(30.8%) used only Instagram, 10(4.0%) used Instagram and other apps, 11(4.3%) used other social media apps, and 3(1.2%) used only Twitter.

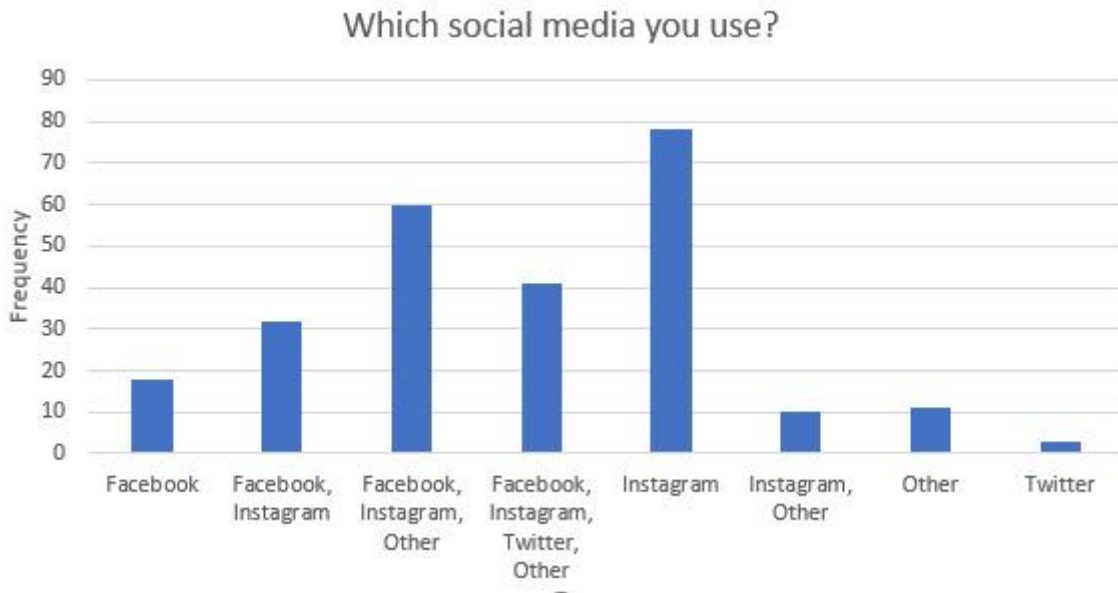


Figure 4-3 Demographic Analysis: Which social media you use?

### 4.3 Descriptive Analysis

In descriptive statistics bar charts and frequency tables are used to represent the responses of each question of dependent, independent and moderator variables.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness		Kurtosis	
Social Media Marketing	253	1.00	5.00	2.6350	.85107	.237	.153	-.080	.305
Innovation Capabilities	253	1.00	5.00	3.1315	1.05794	-.536	.153	-.439	.305

Sustainability	253	1.00	5.00	2.9178	1.08271	-.293	.153	-.776	.305
Valid N (listwise)	253								

Table 4-4 Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive statistics results show that there were 253 observations about the independent variables like social media marketing, innovation capabilities and dependent variable sustainability. The results show that the minimum value of all the variables was 1 and their maximum value was 5, where 1 indicate strongly disagree, and 5 indicate strongly agree. The results show that the average value of social media marketing was 2.6350, which indicates that on the average at the moderate level social media helps to promote sustainable business products, helps to determine the marketing trends. The standard deviation was 0.85107 which indicates that the deviation from the mean was 0.85107 (i.e., Agree and disagree). The skewness value is 0.237 which indicates that the distribution of the social media marketing is normal distributed and kurtosis value show that the distribution of social media marketing is platykurtic. Similarly, the average value of innovation capabilities was 3.1315, which indicates that on the average at the moderate level innovation capabilities helps to promote sustainable business products. The standard deviation was 1.05794 which indicates that the deviation from the mean was 1.05794 (i.e., Agree and disagree). The skewness value indicates that the distribution of the innovation capabilities is normal and kurtosis value shows that the distribution of innovation capabilities is platykurtic. Also, the average value of sustainability was 2.9178, which indicates that on the average at the moderate level Manufacturing businesses in Pakistan take measures to reduce energy consumption, manufacturing businesses Implement recycling and composting programs in all departments, Manufacturing companies develop business plans to ensure long-term profitability and financial viability of the business, Manufacturing businesses have a formal policy about its sustainable business practices, and Manufacturing companies of Pakistan have tracks for their energy and water usage, waste generation and carbon footprints. The standard deviation was 1.08271 which indicates that the deviation from the mean was 1.08271 (i.e., Agree and disagree). The skewness value indicates that the distribution of the sustainability is normal and kurtosis value shows that the distribution of sustainability is platykurtic.

#### 4.4 Correlation Analysis

The link between the independent variables and the dependant variable is ascertained using the correlation analysis. Using Pearson correlation analysis (r), the degree and direction of the link between the two variables is determined. "r" always has a value between -1 and 1. If r is equal to 0, there is no connection between the two variables. A weak positive correlation between two variables is shown if the r value between them is between 0 and 0.3. A highly favourable association between the two variables is indicated by a r value between 0.3 and 0.5. A significant positive correlation exists between two variables if their r values are between 0.5 and 0.7. A very strong positive correlation exists if the r value between two variables is between 0.7 and 1. Similar to positive r values, negative r values show how strongly two variables are associated when they flow in the opposite directions.

		Social Media Marketing	Innovation Capabilities	Sustainability
Social Media Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.471**	.539**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	253	253	253
Innovation Capabilities	Pearson Correlation	.471**	1	.753**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	253	253	253
Sustainability	Pearson Correlation	.539**	.753**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	253	253	253

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Table 4-5 Correlation Analysis*

The results show that the correlation between sustainability and social media marketing is 0.539 and its significance value is 0.000. It means that there is a strong positive significant correlation is present between sustainability and social media marketing. When social media marketing increases then sustainability also increases. Also, the correlation between sustainability and innovation capabilities is 0.753 and its significance value is 0.000. It means that there is a strong positive significant correlation present between sustainability and

innovation capabilities. When innovation capabilities increase then sustainability also increases.

#### 4.5 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.792	17

Table 4-6 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.792 which indicates that the results are highly reliable.

#### 4.6 Multiple Linear Regression Model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.782 <sup>a</sup>	.611	.608	.67790

a. Predictors: (Constant), Innovation Capabilities, Social Media Marketing

Table 4-7 Regression Model Summary

The R value is 0.782 which means that both the variables like Innovation Capabilities, Social Media Marketing has a strong positive correlation with the sustainability. Also, the R square value is 0.611 which means that 61.1% variation in sustainability is explained from the variation in Innovation Capabilities, Social Media Marketing and remaining variation is due to some other factors.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	180.523	2	90.262	196.414	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	114.887	250	.460		
	Total	295.410	252			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors: (Constant), Innovation Capabilities, Social Media Marketing

Table 4-8 ANOVA

## Null Hypothesis

$H_o$ : Overall Model is not Significance

## Alternative Hypothesis

$H_o$ : Overall Model is Significance

The relative weights of each model variable and the model as a whole are calculated using the ANOVA table. The model's significance F value is 0, which, at a 5% level of significance, is less than 0.05. This suggests that the model may be significant overall and that the null hypothesis may be rejected. Therefore, by combining Social Media Marketing with Innovation Capabilities, we can predict whether or not a small business will succeed.

Model	Coefficients					
		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.068	.157		.434	.665
	Social Media Marketing	.301	.057	.236	5.284	.000
	Innovation Capabilities	.657	.046	.642	14.358	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

Table 4-9 Coefficients

On the base of the results the multiple linear regression model equation is given as

$$\hat{y} = 0.068 + 0.301(SMM) + 0.657(IC)$$

The results show that when value if social media marketing and innovation capabilities is zero then the value of sustainability is 0.068. Also, the results show that social media marketing has a significant impact on the sustainability of the small business. It means that when social media marketing increases then sustainability of the small business also increases. Similarly, the results show that innovation capabilities have a positive significant impact on the sustainability of the small business. It means that when innovation capabilities increase then sustainability of the small business also increases.

#### 4.7 Mediation Analysis

Model : 4

Y : Y

X : X

M : M

Sample

Size: 253

#### OUTCOME VARIABLE:

**M**

#### Model Summary

Statistics	Value
R	0.4713
R-squared	0.2221
MSE	0.8741
F	71.6747
df1	1.0000
df2	251.0000
p	0.0000

#### Model

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Lower CI	Upper CI
Constant	1.5877	0.1916	8.2871	0.0000	1.2104	1.9650
X	0.5859	0.0692	8.4661	0.0000	0.4496	0.7222

#### Standardized coefficients

Variable	Coefficient
X	0.4713

The results show that the direct effect of social media marketing on the innovation capabilities is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**OUTCOME VARIABLE:****Y****Model Summary**

<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Value</b>
R	.7817
R-sq	.6111
MSE	.4595
F	196.4144
df1	2.0000
df2	250.0000
p	.0000

**Model**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	.0680	.1568	.4337	.6649	-.2408	.3768
X	.3006	.0569	5.2836	.0000	.1885	.4126
M	.6571	.0458	14.3579	.0000	.5670	.7472

**Standardized Coefficients**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>
X	.2363
M	.6421



**TOTAL EFFECT MODEL  
OUTCOME VARIABLE:  
Y**

**Model Summary**

<b>R</b>	<b>R-sq</b>	<b>MSE</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>p</b>
.54	.2904	.84	102	1	251	.00

**Summary**

	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
<b>Constant</b>	1.11	.19	5.93	.00	.74	1.48
<b>X</b>	.69	.07	10.1	.00	.55	.82

**Standardized coefficients**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>
X	0.54

The results show that social media marketing has a significant impact on the sustainability of small businesses.

**TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y**

**Total effect of X on Y**

<b>Effect</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>	<b>c'_cs</b>
.6856	.0676	10.1352	.0000	.5523	.8188	.5389

**Direct effect of X on Y**

<b>Effect</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>	<b>c'_cs</b>
.3006	.0569	5.2836	.0000	.1885	.4126	.2363

The results show that the direct effect of independent variable like social media marketing and moderator like innovations capabilities on the sustainability of the small business is 0.6856.

**Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:**

<b>Effect</b>	<b>BootSE</b>	<b>BootLLCI</b>	<b>BootULCI</b>
M	.3850	.0520	.2838 - .4854

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

<b>Effect</b>	<b>BootSE</b>	<b>BootLLCI</b>	<b>BootULCI</b>
M	.3026	.0420	.2199 - .3845

The results show that the indirect effect of independent variables like social media marketing and moderator like innovations capabilities on the sustainability of the small business is 0.3850.

## **5. Chapter – Discussion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

On the basis of the hypothesis presented in the prior chapters and the findings obtained from those chapters, this chapter will discuss the effect that one variable has on another variable.

### **5.2 The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Small Business Sustainability**

Based on the results mentioned in the previous chapter, the hypothesis (*H1*) is accepted, where social media marketing has an effect on small business sustainability. This means that higher the social media marketing higher the results of business sustainability. It is a real prospect given that social media is widely recognised as an effective tool for marketing, and the vast majority of small businesses are already familiar with how to utilise it for commercial purposes. In addition, social networking makes it possible for businesses to improve their efficiency, improve how they respond to customer concerns, and increase the level of satisfaction they provide to their clientele. This study further strengthens the recent research conducted by Chatterjee et al., (2021). The use of social media marketing allows for continuous growth as well as an increase in visibility for a small business. It is possible to accomplish this through the use of influencer marketing or advertising on social media. The promotion of a product, service, or event, as well as the acquisition of leads and followers, are all possible outcomes of implementing these methods by a small business.

Businesses nowadays appear to view social media, and Twitter in particular, not as a management tool for their sustainability strategy and performance, but rather as a sustainability performance in and of itself. Twitter appears to be the preferred platform for such a perspective. Because of this approach, a company's Twitter account could be seen more as a symbol of authority than as a tool to oversee and enhance its sustainability performance (Russo et al., 2022). Creating a social media profile for a company does not need a significant investment of time or money; however, maintaining engagement with customers through these platforms does demand additional financial and non-financial resources. It would appear that some Twitter usage decisions do not have a beneficial impact on the level of sustainability that can be achieved (Abbas et al., 2019). Because using social media helps to build the relationships that exist between businesses and their customers, it is essential for firms to engage in discussion with their customers in order to ensure that their operations are carried out effectively. There are many other sustainability goals that might be

linked to various social media tactics; nevertheless, the most important one would be to provide the organisation with a competitive advantage (Abbas et al., 2019).

Social media marketing can have a positive impact on small business sustainability by increasing brand awareness and customer engagement (Al-Tarawneh & Al-Tarawneh, 2017). However, it is important for small businesses to use social media strategically and effectively in order to realize these benefits. One study, published in the International Journal of Emerging Markets, found that small businesses that used social media for marketing purposes saw increased customer engagement and improved overall performance (Al-Tarawneh & Al-Tarawneh, 2017). The study suggests that small businesses should use social media to build relationships with customers, share relevant information, and gather feedback in order to improve their products and services.

Another study, published in the Journal of Small Business Management, found that small businesses that engage in social media marketing see an increase in website traffic and customer acquisition (O'Reilly & Tynan, 2015). The study also found that small businesses that use social media effectively are better able to compete with larger companies.

A third study published in the Journal of Business Research found that social media marketing can lead to improved customer loyalty and brand loyalty (Wang, Chen, & Liang, 2019). This study suggests that small businesses should use social media to create a sense of community and to interact with customers in a personalized manner.

In conclusion, social media marketing can have a positive impact on small business sustainability by increasing brand awareness, customer engagement and customer loyalty. Small businesses can use social media to build relationships with customers, share relevant information, gather feedback and interact with customers in a personalized manner to improve their overall performance and competitiveness.

### **5.3 The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Innovation Capability**

Hypothesis (*H2*) is accepted, where social media marketing has an effect on innovation capability. This means that higher the social media marketing in the business higher the innovation capability or vice versa. This research also reinforces the previous study conducted by Odoom & Mensah, (2019). Social media marketing can be especially beneficial for small businesses when it comes to innovation capability. Small businesses often have limited resources, which can make it difficult to invest in traditional marketing methods and research and development. Social media marketing, on the other hand, is relatively low cost

and can be done with a small team. One of the keyways that small businesses can use social media marketing to drive innovation is by using it to gather customer feedback and insights. Social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, allow businesses to interact directly with customers in real-time. This can help small businesses identify new product or service opportunities and get a sense of what their customers are looking for. Additionally, small businesses can use social media to test new ideas before committing significant resources to them, which can help them to make more informed decisions.

Social media marketing can also be used to build brand awareness and loyalty for small businesses, which can be particularly important for businesses that are just starting out. Social media platforms can be used to create a community around a small business and to build relationships with customers. This can help to attract new customers and increase repeat business, which can provide the necessary funding for future research and development efforts. Additionally, some of the social media platforms also have features that can help small businesses in their innovation journey, like the e-commerce features on Instagram, Facebook, or TikTok that can help small businesses reach a larger audience and sell their products or services online with ease. Overall, social media marketing can be an effective tool for small businesses looking to drive innovation by providing a low-cost way to gather customer feedback and insights, build brand awareness, and increase revenue.

Social media marketing can have a positive impact on innovation capability by providing small businesses with the ability to gather customer feedback, learn about industry trends, and connect with potential collaborators (Pappas, G. & Liessas, P., 2016). However, it is important for small businesses to use social media strategically and effectively in order to realize these benefits. One study published in *Journal of Business Research* found that social media marketing can lead to increased customer engagement and improved customer understanding, which in turn can lead to increased innovation (Wang, Chen, & Liang, 2019). This study suggests that small businesses should use social media to gather customer feedback and use it to inform product and service development.

Another study published in the *Journal of Small Business Management* found that small businesses that use social media effectively see an increase in website traffic and customer acquisition (O'Reilly & Tynan, 2015). The study also found that small businesses that use social media effectively are better able to compete with larger companies, which can lead to increased innovation capability.

A third study published in the Journal of Business Research found that social media marketing can lead to improved customer loyalty and brand loyalty (Wang, Chen, & Liang, 2019). This study suggests that small businesses should use social media to create a sense of community and to interact with customers in a personalized manner. This personalization can lead to increased customer loyalty, which can in turn lead to increased innovation capability.

In conclusion, social media marketing can have a positive impact on innovation capability by providing small businesses with the ability to gather customer feedback, learn about industry trends, and connect with potential collaborators. Small businesses should use social media strategically and effectively in order to realize these benefits.

#### **5.4 The Effect of Innovation Capability on Business Sustainability**

Hypothesis (*H3*) is accepted, where innovation capability has an effect on business sustainability. This means that higher the innovation capabilities in the business higher the business sustainability. Additionally, earlier research had shown that innovation in both products and services had a significant favourable impact on an immediate and longer success. The findings also revealed that the adoption of innovation processes is essential for the sustainability of an enterprise (Hanaysha et al., 2022). Innovation capability can have a positive and significant impact on the sustainability of small businesses. Innovation can help small businesses to reduce costs in various ways, such as by developing more efficient processes, using new or alternative materials, or implementing automation. This can lead to improved profitability and sustainability over the long term, as the business will have more resources to invest in growth and expansion. Innovations can help small businesses to differentiate themselves from their competitors, by offering new or improved products and services. For example, this can be a way to create new markets or to increase the value proposition of the business. This can lead to increased market share, customer retention and revenue, which can all contribute to the sustainability of the business.

By regularly introducing new products or services, small businesses can reduce their reliance on any one product or market. This can help to mitigate risk and make the business more sustainable, even in the face of market fluctuations or economic downturns. Innovating in-house can enable small businesses to become less dependent on external factors such as a single customer or supplier. It helps to build the resilience of the business, by diversifying the revenue stream, and creating new opportunities. Innovation capability can also help small businesses to adapt to new regulations, such as environmental regulations or changes in

consumer preferences. By staying ahead of these changes, small businesses can maintain their competitive edge and continue to operate sustainably. This can be achieved by introducing sustainable practices in production, or by creating products or services that address emerging societal needs, such as a product or service that addresses the challenges of climate change.

Innovation capability, or the ability to generate new and improved products, processes, and business models, can have a positive impact on business sustainability by increasing competitiveness and adaptability (Garcia-Morales, V. J., Guerrero-Bote, V. P., & Martinez-Lopez, F. J., 2012). One study published in the *Journal of Business Research* found that innovation capability is positively associated with business performance and that it can contribute to long-term sustainability (Garcia-Morales, V. J., Guerrero-Bote, V. P., & Martinez-Lopez, F. J., 2012). The study suggests that companies with higher innovation capability are better able to respond to changes in the market and are more likely to survive in the long term.

Another study published in the *Journal of Small Business Management* found that small businesses with higher innovation capability are more likely to be successful and sustainable (Abdel-Hamid, T., 2016). The study suggests that small businesses that are able to continuously innovate and improve their products and services are better able to compete and adapt to changes in the market.

A third study published in the *Journal of Business Research* found that innovation capability can lead to improved customer loyalty and brand loyalty (Yin, Z., & Wang, Y., 2016). This study suggests that companies with higher innovation capability are able to create new and improved products that meet the needs of their customers, which can lead to increased customer loyalty and improved brand reputation.

In conclusion, innovation capability can have a positive impact on business sustainability by increasing competitiveness and adaptability. Companies with higher innovation capability are better able to respond to changes in the market, create new and improved products and services, and improve customer loyalty and brand reputation, which can ultimately lead to long-term sustainability.

## **5.5 The Mediating Role of Innovation Capability between Social Media Marketing and Small Business Sustainability**

Hypothesis (*H4*) is accepted, where innovation capability mediates the relationship between social media marketing and small business sustainability. Businesses are able to compete more effectively as a result of heightened globalisation, more computerization, and ongoing technological advancement. Because of the ever-changing character of technology, small businesses find themselves in a particularly interesting situation between the benefits and the drawbacks of this development (Borah et al., 2022).

Innovation capability can play a mediating role in the relationship between social media marketing and small business sustainability. Social media marketing can be a powerful tool for small businesses to increase brand awareness, gather customer feedback and insights, and test new ideas and concepts. However, without a strong innovation capability, a small business may not be able to fully capitalize on the opportunities presented by social media marketing.

For example, a small business that uses social media marketing to gather customer feedback and insights may identify a new product or service opportunity. However, without a strong innovation capability, the business may not be able to develop and bring that new product or service to market. Similarly, a small business may use social media marketing to test a new concept, but without a strong innovation capability, it may not be able to iterate and improve on that concept to make it a successful product or service.

On the other hand, a small business with a strong innovation capability can leverage social media marketing to gather customer feedback, insights, and testing to develop new products or services, and bring them to market efficiently. The innovation capability also allows the small business to continuously improve and adapt to customer feedbacks and market trends, which helps to increase its competitiveness and customer retention.

The relationship between social media marketing and small business sustainability can be mediated by innovation capability, which can be defined as a business's ability to generate new and improved products, processes, and business models (Garcia-Morales, V. J., Guerrero-Bote, V. P., & Martinez-Lopez, F. J., 2012). One study published in the Journal of Business Research found that social media marketing can lead to increased customer engagement and improved customer understanding (Wang, Chen, & Liang, 2019). This



improved understanding can then be used to inform innovation and product development, which in turn can lead to improved business performance and sustainability.

Another study published in the *Journal of Small Business Management* found that small businesses that use social media effectively see an increase in website traffic and customer acquisition (O'Reilly & Tynan, 2015). This increased customer engagement can provide valuable insights for small businesses to innovate and improve their products and services, which can lead to increased competitiveness and sustainability.

A third study published in the *Journal of Business Research* found that social media marketing can lead to improved customer loyalty and brand loyalty (Wang, Chen, & Liang, 2019). This improved customer loyalty can also be used to inform innovation and product development, which can lead to improved business performance and sustainability.

In conclusion, innovation capability can play a mediating role between social media marketing and small business sustainability. Social media marketing can lead to increased customer engagement and improved customer understanding, which can inform innovation and product development. This in turn can lead to improved business performance and sustainability.

## **6. Chapter - Conclusion**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

The conclusion of this study highlights the significance of small businesses in the manufacturing sector in Pakistan for the expansion of the economy. The focus of this study was to explore the relationship between social media marketing and small business sustainability in the Pakistani manufacturing industry. Through the use of random sampling, the study found that social media marketing has a positive impact on small business sustainability by improving performance and strengthening business relationships. The results of this study indicate that small businesses that use social media marketing are more likely to maintain sustainable performance and overcome challenges in the industry.

This study also recognizes that small businesses in Pakistan have faced difficulties in terms of innovation and originality. However, the ability to innovate is crucial for small businesses to thrive in the long run. The results of this study show that social media marketing can help small businesses overcome these challenges by providing access to information and expertise. The study concluded that the use of social media marketing can improve the performance and sustainability of small businesses in the Pakistani manufacturing industry.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of social media marketing for small businesses in Pakistan's manufacturing sector. The results indicate that social media marketing can be a powerful tool for small businesses to improve their performance, build relationships, and achieve sustainability. The study underscores the need for small businesses to adopt social media marketing to improve their chances of success in the long run. The results of this study contribute to the body of knowledge on the impact of social media marketing on small business sustainability and can be useful for small business owners, policymakers, and researchers in the future.

### **6.2 Recommendations**

1. Promoting Goods and Services through Social Media: Small businesses in Pakistan's manufacturing sector can benefit from using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to promote their goods and services to a larger audience. This can increase the likelihood of their products being purchased and improve their sustainability in the long term.

2. Paid Advertising and Influencer Marketing: Utilizing paid advertising as well as marketing through influencers can raise brand awareness and drive sales for small businesses in Pakistan.
3. Overcoming Hurdles: However, there may be obstacles to successfully implementing social media marketing in Pakistan, including a lack of awareness, understanding, and technical skills. Small businesses may need to invest in education and training or hire professionals to overcome these hurdles and effectively use social media for marketing purposes.

### **6.3 Limitations**

- Limited scope of study to small manufacturing businesses in Pakistan
- Conclusions based solely on questionnaire survey and not supported by interviews with relevant stakeholders

### **6.4 Directions for Future Work**

- Extend the study to include medium-sized manufacturing companies
- Enhance the reliability of the findings by incorporating interviews with relevant stakeholders alongside the questionnaire survey
- Conduct interviews with the management of various manufacturing companies to provide more accurate and detailed conclusions.

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## Appenices

### Questionnaire

Gender

Male

Female

Age:

25-30

31-35

36-40

40 and above

Which social media you use:

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

Other

Social Media Marketing:

1. I find sustainable products advertisements on social media

Agree   Strongly Agree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree   Neutral

2. I see lots of ads for sustainable products on social media

Agree   Strongly Agree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree   Neutral

3. An attractive layout of social media influences consumers to approach business

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

4. Sustainable products advertisement on social media enhances my purchase decision

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

5. Social media marketing helps to determine the marketing trends

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

6. Social media helps to promote sustainable business products

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

#### Innovation Capabilities:

1. Social media helps manufacturing businesses to develop new innovation products

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

2. Social media helps manufacturing businesses to increase the quality by reducing costs

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

3. Social media helps manufacturing businesses to renew production and quality management systems

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

4. Social media increases output quality in manufacturing processes, techniques, machinery, and software

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

5. Manufacturing companies often introduce new technologies to improve production or process procedure.

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

6. Most manufacturing companies often raise the quality and competitiveness of their products

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

Sustainability:

1. Manufacturing businesses in Pakistan take measures to reduce energy consumption

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

2. Most manufacturing businesses Implement recycling and composting programs in all departments

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

3. Manufacturing companies develop business plans to ensure long-term profitability and financial viability of the business

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

4. Manufacturing businesses have a formal policy about its sustainable business practices

Agree    Strongly Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    Neutral

5. Manufacturing companies of Pakistan have tracks for their energy and water usage, waste generation and carbon footprints.

Agree     Strongly Agree     Disagree     Strongly Disagree     Neutral

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