



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Navigating Social Media: Strategies for Institutional Managers in the Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

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With the spread of electronics-based interactions across various sectors, virtual space has also become lively with societal spaces for newer dimensions of social and psychological factors. In this light, effective managerial engagement with social media is an imperative, grounded in sensitivity to both platforms and audiences. Managers face distinctive challenges and opportunities at the juncture of social and economic science. Although social media provides unprecedented access to stakeholders, online discourse is sensitively social and ethically challenging. Given the void that exists in current managerial communication research, this paper presents a qualitative study informed by the views of private sector managers in Oman. Notwithstanding challenges such as traditional values and privacy issues, there is acknowledgement of the potential benefits of social media for organizational reputation and stakeholder trust. Social media also impacts the decisions of investors; hence, managers need to be on social media to ensure transparency and the generation of trust. Currently, the approach private companies adopt on social media is a one-way strategy and most often promotional. In times of crisis, social media acts as a virtual learning process on how to prepare and mitigate a crisis through engaging and empowering the community and the institution. It is, therefore, crucial to know the influence created by influential people on social media to develop relevant marketing strategies for the stakeholders. The development of an effective managerial engagement with social media is therefore a complex task that requires a diversity of insights from the social and economic sciences. In interaction with social media as a genuine field, managers can work toward organizational goals, build meaningful relations, and create positive societal change in an increasingly digital world.

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INTRODUCTION

Given the development of electronic interactions that are pouring into all possible levels of scientific, cultural, and business realia, cyberspace has become a vibrant societal space of communication and the emergence of new social and psychological realities. No doubt, this e-space is not virtual in the full sense; it represents a means for the actualization of personal properties and the construction of new social relations. Coupled with these changes in the landscape, it brings into sharp focus the role that institutional managers can play in the navigation of the social media platform. Indeed, one of the duties of researchers is to further investigate this issue for closer scrutiny of strategies, methodologies, and mechanisms that can secure effective managerial engagement with social media. One salient aspect worthy of examination is how managers interface with society and its assorted cohorts, in particular with respect to phenomena intersecting the social and economic sciences. By unpacking these dynamics, researchers can tease out the pluralistic implications of managerial

interactions taking place in the digital sphere, and through this process, flesh out how to engage meaningfully and deploy social media as a strategic means through which to advance organizational causes.

This has been the case to the extent that of late, the use of social media by organizations has advanced to the level that it has become conceivable for it to be utilized for reasons of recruitment and employment by entrepreneurs hoping to avoid some of the challenges associated with human intervention that is connected to favoritism and corruption. Some also talk about ways to use social media for building social capital and contributing to reducing loneliness and health aspects, like improving well-being versus increasing the levels of stress due to privacy concerns. On the contrary, positivity versus negativity.

Organizational outcomes pertaining to job performance, job attitudes, and social capital. In the contemporary business and organizational management environment, one can barely get away from social media. Digital platforms have evolved and proliferated further; they have become central channels for communication, marketing, and engaging with diverse stakeholders. It is against this background that institutional managers play a very important role in wading through these social media mines. Effective social media engagement at the managerial level requires nuanced understandings about the platforms and their audiences, together with the mechanisms driving this interaction. One salient aspect worthy of examination is how managers interface with society and its assorted cohorts in phenomena that juxtapose social and economic sciences. Digital discourse is multifaceted; social, cultural, and economic factors join forces to give meaning to online interactions. Managers have to engage with the multifaceted nature of digital discourse. The dynamics need to be understood in their entirety, including within the broader social context in which social media operates.

The challenges and opportunities are particularly specific when it comes to the harnessing of social media toward organizational objectives for managers situated at the juncture of the social and economic sciences. On one hand, the sites of social media provide access to extensive networks of consumers, stakeholders themselves, or influencers, in ways that enhance branding, customer engagement, and market research. On the other hand, sensitivity to social dynamics, cultural nuance, and ethical considerations is needed when one has to wade through the complexities of online discourses. Moreover, managers have to appreciate the dynamic nature of online communities and the fluidity of social media trends. What works today will not work with similar traction tomorrow; it requires equal parts of agility and adaptability in the real creation of the content and engagement strategies. This thus calls for constant monitoring and analysis of social media metrics, sentiment analysis, and consumer feedback in order to make strategic decisions. Furthermore, managers have to be aware of ethical considerations in their online activities and their consequences on the reputation of organizations and stakeholder trust. In the age of high scrutiny and digital transparency, missteps on social media may have far-reaching repercussions—underlining the need for integrity, authenticity, and accountability in online communication. In other words, good engagement of a manager with social media is multidimensional. It requires insights not just from the social sciences but also from the economic sciences. Only by understanding the dynamics of online discourse, using digital tools strategically, and maintaining ethical standards will managers be able to tap the potentials of social media to advance organizational goals, establish meaningful relations with their stakeholders, and contribute to positive societal impact.

The theoretical framework is based on the assumption that social media represents an accessible social sphere, considering the large amount of time people spend online expressing themselves and engaging in various topics. In this respect, the paper places special focus on the social networks as a means of communication through which a great deal of social interaction is nowadays channel. This culminates with the recognition of technology-driven communication and its effects on social relationships—it blurs physical and digital interaction. This framework, according to Awashreh, (2023 b), has been developing in the use of social networks to the point of giving way to a new science that can be called soc-technology and techno-psychology. It hence means that technological social media has gained great importance in research and is a space almost independent and more dynamic than the real space in. With cases of digital transformation that daily life is witnessing, programs and electronic sensors became among the indispensable necessities of life.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature has shown that the trend in using social media is gaining ground in the Sultanate of Oman. Major platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn dominate in user hits. All of these have uses, whether for marketing or education, even personal communication. Indeed, the frontrunner of these would be YouTube, with an astonishing 85% usage rate, followed by Facebook and Instagram. The growth of LinkedIn, however, appears to remain flat or even declining. Past research has pointed out the very positive effect of Facebook advertising on consumer attitude, especially within the framework of Palestinian companies using social media marketing tools to complement the effectiveness of direct advertising (Sayyad, 2023). In a modern setting, other recent studies have investigated the new roles and career opportunities brought forth by social media sites. Indeed, Awashreh (2023), highlights this creation of opportunities on a large scale and examines the extent to which social media networks do indeed contribute to the rise of job roles or professions. The findings reveal an active space within which business initiatives, both within and outside organizational boundaries, are born out of the changing human needs reported by Al Jaber & Qawasmeh (2020). This dynamic environment offers ground for innovative opportunities that call for exploration in order to align with the market dynamics, ensuring the meeting of needs for communities in an effective way. Marketing media research has been conducted in understanding consumer behaviors and strategizing ways of promoting sales. It is also the means to be in contact with customers through social media, to hear their comments and suggestions, and to be there to help and respond. On the other hand, human resources can use social media to attract human resources and build the personal brand of companies as a nice place to work. Moreover, when it comes to what can be done for companies with the help of social media, following up the market, the trends and the developments in the industry, monitoring the activity of their competitors and crisis management without spreading rumors, managers can spread the right information and manage the crisis in an objective, honest manner away from fooling others or misleading them (Al Jaber & Qawasmeh, 2020).

It can enhance the investment of companies through social media. It is reported that the results showed that social media does have a significant impact on the investment decisions of investors. In all, there are three main explanatory variables identified: information from social media, online community behavior, and firm image on social media. Investment-related information on social media positively affects investment decisions. Furthermore, online community behavior and firm image affected investment decisions in the case of less experienced investors. Generally, the study establishes that social media is indeed a significant determinant of investment decisions among investors, as stipulated by existing research literature in the field.

Also, applying psychology theory in analyzing social media-based word of mouth and its influence on the institutional investors' stockholdings, it was found that committed investors increase their stockholdings when confronted with positive sentiment, while transient investors decrease theirs. The results are moderated through competitive intensity and the presence of intangible assets. It therefore advances the proposition that investors' reactions to customer sentiment are informed by their investment strategies, a subtle understanding of how social media features in investment decision-making. Moreover, commitment and loyalty in social commerce online brand communities are fully mediated by social commerce trust with respect to the relationship with social presence. Moreover, social media may seduce people with the illusion of an ever-changing and confident identity, which is a deceit/dream that social media generously offers. In this sense, the role of ruling political elites would be very difficult in not only providing stability to their societies but also in engendering a solid societal identity within an increasingly unpredictable and complex international environment.

Gap in the literature

The bulk of the existing landscape is oriented towards companies and their relationship with social media from the standpoint of company operations and marketing strategies. But there is a visible lacuna concerning the standpoint of effective communication for general managers and chief executive officers. This research aims to fill this void by delving into communication dynamics only at the executive level within organizations and between them and other stakeholders, like customers.

3. METHODOLOGY

The present research therefore takes a qualitative approach, with the semi-structured interview as the main tool for data collection. Sampling of the respondents will utilize the network at Sharkia University in order to capitalize on their expertise, which enables the interview process. As it is a very important issue, one assumes that some respondents are not very willing to cooperate in the interviews or even with the written questions. For this reason, around 12 respondents were targeted from various private sector companies and institutions, social media, and marketing experts, on top of university instructors. Twelve dialogue-like interviews in the form of half-structured questionnaires were required to be held with a number of managers and executives of private companies in the Sultanate of Oman. The interviews aimed to gain insights into the presence of managers and executives within the social media platforms. These were the guiding questions during the interview process:

High-level management does not use social media for the benefits of development of their organization and their relations to stakeholders, but why?

- How and why top management should use the social media?
- To what extent influential persons, at what capacity and why do they interact and appear on social media platforms to represent their institution or company?
- Impact of institutional investment in presence and interaction of influential people over social media
- Impact of presence and interaction of influential people over social media upon them as a person

Such questions were open-ended to grant space for the interviewee to answer it at length, thus sharing his experience, views, and perceptions.

Information was gathered through two main methods: direct semi-structured interviews with managers and executives; and email correspondence where the target respondents are forwarded with the questions and then asked to respond to them in writing. Among those institutions that were interviewed included the Ministry of Labor and A'Sharqiyah University, among many more. There were a number of managers who were targeted for the interviews, including many directors who originated from different sectors. The initial contact was by phone to explain to the respondent the nature and purpose of the interview and to arrange appointments. In some cases, busy respondents preferred to respond in writing through email replies. These various ways by which data were collected helped the research to have a complete understanding of the role and influence of social media influencers from both the organizational and personal points of view.

4. FINDING

This has involved the transcription of data collected from the field interviews and written questionnaires, whereby discussions, descriptions, and illustrative examples have been included. The findings will be highly scrutinized and deliberated in detail herein after. Use of social media Omani managers face several forms of contradictions in using social media. First and foremost, these sites may hamper the traditional values and practices of the Omani people. The Omani culture upholds privacy and respect toward others as basic values. Hence, a lot of activity on social media could give the perception of overstepping these values (interview with company manager 1, 2024). The second aspect is related to security and privacy issues of social media use. With carelessness in the use of social media amidst increasing cyber threats, managers and companies become easy targets of possible data breaches or surveillance. Given the absence of strict laws in Oman regarding social media, managers may consider it essential to avoid social media as a way of minimizing their exposure and keeping all business information and sensitive data confidential.

Some company managers are of the view that directors should not use social media to communicate with stakeholders, customers, and suppliers. A regional director makes a claim that he is very busy and has no time to spend on social media to communicate with stakeholders although he acknowledges that these media are very crucial to the banking business interview with a banking

director, 2024). As such, managers are of the opinion that it's not their duty, considering frontline employees have the main role of social media engagement, stakeholder communication, product marketing, or even service promotion and sales visibility of the organization. If asked why top managers or directors keep silent, then they will simply say it is not in their scope. Directors are supposed to reach out to international companies and work on the organizational structure and decision-making. Provide directives and have them follow. In 2024, an opinion expressed by Company manager 3 in an interview. A view mirroring the mental framework of previous generations of managers who cannot understand the role of social media in contemporary education and the emergence of new socio-technological dynamics. One design company director commented on some of the potential concerns regarding executives and managers participating in social media. He commented that this participation would lessen how younger people view the prestige or value of those executives. While honesty is assumed with this type of medium, the executives are more concerned with the company image, which might prevent their ability to be forthright. This dilemma puts forward the paradox of valuing honesty, yet there is a reluctance to freely express it for fear of the consequences that may arise. Further, fear of losing their job positions instills a fear of engaging in social media amongst the executives and managerial staff (Interview with the company manager 2 & 4, 2024)

Organizational culture significantly influences its operations and managerial practices. Some managers believe that their responsibilities are confined to administrative tasks and interactions with other directors. They may perceive communication with stakeholders and customers as beyond their scope, often deflecting media inquiries and limiting their discourse to general, non-specific statements. This reluctance to engage with the public via social media platforms indicates a certain apprehension among general managers and directors concerning direct public interaction (Interview with social media expert, 2024). This apprehension is quite understandable, as the fear of making mistakes in public, particularly within the realm of public relations, can have significant repercussions for managers and companies alike. However, as social media continues to evolve into an increasingly integral aspect of our daily lives, the trepidation surrounding public communication should gradually diminish. Embracing social media as a genuine sphere of interaction becomes imperative. In the upcoming months or years, social media is poised to become the dominant platform as technology advances and progresses.

Appearance on social media

Although the importance of the presence of managers and officials on social media platforms in the Sultanate of Oman is recognized, the practice is not so common. Some officials may occasionally post pictures as well as excerpts of their speeches regarding activities but active participation and interaction through social media platform is not found.

The respondents however were of the opinion that it is imperative for the officials to have a presence in social media since this would enhance the reputation of the institution, give a better image of the educational programs in place as well as promote trust from students, parents, and the local community. They added that perhaps it may increase visibility and promotion in a positive way both for the individual and for the institution. Interview with company manager 8, 2024. One official said it is "very influential and supportive in portraying a clear image of the institution and reaching a wide audience in a quick way" (Interview with a company manager 8, 2024). Having such a presence will provide an easy and fast way to communicate the mission, objectives, culture, and services of the organization to the stakeholders. In addition, the surveyed respondents put across the argument that what somebody writes about or comments on, even what is posted on his/her personal social media page are a reflection of one's personality, ideas, and values. As influential individuals, they are seen from a different perspective than what the common person is viewed from in society and might possibly be regarded as role models.

In identifying the need to communicate with stakeholders, all respondents agreed that communication was necessary but strategic in doing so. As busy professionals and not media figures, most managers engage in social media mainly for work-related discussions. Their engagement is always linked to company success stories, experiences, or failures, to ensure stakeholders are kept

updated and involved in such happenings, 2024. However, with the changing and awareness growing, it becomes very important to acknowledge the transformation of social media into a vital public sphere of interaction. Noting how fast technology is transforming the world, social media will soon attain the status of becoming the prime platform. Thus, engaging and interacting on social media will soon become an essential criterion.

Impact of investment

Today, in the contemporary business world, a corporate image is the most important aspect considered while dealing with the public and stakeholders. Therefore, companies make every effort to present themselves in the best manner possible. Additionally, social media forms one of the biggest ways of enhancing company perception; hence, it plays a great role in the decisions of investors. As an interview with one of the managers of the company elicited, while stakeholders are also attracted to invest in successful companies, the latter mainly do so motivated by the goal of profit maximization. In such a scenario, social media platforms not only act as modes of communication but turn into basins of untapped wealth that can be used to ascertain a company's investment and valuation decisions.

In this digital environment, communication between managers and investors on social media cannot be overemphasized. This is a channel that beats them all in giving a dynamic way of building trust between companies and investors based on openness. Managers reduce the distance that exists between company activities and investor understanding by promptly and directly sharing vital information and market updates, which is the base for establishing investor confidence. This view is also replicated by the findings from the interview, which validate the instrumental role of social media in explaining the current status of the company and its future strategic direction to different stakeholders and investors. Interview with a company manager 6, 2024.

Moreover, the strategic activities of managers on social media act as a gateway in the pursuit of a good reputation and attractiveness to potential investors. Such leveraging of digital channels by management for storytelling about successes and important milestones increases the visibility of corporate performance and lends authenticity and relatability to it. Such a proactive approach to communication creates a dialogue with the investors, and managers respond to questions, issues, and feedback in real-time to establish long-term relationships that are based on openness, transparency, and mutual trust. Consequently, the company becomes an attractive investment opportunity characterized by openness in communication and investor engagement, as has been observed from the interview insights. (Interview with a company manager 10, 2024). Social media will help develop and enhance at a rapid rate the need for social sharing to result in better commercial and investment relations.

More engagement with social media

The last couple of years have witnessed an increasing usage of social media sites by politicians and officials in the country, reflecting the global trends. Indeed, a few government representatives and private sector managers have joined social media with the express intent of shaping public opinion and promoting their respective organizations (interview with a manager at company 9, 2024). Respondents, however, explained that the large following and ease of access to social media made it very effective in shaping public opinion and promoting goods and services, as expressed by the manager of company 2 in an interview conducted in 2024.

The influence of prominent people on social media sites is another critical factor that would affect the reputation of a CEO. Their engagement with our products and services is instant validation of their quality and value. For instance, once prominent influencers share positive content about our products or recommend them in a very positive way, that strengthens trust in them and reflects their positives directly. This positive effect can also be conveyed to potential prospects and, more importantly, to current customers, where it would strengthen their relationship with the company, thus increasing the depth of the association with the brand. This is according to an interview

conducted with manager 6 in 2024. Moreover, such interaction of the influencers may be vital in ascertaining market trends and consumer behavior. By voicing opinion and setting trends, these individuals can drive demand toward certain products or services or, on the contrary, shift attention away from them in case of negative experiences. It is hence relevant to regard the notion of influential people in marketing strategies and communication with an audience. Therefore, it becomes imperative to improve the relationship of the executives with these people and understand the mechanisms through which they exercise their influence in order to successfully bring about a distinction of the brand in the market. In the words of Manager 8 in an interview in 2024.

According to Al-Shaar, a Jordanian expert in social media, globalization, technological innovation, and the digital revolution have made the tools of social media quite indispensable for any manager or executive in this digital world. They help in direct communication with different stakeholders, such as clients, employees, partners, and investors, through direct communication that increases transparency and develops trust. They also help share knowledge and success stories more easily, connect with an audience, and become thought leaders within specific areas. (Communication with Al-Shaar, 2024). Social media can also serve as a key learning tool for managers to keep themselves updated in their respective areas, communicate with experts, and share their views and opinions. They further help them track changes in the market, perceive the needs of their customers, and find new opportunities for growth. In this way, social media becomes an invaluable tool for every manager and executive looking towards success in the modern-day business world. The role of social media for managers will only continue to grow in importance as digital transformation and technologies evolve in the future; its interactive and intelligent capacities will open up multiple avenues of communication, interactivity, learning, and innovation. Other fast-developing trends that are going to define the future for social media managers include artificial intelligence and work tool integrations, to mention a few. One expert in the field of social media believes that the site works differently for various managers regarding their roles and duties. Although some managers might find it necessary to be connected with the public through such networking sites, this is not the case with all managers. There could be many such successful managers who always prefer to remain under the radar and never even have a profile on LinkedIn, Facebook or even twitter (personal communication with social media expert, 2024).

Barriers to social media

This importance of social networking for managers is also determined by various factors such as the industry, sector, national culture, and organizational norms. The cultural upbringing, as in the case of Muslim communities, can also impact attitudes toward self-promotion and visibility. I would like to clarify that I do not undermine the importance of the issue at hand but rather put more emphasis on the consideration of the context in which a manager finds themselves. Nevertheless, the trend adopted so far by private companies in engaging their audiences through the use of social media remains promotional with very little content. Managers or any other officials are seen in videos or featured in photo-taking events, often giving generic statements of welcome. There is a need to establish a more engaging and informative approach in terms of transparency and the building of trust among its stakeholders. Example: This was expressed by the marketing instructor in an interview in 2024.

Moreover, some Muslim managers stay away from using social media due to a couple of reasons. First and foremost is religious commitment: some of them find that many of these media outlets conflict with Islamic values and moral codes, for which reason they show rejection towards the heavy display of indecent images or content. Moreover, they are keen to maintain their privacy due to the fact that it is part of the Islamic culture, and they would not be very willing to disclose private matters to the public. They also recognized the risks of aberration that social media promotes, since this aberration would affect negatively their job performance as well as the realization of set goals in their lives and careers. Besides, they know the insecurity risks they may be open to from the means, in terms of electronic hacking or using personal information for ill purposes, hence trying to keep off from using them (interview with a company manager 3, 2024).

Social media and managing crises

Social media is like light in crises, for it guides the process of communication and sets the people on a certain path. Governments and institutions depend on platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp to share information at incredible speed with clear directions amidst crises. This was strikingly evident in the case of the Sultanate of Oman during the COVID-19 pandemic, wherein such channels acted like lifelines in delivering updates related to the epidemiological landscape and linked precautionary measures every day. Further, during times of crisis, social media is instrumental in psychosocial support for the development of resilience at both individual and community levels.

On these digital landscapes, users share their experiences, feelings, and resources, providing comfort, strengthening solidarity, and reinforcing social links. In the Gulf countries, waves of solidarity invaded social media in the face of recession and health crises, all pointing towards the deeper functions these platforms play in sustaining collective morale, as pointed out by an interview with a company manager 4 in 2024. More than this, however, social media has become an essential channel in the dissemination of awareness/education, taking the place of a virtual classroom on crisis preparedness and response. Through such channels, trusted sources such as governments, organizations, and field experts can share trusted information, besides doling out effective advisories for communities to stay safe and navigate crises. Social media in the Gulf countries has taken up the task of informing society on the importance of precautions against drought and temperatures, therefore fostering a culture of resilience and preparedness. Moreover, in times of turmoil, social media acts as a medium to amplify solidarity and cooperation and creates social harmony and empathy. Campaigns and charity efforts take advantage of social media to bring about awareness, gathering support and mobilizing the distribution of relief and assistance to those in dire need. Social media in Gulf countries has turned into a channel through which benevolence is done, whereby fundraising campaigns ensure that resources are mobilized to alleviate the plight of the poor during times of economic downturn, exemplifying great potential for collective action at times of need. This is according to an interview with a company manager in 2024 and another one with an investment manager in the same year.

More exactly, it is in times of crisis that social media comes into its own, crossing the boundaries of the digital world to become a force for communication, support, education, and unity in times of hardship, hence lighting paths to resilience and collective empowerment. Although the presence of managers and officials on social media platforms is realized to be significant, the current approach is superficial and promotional. There is definitely room for any organization to make use of social media as a powerful communication, engagement, and reputation management tool.\

4. DISCUSSION

Previous researches show that managers can utilize social media in several ways to enhance communication within the organization and outside the organization. The ways in which the use can be applied are through internal communication within the organization and interaction between work teams, so that social media platforms can be used internally to enhance communication between the company's employees. This can be done by creating private groups for employees to share knowledge and exchange ideas and updates. In PR management, managers can use social media to create and maintain public relations with customers, partners, and investors by publishing valuable information and answering questions. Thus, social media in Oman can be used by any director, and a director in a company commented that he can use it in various positions.

This research is an attempt to fill the knowledge gap about effective communication by general managers and CEOs of organizations, both internally and externally, with other stakeholders like customers. In the Sultanate of Oman, this study explored managers' and executives' opinions on their presence at social media sites through semi-structured interviews carried out among private companies' managers and executives. The results show that very few managers in Oman find it not easy to use social media due to traditional values and customs, security and privacy issues, and lack of stringent rules and regulations guiding the use of social media. Moreover, few managers believe that directors should not engage stakeholders, customers, and suppliers on social media, but leave such duties to employees on the front line.

Organizational culture plays a very significant role in managerial practices, and some managers believe that communication with the stakeholders and customers is not in their scope. However, with the constant growth of social media as an integral part of life, the reluctance for public communication is bound to decrease gradually. It becomes necessary to consider social media as an authentic site of engagement at a time when technology and development march forward. While managers and officials in the Sultanate of Oman do have accounts on social media sites, active contribution and engagement are at a low level. However, it was highlighted by respondents that it is important for the institutional reputation of officials, image enhancement of educational programs, and trust-building among their stakeholders.

While there are difficulties and challenges for managers and executives to effectively use social media, their presence and engagement through these media are likely to become imperative with the passage of time when technology will further diffuse, and social media happens to become the prime platform. Social media is an important tool for corporate image building and influencing the decisions of investors; they act like platforms which are also pools of potential wealth in the formation of investment decisions and company valuation. Through social media, the interaction between managers and investors extends beyond the conventional limits, building trust and a feeling of transparency that cements investor confidence. Business strategic engagement on social media builds reputation and allure for potential investors, creating authenticity and relatability. In addition, politicians and officials engage increasingly with social media in a manner reflective of global trends. On the other hand, a CEO's reputation affects trust in products or services. Knowing the effect of influential stakeholders is critical in marketing strategies and communication with audiences. In the current business landscape, globalization and digitization have made it without social media, an indispensable tool for any manager or executive. They provide an avenue for direct communication with the stakeholders and bring transparency. Also, they permit sharing of expertise toward cultivating thought leadership in respective areas. The role of social media in the life of a manager will only continue to grow as technology and digital transformation move further; with emerging trends like artificial intelligence and integration into work tools, the role is bound to expand.

The importance of social media for managers depends upon a number of factors, such as industry, sector, national culture, and organizational norms. Nevertheless, the way private companies currently practice social media engagement is essentially promotional in nature and narrow in scope. Some Muslim managers also avoid using social media because of religious and moral commitments, protection of privacy, and security risks. Others have no time, as this bank regional manager shared in an interview with the bank director in 2025. Social media during crises serves as a key channel of communication, guidance, and support in the enhancement of preparedness and program response activities, Razali et al. (2024). Governments and other institutions make use of such platforms to disseminate facts and provide psychosocial support in the interest of boosting resilience among people and their communities. Further, social media serves as the virtual classroom in teaching the public measures of caution amidst disasters—a classic example of how social media can be used for communication, support, and unity. Social media transcends its digital confines during crises and evolves into a dynamic force for communication, support, education, and unity. Social media can become a very effective tool for communication, engagement, and reputation management in organizations. Therefore, organizations are able to use it to the fullest in supporting their navigation within the complexities that come with modern business landscapes.

5. CONCLUSION

The current research thus brings out the challenges and opportunities that existed in exploiting social media among managers and executives in the Sultanate of Oman. Even as traditional values, security concerns, and organizational norms work against social media, their importance in improving internal and external organizational communication cannot be overemphasized. As technology advances and social media becomes pervasive, the managers should accept the latter as essential ways by which they can achieve transparency with their stakeholders, elicit trust, and engender high levels of engagement. The findings underpin the potential of social media to shape corporate image, influence investor decisions, and strengthen relationships with customers and partners. It is still,

however, upon the companies to adopt a more strategic and holistic approach toward social media engagement—one that recognizes its role within crisis communication, public relations, and organizational culture. Harnessed at the core, it enables organizations to outmaneuver the complexities within the modern business world and come out at the top in their sectors.

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