RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA (OSM) USAGE AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNICATION IN SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between the Online Social Media (OSM) usage and the attitude towards entrepreneurial communication within the context of Saudi Arabia. This cross-sectional study adopts a quantitative approach using an online survey of 606 users. Data was collected from (a) Young entrepreneurs; (b) Incubatee entrepreneurs; and (c) School age aspirant entrepreneurs using an online survey with 270 men and 336 women participated in the survey. The analyses were executed using the partial least squares (PLS) approach. Findings suggest that Usage of OSM have a positive impact on attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communication. The impact can be classified into three major themes of improvement in; (a) self-confidence; (b) personal verbal communications; (c) expression of mind; resulting positive responses for business development. The gender was also found to be significant moderating variable which reveals variations on the degree of effect between males and females. To the best of our knowledge, earlier researches failed to provide empirical link between assimilation of social media and attitude towards entrepreneurial communication skills within the Saudi context, taking into account the moderation effect of among gender groups. One of the hallmarks of research finding is identification of OSM Apps as a candidate supplement for personal communication within the business environment, which opens the chance for future research to study this area of knowledge.

Keywords: Online Social Media (OSM), Attitude, Entrepreneurial Communication, Technology Usage, Information Systems, Saudi Arabia.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial Communication plays a pivotal role in the success of any entrepreneur. It performs a number of functions for entrepreneurs especially at the time of launching a start-up. For example it reduces the uncertainty about their product quality and quality of services of the start-ups and it also helps to differentiate the start-ups from their rivals (Fischer & Reuber, 2014). A number of techniques, technologies and practices can be employed to enhance the entrepreneurial Communications to help entrepreneurs expand their reach horizon. Chief among them is the Online Social Media (OSM).

OSM - also referred as Social Networking Sites (SNS), has emerged as the greatest impactor on the attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communication especially among young entrepreneurs. It gives two-way correspondences, which enable individuals to impart better, without having confinements and at no extra cost. Since their presentation, OSM have pulled in a huge number of clients around the globe, a significant number of which have absorbed these

advancements into their day by day rehearses. Inarguably, young entrepreneurs are normally most of OSM clients gathering and are viewed as early adopters of OSM around the world (Thornton, 2017).

Saudi Arabia has recorded significant increase in the number of OSM users in the last decade. This infers that Saudi society is likely to be impacted by this revolution. As such, studying this phenomenon by social scientists and management experts becomes a must. According to report of Saudi Ministry of Communications and Information Technology published in September 2019, Saudi Arabia has recorded more 18 million users (almost 60% of Saudi population) and this has reached within last couple of years. Facebook has emerged as the largest social media giant having largest number of users in the Kingdom (approximately 11 million users). While Twitter amounted to 9 million users and YouTube witnessed 7 million Saudi users (Saudi Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, 2019). Although previous research suggested that OSM usage level can be used as a predictor of behavioral communication, assimilation of OSM has not been studied sufficiently and the adoption stage of OSM has been the focused of previous global studies (Curras-Perez et al., 2014; Nah et al., 2013; J.A.J.H.S.O.M. Young, Leadership & Governance, 2017), whereas very few researchers have examined the assimilation of OSM (Bharati et al., 2014). While the adoption of innovation implies the initial success of a system through using a new innovation (Agarwal, 2000; Damanpour, 1991), the assimilation implies the absorption of a technology into the routines of an entity or individual. Second, although earlier researchers within the Saudi context and Middle East region attempted to study linkage between Facebook and Twitters users and communications (Al-Khaddam, 2013; Maqableh et al., 2015; Alqahtani, 2016; Hussein, 2016), the current research departs from previous studies and attempts to address the gap by investigating the effect of advance usage of the most common Apps (such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snap Chat, YouTube, Instagram, Periscope, and WhatsApp) on the attitude towards entrepreneurial communication and variation between males and females within the context of Saudi Arabia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature of this study is two folded due the shortage of research that have investigated the effects of assimilation of OSM the attitude of individual's communications.

OSM Use

The communication among people has been revolutionized by social media platforms over the last few years (Graffi et al., 2010; Parveen, 2012; J.A.J.H.S.O.M. Young, Leadership & Governance, 2017). Boyd & Ellison (2007) mentioned that billions of people have assimilated these technologies into their daily lives. Reports indicate that Facebook has 2.41billion active users per month on June 2019[1], WhatsApp has half a billion daily users[2] while Twitter has over 330 million monthly active users[3] in first quarter of 2019. As result, OSM has attracted researchers to study these phenomena. A sample review of literature reveals that OSM has received growing interest by researchers to study the antecedents affecting the use of OSM technology and its multi-dimensional aspects from organizational and individual perspective. Table 1 provides a summary of literature on OSM.

Where:

[1]https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/

[2]https://www.statista.com/statistics/730306/whatsapp-status-dau/

[3]https://www.statista.com/statistics/282087/number-of-monthly-active-twitter-users/

		OSM Types				
Authors	**Objectives**	**Twitter**	**Facebook**	**YouTube**	**SnapChat**	**Others**
Ahmed et al.,	Exploring factors taht could influence the adoption of social media by SME's in UAE, and its impact on performance	x	x	x		
Dhir et al., 2018	Determinants of user intention to use a specific social media feature		x			
Huang et al., 2018	Factors motivating Young Adults for Instagram Use					x
Hussein, 2016	The negative effect of social network on the social values: Qassim female students				x	
Young, 2017	The adoption and utilization of social media in non-profit human service organizations	x	x			x
Westerman et al., 2016	Exploring the potential source of students' attitudes towards social media	x	x			
Alqahtani, 2015	Effects of social networking on higher education in Saudi Arabia	x	x			
Tajudeen et al., 2017	The imapct of social media on information accesibilty	x	x			
Atkin et al., 2015	Explores the diffusion theory in the new media environment					x
Park et al., 2015	Comparing Twitter and Youtube networks in information diffusion	x		x		

Table 1
A SAMPLE REVIEW OF LITERATURE[*]

[*]Author Source

The literature review on OSM implies that the research trend can be categorized into three broad streams. First stream of research focuses on adoption and usage of social media (e.g., Young et al., 2017; Curras-Perez et al., 2014; Sun & Wang, 2012; Kate et al., 2010). The second stream highlights the technical aspects of social media (e.g., Krishnan et al., 2013; Burmeister, 2009). The third-stream is concern with the effects of OSM (e.g. Hussein, 2016; Munnukka & Järvi, 2014; Grassman & Case, 2009; Kreps & Pearson, 2009). This research contributes to the third stream with an aim address the gap in literature to measure the effect of OSM assimilation (post-adoption) on individual's attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communication.

OSM and Entrepreneurial Communications

Many studies have explored entrepreneurs attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communication (e.g. Cleland et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2006; Kovac & Sirkovic, 2017; Tripathi et al., 2019), providing a starting point for researchers to explore new opportunities by studying who other factors could influence the Entrepreneurial Communications.

The literature suggests that Online Social Media (OSM) has received attention by some researchers as a predictor of many behavioral outcomes for individual perspective. Table 2 provides a summary of literature of OSM and its effect on behavioral outcomes.

Table 2 A SUMMARY OF LITERATURE ON OSM AND BEHAVIORAL OUTCOMES*							
Author	Title	Scope of focus		Findings of effect		Investigation of Differences between Groups	Country
		Entrepreneurs	Non-Entrepreneurs	Positive	Negative		
Kalpidou et al., (2011)	The relationship between Facebook and the well-being of undergraduate college entrepreneurs		*	Social adjustment	Self-esteem, Emotional adjustment, Academic adjustment	Age	US
Valenzuela et al., (2012)	The social media basis of youth protest behavior: The case of Chile		*	Protest Activity	NA	NA	Chile
Al-Khaddam (2013)	Impact of social networks on interpersonal communication of the entrepreneurs University College Irbid Girls: Facebook as a model	*		NA	Interpersonal Communication	Place of Residence	Jordan
Maqableh et al., (2015)	The impact of social media networks websites usage on students' academic performance.		*		Student Performance		Jordan
Alqahtani (2016)	Effects of Social Networking on Higher Education in Saudi Arabia. In Social Networking and Education		*	Learning Management, Personal Development, Psycho Social	Interpersonal Communication		Saudi Arabia
Hussein (2016)	The effect of social network SnapChat on the emergence of some negative social values (social hatred) based on the perspectives of Qassim female: A survey study		*	Social Hatred Values		Age	Saudi Arabia
Turan & Kara, (2018)	Online social media usage behavior of entrepreneurs in an emerging market	*		Attitudes about social media (linked to entrepreneurs perception)		NA	Turkey

Suleiman et al., (2020)	Scale Validity and Reliability of Social Media and Entrepreneurial Skill Development among Tertiary Institution Students in Nigeria	*		Entrepreneurial Skill Development			Nigeria
Pakura & Rudeloff, (2020)	How entrepreneurs build brands and reputation with social media PR: empirical insights from start-ups in Germany	*		Communication outcome to building up brand and reputation			Germany
							*Author Source

The above research included investigations for the impact of OSM on academic performance (Kalpidou et al., 2011; Maqableh et al., Ahn et al., 2015), social change (Kalpidou et al., 2011; Hussein, 2016), attitude and hehaviour (Valenzuela et al., 2012; Turan & Kara, 2018) and Communication skills (Al-Khaddam, 2013; Suleiman et al., 2020; Pakura & Rudeloff, 2020). Few other studies (e.g. Al-Khaddam, 2013; Turan, & Kara, 2018; Suleiman et al., 2020; Pakura & Rudeloff, 2020) attempted to discover association between social media and entrepreneurial Communication skills. In addition, age factor (e.g. Kalpidou et al., 2011; Hussein, 2016) and Place of Residence (Al-Khaddam, 2013) were found to represent a significant moderation effect on linkage the level of impact of OSM on Communication skills development which suggest the existence of moderation forces effecting this phenomenon. Furthermore, the studies that were conducted within the context of Saudi Arabia, were limited to one institution and used sample sizes such as 100 (e.g. Alqahtani, 2016) and 200 (Hussein, 2016), which suggest need large scale survey. Moreover, the majority of researcher with the middle east is has more focus on female groups (Al-Khaddam, 2013; Hussein, 2016; Maqableh et al., Ahn et al., 2015) which call for more study to investigate the variation between genders.

By synthesizing the above literature, the following observations can be made which offers justifications for this study. Firstly, OSM platforms and Apps have received high popularity among Saudi users still require more in-depth investigation to understand the phenomena through empirical studies (except Facebook and Twitter which have received some attention). Secondly, although early researchers attempted to link between social media with Communication skills, there are a little literature investigating the linkage between social media and development of entrepreneurial Communication skills. Thirdly, early studies attempted to study the association between social media usage or adoption with behavioral impact including Communication skills, to the best of our knowledge, the association between the assimilation of social media and communication skills is yet to be explored. The assimilation (Volume of use, Diversity of use and intensity of use), implies the absorption of a technology into the routines of an entity or individual. Fourthly, although early researchers studied the relationship between social media and behavioral and interpersonal changes within the Saudi context, the effect of OSM on entrepreneurial Communication skills was not covered. In addition, most studies within the Saudi context were conducted on single institution, which call for more national wide studies. Fifthly, the literature suggests that there is a need for empirical research that develops and tests a conceptual model to examine the connection between OSM Usage, its impact on individual's attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communication.

Thus, the current study departs from previous studies and attempts to address the gap by investigating an area that has not been studied within the context of Saudi Arabia. The study investigate the degree to which the assimilation of various OSM apps (including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, SnapChat, YouTube, Instagram, Periscope and WhatsApp) can enhance the attitude towards entrepreneurial communication within the context of Saudi Arabia using a national-wide survey with the focus on potential differences between male and female users.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

OSM Assimilation

Literature suggests that OSM Assimilation can be operationalized by four facets of assimilation including volume, diversity, breadth, and depth (Massetti & Zmud, 1996). Later breadth and depth were combined into one construct as intensity (Ravichandran, 2000). Based on the guidelines available in the literature, and results from pilot case studies, this research defines OSM assimilation as volume, diversity and intensity (business use intensity and personal use intensity) of OSM (Massetti & Zmud, 1996; Ravichandran, 2000; Singh et al., 2012). The volume is represented by the total number of OSM Apps used. The OSM diversity is represented by the variety of OSM Apps used with each having different functions and capabilities (such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Snap Chat). The intensity facet consists of two constructs, that is; business use intensity and personal use intensity. The business use intensity represent the extent to which OSM features are utilized for performing/accomplishing business objectives. The personal use intensity represent the extent to which OSM features are utilized for performing/accomplishing personal user objectives (Figure 1).
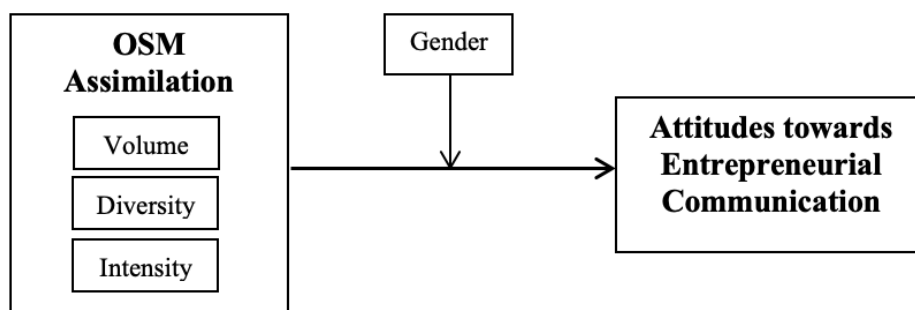
FIGURE 1
CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF OSM ASSIMILATION AND ATTITUDE TOWARD ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNICATION

Attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communication

Literature suggests that attitude is a psychological construct and refers to a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviors toward a particular object, person, thing, or event (Perloff, 2010). Attitudes are often developed during early childhood and as a result of upbringing environments and experiences and they can have an influence over individual's behavior. There are many factors play a pivotal role in attitude formation or influencing attitudes. These factors

include, social factors, direct instruction, family, prejudices, personal experience, educational and religious institutions, physical factors, economic status and occupations and media. More recently impact of social media has been linked with attitude towards communications (Fuse & Lanham, 2016). This construct has been adopted for this study as respondents include different categories of entrepreneurs and this construct measures their attitude towards entrepreneurial communication. Thus, the study hypothesizes the OSM impact as follows.

H1: OSM Usage has positive impact on attitude towards entrepreneurial communication.

Control Variable: Gender

The literature suggest that the effect of OSM usage on the attitude towards communication can be moderated by factors such as age, gender, and area of residence (Kalpidou et al., 2011; Hussein, 2016). Early research within the area of middle east have focused more on studying the relationship between OSM and behavioral outcome using female sample, assuming that the lifestyle and attributes of females play a vital role in their interaction with social media (Al-Khaddam, 2013; Hussein, 2016; Maqableh et al., Ahn et al., 2015). Nevertheless, it is argued that males have also different lifestyle and attributes compared to females, in relation to the factors that would drive them to use OSM and the part of their lifestyle and attribute that would be impacted by the use of OSM (Blond, 2008; Dakanalis et al., 2015; Hawi, & Samaha, 2017; Girard et al., 2017). Thus, the study hypothesizes the moderation effect of gender as follows.

H2: The influence of OSM on the attitude towards entrepreneurial communication varies due to differences in the user's gender

Research Methodology

This research follows the positivistic philosophy (Collin & Hussey, 2003). In positivistic philosophy researchers develop research hypotheses based on the observations that are derived from previous literature and theoretical models together with support of direct feedback (exploratory qualitative study) from OSM and Social Science experts. The exploratory study provided valuable insights and suggestions for the operationalization for the instruments items. This is followed by the design of a valid research method to test them.

Questionnaire Design

This cross-sectional study adopts a quantitative approach (Mingers, 2003) and used an online survey for its data collection. The instrument used for data collection was developed through review and analysis of previous literature as well as an initial exploratory study. After the conclusion of exploratory study analysis and refinement of measurement instrument based on the analysis, a ten panel of experts composed of academicians and practitioners was invited to evaluate the initial instrument and suggest changes if required. In addition, before the launch of the large-scale survey phase, the final version of the survey was pilot tested with 10 OSM users to ensure the content validity of the measures. Table 3 depicts the final instrument design.

Table 3 THE OPERATIONALIZATION FOR THE INSTRUMENTS ITEMS		
Variable	**Measure**	**Reference**
OSM Volume (VOL)	➢ The sum of OSM platforms/apps that are being used frequently	Adopted from Massetti & Zmud (1996)
OSM Diversity (DIV)	➢ Types of OSM that are used and their frequency usage (9 items – three point Likert scale).	Adopted from Massetti & Zmud (1996); Zolkepli & Kamarulzaman, 2015; Westerman et al., 2016; and Exploratory Case Study
	• Facebook	
	• Twitter	
	• LinkedIn	
	• Snap Chat	
	• YouTube	
	• Instagram	
	• Periscope	
	• WhatsApp	
	Others. Please list	
OSM Business Intensity (INT1)	➢ The extent to which OSM functions are being utilized during daily business activity (12 items - 6 point Likert scale).	Adopted from Ravichandran, 2005; Singh et al., 2012 and Exploratory Case Study
	➢ For what business purpose/function you are using the OSM: (select more than one if applicable)	
	• Building business contacts	
	• Build brand awareness	
	• Create new content	
	• Interactions with Customers	
	• Drive viewers to blog and website	
	• Highlight expertise	
	• Identify potential leads	
	• Market research	
	• Recruitment	
	• Advertisement	
	• Product or service information	
	• Read Content	
OSM Personal Intensity (INT2)	➢ The extent to which OSM functions are being utilized during daily individual activity (12 items - 6 point Likert scale).	Adopted from Ravichandran, 2005 and Exploratory Case Study
	➢ For what personal purpose/function you are using the OSM: (select more than one if applicable)	
	• Communication with Friends and Family	
	• Following Religious leaders	
	• Information seeking	
	• Following fashion/trend	

	• Entertainment,	
	• Friendship/companionship	
	• Passing time,	
	• Social interaction	
	• Knowledge Advancement	
	• Relaxation	
	• Self-Expression	
	• Professional Advancement	
Attitude towards entrepreneurial communication' Attitude (ATD)	• I am more confident communicating on social media than I am communicating verbally	Adopted from Fuse & Lanham, 2016; and Exploratory Case Study
	• I rely on social media as my main form of communication	
	• Social media has improved my oral communication	
	• Social media has improved my overall confidence	
	• People seem to respond more positively to me on social media than in verbal communication	
	• Social media has empowered me to speak my mind in verbal communication	
	• Social media has allowed me to make friend more easily.	
	• (7 items - 5 Likert scale).	

The concept of volume and diversity were adopted from Massetti & Zmud, (1996), and items of used for measuring diversity were derived from the exploratory case study. The concept of intensity was adopted from Ravichandran, (2000, and items used for measuring the business use intensity was derived from Singh et al., (2012) and some items were renamed/regrouped/added from the exploratory case study, namely items of (Interactions with Customers, Recruitment, and Advertisement). The items used for measuring the personal use intensity were derived from the exploratory case study. The attitude towards entrepreneurial communication construct was measured by items adopted from Fuse & Lanham (2016) and was rephrased through feedback of the exploratory case study.

Sampling Design: As to the sample selection criteria, the researcher needs to identify the individuals those can best inform about the entrepreneurial communication and OSM usage both. Since the study is intended to understand the impact of OSM on entrepreneurial communication in Saudi Arabia, it was decided to include three different categories of entrepreneurs; (a) Young entrepreneurs; graduated from any business incubator in Saudi Arabia and having their own start-ups; (b) Incubatee entrepreneurs, engaged with any business incubator in Saudi Arabia as 'incubatee' and planning to launch their start-ups in near future; (c) aspirant entrepreneurs, at least attended a formal course on entrepreneurship; having a vivid business idea and participating in business plan competitions. As the OSM has the highest diffusion among youngsters, therefore the sample comprised of only youngsters (ages less than 30 years). Although quotas were not assigned to any specific demographic strata but special considerations were made to ensure as representative a sample as possible. There are a number of different guidelines given in the literature as to the appropriate sample size for the various statistical techniques (factor

analysis, regression analysis, partial least square and structural equation modeling) used in this study. A sample size of 500 plus was considered sufficient for the study as per the guidelines given in the literature (Hair et al., 2013)

Data Collection: The data used in this study was collected between October and December 2019 through a rigorous method using online survey in Saudi Arabia. Participants were recruited through popular social media Apps such as Twitter, Snap chat, LinkedIn and WhatsApp and through judgmental techniques with business incubators and universities from all over the kingdom. First, an online survey was developed using Quesionpro.com, which also included the consent statement. Second, an online post to invite users to participate containing a web-link for the online survey page was distributed through different Saudi groups in LinkedIn that contained thousands of Saudi users. Third, a total of 200 university faculty members including business incubator staff listed in LinkedIn were contacted randomly and asked to distribute the link to their entrepreneurs meeting the above mentioned criteria and encourage them to participate.

Fourth, an invitation was distributed to hundreds of WhatsApp groups by users from the capital city, Eastern region and Western region. And finally, business incubator staff members were asked to circulate invitations to incubatees and graduates. A total of 948 participants have started the survey. Only 836 have successfully completed the survey. After scrutinizing and cleaning of the data, a total of 606 valid responses were considered to be qualified for statistical analysis due to age restriction or missing data required for the analysis used in this study. Tables 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d and 4e summarize some of the demographic and statistical data:

Table 4a RESPONDENT'S PROFILE - CATEGORY WISE		
Category	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Young Entrepreneurs	66	10.9%
Incubatee Entrepreneurs	165	27.2%
Aspirant Entrepreneurs	375	61.9%
Total	606	100%

Table 4b RESPONDENT'S PROFILE - GENDER-WISE		
Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Men	270	44.5%
Women	336	55.5%
Total	606	100%

Table 4c FREQUENCY OF ANSWERS TO THE OSM (VOLUME AND DIVERSITY) USED BY RESPONDENTS			
OSM Used	**Question**		
	I am an Active User	**I Have an Account but I am Not an Active User**	**I Don't Have an Account**
Facebook	183	210	213
Twitter	391	168	47
LinkedIn	502	86	18
Snap Chat	474	109	23

YouTube	337	175	94
Instagram	369	193	44
Periscope	39	83	484
WhatsUp	582	14	10

Table 4d
FREQUENCY OF ANSWERS TO THE BUSINESS USE AND LEVEL OF USING OSM BY RESPONDENTS

Purpose of Use	Extent of Use					
	Continuous Logged In	Three Times a Day	Once a Day	Three Times a Week	Once a Week	Not Used
Building business contacts	134	161	53	32	217	9
Build brand awareness	298	92	131	44	21	20
Create new content	389	45	66	45	52	9
Interactions with Customers	424	110	34	12	22	4
Drive viewers to blog and website	125	105	97	89	126	64
Highlight expertise	84	119	76	23	170	134
Identify potential leads	455	67	32	12	27	13
Market research	322	68	102	55	34	25
Recruitment	122	64	77	78	170	95
Advertisement	547	27	12	7	9	4
Product or service information	306	79	122	57	19	23
Read Content	202	106	86	56	64	92

Table 4e
FREQUENCY OF ANSWERS TO THE PERSONAL USE AND LEVEL OF USING OSM BY RESPONDENTS

Purpose of Use	Extent of Use					
	Continuous Logged In	Three Times a Day	Once a Day	Three Times a Week	Once a Week	Not Used
Communication with Friends & Family	388	128	44	16	19	11
Following Religious leaders	76	99	118	35	80	198
Information seeking	221	98	78	65	56	88
Following fashion/trend	198	76	107	72	86	67
Entertainment,	293	121	99	45	39	9
Friendship/companionship	332	104	73	47	29	21
Passing time,	186	114	145	46	87	28
Social interaction	278	97	108	69	35	19
Knowledge Advancement	178	131	107	68	109	13
Relaxation	176	109	145	55	87	34
Self-Expression	209	102	113	45	44	93
Professional Advancement	232	107	132	58	54	23

Data Modeling Software: The partial least squares (PLS) approach (Wold, 1982; Lohmöller, 1989), was used for data testing. The literature suggests that PLS method is widely used in social science research (Urbach, & Ahlemann, 2010) and considered as a second-generation modelling method that facilitate the process of quality evaluation for the measurement of research constructs as well as the evaluation for the constructs in the model and their relationships simultaneously (Fornell, 1982). These features have promoted PLS to be most suitable for both developments of new theoretical models as well as for theoretical models testing (Fornell, 1982; Bontis et al., 2002). In this study, SmartPLS software was used for the execution of PLS analysis (Ringle et al., 2005).

Data Analysis

In PLS analysis, it is required to perform two separate stages of analysis to evaluate the research model structure, namely, the assessment of Measurement Model, and the assessment of Structural Model.

Measurement Model: Reflective measurement models can be assessed through performing the test of reliability and discriminant validity (Urbach, & Ahlemann, 2010). To this end, the current study follows the measurement model test criteria proposed by Henseler et al., (2009).

The reliability test is being executed through uni-dimensionality and internal consistency check. The test of Uni-dimensionality is performed through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) test (Hair et al., 2013). Prior to performing EFA, two suitability tests were executed (Lewis et al., 2005). The result of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was 0.894 and greater than 0.5. The result of Barlett's test reveals significance level (0.000). Both results indicate that the data is suitable for EFA test. Principal component analysis (PCA) was used as an extraction method, with Eigen value at 1.0, and using Varimax rotation (loading set at 0.5). A total of three items had to be removed due to their low communalities and loadings scores (VOL1, ATD1, ATD2). To assure Uni-dimensionality, measurement items having factor loadings above 0.5 were kept, which is valid evidence that that measurement items do share enough variance with their respective constructs.

The internal consistency in PLS can be accomplished through reliability test, convergent validity and discriminant validity (Straub et al., 2004). To satisfy reliability test, the value of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability must be greater than 0.7 (value of 0.6 is the bottom line). Convergent validity help researchers to the measure the extents to which an item of the same construct correlate with each other (Straub et al., 2004). Convergent validity can be satisfied by keeping items with factor loadings >0.7, Average Variance Extracted >0.5 and Communalities value >0.5. One item had to be further removed (ATD5) due to low factor loadings. The results depicted in Table 5 indicate that reliability and convergent validity test requirements were satisfied.

Table 5 PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF RESEARCH VARIABLES						
	Cronbach's Alpha	**Composite Reliability**	**Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**	**Factors**	**Original Sample (O)**	**T Statistics**	**P Values**
OSM ASSIMILATION	**0.603**	**0.834**	**0.715**	DIVE	0.823	14.726	0.000
				INTE	0.868	17.890	0.000
Attitudes Towards Entrepreneurial Communication	**0.712**	**0.803**	**0.593**	ATD3	0.711	8.281	0.000
				ATD4	0.723	6.880	0.000
				ATD6	0.719	9.361	0.000
				ATD7	0.779	13.089	0.000

The test discriminant validity allows the assurance that various constructs used in measurement instruments are distinct from each other in the inter-construct correlations table (Straub et al., 2004). This can be satisfied when the values of the square root of the Average Variance Extracted are greater than any corresponding value in the inter-construct correlations (Fornell-Larcker criterion). In addition, the loading values of each item in the matrix of loadings and cross-loadings tables should be greater than all the corresponding cross-loadings items in the matrix (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results depicted in Table 6 indicate that discriminant validity test requirements were satisfied for the data of this study.

Table 6 FORNELL-LARCKER CRITERION			
	Moderating Effect - Gender	**OSN ASSIMILATION**	**Attitudes Towards Entrepreneurial Communications**
Moderating Effect - Gender	**1.000**		
OSN ASSIMILATION	0.218	**0.846**	
Attitudes Towards Entrepreneurial Communications	0.093	0.173	**0.711**

Structural Model: The structural model can be assessed through the extracts of coefficients of determination (R2) and the significance of path coefficients (Henseler et al., 2009). The R2 was (0.49) and adjusted R2 was (0.45), suggesting that the model has a good explanatory power. Results are exhibited in Table 7.

Table 7 RESULTS OF HYPOTHESIS TEST				
Path	**Beta**	**T Statistics**	**P Values**	
OSM ASSIMILATION → Attitudes Towards Entrepreneurial Communications	0.208	4.838	**0.000**	Supported
Moderation Effect → Attitudes Towards Entrepreneurial Communications	0.148	3.340	**0.000**	Supported

p<0.05* p<0.01 **, p<0.001 ***, Significance values are in BOLD

FINDINGS

The current study aimed at measuring influence of Online Social Media (OSM) assimilation on the Attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communication. The proposed conceptual model was mostly supported by the empirical data. Through empirical evidence, the study has confirmed that the use of online social media does influence attitudes towards communication. The results also demonstrate that there is a statically significance variation between female and male entrepreneurs on the extent to which OSM can influence the attitudes towards communication.

DISCUSSION

The study has demonstrated that the OSM usage influences Attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communication positively. This impact of social media on Attitude Towards Entrepreneurial Communications can be classified into three major themes;

1.   improved self-confidence

2.   improved verbal communications

3.   improvements in expression of mind

Resulting positive response and friendship opportunities even from opposite gender. This finding is consistence with the findings of previous literature that confirms the usability of OSM to improve develop personal skills (Alqahtani, 2016), but contrary to finding of Kalpidou et al., (2011) who discovered negative relationship. This might explain the nature of OSM app used in the later study (focusing only on Facebook), whereas this study investigated the effect of different OSM apps. This open door for researchers to investigate who would the features and functions of each OSM app can affect the user. In addition, the finding of this study is consistence with the findings of previous literature that confirms the ability of OSM to enhance the users' attitude towards communications, business communications skills and entrepreneurial skills OSM (Turan & Kara, 2018; Suleiman et al., 2020; Pakura & Rudeloff, 2020). The result were also consistence with previous findings that confirm the fact that the effect of OSM on behavirouasl and communication outcome can be moderated by other factors (Kalpidou et al., 2011; Al-Khaddam, 2013; Hussein, 2016), suggesting that the gender of users represent a significant variable that control the degree to which attitude towards entrepreneurial communications can be improved by OSM use. This finding suggests that more research is required to understand the antecedent factors behind the difference between the two groups.

 Firstly, OSM has enhanced the confidence levels of the respondents towards OSM as a platform for free exchange of ideas and words. Secondly, respondents feel that OSM has reduced their hesitation while communicating in front of strangers and improved their communication opportunities; therefore they rely more on OSM applications as their major tool for communications. Finally and probably most importantly, respondents think that social media has provided them an opportunity to speak their mind. This will ultimately result in better positive responses on OSM applications than in verbal communications and therefore it is easier to make friend of the opposite gender using social media.

With the rise OSM Usage, people tend to become more confident and more connected to all of their communities. This is a positive aspect of OSM Usage and must be taken serious at all levels. It provides opportunities for individuals and institutions for considering OSM as a

solution for human development. Another opportunity arisen from this research is the link of general public to government authorities and their functionalities. This link will bring efficiency and transparency on all government affairs with better communication and collaboration of general public with government. This provides opportunities for government agencies to invest more in OSM as one of effective solutions to improve their connections and partnership with the society.

LIMITATIONS

Like any other social sciences study this study may also be studied with its limitations. These limitations are summarized as follows. Firstly, this study has used self-reporting questionnaires which make the process robust and economically feasible are criticized by some academics. Secondly, use of entrepreneurs in the research process as objects are also criticized by some academics, but entrepreneurs are considered as most influenced cluster by the OSM. Thirdly, this investigation examines impact of social media on individual's Attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communications. However, the study is not designed to examine the causal relationship between these variables. This study aims only to assess the extent to which the factors are correlated with each other and the nature of these correlations. The factors considered in this study are not considered to be exhaustive, but they are, however, believed to be some of the most critical factors in the light of the literature review. Other factors expected to influence the individual's Attitude towards Entrepreneurial Communications may vary from country to country and from language to another language. Fourth, the online survey tools were used and hence susceptible to limitations of online surveys. Another important factor to consider is that the Attitude Towards Entrepreneurial Communications may vary over time, with changes with the technological advancements, and as they or their lifestyle changes or as they become older. However, by examining a diverse range of respondents, it is possible to minimize the impact of these factors.

IMPLICATIONS

One of the hallmarks of this research is identification of OSM applications as a supplement for traditional personal communication. Many observations make justifications for this tall claim, firstly it provides an opportunity to avoid speaking under normal circumstances when they don't want to speak; secondly this provides an opportunity to avoid eye contact with familiar or strange people and making a sense of relief by hiding anxiety in socially awkward situations. OSM users became more confident that they will not experience any detrimental situations while communicating through social media, thus allowing them to communicate without fear of people's observations or negative comments. Social media provides all personality types including introverts with an even playing field, temporarily relieving them of their introvertedness. This study also suggests that OSM has emerged as a platform for individuals to establish and strengthen their relationships with others. This is achieved by freely sharing their experiences and eventually enhancing their joy and happiness. Improvement in Entrepreneurial Communication is the not the core objective of this process rather considered as a source of empowerment, with a majority of respondents stating that social media has empowered them to speak their mind. It is interesting to note that Secondly WhatsApp has emerged as most used OSM application in Saudi Arabia, while Facebook and YouTube were ranked in lower orders. This also supports that users are more interested in a single application

handling all types of media but benefits of using OSM were not attributed to only one social media; rather it has spread to all. Social media applications provide a variety of options available to users preferring various forms of social media as their main form of communication including a toggling tendency between different OSM applications.

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