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Administrative Sciences

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*Suggested Citation:* Al Boinin, Hamda; Savanid Vatanasakdakul; Zaghouani, Wajdi (2025) : Gender, culture, and social media: Exploring women's adoption of social media entrepreneurship in Qatari society, Administrative Sciences, ISSN 2076-3387, MDPI, Basel, Vol. 15, Iss. 3, pp. 1-22, <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci15030089>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/321233>

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## Article

# Gender, Culture, and Social Media: Exploring Women's Adoption of Social Media Entrepreneurship in Qatari Society

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**Abstract:** Purpose: Social media has become a significant catalyst for entrepreneurship in the Middle East, particularly for women. Considering the limited research conducted to understand the factors influencing social media adoption in conservative societies such as Qatar, this study aims to examine the factors affecting the adoption of social media among women entrepreneurs in Qatar and extend the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by including sociocultural variables. Method: The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey approach comprising 290 women entrepreneurs through an online survey. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), particularly Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis, was used to investigate relationships between constructs. Findings: The results highlight two dimensions that significantly affect women's adoption of social media for entrepreneurship in Qatar: technological (perceived usefulness) and sociocultural (family influence, kinship roles, and reputation preservation). Through these factors, we found that women in Qatar are especially drawn to social media entrepreneurship because it enhances their business operations while being in line with their cultural and social values. Conclusion and Originality: This research is one of the pioneering studies on women entrepreneurship and social media in Qatar. It extends the technology adoption theory with novel sociocultural constructs specific for women entrepreneurship in the Middle East. This research offers insights that are significant for advancing the field of digital entrepreneurship and fostering women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment within Qatar and the other communities of the Middle East.



Received: 18 December 2024

Revised: 6 January 2025

Accepted: 31 January 2025

Published: 4 March 2025

**Citation:** Al-Boinin, H., Vatanasakdakul, S., & Zaghouani, W. (2025). Gender, Culture, and Social Media: Exploring Women's Adoption of Social Media Entrepreneurship in Qatari Society. *Administrative Sciences*, 15(3), 89. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci15030089>

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**Keywords:** women entrepreneurship; social media; TAM; Qatar; Middle East

## 1. Introduction

Women entrepreneurs have a crucial role in the sustained economic development and social transformation processes worldwide, and the progress of technological innovations is providing better opportunities for them. Social media platforms offer a promising path for women, opening new opportunities for them within the field of entrepreneurship. Social media entrepreneurship is another type of digital entrepreneurship whereby entrepreneurs use social media platforms (for instance, Instagram and Facebook) to build and sell their products, services, or other related products. Social media differs from websites as traditional forms of digital entrepreneurship by being affordable, simple to use, extending the reach of customers, and improving communication with them, making it a useful

tool for potential entrepreneurs (Camacho & Barrios, 2021). In particular, the accessibility and flexibility of social media are highly important for supporting women and providing them with more equitable opportunities with their male counterparts in entrepreneurship (McAdam et al., 2020; Sahu & Bhamboo, 2023). Most significantly, in countries where sociocultural factors are closely intertwined with female entrepreneurship—including the Middle East—the imperative of social media is evident (McAdam et al., 2020).

Despite the increasing scientific interest in Middle Eastern women entrepreneurship, one can identify considerable lacking of research related to social media (Ennis, 2019; Eroglu et al., 2019). From the global perspective, prior studies on social media usage by entrepreneurs are mainly drawn from Western and Asian countries and very scantily from Middle Eastern countries (Mandal, 2012; Nawi et al., 2017). However, there is limited research concerning the cultural and gender aspects of this subject. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the impact of societal and cultural characteristics on the adoption of social media entrepreneurship among women in the Middle East due to the different social issues that women face in conducting their businesses in the region (McAdam et al., 2020).

The purpose of this research is to address the existing research gaps and investigate the adoption of social media by women entrepreneurs in Qatar. Building on the technology adoption theory, this study incorporates a sociocultural perspective to capture the nuances of the society and culture in the Middle Eastern region. The originality of this research lies in the development and validation of a technology adoption framework focused on both technological and cultural contexts of social media entrepreneurship and women in the Middle East. This study is the first to conceptualize Middle Eastern cultural values in terms of women entrepreneurship and social media adoption, providing a more comprehensive analysis of the adoption decisions. It offers novel measurement items to measure these cultural values quantitatively. This research will advance the knowledge of women's entrepreneurship and social media in Qatar and the Middle East as an unresearched context (Al-Qahtani et al., 2022). Moreover, the findings of the study will guide policymakers in supporting women's entrepreneurship and empowerment in the region.

The structure of the paper is as follows: The next section presents the literature review. After that, the theoretical framework and the formulation of the research model and hypotheses are presented. The research methodology is then described, leading to an analysis of the results. The following section discusses the result implications of the research findings. Finally, the paper concludes with reflections on limitations and provides recommendations for future research.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Social Media Adoption by Entrepreneurs

Social media entrepreneurship is defined as the practice of digital entrepreneurship through the sale, buying, trade, or exchange of goods and services through social media platforms (Olanrewaju et al., 2020). While social media entrepreneurship has received increased attention among scholars, the research on this topic is relatively new (Olanrewaju et al., 2020). Research within information systems has explored why entrepreneurs use social media (Abed, 2020). Scholar identified that the main factors influencing entrepreneurs' decisions to adopt social media are related to technology's perceived usefulness and ease of use (Abed, 2020; Fan et al., 2021; Tripopsakul, 2018). Besides technological factors, scholars identified other factors, such as individuals' prior use and personality attributes, that influence the adoption decisions (Mandal, 2012; Tripopsakul, 2018). Furthermore, external factors, such as competition and customers' expectations, also push entrepreneurs to incorporate social media (Fan et al., 2021; Tripopsakul, 2018). However, there is still a lack of research on the sociocultural influence on the adoption of social media entrepreneur-

ship. Moreover, the existing research on entrepreneurs' adoption of social media tends to overlook women's perspectives and experiences.

Several technology adoption theories were used by scholars to provide a framework investigating entrepreneurs' motivation for adopting social media, such as Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Tripopsakul, 2018; Turan & Kara, 2018), The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Mandal, 2012; Nawi et al., 2017), and the Technology–Organization–Environment (TOE) framework (Abed, 2020; Fan et al., 2021). Although these theories offer valuable empirical insights on the adoption of technology, they frequently ignore sociocultural variables and women's perspectives (Shachak et al., 2019).

The current research on social media entrepreneurship adoption is relatively focused on Western and Asian nations, and it appears that there is a significant gap in the literature about Middle Eastern countries (Abed, 2020). This gap is especially important in the context of the research subject—Qatar—where entrepreneurs' use of social media is still in the early stages of investigation (Al-Qahtani et al., 2022). In light of the differences in the dynamics of the region and the considerable roles of social and cultural factors, particularly for women, it becomes easily understandable why it is necessary to define the factors that may motivate the use of social media in this case. This is important since there are other local factors that can determine women's entrepreneurial behavior and technology adoption.

## 2.2. Women Entrepreneurship in the Middle East

Cultural, societal, and familial norms have a deep influence on women's entrepreneurship in the Middle East (Al-Harthi, 2017; Naguib, 2015). In collectivist societies, family approval and support are very important. In the Middle East, these norms heavily affect entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors for women, and they determine their entrepreneurial success (Welsh et al., 2021). For example, in Oman, in the case of women entrepreneurs, family approval is an essential part of many business decisions (Al-Harthi, 2017), and in Saudi Arabia, there are certain legal requirements for family involvement, such as co-signing business documents (Alreshoodi et al., 2022). Consequently, family support is a practical necessity as well as a motivational factor in view of the regulatory frameworks.

Furthermore, research emphasizes women's caregiving role within the family and how it affects entrepreneurial activities (Barragan et al., 2018; Naguib, 2015). In Middle Eastern cultures, women's family caregiving is a deeply rooted concept as part of the religion and culture (Setyawati et al., 2024). As such, women entrepreneurs frequently try to balance their entrepreneurial commitments with family responsibilities (Barragan et al., 2018). Along with parenting, women in the Middle East are expected to take part in extensive family occasions and care for extended family and sick or elderly relatives (Bilge Johnson, 2023). On the other hand, a change toward a more equal division of domestic duties between men and women is taking place in many other societies, especially in the West (Kim, 2019). As a result, women entrepreneurs in the Middle East face a challenge trying not to disrupt both family and entrepreneurship trajectories (Barragan et al., 2018; Naguib, 2015).

Additionally, gender norms in the region, largely influenced by traditions and religious beliefs, restrict women's public interactions with other men (Salem & Yount, 2019). Gender segregation is a norm in various public spaces, including universities and workplaces, across many countries in the Middle East (Madbouly et al., 2021). This division restricts networking possibilities for female entrepreneurs looking to expand their businesses (McAdam et al., 2020). Moreover, societal pressure on women to uphold strict gender norms and represent a positive image socially is common in the region (Itani et al., 2011; Hatoum, 2021). These expectations influence women's participation in entrepreneurship. For example, women lean towards what is considered to be socially accepted regarding

business activities and choose a business field suitable for their gender (Al-Harthi, 2017; Hatoum, 2021). This reinforces traditional gender roles and reduces the parameters of the entrepreneurial opportunities available to women (Ennis, 2019). The context of women entrepreneurship in the Middle East highlights the profound influence of societal and cultural influences on the experiences and choices of women.

### *2.3. Social Media and Women Entrepreneurship in the Middle East*

While several studies explored women entrepreneurship in the Middle East, there is a lack of research within the context of social media. Limited exploratory studies have investigated how social media influences women entrepreneurs in the Middle East (Alghamdi, 2021; Elshantaly & Moussa, 2022; McAdam et al., 2020). For example, McAdam et al. (2020) conducted interviews with six women entrepreneurs with the purpose of exploring Saudi women entrepreneurs' utilization of digital technologies. The study concluded that Saudi women utilize social media to access a professional environment free from the restrictions of in-person interactions with males, enabling them to express themselves and explore ventures outside of traditional fields. Alghamdi (2021) explored the empowering influence of social media on Saudi female entrepreneurs through a cross-sectional survey of 156 women. The study found that social media assists Saudi women in balancing between home caregiving responsibilities and entrepreneurial activities. Elshantaly and Moussa (2022) also investigated the influence of social media on women entrepreneurs in the UAE using data from 14 interviews. The study highlighted that social media helps UAE women entrepreneurs by increasing their presence in male-dominated fields and encouraging accessibility and affordability.

While prior research has attempted to explore women's entrepreneurship and social media in the context of Middle Eastern countries, there is limited research, especially in the context of Qatar. Most current studies in the topic area are descriptive and mainly qualitative in nature. Alghamdi (2021) exclusively falls into the quantitative research category, but it has not been grounded in theory. This study seeks to fill this gap by developing a research model to test the impact of technological and sociocultural drivers on the use of social media among women entrepreneurs in Qatar. The use of quantitative research with a theoretical background contributes to achieving valid and reliable measurement and analysis of variables. This approach is useful for figuring out causal relationships and generating prediction models that can be particularly useful for planning policy alterations.

### *2.4. Case Study: Qatar*

Qatar presents an interesting case for the examination of women in social media for business. Despite the fact that the population density of the given country is rather low and does not exceed 2.6 million people, Qatar is among the richest countries in the world with an economy that relies on hydrocarbon resources (Fouad, 2018). The focus on Qatar National Vision 2030 includes economic diversification and the development of SMEs and start-ups, including women's entrepreneurship (Al-Qahtani et al., 2022; Tarek, 2019). Through organizations like the Qatar Development Bank (QDB), Qatar Business Incubation Centre (QBIC), Bedaya Center, and Nama Center, the Qatari government has launched a number of initiatives to encourage entrepreneurship, with special attention given to women entrepreneurs (Tarek, 2019). These initiatives offer vital resources to prospective business owners, including loans, funding, and mentorship.

Additionally, notable achievements have been demonstrated in improving access to education and increasing the status of women as a strategic priority of the Qatari government. As stated by Ali (2022), Qatari women surpass men in the enrollment rates of university education. However, a gender gap persists, with labor force participation at



64.1% for women and 96.6% for men as of 2023 (Qatar World Bank Gender Data Portal, 2023). The National Planning Council (2024) carried out a survey in 2024 which revealed that 42% of economically inactive women cited family care as their primary reason for not working, despite 85% holding university degrees. Among those seeking jobs, 50% faced difficulties finding suitable employment that aligns with their social and cultural values (National Planning Council, 2024). Al-Ghanim (2019) argued that traditional kinship models and cultural norms limit Qatari women's economic participation. Many young Qatari women prioritize family responsibilities over professional aspirations (Salem & Yount, 2019). Additionally, many Qatari women prefer gender-segregated workplaces to uphold their reputations, which influences the types of jobs they find suitable (Salem & Yount, 2019).

While these challenges still exist in practice, women in Qatar have gradually accepted entrepreneurship as a feasible and favorable work model. More Qatari women show interest in being entrepreneurs than men, according to the research conducted by Costa and Pita (2020). However, Al-Qahtani et al. (2022) noted that sociocultural barriers still hinder women's full participation in the entrepreneurial milieu. On the other hand, regional and global research highlight the promising potential of social media as a way for women to handle these issues (McAdam et al., 2020; Sahu & Bhamboo, 2023).

This potential is promising for women in Qatar, as the Information and Communication Technology Development Index is highly ranked in the country and the nation is positioned as one of the world's most social media-savvy (Tarek, 2019). However, despite these encouraging signs, there is a scarcity of research exploring women's adoption of social media in Qatar. This offers a unique chance to explore this phenomenon. In line with Qatar's objectives of economic diversification, social advancement, and gender parity, this investigation is important for policymakers working to encourage women's entrepreneurship and economic participation.

### 3. Theoretical Background and Hypothesis Development

#### 3.1. Theoretical Background

In pursuing the research question of what influences the use of social media by women entrepreneurs in Qatari society, a theoretical framework was adapted rooted in technology adoption. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989) was used in this research for its widely established acceptance and validation among researchers (Salahshour Rad et al., 2018). It is a fundamental theory, providing a strong foundation for examining the technological aspects of adoption behavior through the components of perceived usefulness (PE) and perceived ease of use (PE) (Salahshour Rad et al., 2018). Notably, this model is best for investigating the adoption behavior from an individual perspective, such as women entrepreneurs (Davis, 1989).

However, the TAM was criticized for expressing the adoption of technology simply based on technological factors (Bae & Han, 2020; Shachak et al., 2019). Other social, cultural, and contextual factors are also important (Shachak et al., 2019). As a result of this limited extent, academics have advocated for the TAM framework to be expanded to include contextual factors in order to provide a more thorough understanding of technology adoption (Bae & Han, 2020; Shachak et al., 2019). This approach enhances the model's explanatory power and applicability (Bae & Han, 2020).

In the context of women entrepreneurship in the Middle East, research emphasize the substantial influence of sociocultural dynamics (Al-Harthi, 2017; Naguib, 2015; Welsh et al., 2021). Moreover, these dynamics play a significant role in the adoption of digital technologies by women entrepreneurs in the region (Alghamdi, 2021; McAdam et al., 2020). As a result, our study incorporates a sociocultural dimension into the TAM frame-

work, following a similar path of earlier research on technology adoption (Bae & Han, 2020). This approach strategically provides the necessary framework to provide a more nuanced understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing the adoption of social media entrepreneurship among women in Qatar.

Empirical research examining the influence of culture on entrepreneurship has used well-known cultural theories such as Hofstede's cultural theory, Schwartz's theory, and Trompenaars' cultural dimensions (Bojadjev et al., 2023; Morales et al., 2019). While these frameworks provide valuable insights, they are criticized for being too general and failing to address local cultural elements, particularly related to women entrepreneurship in the Middle East (Hayton & Cacciotti, 2013; Valliere, 2019).

Thus, to meet this need, the current study presents new cultural constructs adapted from the literature on women's entrepreneurship and the Middle East. From an extensive literature review, the following concepts were identified, i.e., family influence (Al-Harathi, 2017; Ennis, 2019; Welsh et al., 2021), kinship role (Al-Ghanim, 2019; Barragan et al., 2018; Brush et al., 2009), gender segregation (Kemppainen, 2019; Mathew, 2019; Salem & Yount, 2019), and reputation preservation (Al-Harathi, 2017; Gupta & Mirchandani, 2018; Itani et al., 2011). Through these constructs, our study fills theoretical gaps and offers a better understanding of social media adoption by women entrepreneurs in the context of Middle East. A thorough examination of these constructs and their applicability within social media adoption context is given in the next section.

### 3.2. Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

This study presents a research model based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Our model extends the technological dimension of TAM and incorporates a socio-cultural dimension. The present study proposes the addition of the sociocultural dimension to TAM to offer a better explanation of females' adoption of social media entrepreneurship in Qatar. The proposed research model is demonstrated in Figure 1 below.

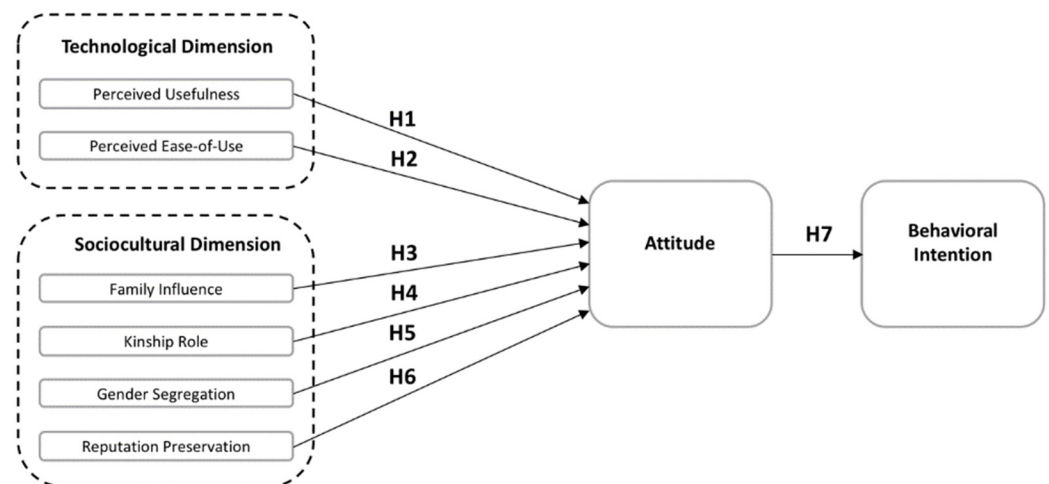


Figure 1. Research model.

### 3.3. Research Hypothesis

#### 3.3.1. Perceived Usefulness

The perceived usefulness is the extent to which an individual believes that the use of a certain technology will improve productivity or level of performance, as defined by Davis (1989). In this research, perceived usefulness captures the level at which women entrepreneurs in Qatar consider social media useful. According to Alghaith (2016), Middle Eastern women entrepreneurs benefit from the use of social media mainly because it

enables them to perform sales and market their products and services more conveniently. Furthermore, prior research suggests that entrepreneurs are more likely to adopt social media if they find it useful in enhancing their business operations (Abed, 2020; Tripopsakul, 2018). Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H1.** *Perceived usefulness positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitudes towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.*

### 3.3.2. Perceived Ease of Use

Perceived ease of use, according to Davis (1989), is the degree of difficulty a given individual believes they will encounter when using a specific technology. In this research, perceived ease of use captures the extent of the ease women entrepreneurs in Qatar perceive when engaging in business activities using social media platforms. Previous studies have shown that social media is easy to use for business operations and does not have technical complexity (Abed, 2020; Hossain & Rahman, 2018). Turan and Kara (2018) pointed out that previous research indicates that entrepreneurs are more likely to use social media if it is easy. Similarly, the high penetration rate of social media use in Qatar makes it arguable to assume that people from the region have the required knowledge and experience in dealing with social media, making the adoption of social media an easy process (Tarek, 2019). Based on these premises, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H2.** *Perceived ease of use positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.*

### 3.3.3. Family Influence

Family influence is derived from the concept of social influence by Venkatesh et al. (2012). In this study, it represents women's subjective perception of the extent to which their family supports their use of social media for business. Venkatesh et al. (2012) established that close social circles and family members deeply influence the adoption of new technologies, and that influence is more visible among women.

Collectivist Middle Eastern cultures place strong emphasis on family cohesion and support as it impacts the well-being of individuals (Welsh et al., 2021). Prior research highlights the significant role the family plays in influencing women's entrepreneurship and their decision-making processes (Al-Harthi, 2017; Barragan et al., 2018; Welsh et al., 2021). For instance, Al-Harthi (2017) showed that women entrepreneurs in the Middle East will venture into entrepreneurship only if their families approve. Moreover, Alreshoodi et al. (2022) indicate that women entrepreneurs in some Middle Eastern countries must involve their families as co-signatories, and this makes family involvement inevitable.

Virtual platforms are not exempt from this effect as research on social media has revealed that close social networks and families impact Middle Eastern entrepreneurs use of social media (Humaid & Sabri, 2019). Other research also found that, in the Middle East, people's intentions to use internet are influenced by their family (Al-Omoush & Shaqrah, 2010). In light of the significant influence of families on Middle Eastern women's entrepreneurial choices and technology adoption, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H3.** *Family influence positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.*

### 3.3.4. Kinship Role

Kinship role is defined as the set of duties and tasks distinct from the role of the individual within a kinship system in a society (Barrett, 2022). In this research, kinship role



explores the extent to which women entrepreneurs in Qatar feel that they can effectively perform their roles within their families while using social media. Brush et al. (2009) identified that the main variable affecting all aspects related to women entrepreneurs is their role within the family or what they referred to as 'motherhood'.

Regardless of culture, women taking the bigger part in family affairs is universal. However, this gender norm is highly noticeable in Middle Eastern countries, impacted by religious and cultural circumstances (Setyawati et al., 2024). The Islamic custom of birr-al-walidayn (بر الوالدين) and Silat al-Rahim (صلة الرحم) encourage individuals to respect and take care of their parents and relatives and preserve familial relationships (Fauzi & Noer, 2024; Bilge Johnson, 2023). In Middle Eastern cultures, women are considered responsible for family members such as grandparents, aunts, and uncles, and they are actively involved in family ceremonies and celebrations, performing the majority of preparations beforehand (Bilge Johnson, 2023). In Qatar, several women either do not work or limit their careers, as long hours of work are inconvenient for them and interfere with family responsibilities (Doha International Family Institute, 2019).

In contrast, social media entrepreneurship allows women to balance caregiving with business duties (Alghamdi, 2021; Hossain & Rahman, 2018). It enables women to work from home and pursue entrepreneurial endeavors, which is more in line with societal norms about women's familial duties (Al-Ghanim, 2019). According to Alghamdi (2021) and Boshmaf (2023), women in the Middle East engage in social media entrepreneurship for work-life balance. This enables them to operate their enterprises on social media in a flexible manner while simultaneously taking care of their families. Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H4.** *Kinship role positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.*

### 3.3.5. Gender Segregation

Gender segregation is the legal and cultural norms that physically separate males and females in social spaces (Al-Mohannadi & Furlan, 2022). Due to customs and religious convictions, gender norms in the Middle East limit women's interactions with men (Sabri & Thomas, 2019). In Qatar, gender segregation is a strongly ingrained tradition, where gender-segregated areas are the norms in public hospitals, universities, and government institutions (Ennis, 2019; Salem & Yount, 2019). In this research, gender segregation is examined through the perception of women entrepreneurs in Qatar regarding social media as an appropriate context for interaction with men for business purposes.

Many studies examined the effects of gender segregation on women entrepreneurs in the region, emphasizing how it limits their access to social networks (Ennis, 2019; Sabri & Thomas, 2019; Salem & Yount, 2019). Developing a business requires extensive networking and communication with various people, predominantly men (Neumeyer et al., 2019). However, the convention of gender segregation in the region limits women entrepreneurs' degrees to network and develop their businesses (Barragan et al., 2018; Itani et al., 2011). Furthermore, the limitation of mobility for women in some Middle Eastern countries, including the necessity of a male relative chaperone, where women entrepreneurs are restricted in traveling alone without a brother, father, husband, or son, further complicate their entrepreneurial pursuits (Itani et al., 2011; Mathew, 2019).

However, the current research has pointed out that social media serves as a means for women entrepreneurs in the Middle East to network while maintaining the socially acceptable gender norms (McAdam et al., 2020). According to Huarng et al. (2012), social media serves as a means of overcoming the conventional obstacles created by physical

gender segregation, allowing female entrepreneurs to interact with stakeholders across geographic boundaries without being limited by their gender. According to research by [McAdam et al. \(2020\)](#), women entrepreneurs in the Middle East rely on their abilities and online networking to develop their businesses rather than relying on male family members. They use social media to broaden their social networks and connect with mentors. Similar findings were made by [Alghamdi \(2021\)](#) and [Alghaith \(2016\)](#), who discovered that female entrepreneurs in the region use social media to facilitate their interaction without the need for in-person gender mixing. Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H5.** *Gender segregation positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.*

### 3.3.6. Reputation Preservation

Reputation preservation is the process of upholding a positive social image, usually to prevent humiliation or disgrace in a specific situation ([Qi, 2017](#)). In this study, reputation preservation captures the level of acceptability Qatari women entrepreneurs attribute to social media platforms to uphold a favorable social reputation. Maintaining a positive social image is a deeply embedded value in Middle Eastern culture, where people make an effort to avoid acting in ways that deviate from socially acceptable norms ([Harkness, 2019](#)). Qatar is a small country where public actions are strictly monitored, and community ties are strong. People in Qatar are highly committed to upholding the reputation of their tribes and they place a high value on protecting their individual reputation in order to prevent social shame ([Harkness, 2019](#)).

This focus on reputation permeates into entrepreneurial behavior: the cultural and social emphases on protecting one's image can affect business interactions ([Lalonde, 2013](#)). Entrepreneurs are normally concerned about reputational damage from business failure or when deviating from cultural standards ([Al-Harthi, 2017](#); [Ennis, 2019](#)). These worries especially apply to women entrepreneurs in the Middle East, where societal expectations largely dictate business decisions ([Al-Harthi, 2017](#)). Women entrepreneurs may engage with men, travel frequently, and assume leadership roles, all of which can provoke backlash ([Ahmad, 2011](#)). These cultural tenets naturally affect women's public image and raise the perceived risks of entrepreneurship. For instance, [Al-Harthi \(2017\)](#) noticed that women entrepreneurs gravitate towards sectors that suit culturally accepted gender roles.

[McAdam et al. \(2020\)](#) shared that social media grants women entrepreneurs in the Middle East a space for freer self-expression without jeopardizing their social standing. The anonymity and flexibility of social media enable women to conduct entrepreneurial activities with less scrutiny than they might face offline ([McAdam et al., 2020](#)). Furthermore, women can participate in conventionally male-dominated sectors via social media while avoiding the stereotypes typical in physical environments ([Elshantaly & Moussa, 2022](#)). Based on these findings, we suggested the following hypothesis:

**H6.** *Reputation preservation positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.*

### 3.3.7. Attitude

Attitude, in this context, refers to one's overall positive or negative feelings about using a particular technology ([Davis, 1989](#)). Regarding the model proposed in this study, the technological and sociocultural constructs are presumed to directly influence women's attitudes towards social media. In brief, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, family influence, kinship roles, gender segregation, and reputation preservation are anticipated to shape women entrepreneurs' positive opinions about social media.

The TAM builds upon the theory of reasoned action, emphasizing the roles of attitude in behavioral intention and subsequent technology usage (Ajzen, 1991; Davis, 1989). Positive attitudes towards social media entrepreneurship are assumed to greatly inform women's decisions to engage with these platforms. Attitude is pivotal in women's entrepreneurial intentions: it strengthens their awareness of opportunities and their ability to capitalize on them, thereby fostering success in digital entrepreneurship (Abed, 2020). Numerous studies have shown that entrepreneurs are more inclined to use social media consistently if they hold favorable attitudes towards it (Abed, 2020; Fan et al., 2021; Tripopsakul, 2018). With this understanding, we put forth the following hypothesis:

**H7.** *Attitude towards social media entrepreneurship positively affects women entrepreneurs' behavioral intention to adopt it in Qatar.*

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1. Research Design

The focus of this study is to examine factors that encourage social media utilization among women entrepreneurs in Qatar. The research is quantitative in design, where novel hypotheses are tested, and multiple variables are examined. The chosen methodology was used to make statistical inferences and test new hypotheses with a diverse population of women entrepreneurs in Qatar (Vatanasakdakul et al., 2023).

Responses were gathered using a probability simple random sampling method, allowing each member of the population an equal chance of selection for unbiased representation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This method ensured the sample accurately reflects the larger population, making it suitable for statistical inferences. The sample included diverse demographics of age, marital status, and education level to ensure a representative sample of women entrepreneurs.

### 4.2. Study Population and Sampling

The study used the probability simple random sampling method to select each member of the targeted population with an equal chance. Sampling this way can minimize bias and result in generalized findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Women entrepreneurs in Qatar were the target population. This focus enables the exploration of technological and sociocultural factors that are unique to women in the context of a conservative society like Qatar when it comes to adopting social media.

Since the exact numbers of women entrepreneurs using social media in Qatar are not accessible, the study depended on secondary data as per the Qatar Development Bank report on home-based businesses that put the number of women using social media to conduct their businesses at about 2500 (Qatar Development Bank, 2020). Following the rule of ten, a standard guideline in quantitative research, at least 10 times the number of variables being analyzed in the study were taken (Lakens, 2022). The minimum sample size was then derived from 28 survey items to be 280 responses ( $28 \times 10$ ). A total of 290 valid responses were completed, which were more than enough for robust statistical analysis.

### 4.3. Data Collection

The research is a cross-sectional survey design, allowing for data to be collected at a single point in time. The strength of this approach is the ability to take a snapshot of the current situation and see how different factors affect the adoption of social media. Data were collected through online questionnaires measuring attitudes and behaviors on a five-point Likert scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The survey was

conducted online between June of 2023 and 3 December 2023, using the Survey Monkey tool. It was distributed through email and social media posts.

#### 4.4. Development and Validation of Survey Instrument

The study relied on the established instruments, along with newly developed instruments. To address the technological aspect of social media adoption, validated instrument items were adopted from [Davis \(1989\)](#) and [Venkatesh et al. \(2012\)](#), particularly, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude, and behavioral intention. To address the sociocultural aspects of social media adoption, specific to women entrepreneurs in Qatar, new instruments were developed due to non-existing measurement items that capture the sociocultural nuances of the research context. Therefore, combining established items with novel measures addresses the existing measurement gaps.

There were several important steps in the validation process for the new constructs: First, a thorough literature review on women, Middle Eastern culture, and entrepreneurship was carried out, and the theoretical concepts of family influence, kinship roles, gender segregation, and reputation preservation were identified. Next, survey items were developed based on these concepts, and to ensure clarity and relevance, a pre-test was given to six external researchers to check for typographical or grammatical errors and make sure the questions were understandable in relation to the intended constructs. Finally, a pilot study was conducted with 30 randomly chosen participants, which confirmed the validity and reliability of the research instrument and questionnaire. The study instrument's scale items are detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Measurement items.

Research Construct	Measurement Items	References
Perceived usefulness (PU)	PU1: Using social media to do business is useful. PU2: Using social media to do business improves my business performance. PU3: Using social media to do business increases my productivity. PU4: Using social media to do business makes it easier to operate my business.	Adapted from <a href="#">Davis (1989)</a>
Perceived ease of use (EU)	EU1: I find it easy to use social media to do business. EU2: Social media sites allow flexible interaction for doing business. EU3: Learning to operate a business using social media sites is easy for me.	Adapted from <a href="#">Davis (1989)</a>
Family influence (FI)	FI1: My family approves of me doing business on social media. FI2: My family is supportive of my social media business. FI3: My family believe that doing business on social media is good for me. FI4: My family is proud of me for running a business on social media.	Derived from literature ( <a href="#">Al-Harthi, 2017</a> ; <a href="#">Ennis, 2019</a> ; <a href="#">Welsh et al., 2021</a> )
Kinship role (KR)	KR1: As a woman, I feel that having my own business on social media allows me to meet my responsibilities towards my family. KR2: As a woman, I feel that having my own business on social media gives me flexibility in managing my family time. KR3: As a woman, I feel that having my own business on social media allows me to manage my household duties more efficiently. KR4: As a woman, I feel that having my own business on social media allows me to participate more in extended family events and affairs that I am expected to be involved in.	Derived from literature ( <a href="#">Al-Ghanim, 2019</a> ; <a href="#">Barragan et al., 2018</a> ; <a href="#">Brush et al., 2009</a> )

Table 1. Cont.

Research Construct	Measurement Items	References
Gender segregation (GS)	GS1: As a business woman in Qatar, social media allows me to have an appropriate channel of interaction with men for business purposes. GS2: As a business woman in Qatar, social media allows me to develop business connections with stakeholders regardless of their gender. GS3: As a business woman in Qatar, social media allows me to overcome in-person communication barriers with men.	Derived from literature (Kemppainen, 2019; Mathew, 2019; Salem & Yount, 2019)
Reputation preservation (RP)	RP1: I am doing online business on social media platforms because I am apprehensive about engaging in face-to-face business dealings as I fear it may tarnish my reputation. RP2: I am doing online business on social media platforms because I pay a lot of attention to how others see me. RP3: I am doing online business on social media platforms because I am concerned with protecting the pride of my family and their social status. RP4: I am doing online business on social media platforms because I feel ashamed about losing face from potential failure.	Derived from literature (Al-Harathi, 2017; Gupta & Mirchandani, 2018; Itani et al., 2011)
Attitude (ATT)	ATT1: Using social media for business is a good idea. ATT2: I am favorable towards social media business. ATT3: I am positive about social media for conducting business.	Adapted from Davis (1989)
Behavioral intention (BI)	BI1: I intend to continue using social media sites for business purposes in the future. BI2: I predict that I will remain on social media for business in the future. BI3: I plan to continue to use social media for business frequently.	Adapted from Venkatesh et al. (2012)

#### 4.5. Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) estimation technique called Partial Least Squares (PLS). PLS-SEM was used due to its feasibility with a large number of independent variables, a limited number of samples, and a complex model (Hair et al., 2021). PLS-SEM can be considered as being exceptionally well designed for exploratory research since it aims at producing high prediction accuracy and, as such, can effectively provide the basis for the examination of numerous interconnected relationships between the variables (Hair et al., 2021). The SmartPLS software (Version 4.0) was used to analyze the data and assess the technological and sociocultural constructs associated with media use among women entrepreneurs in Qatar.

#### 4.6. Ethical Considerations

For ethical considerations, the study received Institutional Review Board (IRB)'s approval (approval number: QBRI-IRB-2023-96). Due to the sensitivity of the topic on gender and culture within a conservative country, the study took into account several considerations. When developing the questions, it was ensured that this study was performed in accordance with the culture of Qatari society. All efforts were made to adhere to cultural sensitivity and to undertake whatever extra precautions were needed to ensure that the participants did not feel uneasy or violated. An informed consent was obtained by explaining the aim and procedure of the study, where participation was completely voluntary, and participants had the right to withdraw at any time with no cost. Additionally, respondents remained unknown to the researcher at the time of the survey. The data collected included no personally identifying information such as names, emails, or phone numbers. Data



security was ensured as it was stored in a private computer with a protected password and used only for research purposes.

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive statistics on the demographic characteristics of the study sample are as follows: In terms of age, the majority of respondents were 30–39 years old (41.72%), followed by the 18–29 age group (35.52%) and those aged 40 and above (22.76%). Concerning education, the majority held a bachelor's degree (57.24%), followed by a significant portion having postgraduate education (16.21%), with smaller percentages having a diploma (10.69%) or high school education or below (15.86%). A larger proportion of respondents were married (62.5%), while 37.5% were single. Regarding employment status, a higher percentage (58.62%) were full-time entrepreneurs, meaning they did not have formal employment outside of their social media business, compared to part-time entrepreneurs (41.38%) who had formal employment aside from having their business. This study's sample is representative of the population as it accounts for a variety of demographic backgrounds.

In terms of social media entrepreneurial experience, 58.62% of respondents had established their social media business less than 2 years ago, 30% had 2–5 years of experience, and 11.38% had more than 5 years of experience. This highlights the recent growing trend and involvement of women in social media entrepreneurship in Qatar. Regarding social media platform usage among the respondents, Instagram is the most widely used platform, with 41% of respondents using it, followed by WhatsApp at 31%, Facebook at 16%, TikTok at 7%, Snapchat at 3%, and other platforms collectively accounting for 2% of usage.

### 5.2. Measurement Model

The findings illustrated in Table 2 indicate that the measurement model exhibits satisfactory validity, aligning with the criteria established by Chin (1998). According to Chin, loading values above 0.707 are considered adequate. Notably, most loading values surpassed this threshold, barring four items (FI1, FI4, GS3, and RP4). Nevertheless, the loading values for FI1 and FI4 fall within an acceptable range, as Chin suggests that values between 0.5 and 0.6 are permissible in the initial phases of scale development. Per the guidelines introduced by Hair et al. (2021), items with outer loadings below 0.4 (GS3 and RP4) were omitted from the scale. Moreover, all Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeded 0.7, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values surpassed 0.5 for all items, with family influence (FI) scored the lowest value (0.520) and reputation preservation (RP) scored the highest value (0.795).

To further assess validity, the cross-loading procedure in SmartPLS was employed, revealing strong loading between construct variables. Each indicator was loaded significantly with its respective latent variable, demonstrating clear discrimination among the latent variables. Furthermore, the Fornell and Larcker criteria and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) values were tested, with a satisfactory result for all variables (less than 0.85), indicating a strong discriminant validity. The assessment for multicollinearity, conducted using the Variation Inflation Factor (VIF), revealed no concerns, confirming the absence of multicollinearity, with all VIF values falling within the acceptable threshold as per Chin (1998).

Table 2 provides the statistical outcomes of the measurement model descriptive from Smart PLSs.

**Table 2.** The statistical outcomes of the measurement model descriptive from Smart PLSs.

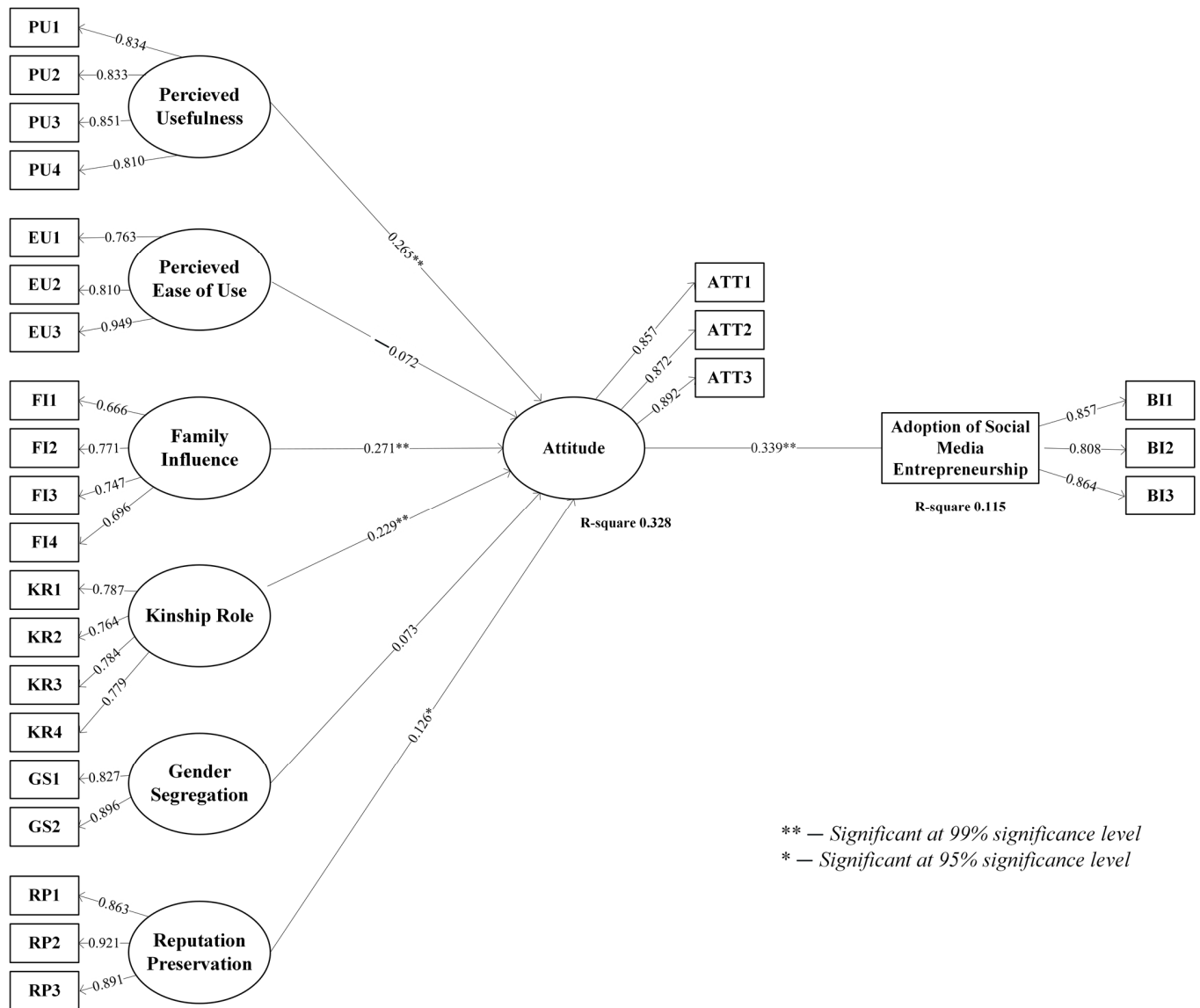
Construct	Item	PLS Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
PU	PU1	0.834	0.853	0.900	0.692
	PU2	0.833			
	PU3	0.851			
	PU4	0.810			
EU	EU1	0.763	0.836	0.881	0.713
	EU2	0.810			
	EU3	0.949			
FI	FI1	0.666	0.694	0.812	0.520
	FI2	0.771			
	FI3	0.747			
	FI4	0.696			
KR	KR1	0.787	0.785	0.860	0.607
	KR2	0.764			
	KR3	0.784			
	KR4	0.779			
GS	GS1	0.827	0.658	0.852	0.743
	GS2	0.896			
	GS3	0.342			
RP	RP1	0.863	0.873	0.921	0.795
	RP2	0.921			
	RP3	0.891			
	RP4	0.290			
ATT	ATT1	0.857	0.845	0.906	0.763
	ATT2	0.872			
	ATT3	0.892			
BI	BI1	0.875	0.811	0.886	0.721
	BI2	0.808			
	BI3	0.864			

### 5.3. Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

After confirming the validity of the measurement model, the results of the structural model were examined in Figure 2. The structural model was conducted using bootstrapping analysis in Smart PLS, with detailed statistical findings presented in Table 3, and Table 4 provides a summary of the hypothesis outcomes. From a technological perspective, perceived usefulness (PU) was found to be significant, while perceived ease of use (EU) was not significant. The impact of perceived usefulness (PU) on attitude (ATT) was found to be significant at a 99% level, with a path coefficient of 0.265 and a high t-statistic value of 4.725. Hence, Hypothesis 1 was supported. However, the link from perceived ease of use (EU) to attitude (ATT) exhibited a non-significant negative association with a path coefficient of -0.072 and a low t-statistic of 1.112, leading to the rejection of Hypothesis 2.

From a sociocultural perspective, family influence (FI), kinship role (KR), and reputation preservation (RP) were found to be significant. However, gender segregation (GS) was not significant. The impact of family influence (FI) on attitude (ATT) was found to be significant at a 99% level, with a path coefficient of 0.271 and a high t-statistic value of 5.271. Hence, Hypothesis 3 was supported. Similarly, the impact of kinship role on attitude (ATT) was found to be significant at a 99% level, with a path coefficient of 0.229 and a high t-statistic value of 4.402. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported. Nevertheless, gender segregation (GS) demonstrated a marginal positive effect on attitude (ATT); however, a

low t-statistic of 1.317 fell below the threshold, resulting in the rejection of Hypothesis 5. However, the impact of reputation preservation (RP) on attitude (ATT) was found to be significant at a 95% level, with a path coefficient of 0.126 and a t-statistic value of 2.105, resulting in the acceptance of Hypothesis 6.



**Figure 2.** Structural model results.

**Table 3.** The summary of the path coefficient test.

Paths	Actual Effect	Path Coefficient	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	Significance Level
PU → ATT	+	0.265	0.064	4.725	99%
EU → ATT	−	−0.072	0.073	1.112	Not significant
FI → ATT	+	0.271	0.059	5.271	99%
KR → ATT	+	0.229	0.052	4.402	99%
GS → ATT	+	0.073	0.055	1.317	Not significant
RP → ATT	+	0.126	0.060	2.105	95%
ATT → BI	+	0.339	0.064	3.726	99%

**Table 4.** The summary of the hypothesis testing in the structural model.

Variable	Research Hypothesis	Results
Perceived usefulness (PU)	H1: <i>Perceived usefulness positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.</i>	Accepted
Perceived ease of use (EU)	H2: <i>Perceived ease of use positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.</i>	Rejected
Family influence (FI)	H3: <i>Family influence positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.</i>	Accepted
Kinship role (KR)	H4: <i>Kinship role positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.</i>	Accepted
Gender segregation (GS)	H5: <i>Gender segregation positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.</i>	Rejected
Reputation preservation (RP)	H6: <i>Reputation preservation positively affects women entrepreneurs' attitude towards social media entrepreneurship in Qatar.</i>	Accepted
Attitude (ATT)	H7: <i>Attitude towards social media entrepreneurship positively affects women entrepreneurs' behavioral intention to adopt it in Qatar.</i>	Accepted

Lastly, the connection between attitude (ATT) and behavioral intention to adopt social media (BI) revealed a significant positive relationship at a 99% level, with a path coefficient of 0.339 and a high t-statistic of 3.726. Therefore, Hypothesis 7 was accepted, emphasizing the crucial role of attitudes in shaping women entrepreneurs' intentions to adopt and continue the use of social media platforms.

## 6. Discussion

The paper focuses on the various aspects involved in influencing social media adoption among women entrepreneurs in Qatar. Based on the evidence presented in this study, technological factors such as the usefulness of social media and sociocultural variables like family influence, kinship role, and reputation preservation significantly influence female entrepreneurial attitudes and behavioral intention towards social media use in Qatar.

From a technology perspective, the study findings show that Qatari women entrepreneurs find social media to be advantageous. The findings related to Hypothesis 1 stated that perceived usefulness has a significant positive effect on the social media usage intentions of entrepreneurs, which is also supported by prior studies to show that usefulness enhances social media adoption among entrepreneurs (Abed, 2020; Di Stefano et al., 2023; Turan & Kara, 2018). Consequently, our study suggests that Qatari women entrepreneurs' motives are comparable to those of people around the world due to the effectiveness of social media in improving business operations.

However, contrary to expectations, the perceived ease of use of social media was not found to predict the adoption of social media among women entrepreneurs in Qatar. The rejection of Hypothesis 2 (ease of use) conflicts with prior developments, which have noted that the simplicity of social media is instrumental in positively facilitating its adoption (Tripopsakul, 2018; Turan & Kara, 2018). Our finding might imply that social media is becoming more 'intuitive', which requires minimal training compared to the past or older technologies. Moreover, it can indicate that women in Qatar might be already familiar with social media tools and possess the necessary digital literacy to leverage them, given the high digital literacy and social media penetration in the country as suggested by Ali (2022) and Tarek (2019). As a result, ease of use comes natural to women entrepreneurs in Qatar and might not be a determining factor in the adoption of social media as opposed to the benefits and usefulness it offers.

The study further highlights the impact of sociocultural values. The results indicate that cultural and societal factors are indeed key determinants of women entrepreneurs' engagement with social media in Qatar. Based on our empirical evidence, family influence, kinship role, and reputation preservation have a significant positive effect on the adoption. This reveals that, despite the recent modernization of the country, there remains complex and extended influence of sociocultural constructs across physical and virtual realities, particularly for women entrepreneurs in Qatar.

The acceptance of Hypothesis 3 (family influence) is in line with the prior literature on the Middle East, emphasizing the strong impact of family on women entrepreneurs' decisions (Al-Harthi, 2017; Barragan et al., 2018; Itani et al., 2011). The results indicate that families play a crucial role in influencing women entrepreneurs' decisions even today and across online spaces in Qatar. This implication is significant in facilitating women's entrepreneurship as the focus should not be on individual women but rather on the family as a whole due to its extended influence.

Similarly, the acceptance of Hypothesis 4 (kinship role) indicates that women entrepreneurs in Qatar value their family responsibilities and adopt social media to engage in entrepreneurship while embracing kinship cultural and social norms. This finding is supported by previous studies both in the Middle East and worldwide, highlighting the importance that women assign to their caregiving roles and how such responsibilities impact their entrepreneurship (Al-Ghanim, 2019; Al-Qahtani et al., 2022; Brush et al., 2009). Our finding is also supported by previous studies highlighting that women entrepreneurs embrace social media due to the flexibility it offers them in managing their businesses and families (Alghamdi, 2021; Hossain & Rahman, 2018). This finding has significant implications regarding women and digital spaces. Social media can be promoted as a tool that facilitates women's economic participation and entrepreneurship, while remaining relevant to cultural family structures and social norms.

Surprisingly, the current study shows that the predictor variable of gender segregation had no meaningful effect on the adoption of social media by women entrepreneurs in Qatar, leading to the rejection of Hypothesis 5. This opposes previous studies that described gender norms of segregation in Middle Eastern cultures as severely impacting women's economic activity, including entrepreneurship (Hatoum, 2021; Itani et al., 2011; Kempainen, 2019). Although it was postulated that the online nature of social media environments may assist female entrepreneurs in overcoming traditional gender-mixing issues, our finding might reveal a new form of culture shift in Qatar that may no longer consider gender segregation as an important aspect in the Qatari society and public domains. This finding aligns with a recent study by Amin et al. (2024) indicate a diminishing emphasis on gender segregation and a growing acceptance of mixed-gender environments. As a result, gender segregation may no longer be a barrier for Qatari women entrepreneurs, which would lessen its influence on their decision to use social media for the purpose of appropriate social interaction. This has significant implications for understanding how cultural dynamics are not static and can change over time.

On the other hand, the acceptance of Hypothesis 6 (reputation preservation) indicates that the desire to protect a favorable social image persist and affects the adoption of social media among Qatari women entrepreneurs. This corresponds with the prior research on Middle Eastern culture and women's entrepreneurship, pointing out that cultural expectations of women to maintain a positive reputation impact their entrepreneurial engagement (Al-Harthi, 2017; Harkness, 2019). The autonomous and online nature of social media allow women to have more space for experimenting business ideas without losing social standing. This study's findings reveal that, in Qatar, women entrepreneurs use social media to make more independent business decisions and start their own businesses without



risking their social status, as is frequently the case in offline contexts. This result is consistent with [McAdam et al. \(2020\)](#), which demonstrated how Saudi women entrepreneurs use social media to exercise their business more freely while still preserving their reputation. This finding has significant implications in fostering women's empowerment through online spaces and encouraging women to delve into entrepreneurship and explore it without jeopardizing their reputation.

With regard to attitude and behavioral intention, the acceptance of Hypothesis 7 (attitude) highlights the important correlation between attitude and behavior, proving that the positive attitudes of women entrepreneurs towards social media positively affect their intention to embrace it. This result aligns well with previous global assessments showing that entrepreneurs are more likely to accept and maintain the propensity towards social media platforms if they have positive attitudes towards it ([Di Stefano et al., 2023](#); [Khan et al., 2023](#)).

## 7. Conclusions

This study sheds light on the complex variables influencing the use of social media by female entrepreneurs in Qatar. The study adopts a technology adoption framework. It utilizes the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and extends the model's technological dimension to incorporate a sociocultural dimension. This approach provides a more holistic review of the factors that stimulate the use of social media by women entrepreneurs in Qatar. The results of the study reveal that women entrepreneurs' attitudes and intentions to use social media in Qatar are significantly shaped by both technological factors, especially the usefulness of social media, and sociocultural factors, such as family influence, kinship role, and reputation preservation.

While Qatar is experiencing massive economic expansion and modernization, our study reveals that the societal and cultural values remain relevant. In fact, our findings reveal that social media entrepreneurship aligns well with the sociocultural values of women in Qatar. Women are drawn to social media entrepreneurship as their families support it, and it facilitates their business activities while allowing them to fulfill their kinship roles and allowing them to conduct their business activities in a manner that preserves a positive reputation. Social media is a culturally embedded medium that affords an entrepreneurial opportunity for women in Qatar to overcome barriers.

### 7.1. Contribution and Implication

Both theoretical and practical contributions are made by this work. Theoretically, this study adds to the body of knowledge on women entrepreneurship and social media use in the digital landscape of the Middle East and Qatar. It is the first study to conceptualize and empirically examine the intersection of Middle Eastern cultural values with women's social media adoption. Moreover, this study provides a framework for future studies to investigate the ways that sociocultural factors influence technology acceptance in non-Western contexts. Additionally, it addresses theoretical gaps and presents new measurement scales for sociocultural factors, allowing for a quantitative examination of these values, which can be beneficial for future research endeavors across different contexts.

From a practical standpoint, the study offers crucial insights for policymakers, entrepreneurs, and technology developers. The study's findings are useful to comprehend the technological aspects and sociocultural values that impact women's entrepreneurship utilization of social media, so that targeted policies and programs that encourage digital entrepreneurship can be designed for females in the region. For example, stressing the positive aspects of social media helps to promote its greater acceptance. Promoting the usefulness of social media in facilitating business activities drives women's adoption

of social media entrepreneurship. Initiatives should acknowledge the role that families play in women's decision making, and encourage family participation in fostering social media business. Additionally, by portraying social media entrepreneurship as a flexible choice, women would be able to improve their social image while juggling work and family obligations. Finally, programs must emphasize how social media empowers women by assisting them in overcoming cultural obstacles. Furthermore, social media platforms can be customized to fit the particular needs of women entrepreneurs in Qatar and other contexts, with the necessary spaces that preserve cultural sensitivities but allow women to sell their products to the world. All things considered, the results can direct the creation of policies supporting Qatar's National Vision 2030 goals for social development and economic diversification.

## 7.2. Limitations and Future Directions

Future research should address the limitations of this study. The study solely focuses on data from Qatar which might restrict the results' applicability in other contexts. To find similarities and variations in the use of social media, future studies can include comparative analysis or cross-cultural investigations among women entrepreneurs from different cultural backgrounds or across different Middle Eastern countries. Furthermore, this study used cross-sectional data, which recorded information at a certain moment in time. A longitudinal method may be used in future research to gain a deeper understanding of how sociocultural dynamics change over time.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, H.A.-B., S.V. and W.Z.; methodology, H.A.-B. and S.V.; software, H.A.-B. and S.V.; validation, H.A.-B., S.V. and W.Z.; formal analysis, H.A.-B. and S.V.; investigation, H.A.-B.; resources, H.A.-B. and S.V.; data curation, H.A.-B.; writing—original draft preparation, H.A.-B.; writing—review and editing, H.A.-B., S.V. and W.Z.; methodology; visualization, H.A.-B.; supervision, S.V. and W.Z.; project administration, H.A.-B., S.V. and W.Z. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** The study protocol was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Hamad bin Khalifa University Institutional Review Board (IRB) (IRB protocol number: QBRI-IRB-2023-96, 6-12-2023).

**Informed Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

**Data Availability Statement:** The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author due to institutional restrictions including privacy.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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