The Influence of Social Media on Business Intelligence, Business Performance, Brand Awareness, and Customer Retention: Evidence from the UAE

Asokan Vasudevan[1*], Barween Al Kurdi[2]

[1]Shinawatra University, 99 Moo 10, Bangtoey, Samkhok, Pathum Thani, 12160. Thailand.
[2]Department of Marketing, School of Business, The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates how social media influences business intelligence, business performance, brand awareness, and customer retention. In addition, it examines how business intelligence influences customer retention, brand awareness, and business performance. Additionally, the study explores the effects of business performance on both customer retention and brand awareness and assesses how brand awareness contributes to customer retention. Using a quantitative approach, this paper collected data from 386 social media users in the UAE. The PLS-SEM approach was used for data analysis. The results reveal that social media significantly and positively impacts business intelligence, business performance, brand awareness, and customer retention. Business intelligence was also found to have a significant and positive impact on business performance and brand awareness, but its effect on customer retention was insignificant. Additionally, business performance significantly and positively impacts customer retention and brand awareness. Brand awareness was shown to significantly and positively impact customer retention.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms are revolutionizing marketing decision-making by developing analytics and targeting capabilities that can be utilized to create brand awareness and sales (Aiello et al., 2020). However, more often than not, businesses continue to treat social media as a side-tracked platform for their marketing and advertising budgets. Businesses continue to hesitate to invest their media budgets into social media marketing (Pereira et al., 2021), and a prime reason for this attitude is probably their lack of understanding of the potential of these platforms (Castillo et al., 2021). However, several case studies portray the potential benefit of using social media on return on investments (Joseph et al., 2020) and recommend the need to be included by business to deliver better products and services. On the other hand, there is also a debate about the cost-effectiveness and traceability of social media marketing budgets (Joseph et al., 2020). This paper discusses the impact of social media on marketing indices concerning many other marketing and business elements like business intelligence, business performance, brand awareness, and customer retention, focusing on the analytical capabilities that the social media might offer companies. Starting with the COVID-19 crisis highlights the importance of developing flexible business continuity plans to deal with any unknown variables that might be faced in the business environment due to any uncertain business environment (Nuseir et al., 2021). With COVID-19 having a major impact on the economy and bringing unprecedented changes in how businesses operate (Pereira et al., 2021), businesses need to realize that they have incident management systems, which could be possible through intelligent marketing plans. Business intelligence must be given a better chance to be employed heavily in different business sectors. However, despite the growing and exigent importance of business intelligence - which includes data collection and interpretation technologies- traditionally, there has been a lack of focus among many business systems for deploying them, especially among small enterprises (Adegbuyi et al., 2015). There are essential business intelligence tools that can enable more effective strategizing and lead to efficiencies, which need further exploration. However, organizations have displayed hesitancy in adopting them (Pereira et al., 2021).

1.1. The research objective

Based on the previous discussion, the aims of the paper are therefore:

1. To understand the impact of social media on both business intelligence and business performance.
2. To understand the impact of social media on both brand awareness and customer retention.
3. To understand the impact of business intelligence on business performance.
4. To understand the impact of business intelligence on both brand awareness and customer retention.
5. To understand the impact of business performance on both brand awareness and customer retention.

1.2. Significance of the study

Social media platforms provide several social media apps which can be used by organizations to communicate directly with customers and even make sales (Wang et al., 2016). Additionally, social media platforms are often equipped to provide businesses with online shops, which can be used to sell products directly to viewers (Trainor et al., 2014). Further, organizations can go a step further with social media by engaging individual customers and promoting their success stories on their pages (Rofiq et al., 2020). Sharing clients' successes on social media builds successful relationships with them, similar to the physical world (Rootman and Cupp, 2016). Building direct relationships could also include liking customer posts and posting personalized messages to them based on social media data about customers' essential dates like birthdays and anniversaries. Such real-time, one-on-one, and targeted communications are made possible by the AI (artificial intelligence) based tools used by social media platforms that keep track of their account holders' lifestyle changes, interests, and network interactions (Kang and Kim, 2017). Further, organizations can also use social media to set up opinion polls or receive feedback and then display how the feedback was incorporated to improve the business processes or products (Al-Rabayah et al., 2016). Before the COVID-19 crisis, consumers relied on the Internet to find reviews and content related to their intended purchases; however, now, they are using social media to find out about other customers' experiences and to voice their opinions (Chatterjee and Kar, 2020). As such social media is playing a pivotal role in creating a company's reputation, sales performance, and sustaining its very existence (Charoensukmongkol and Sasatanun, 2017). Social media facilitates consumer-to-consumer communications, unlike what was ever possible in the offline arena. Based on the previous discussion, this research is essential. At the same time, it discusses a set of new linkages on how social media can be utilized to enhance business intelligence and business performance, positively influencing brand awareness and customer retention.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The paper highlights the effect of social media on business intelligence, business performance, customer retention, and brand awareness. Deep discussions will appear in the following sections.

2.1. Social media and business intelligence

Small businesses can harness the power and scope of social media platforms to collect data and reach a wider audience while staying cost-effective. This is because one significant tool that social media companies have invested in is social media analytics technology, which allows organizations to gather business intelligence in the most scientific, logical, and cost-effective manner (Bilgin, 2018). Social media platforms collect and collate their users' data and furnish it to their advertisers in a manner that can give them a competitive edge. Organizations maintain their social media accounts and pages with the expectation of not only attracting customers and improving their customer segmentation, targeting and positioning, and upscaling their marketing performance (Lambrecht et al., 2021) but also capturing more and more data about their product users' preferences and choices across the Internet. To add more, social media offers an alternative way to collect business intelligence data. For example, social media platforms collaborate with big data companies that capture huge amounts of data on account holders and their online activities, which is then made available to advertisers for better targeting (Khasawneh et al., 2021). With nearly all of the world's population on social media, these platforms provide a wealth of customer data to companies that can be used to develop more relevant products and create more targeted customer segmentations and positioning (Bilgin, 2018). Big data-powered analytics technology has potentially transformed businesses (Davenport and Bean, 2019) by changing the connections between companies and their customers and re-configuring the value propositions (Huang and Rust, 2021). Traditionally, companies gathered market and customer information through feedback surveys, market research, or analysis of their existing customer databases (Akpan et al., 2022). While this was a practical approach to gaining information before developing targeted marketing campaigns, it was tedious and time-consuming and often did not yield the desirable return on investments (Effendi et al., 2020). With the advent of the latest business intelligence technology, software, and tools were developed to help collect and capture data effectively and better analyze and visualize projections. Companies have strived to obtain customer data that is accurate, relevant, and usable (Belitski et al., 2021) as part of their business intelligence. By collecting customer data, organizations can understand their preferences and likes and familiarize themselves with the purchase decision-making process employed by their customers. Additionally, business intelligence data can also provide the organization with information about the lifecycle stage of customers, enabling them to target the customers with the most relevant products when they may be looking for such products (Asare et al., 2020). Based on the previous discussion about how social media utilize business intelligence, the influence of social media utilize business intelligence can be translated as:

H1: Social media positively influences business intelligence.

2.2. Social media and business performance

Numerous studies have found that organizations can successfully harness social media to improve their business performance (Trainor et al., 2014). This is especially true in the COVID-19 crisis, which saw many brick-and-mortar organizations closing down and employees laid off on a large scale (Paniagua and Sapena, 2014). The role of online processes and capabilities was exemplified during the crisis, and the organizations that were able to transition to online business processes quickly were able to ensure their survival (Adegbuyi et al., 2015). With social media, small businesses can grow their reach and improve their performance. However, lacking knowledge and skills in using social media apps and tools may limit small businesses (Adegbuyi et al., 2015). Also, social media allows small and medium-sized businesses to compete with large organizations due to the low costs and minimal investment, which allows social media tools to be harnessed to generate valuable data on customers and potential market trends. Business performance is defined in literature as an organization's ability to use its given resources to deliver on the pre-defined goals (Schultz et al., 2012). It is also described as managing all business activities to create value for stockholders (Charoensukmongkol and Sasatanun, 2017). Other scholars have defined business performance as businesses' operational ability to fulfill their prominent stakeholders' expectations (Aral et al., 2013). Generally, there are numerous parameters to measure business performance. For example, it is measured in terms of profits, return on investment (ROI), inventory turnover, number of customers, design quality, or value provided to the customers. Business performance can be measured in terms of financial and non-financial metrics and can be assessed objectively and subjectively (Paniagua and Sapena, 2014). Without denying that the COVID-19 crisis underscored the fact that almost all businesses were affected negatively, and their performance was limited (Pereira et al., 2021). Based on the previous discussion about how social media utilize business performance, the influence of social media on business performance can be translated as:

H2: Social media positively influences business performance.

2.3. Social media and customer retention

Most customers are online and available on social media platforms, so it becomes an easy and low-cost avenue to connect with customers and tell them about discounts, new launches, or referral programs. Businesses use social media as a powerful tool to communicate with current customers and maintain product loyalty. Social media is more than just a platform to attract new customers and push new products; it can also be used to retain customers by continuously engaging with them (Rofiq et al., 2020). Also, social media allows for marketing strategies to build and maintain relationships, trust, and loyalty with targeted customers (Kang and Kim, 2017). Organizations connect with customers by consistently building and maintaining their social media accounts. This way, organizations can keep abreast of their customers' expectations, needs, or complaints (Malthouse et al., 2013). Also, since customers are creators of content on their own social media accounts and share content extensively, companies can keep track of their customers' sensitivities and expectations by using social media analytics tools. Additionally, companies can directly engage with customers by responding to followers' customer queries, commenting on their posts, and replying to their complaints (Al-Rabayah et al., 2016), which in turn helps retain customers (Al Kurdi, 2024; Sarfraz et al., 2025). To add more, social media provides an expansive landscape for organizations to find customers and retain them. Social media platforms provide a new approach to customer relationship management, shifting from the traditional approach of capturing customers' data at the point of sale (Adegbuyi et al., 2015). Additionally, research has found that timely responses and resolution of customers' questions through social media accounts can lead to greater customer satisfaction, advocacy, and retention (Kang and Kim, 2017). Social media experience of the customers with the company can set the tone for their future attitude toward the company's products and impact on their purchase intentions, attitude, and, at last retention (Alshurideh, 2016; Alkitbi et al., 2020; Rofiq et al., 2020). By creating trust through social media, organizations can win customers and even convert them into active advocates of their products and services. Remember that customer retention strategies vary from company to company but predominantly include identifying customers' needs, developing products that match expected quality, customizing the services or products to the customers' needs, initiating loyalty-building programs, and offering discounts or coupons. However, these activities must be continuously updated to stay relevant to the customers (Al-Rabayah et al., 2016). Based on the previous discussion about how social media utilize customer retention, the influence of social media on customer retention can be translated as:

H3: Social media positively influences customer retention.

2.4. Social media and brand awareness

Social media platforms offer tools and methods to help organizations create brand awareness and showcase their values and identity to a large target audience at a relatively low cost (Omeish et al., 2023; Al Kurdi et al., 2024). Companies undertake brand building through social media by harnessing technologies that enable them to identify their potential customers' sentiments, emotions, and needs (Huang and Sarigöllü, 2012). By generating content that appeals to the customers' sentiments, brands can create a sense of association and encourage followers on social media. Brand awareness is, therefore, an assessment of the awareness of customers and potential customers about the organization and its products (Gustafson and Chabot, 2007). Brand awareness is reflected in the percentage of people who may recall a brand after a time lapse since exposure, and it plays a crucial role in the buyer decision-making process. Brand awareness can be created through a strategic plan that involves first identifying the target customers and then developing products and services that they cherish in a manner that leaves a mark. Additionally, the importance of brand awareness is enhanced in the context of the younger generation, which is conscious of brands' performance on social and environmental issues. This means that younger consumers will likely be positively inclined to purchase products and services from companies with a brand image supporting social causes or that do not lead

to environmental pollution (Sasmita and Suki, 2015). Based on the previous discussion about how social media utilize brand awareness, the influence of social media on brand awareness can be translated as:

H4: Social media positively influences brand awareness.

2.5. Business intelligence and customer retention

Many previous published papers have indicated that social media analytics provides business intelligence that enables organizations to create more personal interactions with customers, stay in consistent touch with them, and maintain near-zero response time (Malthouse et al., 2013). Employing business intelligence applications enables organizations not just to gain potential information about customers and markets but also enable the organization to use such applications to have competitive advantages, operational efficiency, strategic decision-making, and market competitiveness (Singh et al., 2024; Ahmad & Alshurideh, 2025; Tsiu et al., 2025). Social media technologies also provide the benefit of low cost as organizations do not need to purchase and adopt any new hardware or infrastructure, nor do they need a database manager or administrator (Choi et al., 2020). Also, social media provides user-friendly dashboards and analytical reports that can yield rich and contextual information that can be used easily by the organization (Choi et al., 2020), not just to reach customers but also to maintain relations and retain them (Nwokorie et al., 2024; Akter et al., 2025). The role of business intelligence extended beyond simply collecting data based on customer interactions, as organizations now needed to explore new avenues of reaching out to customers and devise new ways of serving them (Paniagua and Sapena, 2014). Here, the role of social media platforms was enhanced, too. Social media is a cost-effective and proactive tool for marketing that can meritoriously facilitate consumer communication and engagement to generate profits (Chatterjee and Kar, 2020). Moreover, business intelligence comprises a company's infrastructure and system for collecting, storing, and analyzing relevant data (Boland et al., 2015). This data consists primarily of customer-related information but also contains information about competitors, changing government policies, and general data on regional trends and preferences (Choi et al., 2020). In addition, since social media allows for extensive networking and communications, organizations can harness the messaging tools to reach out to their customers with their new product launches, offers, and discounts. Organizations can run promotional campaigns that showcase their corporate social responsibility or sustainability-related initiatives, thus generating free public relations and encouraging positive sentiments from the general public (Sasmita and Suki, 2015). Equally important, with emerging technologies adapted to diverse usages, marketing technologies have started to be developed and harnessed. Companies can use tools that enable data warehousing, data mining, visualization, and reporting (Aiello et al., 2020). There are a large number of companies like Oracle, SAS, Java, IBM, and many more, that have come into business selling such business intelligence tools and technologies, and organizations wanting to upgrade their business intelligence systems have a variety of brands to choose from (Nuseir et al., 2021; Sukkari, 2024). Based on the previous discussion about how business intelligence utilizes customer retention, the influence of business intelligence on customer retention can be translated as:

H5: Business intelligence positively influences customer retention.

2.6. Business intelligence and brand awareness

Another trend observed in the literature is related to organizations' use of social media platforms for facilitating what is known as the co-creation of value (Trainor, 2012). Social media data analytics tools allow organizations to tap into customers' ideas and needs and involve them in creating products and services (Aral et al., 2013). This level of customer involvement in the functioning of businesses is unprecedented and could not have been envisioned before the age of social media (Trainor et al., 2014). Also, social media targeting tools allow organizations to use business intelligence tools and technology to specifically target socially and environmentally conscious audiences and use their beliefs to successfully promote their products and services (Foroudi, 2019). The analytics and retargeting tools social media platforms enable advertisers to follow their potential customers across the Internet and expose them to their brands (Bilgin, 2018). Nevertheless, business owners who engage directly with their customers and invest in creating brand awareness over social media platforms are likely to drive greater sales and purchase intentions from potential customers (Charoensukmongkol and Sasatanun, 2017). Keep in mind that many scholars highlighted the idea of using business intelligence technology and programs to enhance brand perception (Saratian et al., 2024), enhance brand performance and equity (Trong Tuan, 2013), enhance brand image (Fahmi et al., 2017), enhance brand acceptance (Zdravković & Peković, 2021) and enhance brand recognition and awareness (Shaily & Emma, 2021). Based on the previous discussion, how business intelligence can influence brand awareness can be translated as:

H6: Business intelligence positively influences brand awareness.

2.7. Business performance and customer retention

This part talks about how organizations utilize business performance to establish and maintain their relations with customers and retain them concerning social media perspective. Social media provides essential listening tools to organizations that help them gauge what their customers are talking about and what they want, and armed with this knowledge, the organizations can develop posts and products that can appear to the target audience (Almarzoqi et al., 2025a; Sarfraz et al., 2025). Using social media listening tools and analytics, organizations can also assess their content's performance and tap into what the customers say about the organization's posts, content, products, or overall image (Kang and Kim, 2017; Almarzoqi et al., 2025b). Using such insights, organizations can tailor communications for their customers, give them a brand experience that meets their needs, and give them a reason to engage further with the organization. Since social media analytics furnishes a large amount of in-depth data on customers, including their location, their designations, their parental status, income levels, their shopping styles, and their interests and hobbies, it becomes easier for marketers to develop retention

proposals like discounts and free merchandise, and target it specifically to their customers on social media (Malthouse et al., 2013; Mohammad et al., 2024). By consistently delivering content that customers need or like to read, organizations can create loyal followers and build trust, which goes toward customer retention. Social media also allows organizations to run and manage loyalty programs and campaigns, which can help increase customer retention (Rootman and Cupp, 2016). By tuning in to customers' conversations, organizations can develop counterarguments to combat any growth in negative opinions or false perceptions around its products or owners (Santoso and Dewi, 2018). This way, making timely and relevant real-time responses can help maintain trust with loyal customers and retain them (Kang and Kim, 2017). Remember that customer retention is the business's ability to retain its customers and prevent them from switching to competitors (Al-Rabayah et al., 2016). Over time, retention is measured by the percentage of customers a company retains over its total number of customers for a given period (Willis, 2019). Customer retention is a method of retaining customers in a company through services provided or products sold (Rootman and Cupp, 2016). Retaining customers indicates that the company serves its customers with the utmost satisfaction and may add to its overall brand image (Willis, 2019). The larger the customer retention rate, the larger the potential profit driven by products sold to them could be (Malthouse et al., 2013). The more the company focuses on customer retention policy, the more it builds its foundation in the market compared to the competitors. Based on the previous discussion, Business intelligence's effect on customer retention can be translated as:

H7: Business intelligence positively influences customer retention.

2.8. Business performance and brand awareness

While the ultimate aim of a for-profit organization is to generate revenues through sales, all businesses need to build a customer base and target them with content that creates awareness about the companies and their products and brands. For example, organizations create brand names, logos, slogans, or associations that consistently reflect the company's values and showcase its commitment to customers (Bilgin, 2018). Brand awareness is further facilitated through packaging, promotions, advertising, and delivering consistently high-quality customer service. Additionally, brand awareness is crucial at all stages of the product lifecycle. For example, brand awareness is essential when the organization is new in the market or launching a new product or service. By developing awareness and generating interest in the new product, the organization can create a distinct recognition for its brand in the customers' minds. Also, a brand that can differentiate itself from competitors can drive the buyer's purchase decision in its favor (Foroudi, 2019). Moreover, when evaluating products, potential clients are likely to give more value to brands that look familiar (Huang and Sarigöllü, 2012). Familiarity with a brand name has a psychologically positive impact on people's minds, as familiarity is associated with likeability (Sasmita and Suki, 2015). Organizations that create brand awareness will likely generate more sales and obtain repeat customers (Foroudi, 2019). Increasing customer loyalty is an essential goal of any organization to ensure significant and sustainable growth. Customer retention contributes significantly to the company's steady growth (Stokinger and Ozuem, 2018). Investing in customer retention strategies such as a loyalty program can increase Customer Life Value (Willis, 2019), as well as customer retention statistics or metrics - the longer the customers stay loyal, the more they are likely to spend on purchasing the company's products (Kang and Kim, 2017). Retaining customers also furnished the organization with historical data, such as customers' purchase history and demographic profile, supporting the organizational decision-making process (Malthouse et al., 2013). Reliable customers act as advocates and give referrals, spread word of mouth, and, as a result, contribute to bringing in new customers and new purchases (Al-Rabayah et al., 2016). Customer retention programs lower overall marketing costs, as retaining an existing customer is less costly than attaining a new one. Business performance is essentially linked with the commercial aspect of any business and defines its short-term and long-term survivability (Joseph et al., 2020). Organizations that cannot display performance will likely shut down or suffer loss (Pereira et al., 2021). While an organization in diverse ways can define performance, all performance needs to be geared toward or accompanied with econmic benefit for the investors or owners. For example, an organization can set its performance standards as 100% repeat customers, or it can set its performance as delivering quality products that are internationally acclaimed. However, in either case, the objective is to create customer value, generate profits for the owners, and sustain workers' employment (Pereira et al., 2021). As such, all businesses undertake activities so that they can deliver sustainable and scalable performance (Joseph et al., 2020); this cannot be attained without building long-term relationships with existing customers to survive their business, cash flow, and operations (Alshurideh, 2024; Ozturk, 2024). One of the methods that organizations use to prolong such relations with customers is by working heavily to enhance their brand awareness and build essential mental images for their brands through brand personality, brand identity, brand awareness, brand recognition, and more (Hamadneh, 2024; Zahra, 2024; Alhammadi & Alshurideh, 2025; Ozturk & Al Kurdi, 2025). Based on this, business performance's effect on brand awareness can be translated as:

H8: Business performance positively influences brand awareness.

2.9. Business intelligence and organizational business performance

It can be said that business intelligence enables better decision-making at the organizational level by helping the organization to improve its product offerings, competitively match the marketing prices, and deliver greater value to the customers (Aljumah et al., 2021). However, collecting business intelligence data during the Covid-19 crisis was difficult through traditional methods (Christa and Kristinae, 2021). Business intelligence tools and software often come in customizable forms that can be adapted by the organization (Khasawneh et al., 2021). Also, nowadays, companies like Amazon and Google provide cloud-based business services that reduce the need to purchase infrastructure for the organization (Thakur and Malhotra, 2022). However, installing business intelligence software and using it effectively requires commitment of time, money, training resources, and management and monitoring by the management (Choi et al., 2020). This

makes it often difficult for small and medium-level enterprises to purchase and implement large-scale business intelligence tools (Aiello et al., 2020). Small and medium-sized enterprises can transition to business intelligence systems with cloud-based technologies. Also, with the COVID-19 crisis, a need was felt to enable the use of business intelligence tools remotely, leading to the rise in demand for technologies that allow for voice commands and remote cloud-based visualization analysis and decision-making (Joseph et al., 2020). Additionally, business intelligence has a substantial scope in management decision-making, but it is helpful in all aspects of business. During the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath, business intelligence is needed to navigate the uncertainties in the business and global environment (Choi et al., 2020). Now, organizations are moving toward modifying their CRM approach and developing new capabilities to use social media platforms to display and sell their products and services. Using the analytics tools provided by social media platforms, organizations can reach out to customers at the point of time that they may be feeling a need for the product (Trainor et al., 2014; Amponsah, 2024). This ubiquitous capacity to reach out to almost anybody anytime allows organizations to pitch their products to targeted customers and at points in their lives when they may be nearer the purchase funnel (Paniagua and Sapena, 2014). Research has found a growing trend of merging social media with overall marketing strategy to drive sales and business performance (Adegbuyi et al., 2015). Using a new form of CRM, social CRM, organizations can improve their business performance substantially (Wang and Kim, 2017). Based on previous discussion, business intelligence's effect on organizational business performance can be translated as:

H9: Business intelligence positively influences organizational business performance.

2.10. Brand awareness and customer retention
Social media holds a significant place as it created an indelible impact on the digital transformation of business during the Covid-19 crisis and its aftermath. Social media tools and strategies have been increasingly deployed in business-to-business (B2B) and Business-to-consumer (B2C) organizations. Research has found that social media accelerates sales performance, improves customer retention, and enhances brand image (Chatterjee and Kar, 2020). Earlier, and especially before COVID-19, social networks were used as an add-on channel to provide information about a company or brand. More recently, social media platforms have become strategic in driving consumers' involvement, developing long-term customer relationships, and getting valuable consumer insights (Allan et al., 2017). Most companies use at least one of the social media sites, such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube (Aral et al., 2013). Further, brand awareness also encourages repeat purchases or allows the organization to up-sell or cross-sell its products to the same customers (Huang and Sarigöllü, 2012). One of the most effective ways brand awareness can help an organization is by developing a sense of association with the brand in the customers' minds, which leads them to become promotors and advocates of the company (Gustafson and Chabot, 2007). Based on the previous discussion about how social media can be used to utilize brand awareness and influence customer retention, the influence of brand awareness on customer retention can be translated as:

H10: Brand awareness positively influences customer retention.

2.11. The study model
Based on the above arguments, the study model is shown in Figure 1.
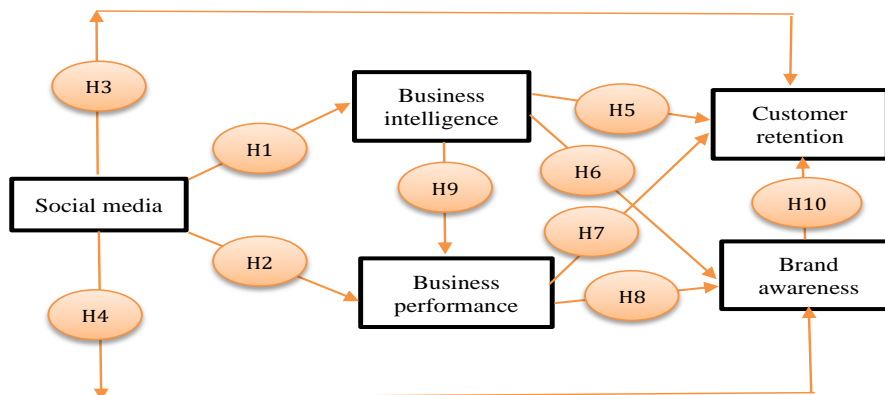
Figure 1. The research model.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

In the present research, hypothesis tests were performed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method using SmartPLS version 4. The analysis process consisted of a two-step process. An initial assessment of the reliability and validity of the model occurred in the first step, while the significance associated with the proposed path relationships was evaluated in step two.

Furthermore, data were collected via a web survey from social media users in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), resulting in 386 valid responses analyzed.

2.12.Demographic characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the sample are summarized in Table 1. More than half of the respondents were female (69.2%), while the remainder were male (30.8%). Most respondents were between the ages of 20 and less than 30 (50.0%). Moreover, (64.5%) of the respondents were single, and (59.3%) had a bachelor's degree.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics.

Characteristic	Classification	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	119	30.8
	Female	267	69.2
Age	Under 20	79	20.5
	20 less than 30	193	50.0
	30 less than 40	78	20.2
	40 less than 50	29	7.5
	50 less than 60	5	1.3
	Above 60	2	0.5
Marital	Single	249	64.5
	Married	121	31.3
	Divorced	13	3.4
	Widowed	3	0.8
Education	Secondary school	73	18.9
	Diploma	52	13.5
	Bachelor	229	59.3
	Master	27	7.0
	PhD	5	1.3

2.13.Measurement model

As part of this study, the indicators loadings, the internal consistency reliability, the convergent validity, and the discriminant validity of the measurement model were examined. Table 2 and Figure 2 show that all outer loadings and AVE values exceeded 0.7 (Hair et al., 2019). It ranged from 0.775 to 0.881 for factor loading, while 0.708 to 0.720 for AVE values. Also higher than 0.7 were the CR and CA values (Hair et al., 2020). A range of 0.862 and 0.870 was seen for CA, and 0.907 and 0.911 were found for CR.

Table 2. Measurement model.

| Variables	Item	Loading	AVE	CA	CR
Social media	SM1	0.807	0.718	0.869	0.911
	SM2	0.867			
	SM3	0.857			
	SM4	0.857			
Business intelligence	BI1	0.869	0.720	0.870	0.911
	BI2	0.843			
	BI3	0.847			
	BI4	0.835			
Business performance	BP1	0.854	0.710	0.863	0.907
	BP2	0.881			
	BP3	0.857			
	BP4	0.775			
Customer retention	CR1	0.855	0.708	0.862	0.907
	CR2	0.841			
	CR3	0.859			
	CR4	0.810			
Brand awareness	BA1	0.856	0.718	0.869	0.911
	BA2	0.870			
	BA3	0.861			
	BA4	0.800			
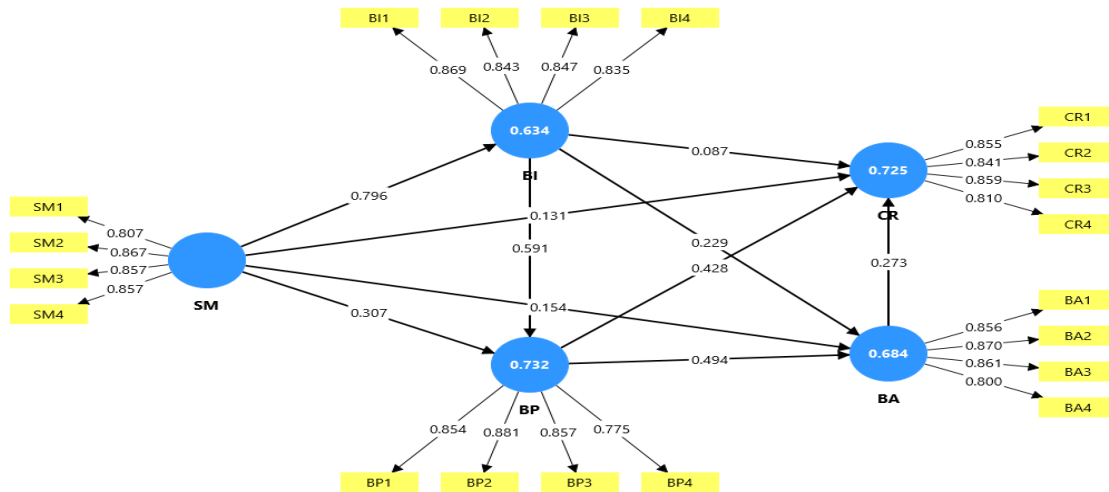
Figure 2. Measurement model.

2.14. Discriminant validity

In this study, the discriminant validity of the model was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). According to Table 3, the square root of AVE is higher than its correlations with other variables. Therefore, this study confirms the model's validity and reliability.

Table 3. Discriminant validity.

Variables	BA	BI	BP	CR	SM
BA	**0.847**				
BI	0.764	**0.849**			
BP	0.805	0.835	**0.842**		
CR	0.778	0.757	0.822	**0.842**	
SM	0.720	0.796	0.777	0.729	**0.847**

2.15. Structural model

This study conducted bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples to determine the significance of the proposed hypothesis paths. According to the findings shown in Table 4 and Figure 3, social media has a significant and positive impact on business intelligence ($\beta = 0.796$, p = 0.000); therefore, H1 was accepted. Similarly, social media significantly and positively impacts business performance ($\beta = 0.307$, p = 0.000); hence, H2 was accepted. Moreover, social media significantly and positively impacts customer retention ($\beta = 0.131$, p = 0.044) and brand awareness ($\beta = 0.154$, p = 0.010). Therefore, H3 and H4 were both accepted. However, business intelligence does not significantly impact customer retention ($\beta = 0.087$, p = 0.202); therefore, H5 was rejected. Lastly, business intelligence significantly and positively impacts brand awareness ($\beta = 0.229$, p = 0.001); therefore, H6 was accepted. Additionally, business performance significantly and positively impacts customer retention ($\beta = 0.428$, p = 0.000); therefore, H7 was accepted. Furthermore, business performance significantly impacts brand awareness ($\beta = 0.494$, p = 0.000); therefore, H8 was accepted. Moreover, business intelligence significantly impacts business performance ($\beta = 0.591$, p = 0.000); therefore, H9 was accepted. Finally, brand awareness significantly affects customer retention ($\beta = 0.273$, p = 0.000); therefore, H10 was accepted.

Table 4. Structural model.

| Hypotheses	Coefficient	T-value	P-value	BCILL	BCIUL	Results
H1: SM -> BI	0.796	32.052	0.000	0.746	0.842	Accepted
H2: SM -> BP	0.307	4.564	0.000	0.172	0.437	Accepted
H3: SM -> CR	0.131	2.018	0.044	0.014	0.271	Accepted
H4: SM -> BA	0.154	2.568	0.010	0.042	0.278	Accepted
H5: BI -> CR	0.087	1.277	0.202	-0.046	0.220	Rejected
H6: BI -> BA	0.229	3.450	0.001	0.098	0.363	Accepted
H7: BP -> CR	0.428	5.542	0.000	0.269	0.574	Accepted
H8: BP -> BA	0.494	5.870	0.000	0.318	0.645	Accepted
H9: BI -> BP	0.591	9.379	0.000	0.466	0.707	Accepted
H10: BA -> CR	0.273	3.915	0.000	0.136	0.409	Accepted
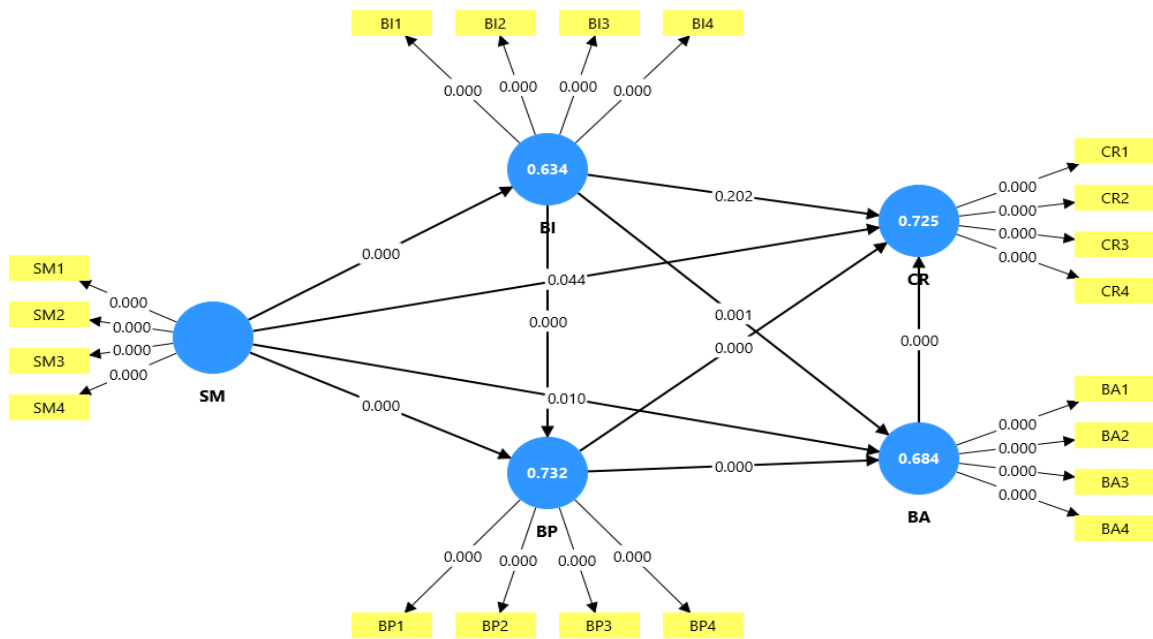
Figure 3. Structural model.

4. DISCUSSION

Study results reveal several key relationships that shed light on how social media, business intelligence, business performance, and brand awareness affect customer retention. Social media has a significant and positive impact on business intelligence, underscoring that social media platforms are rich, low-cost, and effective means of collecting and analyzing data. Social media analytics allow organizations to generate scientific and actionable business intelligence, according to Bilgin (2018), thus allowing organizations to better target and respond to market conditions. Similarly, as found in prior research, social media significantly and positively impacts business performance (Trainor et al., 2014). Social media's low cost and high reach allow small and medium enterprises to effectively compete with larger enterprises by increasing customer reach and improving operational flexibility. In addition, social media has a significant and positive impact on customer retention, confirming its role in maintaining customer relationships. Rofiq et al. (2020) argued that social media allows enterprises to engage customers, build trust, and respond to customer needs in real time, engendering long-term loyalty. Furthermore, the positive impact of social media on brand awareness aligns with the findings of Sasmita and Suki (2015), who indicated that social platforms have a strategic role in exhibiting a brand identity and underlining customer association. Consequently, with engaging content, organizations can develop emotional attachments with consumers and increase visibility and recall. Yet, business intelligence did not significantly influence customer retention, contrary to prior studies, particularly those of Malthouse et al. (2013), who suggested that BI tools enhance relationships by creating more personalized and timely connections. This variance may stem from the study context and the limits to the BI approach in practice, and it is suggested that BI alone, without engagement planning, is not enough to retain customers. In addition, Business intelligence was found to impact brand awareness significantly. This aligns with Saratian et al. (2024) and Shaily & Emma (2021), who show BI positively relates to an organization's ability to enhance brand awareness and brand image. An organization using BI can group its audiences more effectively and create individual messages based on the brand's identity. Similarly, Business performance significantly influences customer retention and brand awareness. Almarzoqi et al. (2025a) and Malthouse et al. (2013) argued that businesses with high-performance levels of consistent service and responsiveness are more likely to develop trust, brand loyalty, and brand advocates. In addition, having a strong performance level positively reinforces a brand's image and visibility in the market. The connection between business intelligence and organizational business performance was also significant. This aligns with Choi et al. (2020) as they stressed BI's importance in supporting better decision-making and delivering strategic value across functions. BI helps firms manage uncertainties and establish competitive advantages. Finally, brand awareness significantly impacted customer retention, supporting the hypothesis that better-known brands are more likely to develop strong emotional connections and trust with consumers (Gustafson & Chabot, 2007). Consequently, the greater the familiarity and likeability, the greater the chances of repeat purchases and loyalty.

5. CONCLUSION

This study examined how social media impacts business intelligence, business performance, brand awareness, and customer retention. Moreover, it examined how business intelligence influences customer retention, brand awareness, and business performance. Additionally, the study analyzed the impact of business performance on both customer retention and brand awareness and assessed how brand awareness contributes to customer retention. A quantitative approach was used in this study, and data were collected from 386 UAE social media users. The PLS-SEM analysis revealed that social media positively impacted business intelligence, business performance, brand awareness, and customer retention. Business intelligence was also found to positively impact business performance and brand awareness, but its effect on customer retention was insignificant. Additionally, business performance positively impacts customer retention and brand awareness. Brand awareness was shown to positively impact customer retention.

6. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Theoretical implications and practical implications

The results of this study provide valuable recommendations for organizations seeking to leverage social media to increase marketing performance. First, the findings confirm that social media positively impacts business intelligence, business performance, brand awareness, and customer retention. Therefore, the study recommends that policymakers and organization leaders consider the role of social media as more than a communication tool but a strategic resource for driving sustainable and continuous business growth. In addition, the study recommended that organizations dedicate and resource a customer social media team that helps them utilize a strategic approach rather than simply a communications or promotional tool. In addition, the study shows that business intelligence has a positive relationship with brand awareness and business performance, emphasizing that organizations should commit to using modern BI tools and training on these tools to make sense of market signals better and tailor their branding strategies. The insignificant relationship between business intelligence and customer retention needs to be examined more closely, as it suggests that business intelligence alone may not help retain customers unless combined with a desire for an emotional attachment to a brand, personalized service, and responsive communication plans. Businesses should not rely on data-driven insights alone when it comes to retention. Instead, they should combine data-driven practices with legitimate customer experience management. In addition, since the study confirms that brand awareness and business performance contribute strongly to customer retention, it is essential to ensure consistent brand presence and actual performance as an outcome of the brand presence. Managers should carefully evaluate the aspects of implementing initiatives that can express brand messages consistent with customers' expectations and performance delivery at every customer touchpoint to stimulate customer loyalty. The results provide valuable insights for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and emerging markets and businesses where resource availability is often limited. Utilizing low-cost, high-impact platforms like social media, combined with BI tools and performance measures, can create competitive advantages for SMEs and place them equally competitive with larger rival organizations.

6.2. Limitations and recommendations

Despite the study's contribution, its limitations must be recognized. First, this study was conducted in the UAE, which may limit the ability to generalize to other regions. Future research may consider applying the same model to other countries to generalize results. Second, with a cross-sectional research design, it was impossible to observe changing behavior. Future research may want to use longitudinal data to explore better changing relationships. Finally, a specific set of variables was analyzed, and possible moderating or mediating variables were not considered. Future research may want to expand the model by accounting for additional variables, including, but not limited to, technological readiness, social influence, or demographic moderators.

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