



# Social Media as a Strategic Marketing Communication Tool in Palestinian Mobile Telecom Companies - Business to Customers Relationship Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of the research is to identifying the role of social media in building customer relationships; the study also aims at using social media as a strategic marketing tool for telecom companies. The researcher used Jawwal as a case study in the aspect of: (brand awareness, knowledge of services and products, and intention to purchase). Through a quantitative approach by designing a survey questionnaire as a tool of collecting data. The sample included (432) of Jawwal Customer's Mobile Telecom Company in Palestine that used different social media platforms. Results showed that social media affect building customer relationship and its elements: (Brand awareness, knowledge, and intention to buy). The most important recommendation of this research is: To utilize the use of social media in marketing communication mixes strategies for telecom mobile companies, because they have a major role and influence in building customer relationships.

**Keywords:** Social Media, B2C-Relationship, Brand Awareness, Knowledge and Purchase Intention

**JEL Classifications:** M300, M310

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The vast of the internet usage is dominating many homes, schools, associations and organizations. The rapid spread of using social media between humans changing the way interact each other; it gathers between different cultures, abolished borders, shorten the distances between people, and facilitate for all societies to rapprochement and have mutual exchange of views and ideas and desires. "Swamynathan said; Today, the way that Internet users communicate, search for and share information is highly influenced by the use of social networks (Wang and Abdullayeva, 2011, p.1). So, it becomes the best tool for communicating and connecting between groups and individuals which took different forms of communicating through social networks, blogging, snapchat, wikis, forums, etc. In the scheme of marketing, marketers and sellers of companies and organizations used social media to

reach and connect to their targeted audiences and for surviving and singularity in this competitive marketplace.

Thus, many companies shed the light on using social media in their marketing strategies as a new concept of social media marketing communication away from the traditional methods in order to reach a great broad of targeted audiences; learn and know precisely about their needs and wants in a quick effective technique with low costs. "Consumers use a free and useful word of mouth method to interact and disseminate information to their friends that can be considered as the future of social media marketing" Yaakop (as cited in Ghafari, Sep, 2017). Companies and organizations depends nowadays on social media for the purpose of promoting its services and products by building a social base for introducing its brands and information and a direct relationship with new expected customers and fostering with current one. Social media is changing so much

in the business world and redefining how businesses communicate across their channels of distribution and with their customers. "A recent survey of European and U.S. firms indicated that 88.2% of the firms had begun to undertake social media initiatives," Rapp, Grewal, and Hughes (2013) (as cited in Rowley, 2018, p.2). So under this new technological communications, business marketing communication starts to shed the light on using social media for coping with renewed marketing strategies to gain competitive advantages in order to compete in this rival volatile marketplace, to be the leading company within related industry. Social media finds more effective marketing tool of two-way direct communication between customers and the company itself; customers can know more information about the services and the products of the company. "Paterson (2009) suggested customer knowledge can be regarded as a vital asset for both online and offline business, He further claimed that a close relationship between company and customer can create a positive influence on their information interaction" (Wang and Abdullayeva, 2011, p.2). Also, company can define precisely the interest and the needs of their customers, also received feedback quickly, not to mention that it is an effective tool to attract customers for the intention of buying and trying the experience of others peers through using different forms of social media; Facebook, twitter, instagram, snapchat, etc.

Since customer relationship is the core elements of business marketing, it is important to realize that using social media as a marketing tool contribute to reach, identify, and communicate with customers. Also, the growing interest of social media gives the opportunities and benefits in entering new niches of market and fostering the relationship with customers. Nonetheless, there are still rarely studies regarding this digital approach from the perspective of customers on how they received their attitudes and the real relationship between social media and business to customer relationship. Therefore, considering the above discussions this research focused the problem on the lack of information regarding the effect of social media marketing communications as a strategic tool on building consumer's relationship in the Palestinian mobile telecom industry from the point view of customer's; Knowledge, Brand Awareness, and Purchase Intention. Based on the above discussion, the main objective of this study is "to identify the role of SM as a strategic marketing communication tool on B2C Relationship in the Palestinian mobile telecom industry," which will examine in this research and find the effect role of using this digital tool (SM) on building customer relationship.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND BUILDING HYPOTHESES

The widespread use of Social Media for marketing communication as a strategic tool changed the way of mobile companies to reach out their prospective customers and maintain the current one. Dahnil et al. (2014) (as cited in Galati et al., 2017, p.40) expound that the approaches of Social media marketing communication has already adopted in the recent decade; which "More and more firms today adopt SM as a communication tool in order to both conduct their marketing efforts and to extend their traditional marketing." Social Media has an interlocking concept with

marketing communication in B2C Relationships; the big effect of using social media between individuals in recent decades for interacting and connecting reflected in the tendency of many companies to use the revolution communication technology of social media in reaching and connecting its targeted customers through different forms of social media to introduce and define the services of the activities; it provides (Knowledge), highlight the value in the product and maximize it and meet the desires of the consumer (Brand Awareness), and as an effective way in purchasing (Purchase intent). Due to the growing interest in this approach, Social media become a field of knowledge and a study for a number of theoretical and applied studies, that has an effective role on business to customer relationship in which make companies attitude to use it as a strategic communication tool. Regarding to this study using the case of Jawwal Palestinian Mobile Company, the researcher illustrated and analyzed the literature review through developing a research model from two main dimensions: Social media communication and B2C Relationships that encompasses three major elements; (Brand Awareness, Knowledge, Purchase intent) to use it as a framework in the research process as following:

### 2.1. Social Media Marketing Communication

Social media marketing begun around ten years ago, it started with LinkedIn, which was propelled in 2003. The ubiquity of online networking destinations has additionally spread to organizations and firms as a feature of their systems. (Allan and Ali, 2017, p.49). According to Olakunle (2012) it is an integrated process in that which disseminating messages, and attracts attention through different social media forms, in the involvement of all tools and methods, strategies, and platforms for the purpose of promoting a personality, business goals, in order to reach, communicate and engage a define target audiences to reached marketing objectives. Trusov et al., (2009) argued that because the advent of the internet increased the ability of individual and potential customers through disseminating of information and connectedness with other through establish a mean of power to an effective cost adopted by the market industry. Moreover, the rapid changing in environment within customer behaviors and reaction to this invasion of technology in needed for a new adoption and activities to act quickly and being proactive by organizations and marketers. Which illustrated by Haataja (2010, p.23) "Increasingly, environmental changes as well as developed customer behaviors demand rapid and flexible responses from companies leading to a fusion of planning and implementation of new activities." In addition to that, new innovation in the discipline of social media impacted is a prerequisite for business survival. Robert and Joseph, (2009) assured that "Social media could well be the salvation of organizations whose product and service development has been impeded by declining R&D spending. From another point of view related to Ranchhod (2004, p.262) "Conventional channels of marketing are gradually being dissolved or assimilated into a global network fuelled by Internet." In the researcher opinion it considered integrated concepts for an electronic marketing communication tools to contacting customers and as promoting methods to organizations that reached a widespread of audiences within both a short time and low cost. Thus, Social media marketing Communication is different than traditional methods of marketing in many distinguished benefits; it can reach its desired message

directly to the targeted customers. Trusov et al., (2009) added to the point that Social networking sites considered as an efficient communication tool for marketers to communicate their message to their direct target market. Despite that, however, there is still a lack of studies on the adoption of social media as a communication marketing tool. Which this study will fill the gap of knowledge to add a value source for further future studies. Therefore, regarding the above discussion the first hypothesis postulates as below:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant role of applying the Palestinian mobile telecom industry for SM marketing as a strategic marketing communication tool in building B2C Relationship.

## 2.2. B2C Relationships

Regarding to “Gordhamer Social media marketing is related to relationship marketing, where the firm need to shift from “trying to sell” to “making connection” with the consumers.” (Çiçek and Erdogmus, 2012, p.1355). Therefore, the new online environment and the idea that markets become virtual and global in which different forms of social media controlled the relationship in a two-way of communication between both audiences and corporations; communications become viral & electronic; shaping and creating customer relationship. Moreover, “Kietzmann pointed that; Businesses use social media to engage in conversations with their consumers or to communicate with them.” (Peeroo, 2017, p.2038). In other words social media marketing communication (SMMMC) not only shaping and crafting relationship marketing but also demonstrate for building and enhancing customer relationship which emphasized by Lagrosen (2005) “In the building and management of relations, the interactivity of the internet makes it a particularly useful tool.” While “Sarkkinen demonstrate that; corporate credibility and relationships are built and enhanced through the personalized interactions, collaboration, communication and feedback attained on Social Media applications.” (Chikandiwa, 2013, p.35). Furthermore, Singh et al. (2008) (as cited in Wang, 2011, p.15) argued that “the new technology such as social media have improved the customer relationship.” On other hand it can maintain long and short term of relationship; which defined by Peeroo (2017, p.2039) “According to O’Brien (2011), the highest level of value a social media empowered consumer can provide to a business is to co-create products and services.” He claims that this feeling of empowerment will make it easier for businesses to satisfy their customers, thereby creating long term and interactive relationships. And Wang (2011, p.8) said; “E-commerce can contribute to enhancing the relationship between a company and its customers from both a short-term and a long-term perspective.” On other point of view, Mangold and Faulds (2009, p.358) refuted that; social media influencing relationship within customer behavior; “The 21<sup>st</sup> century is witnessing an explosion of Internet-based messages transmitted through these media. They have become a major factor in influencing various aspects of consumer behavior including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase behavior, and post-purchase communication and evaluation.” From this perspective the researcher viewed social media marketing communication on customer relationship in three aspects; Brand Awareness, Knowledge, and Purchasing Intention. Therefore, SM is likely to effect on B2C relationship, consequently:

H<sub>2</sub>: B2C Relationship elements; (Knowledge, Brand Awareness, Purchase intention) are significantly correlated to SM marketing in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant effect of SM marketing as a strategic marketing communication tool on B2C Relationship in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

## 2.3. Brand Awareness

Is a description and presentation addressed to the public of the organization for a specific and emerging mark formed as a result of the messages sent and received by the enterprise (Charfeddine, 2015). According to Erdogmus and Çiçek (2012) “brand awareness is about Gain an exclusive, positive, and prominent meaning in the minds of a large number of consumers.” Nyagucha (2017) discussed that successful brand can be achieved through digital communities in which people contribute knowledge, discussion, digital forum advice, and sharing information, within brand’s environment. Since Social media marketing is a two way of communications; organizations can receive images and feedback on product and service’s brand directly from customers through digital interactions, posts and comments, which enable organization to measure the perception of its brands and view audience’s opinion to other brand’s competitors in contrast to traditional marketing channels. Haataja (2010) assured; social networking facilitates brand communications in that it affects brand awareness, brand recognitions and preference, and brand action intention. Social media marketing is more sincere in its digital communications with customers, in a way to show what brands is to be to customer’s mindset than its image control in traditional marketing channels approach, (Erdogmus and Çiçek, 2017). Finally, Haataja (2010, p.28) stated that “The fundamental is that social networking is about brand and awareness”. Hence four hypothesis postulates as below:

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a significant effect of SM marketing on Brand Awareness in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

## 2.4. Knowledge and Purchase Intention

Peeroo (2017) said within the development of Web (2.0), an electronic virtual world environment appears to spread ubiquity through digital word of mouth communications in different forms of social media platforms allowing for sharing and disseminating of information, Hajli (2014) discussed that; electronic environment facilitate interactions and sharing information between human quickly and globally, where individuals can easily share these information’s and their experience with others; family member, peers, group communities... etc. Whereas Kosavinta, et al. (2017) (as cited in Nyagucha, 2017) declared that; social media offer a base of information for customers on product and services they want to look about through internet group friends or a network they alike. Also Kotler and Keller (2009) - illustrated that; buyers search for information by reading online content, comments, reading organizations ‘materials, asking friends opinion; which make it as a base source of information for many of them. So, the researcher illustrated that social media constitutes through online sharing recommendations base information of products, services and brands between social media users which influence in their information search stage form a valuable reference while making a purchase decision. Thus, this base information gives support for helping customers in their decision purchasing in that leave an impression to the product or services and encourage them the intention to buy. So, Consequently:

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a significant effect of SM marketing on Knowledge in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

H<sub>6</sub>: There is a significant effect of SM marketing on Purchase intention in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

## 2.5. Adoption of SMMC in Mobile Telecommunication Companies

Social media spread widely in mobile companies in that illustrated by Bartosik-Purgat et al., (2017, p.82); "Using these media is becoming more widespread also as a result of the possibility of using applications in mobile phones or smartphones." And Ghafari (2017, p.2209) Claimed that; "Marketers have gradually turned to innovative and on-mobile social networks." Also Castronovo and Huang (2012) explored that; mobile marketing take the new form of marketing communication that integrated all forms of media and marketing communication mix in order to drive sales, add viral value, and collecting data. Regarding to Palestine; telecommunications sector consider the most widely used sector for social media among other Palestinian companies, in terms of allocating a team to follow up on the work, budgets allocated and to produce the appropriate content from images and videos. The Palestinian telecoms companies especially Jawwal Mobile Company are the most advanced companies to the work and follow-up of the means of social media communication, in terms of digital marketing plans and the nature of content submitted to the followers. Jawwal Mobile Company is one of the Palestinian Telecommunications Group, in 2009; and the first Palestinian company to establish an official Facebook page by promoting campaigns and offers. In 2010, Jawwal established a team specializing in digital and social marketing. So Jawwal is considered as an important model for the optimal use of social media in Palestine comparing to other Mobile companies. (Digital and Social Media Report in Palestine, 2017).

## 2.6. Social Media Marketing Communication Strategies

As proposed by Mangold and Faulds (2009), Social media encompasses wide range of several digital word of mouth (WOM) forums. So, this wide variety of social media outlet makes WOM marketing prominent a basic source of informing influencers' decisions, in that approaches WOM marketing become the base foundation for all strategic marketing campaigns; said (Castronovo and Huang, 2012). Which Haataja (2010, p.20) assured that "Social media, the platform for social networks, are not just new technology - but enablers of a fundamental marketing strategy shift in how organizations and customers relate to each other." Allan and Ali (2017, p.51) stated also that; "According to Burnet (2015) the idea of building a social media-based marketing strategies are considered to be a very strong approach to build a customer community." This enables organization to increase its sales and value and make more profit, with an effective marketing cost. And thus fostering and ties strong within customers and audiences relationship, (Castronovo and Huang, 2012). With the advent of the internet, according to Lagrosen (2005, p.64); "many marketing communication researchers realized that this new medium would bring new opportunities for the marketing communication process." In this view, Bu-Baker (2009) illustrated that; companies who adopting marketing strategies within this powerful advent of social media through listening, understanding their customer, and

analyzing, learning from the feedback of social media contents can be a winning company. Additionally, Erdogmus and Çiçek (2012, p.1355) proposed that: "Staying competitive in today's fast moving business landscape requires a solid social media strategy." In order to keep following and tracking with customers' preferences and interests, because customer go to social media to keep up with brand's products and promotional campaigns, which clarified by (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). A strategy is relating to long term vision and direction which organization adopted through the deployments that aligning with its objectives, mission, and goals. Regarding to marketing Approaches Corporation needs marketing strategy to meet its customers' needs and achieve its goals through marketing analysis, competitor's activities, and other changing environment. As the researcher discussed earlier about the great incorporate of companies in social media marketing communication; the main purpose of this as illustrated above is to develop a sustainable plan that will help organization to be more capable with exchanging digital environment and be more competitive. In order to achieve that (SMMC) social media marketing communication must be integrated and supported with synergy and co-ordinated framework to other marketing communication channels. Many scholars indicated this point view; Chikandiwa (2013) said that; "There is a need for cohesive integration when implementing Social Media Marketing, a marketer needs to integrate the entire marketing communication tool together with Social Media." Whereas Haataj (2010, p.25) claimed "Social media must be integrated closely to other marketing channels and then support the whole marketing strategy." While Lagrosen (2005, p.64) concluded that; "internet communication activities need to be integrated in the overall marketing communications mix." Thus the researcher demonstrated that engagement of integration marketing communication mix in social media pointed to the incorporation of (IMC) integrated marketing communication; campaigns. Mangold and Faulds (2009, p.359) conducted that "Consequently, marketing managers are seeking ways to incorporate social media into their IMC strategies." Moreover they added: Mangold and Foulds (2009, p.359) that; the phenomena of social media become 'the de facto modus operandi for consumer's in which they disseminated and share product and services' information through all forms of social media as a new paradigm tool in designing and implementing IMC strategies. Although many companies dying to adopt (SMMC) in their marketing strategies, nonetheless many managers still uncertain how they can successfully deploying (SM) in their business strategy, and how they can craft its practical value. From a practical perspective on the real world, Procter and Gamble or General Electric entered social media arena within their communication promotion mix through carefully crafting complying to their vision and mission statement to meet organization's performance goals, By doing so both organizations acknowledged that; "the importance of incorporating social media into their IMC strategies and promotional efforts," (Mangold and Faulds, 2009, p.358).

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Population and Sample

This study adopted convenience sample technique. The target population was (2,800,000), from Jawwal Mobile Company

subscribers in which the quantitative approach was used as a research method. The study adopted a symmetric statistics analysis using windows software program (SPSS version 20). The sample size was based on Yamane (1967) formula, which is a simplified formula to calculate sample size that takes consideration for sampling error and suits for a large targeted population which consisted of (400) individuals, considering (41) questionnaires that have been excluded for the lack of seriousness in the answers by the respondent and data missing due to an empty questionnaires. So, the researcher continues to hand out questionnaire again until obtained the conformed sample study size. In the end the researcher collected (432) valid questionnaire.

### 3.2. Questionnaire Development

The researcher depends on the questionnaire as the tool of the research. The questionnaire constructed from two main sections; the first section took into consideration for the general information and background of population study, Also type of social media that used by participant, the purpose of using social media, and the rate of daily used for social media through dichotomous questions. While the second section was concerned with five elements of the research study:(SM, B2C-relationship, Knowledge, Brand awareness, and purchase intention), in order to measure the level of responsiveness of the sample by using multiple Likert Scales (from 1=strongly disagree, to 5=strongly agree). The administrative study questionnaire was constructed by using Marketing Scales Handbook (Gordon C. Bruner II, 2012), the second section of the questionnaire and its items content were built from eighteen scales. For social media components statements were drawn from scales related to; Curiosity about the Website, Persuasiveness of the Ad, Attention to the Webpage, Communication Openness (Service Provider/Customer), Interactivity (Communication), which adopted respectively from; (Wang et al. 2007), (Yang 2006), Geissler et al. (2006), (Auh et al. 2007), Song and Zinkhan (2008). The statements under (SM) brand awareness were drawn from: Brand Consciousness, Brand Community Interest, Attitude Toward the Ad (Brand Reinforcement), Attitude Toward the Brand in the Ad, Attention to Ad (Brand Evaluation), which adopted respectively from; Nan and Heo (2007), Schouten et al. (2007), Strasheim et al. (2007), Kim et al. (2009), Chang (2007). And for (SM) knowledge it was drawn from: Interactivity (Responsiveness), Company Reputation (Product Quality), Attitude Toward the Website (Content), Attitude Toward the Website (Information Value), which adopted respectively from; Song and Zinkhan (2008), Walsh and Beatty (2007), (Kwon and Lennon 2009), (Holzwarth et al. 2006). Regarding (SM) purchase intention it was drawn from: Purchase Intention Towards the Service Provider, Ad's Effects on Recognition and Intentions, Attitude Toward the Ad (Informative), Attitude Toward the Website (Shopping Efficiency), which adopted from; (Voorhees et al. (2006),; Kim et al. (2009), Schweidel et al. (2006), (Mathwick et al. (2002)

### 3.3. Reliability

A pilot study sample of (31 customers) was done to pretest the questionnaires because it considered important based on the earlier observations to the pilot test questionnaire to ensure its reliability and consistency in picking up the right information required for this research. Feedbacks received from the pretest

sample and incorporated to the questionnaire, also quality checks were undertaken to ensure that there is no missing information before administering the final copies. In addition, it has been used the Cronbach's Alpha to measure reliability of the questionnaire. Questionnaire is of high reliability because the result of each element was  $> 0.7$ , and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for all dimensions Scale was (0.933), as shown in (Table 1) below:

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Results

The total sample study was (432) individuals which count; (227 Male/52.5%), (205 Female/47.5%). Both genders has almost the same counts and percentage which cover the purpose study very well and completely without any bias in sample study, due to the convenience sampling that the researcher chose to distribute. The majority of sample age group was in between (18 and 25) years old with (51.9%), and the minority was in between ( $>50$ ) years old with (6.3%).

#### 4.1.1. Hypnotized thesis and research model

Below, presented the analysis of the study's hypotheses according to the level responses of participants to the questionnaire:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant role of applying the Palestinian mobile telecom industry for SM marketing as a strategic marketing communication tool in building B2C Relationship.

One sample t test is used to test above hypothesis, it is found that B2C-Relationship is ( $t=-10.189$ ,  $df=426$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ) and SM is ( $t=-6.424$ ,  $df=431$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ) is significant at ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) level, which means SM do play a role of applying the Palestinian mobile telecom industry for SM marketing as a strategic marketing

**Table 1: Reliability tests**

Elements	No. of Items	Reliability	Result
Social media	6	0.825	Pass
Brand awareness	8	0.891	Pass
Knowledge	6	0.757	Pass
Purchase intention	7	0.893	Pass
Total value	27	0.933	Pass

**Table 2: One-Sample (T-Test) Statistics for the Role of SM on B2C-Relationship**

Items	N	Mean±Standard deviation	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
SM	432	3.4371 0.75350	-6.424	431	0.000
B2C	427	3.3488 0.65138	-10.189	426	0.000

Significant at level ( $P \leq 0.05$ )

**Table 3: Correlation Coefficients between B2C-Relationship elements and SM**

Items	Sig.	SM	BA	KN	PI	B2B
SM	0.000	1				
BA	0.000	0.647**	1			
KN	0.000	0.481**	0.628**	1		
PI	0.000	0.513**	0.723**	0.635**	1	
B2C	0.000	0.632**	0.910**	0.825**	0.903**	1

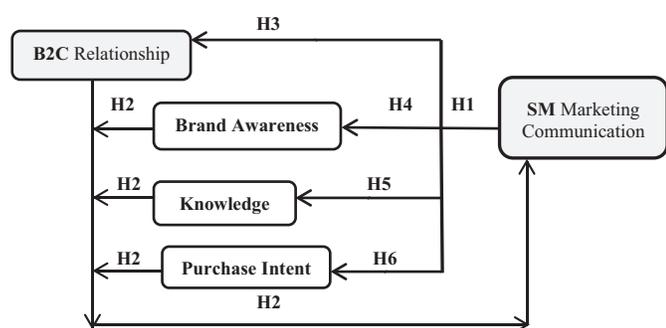
\*\*Correlation is significant at the (0.01) level (2-tailed)

**Table 4: Results of Simple Linear Regression - (B2C, BA, KN, PI)**

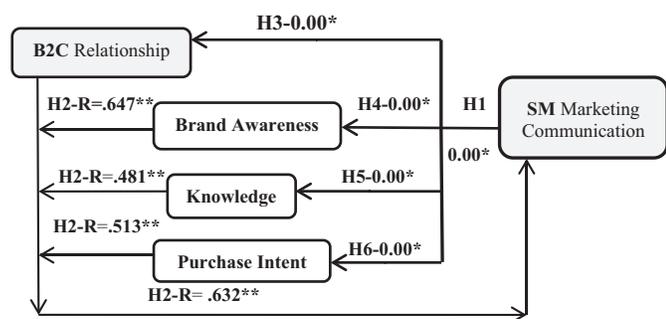
Variables	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Standard error	Beta		
H3-B2C (Sig=0.000 <sup>b</sup> , df=1.425, F=283.286). R <sup>2</sup> =0.400, Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =0.399	(Constant)	1.476	0.114	0.632	12.961	0.000
	SM	0.545	0.032		16.831	
H4-BA (Sig=0.000 <sup>b</sup> , df=1.429, F=309.017). R <sup>2</sup> =0.419, Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =0.417	(Constant)	1.153	0.128	0.647	9.024	0.000
	SM	0.638	0.036		17.579	
H5-KN (Sig=0.000 <sup>b</sup> , df=1.428, F=128.979). R <sup>2</sup> =0.232, Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =0.230	(Constant)	2.006	0.135	0.481	14.871	0.000
	SM	0.435	0.038		11.357	
H6-PI (Sig=0.000 <sup>b</sup> , df=1.428, F=153.064). R <sup>2</sup> =0.263, Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =0.262	(Constant)	1.419	0.150	0.513	9.455	0.000
	SM	0.528	0.043		12.372	

\*Significant at level (p≤0.05)

**Figure 1: Research model**



**Figure 2: Hypnotized research model**



- \* Significant at level (p ≤ 0.05)
- \*\* Correlation is significant at the (0.01) level (2-tailed)

communication tool in building B2C Relationship. According to Iriqat (2019) the high mean value range from (5 to 3.67), middle mean value range from (3.66 to 2.34) and the low mean range from (2.33 to 1), thus, from the table above the middle mean value and low SD value respectively for SM and B2C: (M=3.4371, SD=0.753), (M=3.3488, SD=0.65138) demonstrate a moderate level of SM in the Palestinian mobile telecom sector in building B2C relationship (Table 2).

H<sub>2</sub>: B2C Relationship elements; (Knowledge, Brand Awareness, Purchase intention) are significantly correlated to SM marketing in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

Pearson Correlation Coefficients test was used to test above hypothesis, it is found that (p-value) for all items above is significant

at (0.0) level (2tailed), that means B2C Relationship elements; (Knowledge, Brand Awareness, Purchase intention) are significantly correlated to SM marketing in Palestinian mobile telecom industry, which means that SM Marketing generates a strong positive correlated to B2C-relationship; (Knowledge, Brand Awareness, Purchase intention). Brand awareness and B2C is the most correlated elements to social media marketing (Figure 1 and 2).

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant effect of SM marketing as a strategic marketing communication tool on (B2C) Relationship in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a significant effect of SM marketing on Brand Awareness (BA) in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a significant effect of SM marketing on Knowledge (KN) in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

H<sub>6</sub>: There is a significant effect of SM marketing on Purchase intention (PI) in Palestinian mobile telecom industry.

Simple Linear Regression test was used to test the above hypotheses, the results of the regression indicated that the predictor (SM) can predict (B2C, BA, KN, PI) since the significant p<0.05 level, which means that there is a significant effect of (SM) marketing as a strategic marketing communication tool on B2C-Relationship and its elements; (BA, KN, PI) in Palestinian mobile telecom industry. The most significant effect of social media is on brand awareness and B2C, which indicated respectively in (β= 0.638, β=0.545). In contrast to purchasing intention and knowledge respectively (β= 0.528, β=0.435) (Table 3 and 4).

## 4.2. Discussion

The findings and results of the study confirm the key role of social media in influencing business to customers' relationship on: Brand awareness, Knowledge, Purchase intention, within applying of the Palestinian mobile telecom industry. Regarding for the variables of the research study it is appeared and found that.

### 4.2.1. B2C-Relationship

The testing results of hypothesis (H1) showed that SM do play a role of applying the Palestinian mobile telecom industry for SM marketing as a strategic marketing communication tool in building B2C Relationship. This is consistent with Galati et al. (2017) study; rich content, posts, and messages on Social media as a strategic marketing tool (Evidence from facebook) plays an

important role in small and big firms in the Sicilian wine industry to attract potential customers and to retain existing ones. Also Allan and Ali (2017) came up with the same results arguing that; social media marketing tools and strategies have a big influence role on reaching targeted customers. In addition to that, the testing results of hypothesis (H2) showed that there is a positive relationship between B2C- Relationship elements and SM Marketing. These results derived from the questionnaire survey results where Jawwal's Co. subscribers viewed their attitudes and believed about the importance level for each element construct within using social media. Which is aligning with Ghafari (2017) study that; (awareness cognitive, knowledge cognitive, brand equity, trust, purchasing intention) is significantly affected on social media purchasing. So it is emphasized that SM Marketing generates a strong positive effect on B2C-relationship; (Knowledge, Brand Awareness, Purchase intention). On the other hand, the testing results of hypothesis (H3) indicated a positive linear strong relationship effect of SM Marketing on B2C Relationship. This is in agreement with Rowley (2018) study; social media increase brand awareness, purchase decision, customers reviews and comment through enhanced customer relationship. On the same track Bartosik-Purgat et al (2017) founded that SM preferences and the frequency use of significant impact customer behavior. Also Kim and Ko (2012) came up with the same results arguing that; SM marketing activities is significant among: Relationship equity, value equity, brand equity, and purchase intention. From all above it is concluded that SM is an important factor in integrated marketing communication strategies as a vital tool in marketing, and SM does effect significantly building customer relationship and bond the connection between both the company that offer its services to their customers.

#### *4.2.2. Brand awareness*

The testing results of hypothesis (H4) indicated a positive linear strong effect of SM Marketing on BA. This is compatible with Bilgin (April 2018) study; SM marketing activities is an effective factor on brand image and brand loyalty. On the same track, Jayasuriya and Azam (2018) found that; SM marketing has an impact on brand equity: (Brand awareness, Brand association, Perceived quality, Brand Loyalty). The results of the study also matched Seo and Park (2018); SM marketing has a significant effect on brand awareness and brand image. Moreover it is in line with Olakunle (2012); SM marketing communication has a positive significant effect on consumer's perception of brands. So SM is a significant indicator that affected on brand awareness in integrated marketing communications strategies in mobile telecom industry in Palestine.

#### *4.2.3. Knowledge*

The testing results of hypothesis (H5) indicated a positive linear moderate effect of SM Marketing on KN. This moderate effect refers to the type of SM platform that used to the targeted customers and the content of the message itself. This is compatible with Haataja (2010) study who stated; that winning companies are companies who fit their strategic marketing within social media through tactics, timing, analyze and engage, and the right SM channel. It is also in line with Fellag (2017) study; companies which choose the compatible SM tool that suitable

for the content of the targeted message attract more customers. Moreover Bu-Baker (2016) in the same track demonstrated that; successful using of SM depending on the product and services of the companies and type of SM used to achieve its objectives in order to send the desired message clearly. This result also in concurs with Peeroo (2017); customer's referral, comments, and opinions on social media act as an advocate and have a significant effect on providing information and knowledge. And is matched with the study of Hajli (2014); SM facilitates social interaction and exchange of information between customers.

#### *4.2.4. Purchase intention*

The testing results hypothesis indicated a positive linear moderate effect of SM Marketing on PI. This moderate effect is due to the moderate technology that Middle East countries and Arab world have comparing to other technologies in the rest of the world, and the lack of SM monitoring, analytics, and engagement tools that offer Arabic coverage and functionality. On the other hand, many companies still used limited options of SM forms for their marketing objectives. Moreover digital experiences purchasing within SM in the Arab country is still primitive and about years late with this trend compared to other countries world. This view is in agreement with Almadani & Abdelghader (2018); Factors that help social networking sites to be effective are the availability of Information Communication Technology infrastructure. Also study of Castronovo and Huang (2012); the mix of social media is highly depending on the trend of social media usage among the target market. This is consistent with previous study of Mangold and Faulds (2009); the content, timing, frequency of the social media, and include providing consumers with different social media platforms to engage customers is a basic requirements in the Internet-based social media. Also, the results of the study matched what came along in Thabet (2017) study; viral marketing on social media has a significant impact on purchasing decision, he also recommended in his study to utilize different electronic technologies of SM to reach targeted customers. Moreover it is in line with Dwikianda (2017); online advertisement has a positive significant impact on purchase intention. Also Al-Nsour et al., (2016); came up with the same result; the significant impact of SM on purchase intention within company content and the digital technologies that use beside the content of users.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The aim of this study was to identify the role of SM as a strategic marketing communication tool on B2C Relationship in the Palestinian mobile telecom industry, it used Jawwal Co. Mobile as a case study. The study pointed the role of social media on B2C relationship from the view of Brand awareness; highlight the value and meet the desires of the consumer, Knowledge; reaching and connecting targeted customers to introduce services, and as an effective tool in purchasing (Purchase intent). The study identify clearly the important role of SM marketing on building and fostering customers through using different social media forms as an effective tool to connect, share information between both telecom companies and their customers in order to attract them and bond relationship with them.

Moreover, the study found the big role of using social media as a new hybrid technology within telecom companies marketing communication strategies and its effect on customers, moreover highlighting the position of the company and coexistence in the market place competition within the same industry, and cope with digital media for the adaptation of business environment. Also SM as a modern approaches marketing tool comparing to the traditional marketing communication tool; in which it characterized as a global, communication, connectedness, sharing, and economic tool that reaching large number of customers faster than other traditional marketing tools.

## 6. LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The limitation of this study was in the sample study itself in that (41) questionnaires were excluded because of the lack seriousness in the answers by the participant and data missing due to empty questionnaires. So it had to continue to hand out questionnaire again until obtained the conformed sample study size due to the large number of the sample study. On the other hand, it couldn't reach all geographical area in Palestine due to far countries from different areas and the block siege that Israel authority imposed, so most of the geographical area that has been included in this study are; the middle and north area. On the other hand most age group of the participants was in the middle age of (18–25) years old by (52%) which mean most of the sample study presented youth age groups and not cover enough other age groups of the total sample study. Moreover, since SM platforms are a new hybrid technology in the Web (2.0) there is no such literature reviews covering the topic of SM marketing and it's related or impacts on business to customers specifically the lack of the Arabic reviews that entailed the topic of SM application in the recent digital era.

A number of recommendations formulated regarding to the study For Arab Palestinian mobile Co. as following:

- The interest of Information Communication Technology and work on creative methods in promoting its products to win customer attraction and maintain relationship, through incorporate and the synergy of social media with other departments like marketing department and Information Technology department.
- To choose the appropriate and suitable social media tool that is proportion with the content of the message which sought to send and attract customers towards the benefit from the campaigns and digital advertisements.
- In order to run an effective social media campaign and influence the intention of purchasing to customers, it exhorted to take into consideration more engaging, participative, interesting applications, games, on social media that draw interest to the customers.
- The adoption of Social Media into integrated Marketing Communication of telecom mobile companies within the strategic plans in connecting and bonding to customers and using Social Media as a mass comprehensive communication vehicle which will gain transparency and credibility in the eyes of customers.
- The need for companies to pay attention to the social networks that are known for growing and rapid attention of individuals and adopting it within their business objectives and plans.
- Encouraging senior management in business companies to support Internet services of Web (2.0) in marketing, and focus on the importance of coordination and integration between social media marketing and marketing strategy to ensure the best results, and keeping pace with last digital technologies in business world.

Regarding to the findings from the conclusions and the recommendations above, further research should be explored the following aspects:

- This study is a quantitative study that depending only on questionnaire survey method, So future studies are invited to use other research tools and qualitative methods; such as interview or focus groups to reduce the degree of bias.
- Further studies could be carried out in a wider scope that will cover most of the regions and cities in Palestine to ensure the perspective and picture of the entire country is captured.
- Furthermore, there should be some focus on further research regarding the sample of the study; on covering all age groups and not confined to one age group.
- A comprehensive study of the role Social Media Marketing used marketing and promoting for product and services from two point view of; customers and of the company itself that offer these services and products in order to fully explore Social Media in a very effective way for the objective evaluation and measurement of the influence of these social media platforms on business.

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