The Impact of Technological-Organizational-Environmental Factors on Electronic Marketing Performance of Food and Beverage SMES in Kuwait

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the relationship between the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework and electronic marketing performance among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Kuwait's restaurant and food and beverage sector. While digital platforms and technologies are increasingly essential for improving business operations, the strategic alignment between TOE factors and marketing outcomes remains unclear. Therefore, determining this relationship forms the core problem addressed in this research. A quantitative research method was employed using a self-administered questionnaire to collect data from SME stakeholders. The findings indicate that certain TOE dimensions such as compatibility and organizational readiness significantly impact profitability, while top management support and mobile payment gateway usage are positively associated with sales growth. The study highlights the importance of leveraging TOE elements to enhance marketing performance and recommends stronger organizational readiness, managerial involvement, and digital platform integration to drive marketing success within SMEs.

Keywords: TOE Framework, E-Marketing Performance, SMEs, Food and Beverage, Kuwait
JEL Classifications: M21, L1, M5, M310

1. INTRODUCTION

The debates and contention continue to impede the focus on sales growth practices among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) especially in the Middle East countries (Ahmad et al., 2020; Das et al., 2020). The topic of whether SMEs can overcome these resource limitations, as well as how to create the enabling organizational competencies required to drive all three pillars of marketing performance, has thus far gone unexplored (Eikelenboom and de Jong, 2019). With limited resources, it is critical to research the field of marketing performance in SMEs, especially in the Middle East region. As a result, it is in the interest of this study to investigate the capabilities of SMEs to improve their firms' long-term performance levels. Demand for SMEs to respond to challenges is increasing, given that SMEs account for

over 97% of total establishments in many countries, including Kuwait (Rahman et al., 2022).

There is a noticeable weakness in the marketing performance among SMEs in Middle East region countries, including Kuwait (Thottoli and Al Harthi, 2022). Employees and managers of SMEs in the food and beverage sector are the players in successful marketing performance (Moorman and Day, 2016). Poor levels of awareness and experience for the employees and marketers of food and beverage services (Singh, 2019) negatively affect their firms' marketing performance due to adopting the old classical marketing strategies (Hawary and Aldaihani, 2016; Heiens et al., 2019). Latest reports on the SMEs in Kuwait showed the lack of organizational performance of the commitment of the managers and employees, which negatively impacts profitability and

marketing (Al Bazie and Braganza, 2020; Sarmawa et al., 2020). There is a decline in the number and performance of SMEs in Kuwait, worst in COVID-19 and after, where 25 to 30 thousand SMEs in Kuwait face sustainability issues and survival challenges, especially profitability and growth (Hagagy, 2021).

The performance of SMEs in Kuwait is recorded to be less than 20%, as one of the lowest countries in the Middle East (Lukonga, 2020). The majority of owners and employees of these SMEs in Kuwait are changing from the private sector to the governmental sector (Hagagy, 2021). A recent report highlighted the decline in the annual income growth for marketing of the food and beverage industry among Middle Eastern countries due to the improper use of new marketing strategies (Singh, 2019).

The main point is to measure the roles of adopting the technology as with Technology, Organization, and Environment (TOE) Framework factors capability and main characteristics of companies which support the success of marketing performance while using the marketing applications (Eze et al., 2020). Thus, to what extent the usage of the TOE Framework in the marketing performance within SMEs is yet to be determined. In addition, there is less evidence on the general factors of the TOE framework on the marketing performance of SMEs (Gakii and Maina, 2019; Picoto et al., 2014; Saeed Alkhateri et al., 2021; Sheikh et al., 2017). Thus, this paper investigates the relationship between TOE factors on the electronic marketing performance of SMEs (e.g., sales growth and profitability) in Kuwait.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Electronic Marketing Performance in Kuwait and Middle Eastern Countries

Organizations in the Middle Eastern region countries are facing new changes lately due to technological developments in food and beverage marketing. The firms in the Middle Eastern countries are still more familiar with traditional marketing approaches (Al-Hawary and Obiadat, 2021; Pleshko, 2020). The main shortcoming of the adoption of electronic marketing is the limitation of using technology in marketing, especially related to food and beverage services. There are observable challenges obtained in electronic marketing in Middle East region countries, including Kuwait, like technical support and technology competency (Al-Hawary and Alhajri, 2020). The lack of employees' experiences and knowledge of electronic marketing towards management of the firm relevant factors is significant among SMEs (Pleshko, 2020).

Several challenges have existed in the marketing of food and beverage in the Middle East region countries. The employees and marketers of food and beverages should be aware of the most influential factors (such as the types, characteristics, and developments of technology applications) (Al-Zyoud, 2019). Nowadays, especially after the economic crisis following the pandemic, new attentions are proposed to enhance the employee's and marketers' awareness about implementing new marketing strategies and tactics in Middle East countries, including Kuwait (Heiens et al., 2019; Kotler et al., 2012).

Kuwait, an Arab Middle East country, also has additional cultural and organizational features of marketing, which affected the organization's performance. One of the serious factors of marketing performance in Kuwait is the failure to develop the marketing system towards better customer satisfaction (Al-Hawary and Alhajri, 2020). A study reported that the managers and decision-makers of companies in Kuwait are required to more ability to adopt telecommunication and electronic marketing systems as beneficial alternatives to the traditional marketing approach to improve the firms' sales, volume, and other marketing performance aspects (Al-Hawary and Alhajri, 2020). The main point is to measure the roles of adopting the technology as with TOE framework factors capability and main characteristics of companies which support the success of marketing performance while using the marketing applications (Eze et al., 2020). The companies in Kuwait are facing several obstacles in terms of adopting technological innovations which reduce their marketing performance, Moreover, no literature studies in Kuwait measure the fundamental requirements to proceed with using the technology electronic systems, like Talabat.

In Kuwait, large enterprises are shown superior outcomes than SMEs, due to the use of financial and management resources, especially with marketing performance factors like satisfaction, retention, penetration, preference, and share of customer evaluation (Heiens et al., 2019). The managers and employees of firms in Kuwait still need more efficient plans and experience in the food market to get more development of their businesses to overcome the negative impacts followed the pandemic and other inconvenient environments (Altarrah et al., 2021).

2.2. TOE Framework and Marketing Performance
The TOE framework is a well-known theoretical model that explains how technology is adopted and integrated into businesses (Fan et al., 2023). This framework was first proposed by Tornatzky and Fleischer during the progress of technology (Tornatzky and Klein, 1982). It includes technological, organizational, and environmental factors. Compared to the other theory, the TOE framework is considered a comprehensive approach to ICT adoption depending on internal and external factors (Qashou and Saleh, 2018).

The technology context describes the variables of existing and new technologies, i.e., the adoption ability of the technology system to move toward the electronic marketing stage (Ahmad et al., 2019). Several internal and external factors are categorized within the technological context. Rogers identified several variables of technology influence like relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (Saeed Alkhateri et al., 2021). Previous studies excluded the trialability and observability due to their inappropriateness for the marketing approach (Parveen, 2012; Tajudeen et al., 2018). Also, existing of different technology variables like relative advantage, compatibility, and complexity could affect the marketing performance of the SMEs (Mahakittikun et al., 2021). Therefore, the main hypotheses and sub-hypotheses are as follows:

H_1: There is a significant positive effect of technology context (compatibility) on the profitability (H1a) and sales growth

(H1b) of marketing E-performance of the SME managers of the food and beverage industry in Kuwait.

The organizational context refers to the variables associated with the organization's business procedures. These factors vary from one business to another, and from one study to another depending on the convenience of variables to the objectives and environment of the study (Saeed Alkhateri et al., 2021). Ahmad et al. (2019) reported in their study that the firm scope, firm characteristics, and other managerial beliefs as the main variables of the organizational context of the TOE model. Another study highlighted the organizational context involves other factors of organization and employee factors like technology innovation competence, awareness, managerial structure, financial resources, readiness, and others that influence the organization's marketing performance (Ahmed et al., 2019; Justino et al., 2022; Qashou and Saleh, 2018). Therefore, the hypotheses and sub-hypotheses are illustrated below:

H_2: There is a significant positive effect of organizational context (Top Management Support H3a 1,2, and Organizational readiness H3b1,2), on the profitability and sales growth of E-marketing performance of the SME managers of the food and beverage industry in Kuwait.

The environmental context refers to the surroundings of the organization, especially regarding the business, competitors, governmental support, suppliers, and customers (Qashou and Saleh, 2018). These factors either showed positively or negatively to the firms' business plans and operations. Some factors belong to government support and regulations, while others to the customers' perceptions, and last from competitors of the same business, which are involved in the marketing of the products and services (Saeed Alkhateri et al., 2021). The mobile payment gateway is an essential environmental factor of the TOE framework (Justino et al., 2022) that influences the marketing performance and growth of the business based on the perception of employees of SMEs.

H_3: There is a significant positive effect of environmental context (Mobile payment gateway) on the profitability (H3a) and sales growth (H3b) of the E-marketing performance of the SME managers of the food and beverage industry in Kuwait.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

This study focuses on the measurement of e-marketing performance, particularly in terms of sales growth and profitability. In simple terms, business performance can be assessed by the value generated from marketing inputs, as reflected in overall profitability. Financial performance is often considered an indicator of economic efficiency, typically measured through revenue and profit. Additionally, the cost-to-revenue ratio (expenses divided by revenue) can be used to evaluate how efficiently a company turns its marketing investments into income (Artono et al., 2024). The existing TOE framework with the marketing performance model is contemporarily harmonized with other recent literature studies (Qashou and Saleh, 2018; Saeed Alkhateri et al., 2021; Tajudeen et al., 2018). The main parameters of marketing performance are profitability and sales growth (Figure 1). These TOE factors are the independent variables and precisely defined and adopted

Figure 1: Research framework and hypotheses
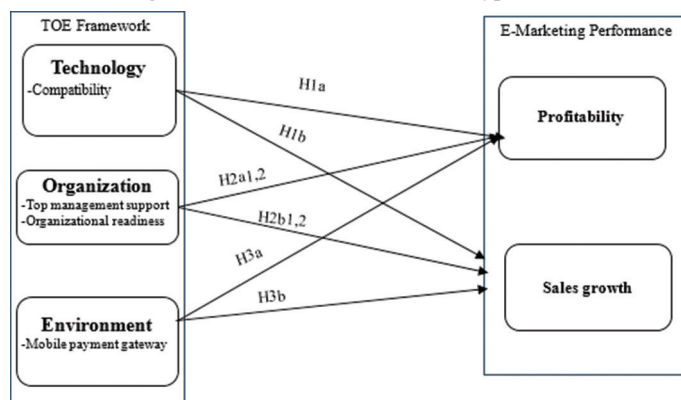
in several literature studies as main indicators of marketing performance (Gakii and Maina, 2019; Perényi and Yukhanaev, 2016; Zulfikar, 2018). The adoption of the TOE framework in the marketing approach showed a highly effective approach (Qashou and Saleh, 2018).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study uses a structured questionnaire with a quantitative research design to gather data from SME managers. The population of this study involves all the SMEs in the food and beverage industry in Kuwait that are registered in the restaurant sector and food-beverage chains in Kuwait. The rationale for selecting these respondents is that they are the people who will report the profitability and sales growth performance, have the knowledge to provide accurate responses, and are the best people to complete the questionnaire.

The simple random sampling method was used was used to select 402 which is a kind of probability sampling technique. Microsoft Excel to generate random numbers for the selection of the SMEs to which the survey was sent. In short, the process is to randomly shuffle Excel rows (i.e. records) based on randomly generated values. A total of 330 questionnaires were completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 82.1% and 220 valid questionnaires were used in this study. This response rate is considered adequate for analysis.

The questionnaire items were taken from previous studies in the literature (see Table 1), including Wang et al. (2016), Justino et al. (2022), Picoto et al. (2014), Ikeni and Tonye, (2022), Budiono and Efrata, (2019), Perényi and Yukhanaev, (2016), Helgesen et al. (2018). The relevant items will be selected and adapted based on the study constructs. The items then are combined into a new single questionnaire, which was used to collect quantitative data for this study. Moreover, the survey questions were made bilingually (English and Arabic translation) to make it easier for the respondents to answer the questions. The two Arabic versions of the questionnaire were reviewed by a third translation panel to select the best version from the two drafts. All constructs were measured using established scales adopted from existing literature on a five-point Likert scale.

Table 1: The measurements of variables

Variable	Items	Source
Organization context		
Top management support	Our top management is likely to invest funds in the applications of E-marketing.	(Wang et al., 2016)
	Our top management is willing to take risks involved in the implementation of E-marketing.	
	Our top management is interested in using applications of E-marketing to gain competitive advantages.	
Organizational readiness for marketing distribution	We have sufficient financial resources in our organization for adopting and implementing E-marketing.	(Justino et al., 2022)
	We have the technical skills and resources necessary for E-marketing implementation.	
	Our organization has good, qualified, and skilled marketing staff.	
Technological context		
Compatibility	E-marketing is compatible with our organization's selling and procurement processes.	(Picoto et al., 2014)
	E-marketing is compatible with existing distribution channels.	
	E-marketing is compatible with our organization's existing information infrastructure.	
	E-marketing is consistent with our organization's existing practice.	
Environmental context		
Mobile payment gateway	The availability of a secure digital payment system for wireless financial transactions and privacy is essential for our marketing business.	(Justino et al., 2022)
	The availability of secure digital payment options (credit cards, smart cards, debit cards, and electronic cash) is essential for our marketing business.	
	The availability of organizations operating as payment gateways of providers of online payment methods is essential for our marketing business.	
E-Marketing performance		
Sales growth	Our preferred model of a marketing application for products has resulted in to increase in sales.	(Ikeni and Tonye, 2022)
	Engaging customers with visual content shown in marketing applications has resulted in to increase in sales.	
	Information accessibility of marketing applications is an indicator of sales growth in our company.	
	Attractive videos or pictures contents in marketing applications have helped in boosting our sales.	
	There is an increase in the average sales growth of our organization.	
Profitability	There is an increase in our organization's profitability	(Budiono and Efrata, 2019; Perényi and Yukhanaev, 2016; (Helgesen et al., 2018)
	My organization in the past five years showed higher profitability than competitors.	
	My organization's profitability is appropriated with potential plans.	
	My organization's profitability has been on the increase in the past and future.	
	Customer purchases improved the organization's profitability in the past five years.	

4. RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive Analysis of Respondents

Table 2 shows the majority of respondents are male (74.24%), with females representing 25.76%. Most participants fall within the 36-45 age group (55.76%), followed by those aged 25-35 (27.88%), over 45 (13.03%), and 25 or younger (3.3%). In terms of education, the largest group holds a diploma or undergraduate degree (43.64%), followed by high school graduates (31.52%), postgraduates (15.15%), and those with less than a high school education (9.7%). Regarding their roles, nearly half of the respondents are employees (46.67%), while 31.52% are managers and 21.82% are business owners. The highest proportion of participants have 11-15 years of work experience (31.21%), with others having over 15 years (27.88%), 5-10 years (22.73%), and less than 5 years (18.18%). Looking at the age of the SMEs, most businesses have been operating for 10-14 years (39.70%), followed by those over 15 years (25.15%), 5-9 years (21.52%), and under 5 years (13.64%). In terms of the business field, more than half are involved in the restaurant industry (54.55%), with others in manufacturing (22.42%), hotel management, agencies, and other services (12.73%), and distribution/import (10.30%).

4.2. Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model should be assessed through the outer measurement and the structural/internal model. The statistical

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	163	74.24
	Female	57	25.76
Age Group	≤25	7	3.3
	25-35	62	27.88
	36-45	124	55.76
	>45	29	13.03
Education Level	<High School	21	9.70
	High School	69	31.52
	Diploma/Undergraduate	96	43.64
	Postgraduate	34	15.15
Position	Owner	48	21.82
	Manager	69	31.52
	Employee	103	46.67
Work Experience	<5 years	40	18.18
	5-10 years	50	22.73
	11-15 years	69	31.21
	>15 years	61	27.88
SME Age	<5 years	30	13.64
	5–9 years	47	21.52
	10–14 years	87	39.70
	>15 years	56	25.15
Business Field	Restaurant	120	54.55
	Manufacturing	49	22.42
	Distribution/Import	23	10.30
	Hotel Mgmt, Agencies, Others	28	12.73

parameters of the measurement model assessment involved internal consistency reliability, indicator reliability, convergent validity, and discriminate validity (Ringle and Wende, 2015).

4.2.1. Indicator reliability
The indicator reliability of the measurement model is assessed by determining the loading values for items of the constructs of more than 0.50 (Sarstedt et al., 2017). All the items of the constructs of the present study obtained loading values of more than 0.50. The loading values for the items of constructs ranged between 0.720 and 0.974, as shown in Table 3. The results demonstrated satisfactory indicator reliability.

4.2.3. Internal consistency reliability
The internal consistency of the measurement model should be assessed to meet the standardization of academic research. Each construct's composite reliability (CR) showed more than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2011). The CR for the study constructs showed higher values than 0.70. The CR values of CR values of compatibility, mobile payment gateway, organizational readiness, profitability, sales growth, and top management support are 0.962, 0.962, 0.973, 0.956, 0.947, and 0.943, respectively.

4.2.4. Convergent validity
The determination of the average variance extracted (AVE) is used to assess the convergent validity in the measurement model. The standard value of AVE must be equal to or higher than 0.50 for constructs to meet the academic requirements of research (Hair et al., 2011). In Table 4, the constructs' AVE is higher than 0.50. The AVE of constructs of the present study is 0.863, 0.792, 0.894, 0.922, 0.930, 0.783, and 0.848 for the constructs of compatibility, mobile payment gateway, organizational readiness, profitability, sales growth, and top management support, respectively.

4.2.5. Discriminant validity
The discriminant validity of the measurement model is assessed by determining standard measures like Fornell and Larcker's criterion. Fornell and Larcker's criterion determines the discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2013). Fornell and Larcker's criterion is assessed as an acceptable parameter if the latent value is higher than the square of the correlation between variables (Henseler et al., 2015). In this study, the values of Fornell and Larcker's criterion of each construct showed a higher value than the squares of correlations with latent variables, as shown in Table 5.

Table 3: Indicator reliability for the items of constructs

Items	Compatibility	Mobile payment gateway	Organizational readiness	Profitability	Sales growth	Top management support
COMPA1	0.938					
COMPA2	0.917					
COMPA3	0.928					
COMPA4	0.932					
COMPL1						
COMPL2						
COMPL3						
Mob_Gate1		0.952				
Mob_Gate2		0.964				
Mob_Gate3		0.920				
OR1			0.956			
OR2			0.970			
OR3			0.956			
PR1				0.913		
PR2				0.905		
PR3				0.938		
PR4				0.861		
PR5				0.890		
SG2					0.855	
SG1					0.908	
SG3					0.910	
SG4					0.899	
SG5					0.852	
TMS1						0.882
TMS2						0.925
TMS3						0.953

Table 4: Construct reliability and validity parameters of this study

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	rho_a	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Compatibility	0.947	0.952	0.962	0.863
Mobile Payment Gateway	0.941	0.941	0.962	0.894
Organizational readiness	0.958	0.958	0.973	0.922
Profitability	0.943	0.947	0.956	0.813
Sales growth	0.931	0.936	0.947	0.783
Top Management Support	0.910	0.915	0.943	0.848

4.3. Hypothesis Testing

The testing of hypotheses should be assessed by determining the path coefficient between the latent variables. Path coefficients are valid and acceptable when the t values are more than 1.96 for the two-tailed or counting the mean values of coefficients range between 1 and −1, and obtain significant P-values (Hair et al., 2020). Table 6 illustrates the hypotheses with bootstrapping results, including ß value, T statistic, and P-value. The hypotheses of direct effects investigated in the present study showed significant with acceptable values of path coefficients and T statistic values are: Compatibility -> Profitability (H1a), Top Management Support -> Sales growth (H2a2), Organizational readiness -> Profitability (H3a), and Mobile Payment Gateway -> Sales growth (H3b). The supported hypotheses are highlighted in red based on previous outcomes obtained in the analysis. Table 6 shows that the Compatibility infrastructure has no significant relationship with sales growth. Also, the results showed an insignificant relationship between top management support and profitability.

5. DISCUSSION

The main goal of the study is to determine the impact of the TOE framework on marketing performance among the SMEs of the food and beverage industry in Kuwait. The findings indicate that certain TOE dimensions such as compatibility and organizational readiness significantly impact profitability, while top management support and mobile payment gateway usage are positively associated with sales growth.

The effect of compatibility on marketing performance was also examined by Yoon (2024), who reported significant positive results. However, the present study differs in terms of environmental context, innovation type, business sector, and how profitability is evaluated. This research specifically investigates marketing profitability through the lens of marketing innovation among SMEs in the food and beverage sector in Kuwait. The findings revealed a significant impact of the technology domain (compatibility)

on profitability, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. This is considered a unique contribution, as no prior study has explored the influence of technology factors on profitability using innovation within food and beverage SMEs in the Arabian Gulf region, particularly in Kuwait.

Top management support, another crucial factor in the organizational context, has been widely studied and is recognized for its influence on organizational performance (Garrett and Neubaum, 2013). Salsabila et al. (2023) highlighted its contribution to marketing outcomes such as profit quality, sales growth, and liquidity. While these studies differ in how they define and measure marketing performance, they align with the current study's finding that top management support significantly enhances sales growth. This confirms the importance of organizational factors in e-marketing performance.

Organizational readiness, a key component of the organizational domain in the TOE framework, also showed a significant relationship with profitability. Lokuge et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of organizational readiness for business performance, especially when adopting innovative approaches. Conversely, Cvjetković (2023) found that various technological factors had no significant influence on organizational performance. While these results differ from the current study, they highlight the variation in context and methodology. Similarly, Yeni and Yasri (2020) found a significant relationship between organizational readiness and business performance among Indonesian SMEs; however, their study included all types of SMEs and focused on social media, using a different framework.

The literature consistently emphasizes the importance of organizational readiness for enhancing SME profitability (Antony et al., 2023; Fuller, 2022). Womick (2024) also reported that organizational readiness significantly improved profitability when artificial intelligence was used as a core business tool. However, the methodology, target population, and study context differed from those of the present research. Becker (2024) also

Table 5: Fornell and Larcker's criterion of constructs

Variable	Compatibility	Mobile payment gateway	Organizational readiness	Profitability	Sales growth	Top management support
Compatibility	**0.929**					
Mobile Payment Gateway	0.568	**0.946**				
Organizational readiness	0.779	0.679	**0.960**			
Profitability	0.499	0.540	0.604	**0.902**		
Sales growth	0.624	0.626	0.670	0.789	**0.885**	
Top Management Support	0.865	0.675	0.853	0.580	0.719	**0.921**

Table 6: Hypotheses with results, coefficient, T statistics, and P-values

H	Relationships	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P-values
H1a	Compatibility -> Profitability	0.176	0.079	2.239	0.025
H1b	Compatibility -> Sales growth	−0.043	0.069	0.621	0.535
H2a1	Top Management Support -> Profitability	0.076	0.101	0.749	0.454
H2a2	Top Management Support -> Sales growth	0.284	0.088	3.235	0.001
H2b1	Organizational readiness -> Profitability	0.206	0.091	2.249	0.025
H2b2	Organizational readiness -> Sales growth	−0.022	0.083	0.265	0.791
H3a	Mobile Payment Gateway -> Profitability	−0.028	0.101	0.282	0.778
H3b	Mobile Payment Gateway -> Sales growth	0.189	0.089	2.118	0.034

found a positive effect of organizational readiness and managerial factors on profitability, which supports the findings of the current study. Nevertheless, the present research offers a more targeted application of the TOE framework, focusing specifically on SMEs in Kuwait's food and beverage industry. It also provides broader generalizability and a more focused investigation of marketing profitability.

Lastly, the mobile payment gateway, representing the environmental domain of the TOE framework, also significantly influenced sales growth. Previous studies such as Kwabena et al. (2021) and Justino et al. (2022) discussed the importance of environmental factors in shaping business performance. However, the present study employed a more comprehensive TOE framework and was more specifically designed for SMEs in the food and beverage sector. The significant effect of mobile payment gateways on sales growth, particularly in the context of Kuwait, has not been previously examined. Although Mohamed (2023) reported similar results among general SMEs in Somalia, their study lacked the specificity, generalizability, and detailed marketing performance indicators used in the present research.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of technological innovation on marketing performance among SMEs in Kuwait's food and beverage sector, using a TOE framework linked to profitability and sales growth. This study revealed important direct relationships between technological, organizational, and environmental factors and marketing performance. The significant findings across compatibility, organizational readiness, top management support, and mobile payment gateways contribute to filling existing gaps in the literature and achieving the research objectives. These findings highlight the practical implications for SMEs aiming to enhance e-marketing performance through strategic use of technology and innovation.

6.1. Implications of the Research

This study provides both theoretical and practical implications for SMEs in Kuwait's food and beverage sector. By establishing significant direct relationships between TOE (Technology-Organization-Environment) factors and marketing performance, the research fills important gaps in the existing literature. A total of eight hypotheses were tested, linking independent TOE variables with marketing outcomes such as profitability and sales growth.

The first major contribution is the development of a TOE-based framework specifically designed to explain marketing performance particularly sales growth in the food and beverage sector. This framework is applied for the first time in this context, offering a structured model that successfully meets the study's objectives and addresses previously unresolved issues.

Secondly, the study uniquely integrates TOE factors with marketing performance in a way not done in prior research. Unlike earlier models that focused on limited adoption or performance metrics, this study demonstrated the consistent and coherent impact of technological and organizational readiness on marketing

innovation. The results emphasize the ease of use and practical implementation for SMEs, highlighting the role of environmental factors especially in improving sales and profitability.

Practically, this research underscores how SMEs can leverage technology adoption, such as mobile payment gateways and delivery platforms, to enhance customer service and operational efficiency. As noted by Cascio and Montealegre (2016), technological innovation boosts business performance, but not all companies can fully measure or utilize its potential. This challenge is especially relevant in Gulf countries, where organizational and technological understanding can vary (Alsanea, 2015).

Finally, the study found that environmental factors had the strongest impact on marketing performance, suggesting that SMEs focusing on modern platforms like Talabat can achieve greater safety, reduced costs, and improved profitability compared to traditional approaches. Given the high demand in Kuwait's food and beverage market, such advancements are vital for current and future economic growth in the sector.

6.2. Limitations and Future Recommendations

While the study achieved its objectives, limitations include the lack of specificity regarding SME types, product categories, and demographic influences. The generalizability is also limited to Kuwait. Future research should expand the model, conduct comparative studies in other Gulf countries, and include qualitative or mixed-method approaches to enhance depth, validity, and applicability. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to assess the sustainability of innovation-driven marketing performance over time.

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