

Identifying and Prioritizing Obstacles to Applying Online Social Media Marketing Strategy in Small and Medium-Sized Companies in Iran (Using A Fuzzy Multi-Criteria Decision-Making Approach)

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Abstract- This research has been done with the aim of identifying and prioritizing the obstacles to using online social media marketing strategy in small and medium-sized companies in Iran, and based on the process of fuzzy hierarchical analysis. The statistical population of this research was senior marketing managers of small and medium companies based in Tehran. In the process of selecting statistical samples, judgmental sampling method was used. Accordingly, a group of 35 experts were selected and participated in the research. The main tool of data collection in this research was three researcher-made questionnaires that were designed according to different goals. The first questionnaire was designed with the aim of identifying obstacles and was designed in an open-ended manner, the second questionnaire was designed with the aim of screening and categorizing obstacles, in a closed form and based on a five-point Likert scale, and finally, the third questionnaire was designed with the aim of determining the weights and rank of each of the obstacles. And it was designed as a pairwise comparison. The data of this research were analyzed in different stages through SPSS, MATLAB and Excel software. In this process, analyzes such as t test, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, exploratory factor analysis, and fuzzy hierarchical analysis process were performed. Finally, the research results led to the identification of 3 main obstacles (obstacles related to the company, obstacles related to target customers, obstacles related to the country of Iran) and 20 secondary obstacles and their ranking was determined. It should be noted that this research is applied in terms of purpose, in terms of survey approach and exploratory studies.

Keywords- Online Social Media Marketing, Small and Medium Companies, Iran

Introduction

1. Introduction

Today's world is the world of advertising [1]. Advertising that is continuously exposed to the eyes of the audience through mass media such as television, radio, newspaper and other media and leads him to the desired goods and services [2]. For this reason, many organizations in today's competitive world are forced to use media advertising tools to introduce their services and products in order not to lag behind other competitors [3]. An advertisement whether radio, television or press should be able to place itself among other advertisements and communicate with the audience so that it can penetrate the audience's thoughts and attract their attention [4]. Various factors such as audience characteristics, music, color, type of advertising slogan and the amount of repetition of the message can be effective in the effectiveness of an advertising message, which obviously will have different effects based on the type of media and the type of audience [5].

Among the new marketing tools is marketing based on social media [6]. Marketing based on social media is the process of drawing people's attention to a specific person, a specific topic, or a specific brand [7]. Marketing

efforts based on social media usually focus on two axes: (1) producing content that can attract the attention of social media audiences; (2) Producing content that, in addition to attracting opinions, motivates the audience to share it. One of the important secrets of this style of marketing is the trust that people in social networks have for each other, and this makes the goal and message spread quickly throughout social networks [8]. Social media marketing relies on word-of-mouth and viral advertising. In today's world, social media has become a very influential and low-cost tool for marketing, which the world's leading companies do not ignore the important role of this media and this style of advertising and pay special attention to it [9].

In the current competitive world, organizations are looking for better and simpler strategies to introduce themselves and their products, which can reduce costs in addition to efficiency and informing and establishing relationships with customers [10]. Social networks are one of these ways. The value and use of social media for organizations, like all other media, depends more on the approach of organizations towards them and the extent of their proper exploitation than on the nature of the media itself [11].

The global statistics provided in 2021 regarding the penetration rate of social media advertising show that social media posts influence purchases by 78%, social media content leads to 85% change in human behavior, and 33% of people through social media with Brands and new products and services become familiar [12]. With these words and this influence of social networks and considering the staggering presence of contacts from all over the world in social networks, advertising and marketing and public relations and branding have been manifested more than ever in the virtual arena [13]. This issue becomes important when we know that the cost of reaching a thousand audience in a newspaper is a hundred times higher than the cost of reaching the same number of audience in social networks [14].

Today, organizations are looking for better and simpler strategies to introduce themselves and their products (services) that, in addition to efficiency and informing and establishing relationships with customers, can reduce costs and be more compatible with environmental standards [15]. Studies show that the effectiveness of advertisements presented in social networks can directly affect the attitude of customers to the brand and the attitude of customers to the advertisement, and following this effect, the purchase intention of customers will also be affected [16]. Also, Nur Syakirah et al., (2016) believe that social network content marketing can have significant effects on brand strength and health [17]. If companies can link the habit and psychological dependence of users to social networks with their perception of the ease of use of such networks, they can hope to influence the attitude of users towards their advertisements in social networks [12, 18].

Conducting preliminary investigations in small and medium-sized companies in Iran and conducting preliminary interviews with some senior marketing managers of these companies showed that these companies face various obstacles in the way of using online social media marketing strategy [19]. These obstacles have caused a lot of material resources and time resources of small and medium companies to be wasted and they cannot effectively implement social media marketing strategy despite spending a lot of money. Therefore, the current research has tried to identify, categorize and prioritize these obstacles through a scientific and systematic methodology; In this way, managers of small and medium-sized companies in Iran can take steps to reduce these obstacles in a transparent decision-making environment. Therefore, the research question was designed as follows: What are

the obstacles to using online social media marketing strategy in small and medium-sized companies in Iran? And how are these obstacles prioritized?

2. Research method

Considering that one of the important factors in choosing the research method is the spatial and environmental conditions of the research, therefore there are different methods for research, and considering the selected topic, this research is generally considered an exploratory research, because it seeks to identify obstacles Applying online social media marketing strategy in small and medium companies in Iran. Also, this research is a field research. Because the researcher has collected the required data by being present in the study field and among the target statistical population. It should be mentioned that among the different types of field research, the current research is considered field-questionnaire according to the method adopted in the data collection phase. Considering that the results of this research can be used in the strategic decision-making process of small and medium-sized companies, it can be said that this research is a type of applied studies.

Also, it should be noted that this research was carried out in the following two general phases:

- The first phase: identification, screening and categorization of obstacles to the use of online social media marketing strategy in small and medium-sized companies in Iran.
- The second phase: Ranking the barriers to using online social media marketing strategy in small and medium-sized companies in Iran based on the Fuzzy Hierarchy Analysis Process (Fuzzy AHP) methodology.

2.1. Statistical population and statistical sample of the research:

The statistical population of this research was senior marketing managers of small and medium-sized companies operating in Tehran (the capital of Iran). After preparing a list of these people, it was tried through the non-random "judgmental" sampling method, and based on indicators such as the person's managerial records in the field of marketing, the person's comprehensive familiarity with social media marketing, the person's complete familiarity with marketing challenges. Small and medium-sized companies, the individual's interest in participating in the current research, and the possibility of access to the individual, the most suitable people in the form of a group of experts are selected as the

research sample. The result of this process was the selection of a group of 35 experts who were questioned in both the first and second phases.

2.2. Data collection methods and tools:

In this research, the following three questionnaires were used:

- The first questionnaire was designed in a semi-open format and its purpose was to identify the obstacles of using online social media marketing strategy in small and medium-sized companies in Iran.
- The second questionnaire was designed in a closed form based on the obstacles identified in the previous stage, and its purpose was to screen and categorize the identified obstacles.
- The third questionnaire was designed based on the obstacles finalized in the previous stage and based on the methodology of paired comparisons, and its purpose was to prioritize the obstacles of using online social media marketing strategy in small and medium-sized companies in Iran.

2.3. Data analysis methods and tools:

- Descriptive analysis methods such as mean and standard deviation were used in the phase of identification and screening of obstacles. It should be mentioned that Excel and SPSS software were used to perform the calculations of this method.
- Also, in the obstacle prioritization phase, Fuzzy AHP method was used and Excel and MATLAB software were used to perform its calculations.

3. Data analysis

3.1. Identification, screening and categorization of obstacles:

In this research, it was first tried to identify the obstacles of using online social media marketing strategy in small and medium companies in Iran through open questionnaires and with the help of 35 experts. After collecting the questionnaires and removing duplicate items and merging similar items, finally 21 obstacles were extracted. In Table 1, these barriers are introduced:

Table 1) Primary identified obstacles

Primary identified obstacles	Label
Lack of alignment of the corporate culture governing the company with online social media marketing	c1
The skepticism of a wide segment of the target community to the advertisements presented in online social media	c2
The audience's lack of deep attention to the advertising content provided by small and medium-sized companies in online social media platforms	c3
Inadequate commitment of SME senior managers to online social media marketing strategy	c4
Absence of government support for the marketing policies of small and medium companies	c5
Lack of long-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	c6
Filtering of most online social media (including Instagram) in Iran	c7
Perceived lack of need for online social media marketing at the level of senior decision makers of small and medium enterprises	c8
The cultural incompatibility of the middle-aged and elderly population of Iran with the online social media space	c9
The low level of digital literacy of a segment of the target community and their inability to apply filters and use online social media	c10
Absence of high-speed internet in Iran	c11

Primary identified obstacles	Label
The unsuccessful experience of some partner companies in the field of online social media marketing and reducing the desire of small and medium-sized companies to use this strategy	c12
Inadequate level of knowledge and skills of managers and employees of the marketing department of small and medium companies regarding online social media marketing	c13
Non-use of benchmarking by small and medium-sized companies in the field of online social media marketing	c14
The deep involvement of the target community with economic and social problems and not having enough opportunities to search in online social media	c15
Lack of short-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	c16
Failure to allocate adequate budget to online social media marketing strategy	c17
Lack of competitiveness of the market in some areas of activity of small and medium companies	c18
Lack of mid-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	c19
Lack of experienced online social media marketing consultants for small and medium enterprises	c20
Incorrect diagnosis of previous actions taken in the field of online social media marketing	c21

After the initial identification of obstacles, it was necessary to screen the aggregated opinions of experts. For this purpose, one-sample t-test was chosen. But the prerequisite for using this test is the normality of data

and variables. Therefore, in the first place, it was tried to ensure the normality of the variables (obstacles) by using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the results of which can be seen in Table 2:

Table 2) Normality test of variables

Variables (obstacles)	N	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
C1	35	1.346	.053
C2	35	1.121	.162
C3	35	1.196	.115
C4	35	1.212	.106
C5	35	1.293	.071
C6	35	1.290	.072
C7	35	1.310	.065
C8	35	1.275	.077

Variables (obstacles)	N	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
C9	35	1.328	.059
C10	35	1.232	.096
C11	35	1.156	.138
C12	35	1.193	.116
c13	35	1.275	.077
c14	35	1.313	.064
c15	35	1.268	.080
c16	35	1.220	.102
c17	35	1.179	.124
c18	35	1.319	.062
c19	35	1.327	.059
c20	35	1.220	.102
c21	35	1.275	.077

Considering that sig. Corresponding to all indicators is higher than 0.05, so the data can be assumed to be normal and the parametric t test can be used to screen the indicators.

Based on this, using a closed questionnaire and a five-point Likert scale, experts' opinions were asked about

the impact of obstacles, and then t-test was used in order to eliminate obstacles whose impact is low. In this test, the threshold limit was 3 and the degree of confidence was 95%. The results of the t test are shown in Table (3)

Table 3) t test results

One-Sample Test						
Variable s (obstacles)	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
C1	6.614	34	.000	.914	.63	1.20
C2	2.227	34	.033	.400	.03	.77
C3	3.784	34	.001	.657	.30	1.01
C4	5.504	34	.000	.829	.52	1.13
C5	3.422	34	.002	.657	.27	1.05
C6	4.761	34	.000	.800	.46	1.14
C7	4.692	34	.000	.771	.44	1.11
C8	-8.178	34	.000	-1.057	-1.32	-.79

C9	3.784	34	.001	.657	.30	1.01
C10	4.761	34	.000	.800	.46	1.14
C11	3.095	34	.004	.571	.20	.95
C12	5.014	34	.000	.771	.46	1.08
c13	8.178	34	.000	1.057	.79	1.32
c14	8.223	34	.000	1.086	.82	1.35
c15	7.100	34	.000	1.029	.73	1.32
c16	7.748	34	.000	1.029	.76	1.30
c17	6.706	34	.000	.971	.68	1.27
c18	6.952	34	.000	.943	.67	1.22
c19	7.403	34	.000	1.029	.75	1.31
c20	7.318	34	.000	.971	.70	1.24
c21	7.294	34	.000	.943	.68	1.21

To analyze the results of this test, hypothesis zero and hypothesis one were considered as follows:

$H_0 : \mu = 3$

$H_1 : \mu \neq 3$

The reason why the mean of 3 was considered was because in the t-test questionnaire, a five-point Likert spectrum was used, and in a five-point spectrum, the mean is equal to 3. According to the above table and the aforementioned assumptions, given that sig. All indicators are less than 0.05, in all of them the null hypothesis is rejected and the one hypothesis is accepted. But in order to know which item has an average importance of more than 3 and which one has less than 3, we must pay attention to the value of the t statistic in table (3). If the value of this statistic is positive, it shows that the index is higher than the average and vice versa. As it is clear in table (3), the t value of C8 obstacle is negative and as a result, this item has a lower

than average effect and is removed from the set of identified obstacles.

But in order to apply the fuzzy hierarchical analysis process, it was necessary to categorize the identified barriers and put them in different sets.

In exploratory factor analysis, the principal components method was used to extract the factors, and the Varimax method with Keyser normalization was used to rotate the factors. The criterion for deciding on the survival or removal of items from factor analysis is their extracted commonality values. In this way, if the extracted share value of each item is less than (0.5), we exclude that item from the factor analysis. Also, the criteria for deciding on the classification of the items are the characteristic values higher than one and the factor scores higher than (0.4). The results of the exploratory analysis test are presented in table (4). In order to show which factor each item (obstacle) belongs to, the highest factor load of that item is highlighted in Table 4:

Table 4) Matrix of factors rotated by principal component analysis method and Varimax rotation method with Keisser normalization of obstacles

Obstacles	C	B	A	Extractive subscription
Lack of alignment of the corporate culture governing the company with online social media marketing	.147	.413	.690	.687

Obstacles	C	B	A	Extractive subscription
The skepticism of a wide segment of the target community to the advertisements presented in online social media	.178	.743	.203	.704
The audience's lack of deep attention to the advertising content provided by small and medium-sized companies in online social media platforms	.640	.168	.229	.645
Inadequate commitment of SME senior managers to online social media marketing strategy	.210	.322	.542	.612
Absence of government support for the marketing policies of small and medium companies	.273	.505	.303	.562
Lack of long-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	.231	.062	.580	.520
Filtering of most online social media (including Instagram) in Iran	.608	.200	.300	.566
The cultural incompatibility of the middle-aged and elderly population of Iran with the online social media space	.687	.180	.005	.566
The low level of digital literacy of a segment of the target community and their inability to apply filters and use online social media	.224	.606	.096	.594
Absence of high-speed internet in Iran	.602	.315	.053	.543
The unsuccessful experience of some partner companies in the field of online social media marketing and reducing the desire of small and medium-sized companies to use this strategy	.053	.063	.487	.584
Inadequate level of knowledge and skills of managers and employees of the marketing department of small and medium companies regarding online social media marketing	.338	.055	.731	.707
Non-use of benchmarking by small and medium-sized companies in the field of online social media marketing	.091	.209	.772	.683
The deep involvement of the target community with economic and social problems and not having enough opportunities to search in online social media	.030	.772	.164	.688
Lack of short-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	.084	.281	.604	.588
Failure to allocate adequate budget to online social media marketing strategy	.282	.299	.556	.552

Obstacles	C	B	A	Extractive subscription
Lack of competitiveness of the market in some areas of activity of small and medium companies	.191	-.007	.787	.657
Lack of mid-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	.016	.263	.651	.646
Lack of experienced online social media marketing consultants for small and medium enterprises	.073	.063	.539	.587
Incorrect diagnosis of previous actions taken in the field of online social media marketing	.314	.015	.620	.643

According to the table, three factors with characteristic value higher than one have been extracted, and all obstacles are placed in these three factors. Based on this, in table (5), based on the output of exploratory factor

analysis, obstacles are introduced in three categories, and each category was named based on the type and type of obstacles:

Table 5) Final classification of identified obstacles

The main obstacles	Corresponding sub-obstacles
Obstacles related to the company	Lack of long-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level
	Lack of mid-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level
	Lack of short-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level
	Failure to allocate adequate budget to online social media marketing strategy
	Inadequate commitment of SME senior managers to online social media marketing strategy
	Lack of experienced online social media marketing consultants for small and medium enterprises
	Inadequate level of knowledge and skills of managers and employees of the marketing department of small and medium companies regarding online social media marketing
	Incorrect diagnosis of previous actions taken in the field of online social media marketing
	Lack of alignment of the corporate culture governing the company with online social media marketing
	Non-use of benchmarking by small and medium-sized companies in the field of online social media marketing
	Lack of competitiveness of the market in some areas of activity of small and medium companies

The main obstacles	Corresponding sub-obstacles
	The unsuccessful experience of some partner companies in the field of online social media marketing and reducing the desire of small and medium-sized companies to use this strategy
Obstacles related to target customers	The audience's lack of deep attention to the advertising content provided by small and medium-sized companies in online social media platforms
	The deep involvement of the target community with economic and social problems and not having enough opportunities to search in online social media
	The skepticism of a wide segment of the target community to the advertisements presented in online social media
	The low level of digital literacy of a segment of the target community and their inability to apply filters and use online social media
Obstacles related to Iran	Absence of high-speed internet in Iran
	Filtering of most online social media (including Instagram) in Iran
	Absence of government support for the marketing policies of small and medium companies
	The cultural incompatibility of the middle-aged and elderly population of Iran with the online social media space

3.2. Fuzzy pairwise comparisons and achieving obstacle weights:

In this section, in order to carry out the process of fuzzy hierarchical analysis, the hierarchies and codes listed in Table 6 were used instead of the full names of the main and secondary obstacles:

Table 6) Final hierarchy and coding of major and minor barriers

The main obstacles	Corresponding sub-obstacles	Code
Obstacles related to the company (m1)	Lack of long-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	c1
	Lack of mid-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	c2
	Lack of short-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	c3
	Failure to allocate adequate budget to online social media marketing strategy	c4
	Inadequate commitment of SME senior managers to online social media marketing strategy	c5
	Lack of experienced online social media marketing consultants for small and medium enterprises	c6

The main obstacles	Corresponding sub-obstacles	Code
	Inadequate level of knowledge and skills of managers and employees of the marketing department of small and medium companies regarding online social media marketing	c7
	Incorrect diagnosis of previous actions taken in the field of online social media marketing	c8
	Lack of alignment of the corporate culture governing the company with online social media marketing	c9
	Lack of competitiveness of the market in some areas of activity of small and medium companies	c10
	Non-use of benchmarking by small and medium-sized companies in the field of online social media marketing	c11
	The unsuccessful experience of some partner companies in the field of online social media marketing and reducing the desire of small and medium-sized companies to use this strategy	c12
Obstacles related to target customers (m2)	The low level of digital literacy of a segment of the target community and their inability to apply filters and use online social media	c13
	The deep involvement of the target community with economic and social problems and not having enough opportunities to search in online social media	c14
	The skepticism of a wide segment of the target community to the advertisements presented in online social media	c15
	The audience's lack of deep attention to the advertising content provided by small and medium-sized companies in online social media platforms	c16
Obstacles related to Iran (m3)	Absence of high-speed internet in Iran	c17
	Filtering of most online social media (including Instagram) in Iran	c18
	Absence of government support for the marketing policies of small and medium companies	c19
	The cultural incompatibility of the middle-aged and elderly population of Iran with the online social media space	c20

In the following, the results of the pairwise comparisons of the main and secondary obstacles will be presented. For this purpose, a questionnaire with a range of languages was distributed among 35 experts. The scale of table (7) and figure (2) was used for fuzzy pairwise comparisons:

Table 7) Scale of paired comparisons

Linguistic range	Fuzzy number
Equal	(1,1,3)
A little more important	(1,3,5)
More important	(3,5,7)
Much more important	(5,7,9)
Absolutely more important	(7,9,11)

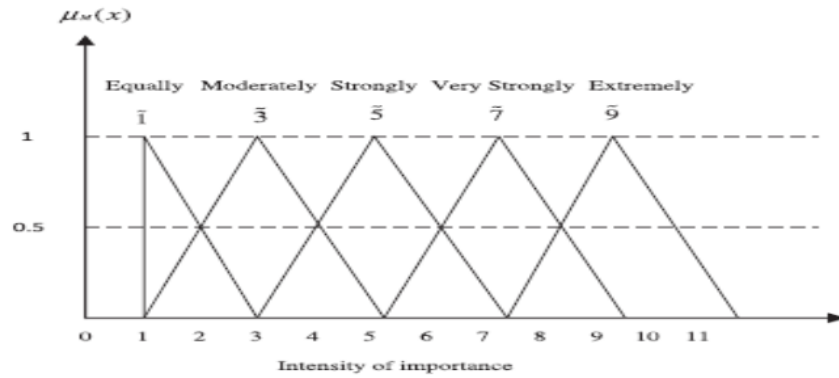


Figure 2) Fuzzy membership function for linguistic value of criteria

3	m2	0.213
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To perform calculations, the geometric mean of experts' opinions was used. To express the results, the initial matrix of pairwise comparisons, which is actually the geometric mean of experts' opinions, is presented. Then, the matrix of the magnitude of the main and secondary obstacles, and then the degree of magnitude and weights of each obstacle are expressed, and at the end, the final ranking of the obstacles is presented.

3.2.1. The result of fuzzy pairwise comparisons of main obstacles:

Table 8) The magnitude and relative weights of the main obstacles

Main obstacles	Magnitude	Weights
m1	1.000	0.486
m2	0.438	0.213
m3	0.618	0.301

Table 9) Ranking of the main obstacles

Rank	Main obstacles	Weights
1	m1	0.486
2	m3	0.301

3.2.2. Fuzzy pairwise comparisons of the sub-obstacles of the main obstacle set m1:

Table 10) Magnitude and relative weights of sub-obstacles m1

sub-obstacles	Magnitude	Weights
c1	0.473	0.075
c2	0.460	0.073
c3	0.484	0.077
c4	0.556	0.088
c5	1.000	0.159
c6	0.471	0.075
c7	0.498	0.079
c8	0.464	0.074
c9	0.500	0.080
c10	0.433	0.069
c11	0.450	0.072
c12	0.496	0.079

Table 11) Ranking of sub-obstacles m1

Rank	sub-obstacles	Weights
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1	c5	0.159
2	c4	0.088
3	c9	0.080
4	c7	0.079
5	c12	0.079
6	c3	0.077
7	c1	0.075
8	c6	0.075
9	c8	0.074
10	c2	0.073
11	c11	0.072
12	c10	0.069

3.2.3. Fuzzy pairwise comparisons of the sub-obstacles of the main obstacle set m2:

Table 12) Magnitude and relative weights of sub-obstacles m2

sub-obstacles	Magnitude	Weights
c13	0.477	0.197
c14	1.000	0.412
c15	0.477	0.196
c16	0.473	0.195

Table 13) Ranking of sub-obstacles m2

Rank	sub-obstacles	Weights
1	c14	0.412
2	c13	0.197
3	c15	0.196
4	c16	0.195

3.2.4. Fuzzy pairwise comparisons of the sub-obstacles of the main obstacle set m3:

Table 14) Magnitude and relative weights of sub-obstacles m3

sub-obstacles	Magnitude	Weights
c17	0.594	0.221

c18	1.000	0.372
c19	0.524	0.195
c20	0.571	0.213

Table 15) Ranking of sub-obstacles m3

Rank	sub-obstacles	Weights
1	c18	0.372
2	c17	0.221
3	c20	0.213
4	c19	0.195

4. Conclusions and suggestions

In this research, after performing various analyses, finally 3 main obstacles and 20 secondary obstacles for using online social media marketing strategy in small and medium companies of Iran were identified. Finally, after applying the fuzzy hierarchical analysis process on the data, the rank of the main and secondary obstacles was determined in the form of tables 16 to 19:

Table 16) Ranking of the main obstacles

Main obstacles	Rank
Obstacles related to the company	1
Obstacles related to Iran	2
Obstacles related to target customers	3

Table 17) Ranking of obstacles related to the company

Obstacles related to the company	Rank
Inadequate commitment of SME senior managers to online social media marketing strategy	1
Failure to allocate adequate budget to online social media marketing strategy	2
Lack of alignment of the corporate culture governing the company with online social media marketing	3
Inadequate level of knowledge and skills of managers and employees of the marketing department of small and medium companies regarding online social media marketing	4

Obstacles related to the company	Rank
The unsuccessful experience of some partner companies in the field of online social media marketing and reducing the desire of small and medium-sized companies to use this strategy	5
Lack of short-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	6
Lack of long-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	7
Lack of experienced online social media marketing consultants for small and medium enterprises	8
Incorrect diagnosis of previous actions taken in the field of online social media marketing	9
Lack of mid-term targeting in online social media marketing at company level	10
Non-use of benchmarking by small and medium-sized companies in the field of online social media marketing	11
Lack of competitiveness of the market in some areas of activity of small and medium companies	12

Table 18) Ranking of obstacles related to target customers

Obstacles related to target customers	Rank
The deep involvement of the target community with economic and social problems and not having enough opportunities to search in online social media	1
The low level of digital literacy of a segment of the target community and their inability to apply filters and use online social media	2
The skepticism of a wide segment of the target community to the advertisements presented in online social media	3
The audience's lack of deep attention to the advertising content provided by small and medium-sized companies in online social media platforms	4

Table 19) Ranking of obstacles related to Iran

Obstacles related to Iran	Rank
Filtering of most online social media (including Instagram) in Iran	1
Absence of high-speed internet in Iran	2
The cultural incompatibility of the middle-aged and elderly population of Iran with the online social media space	3
Absence of government support for the marketing policies of small and medium companies	4

The most important implementation limitation of this research was the dispersion of people included in the statistical sample of the research and the absence of all of them in the same company. For this reason, the coordination and implementation of multiple phases of data collection in this research was done with a lot of time and money.

In addition, the most important inherent limitation of this research has been its complete focus on small and medium-sized companies in Iran. For this reason, the results obtained from it cannot be generalized to other countries with full confidence.

Also, according to the experiences gained in the process of library studies, surveys and compilation of the current collection, the following two suggestions are presented for future researchers:

- Considering the limitation of the implementation of the research based on the time needed to distribute and collect the questionnaires, it is suggested that in such a research, the two initial phases of the research, which are related to the identification and screening of the items, should be conducted using the Delphi method and during a joint meeting with the presence of experts. can be done.
- Also, due to the limitation related to the geographical dispersion of experts, it is suggested to use opportunities such as conventions and conferences in such researches, in which a large number of experts are gathered in one place on a particular day, and the collective phase Data collection should be done at appropriate times during the conference.
- In addition, future researchers are suggested to conduct a research similar to the current research in other developing countries and compare its results with the results obtained in Iran.

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