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Hospitality Meets Hashtags: A Reflective-Formative Higher Order Analytical Model of Social Media Adoption

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Abstract

The current study identifies the factors that lead to social media adoption and influence the performance of the hotel industry. Responses from 448 hotels in Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh were included in a study using the simple random sampling technique. The data was analyzed with structural equation modeling using SmartPLS4. The results confirm that technological, organizational, and environmental factors positively affect social media adoption. Moreover, social media adoption significantly impacts hotel performance. The study enhances theory by empirically identifying the determinants of social media adoption and its effects. Practical implications can assist hotel managers by evaluating the technological, organizational, and environmental factors related to social media adoption and its influence on hotel performance.

Keywords: Social media Platforms; Hotel Sector; TOE model; Performance

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Introduction

Businesses and the state of the economy have changed dramatically in the modern era. Over the past 10 years, there has been a rapid and continuous pace of change, necessitating new studies and research to help companies understand and successfully adapt to technological advancements, innovations, and challenges (Ancillai et al., 2023; Bhandari & Vikhe, 2025; Usman et al., 2024). Technology is a transformative tool at both individual and organizational levels. It is described as the design and application of science and knowledge to achieve desired objectives (Rogers, 2003). Information technology (IT) implementation is therefore essential in any economic system (Bonomi, 2023). Hence, to explore the components driving technology adoption in business, researchers and practitioners have dedicated significant effort over the last two decades (Sahut & Lissillour, 2023) to understand the performance outcomes of these recent technologies. The use of information and communication technology (ICT), such as social media, to meet business objectives and maintain sustainable productivity and competitive advantage has been one of the most significant changes in technology adoption worldwide (Infante & Mardikaningsih, 2022; Luo et al., 2024). Furthermore, one of the major developments in ICT is Web 2.0, which enables users to collaborate in creating, distributing, and customizing internet applications by rating and tailoring them (Ziegler, 2022). Moreover, social media is described as an internet megatrend of the modern era, based on the idea of Web 2.0 (Ozkent, 2022). The global tourism industry, which relies heavily on information, has expanded rapidly with advances in ICT (Chakravarty, 2024; Lin et al., 2025). There have been significant structural and operational changes in the tourism sector with the advent of the Internet and multimedia platforms, leading to more interactive tourism (Ali et al., 2022). According to many scholars, publicly accessible web tourism data is crucial for developing effective marketing strategies and enhancing information systems in the travel and tourism industry (Deb et al., 2022; Khaki & Khan, 2024). Integrating social media into daily operations is essential for hospitality businesses because more travellers use social media for trip planning and execution—such as finding and booking hotels, reading reviews, and sharing their experiences with others. A Travolution survey revealed that 40% of millennial travelers (ages 18 to 33) primarily decide where to stay based on how "Instagrammable" the hotel or lodging is (Pateli et al., 2020). Additionally, to boost their visibility and attract potential customers, hospitality organizations must merge traditional marketing with social media due to intense competition, changing consumer preferences, and the rising popularity of social media among travelers. Consequently, social media is becoming a vital component of most marketing strategies. These platforms also help hospitality businesses showcase their products and services, as they enable real-time evaluation and inspection. The rating and recommendation systems influenced by social media and user-generated content (UGC), such as hotel ranking systems and review mechanisms, are examples of this trend (Raghavendra et al., 2024). Many experts agree that social media's rise has created unprecedented opportunities for genuine engagement between travellers and tourism service providers, including the hotel industry (Hu & Olivieri, 2021). The social media is also transforming how people plan and enjoy their vacations (Aziz & Alam, 2024; Khaki & Khan, 2025), encouraging hospitality companies to innovate their business models accordingly.

These results highlight how important it is for hospitality companies like hotels to use social media for marketing, customer relationship management and information accessibility and improve their overall performance. The importance of social media usage and its implications for the hospitality industry have previously been underlined in a number of articles (Gomez-Suarez & Veloso, 2024; Ibrahim et al., 2021; Khaki & Khan, 2023a; Khaki & Khan, 2023b; Pateli et al., 2020). Nevertheless, scholars studying tourism and hospitality management have yet to develop a convincing set of antecedent

elements that propel social media adoption in organisations and impact performance outcomes. The purpose of this study is to present a thorough framework which outlines different factors that hotel organisations take into account when making decisions about adoption of social media platforms. These variables include the organisation itself, the environment surrounding the hospitality enterprises, and technology features. In addition to examining the antecedents, the current study also looks at how social media adoption affects the performance of the hotel sector. Moreover, even fewer examples exist where the present research has been studied in the context of Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. These destinations are well-known for having a wealth of resources for tourism and hospitality businesses, offering a wide range of products and services. To fill in knowledge gaps and answer the research questions(RQ), the following research questions are formulated for the study: RQ1 What are the factors which influence the adoption of social media in the hotel sector? RQ2What is the influence of social media adoption on the performance of hotel sector? The present study uses the Technology-Organisation-Environment (TOE) paradigm, developed by Tornatzky et al. (1990), a widely used framework.The study obtained a representative sample of businesses involved in the hotel sector of Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. A quantitative research methodology and Partial Least Squares (PLS) Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) were used to investigate the hypotheses.

Theoretical foundation &hypotheses development

Technology-organisation-environment (TOE) framework

According to Tornatzky & Fleischer (1990), there are three context groups identified by the TOE framework: technological, organisational, and environmental. The new technologies that are pertinent to the company as well as the ones that are currently in use are both described in the technological context. Subsequently, the scope, scale and characteristics of an organisation are considered aspects of the organisational context. The environment, in which a company operates, including its industry, rivals, and interactions with the government, comes under the environmental context. According to Tsou et al. (2015) the TOE framework offers a helpful analytical framework that can be utilised to analyse the acceptance of various ICT innovations, like social media. Moreover, the diffusion of innovation theory and the TOE framework are compatible, while the TOE framework adds a new element: the environmental context. This makes a much better explanation of the intra-firm innovation uptake. Because of this, the TOE framework is thought to be a more comprehensive paradigm to examine ICT adoption at the corporate level (Oliveira & Martins, 2011), these factors lead to its choice for the present study.

Relative advantage (RT) and social media adoption (SS)

RT is the extent to which a technology component is thought to provide a more notable value for businesses (Rogers, 2003). Additionally, it is projected that social media use will benefit hospitality organisations in a number of ways, such as enhanced customer need analysis, faster task completion, more effective achievement of strategic objectives, improved marketing and advertising, cost savings, and competitive advantage (Gomez-Suarez & Veloso, 2024; Khan & Darzi,2021). Thus, the benefits of SS that are anticipated can raise the likelihood that firms would use it. Moreover, in the hotel and tourism sector, social media provides RT through positive eWOM generation which is triggered by performance expectancy and social influence, which represent the viewpoints of consumers and management (Jan et al., 2023). Thus, considering the preceding debate, we propose the following hypothesis for the current study.

H1: RT has a favourable influence on SS in the hotel sector.

Compatibility (CP) and social media adoption (SS)

CP is the degree to which new technology complies with established business policies and procedures, as well as with demands, procedures, and technologies (Chatterjee & Kar, 2020). Regarding social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, etc., companies can use them without worrying about whether or not they are compatible with their current IT infrastructure because they are easy for any kind of business to implement (Ainin et al., 2015). Using social media platforms also becomes simple with any internet connection, including mobile Internet, as long as it is compatible with the main web browsers. Also, according to Qalati et al. (2021), CP has a favourable impact on businesses' use of social media. The findings of the study conducted by Rashid (2024) suggest that CP have a positive and significant impact on the adoption of social media. Also, CP positively affects perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and attitude towards the behaviour of using hotel concierge apps (Tan et al., 2024). Thus, considering the above results, we propose the following hypothesis for the present study.

H2: CP has a favourable influence on SS in the hotel sector.

Visibility (VI) and social media adoption (SS)

Yang & Kent (2014) define VI as an individual or organization's public appearance in the media. Social media is an evolving ecosystem with a wide range of users and a particular kind of technology whose main purpose is to maximise VI through links, postings, videos, reels, E-WOM, posts, comments, and tags. According to Dahnil (2021), there is a strong correlation between an organization's SS and VI. Stankov et al. (2010) state that hospitality companies can take advantage of user-generated material (WOM) to the fullest extent if they are engaged on social media. Moreover, the increasing prominence of social media influencers, who market businesses and enhance visibility with customised content on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, X (Twitter), and YouTube, is indicative of a change in the dynamics of marketing. Customers find their engaging style

appealing, and it also has a big impact on what they decide to buy (Joshi et al., 2024). In light of the foregoing debate, we thus propose the following hypothesis for the current study.

H3: VI has a favourable influence on SS in the hotel sector.

Top management support (TM) and social media adoption (SS)

Grover & Goslar (1993) define TM as the degree of upper management support given to an innovative technology adoption. Research on businesses implementing information technology (IT) has mostly concentrated on the backing of upper management (Li & Wang, 2018). It is evident from reading the literature on IT adoption that organisation's decision to adopt new technologies is heavily influenced by the backing of upper management. Its significance for effectively implementing technology has been established by several academicians (Abed, 2020). Top management support has a significant impact on how social media is used by the Greek hospitality industry, according to Pateli et al. (2020). Also, according to Shi et al. (2024), management support is essential for enterprise social media adoption among hospitality employees. We therefore suggest the following hypothesis for the present study in light of the discussion above.

H4: TM has a favourable influence on SS in the hotel sector.

Innovativeness (IV) and social media adoption (SS)

According to Adebayo (2015), innovation is the search for uniqueness, technological leadership, creativity, experimentation, and other attributes in products and procedures. According to Shaltoni (2017), organisational innovativeness has a significant effect on how social media is used. Furthermore, the ability of organisations, especially those in the service industry, to satisfy their customers is the primary determinant of their success. Therefore, in order to give customers the best possible service, businesses need to search for cutting-edge business strategies, such as leveraging social media platforms for commercial objectives. Moreover, in the hotel sector, the most significant innovations are usually of a technological or structural nature, and they might be gradual, radical, or improvement-oriented (DaSilva et al., 2024). In summary, according to Da Silva et al.(2024), innovation has the potential to improve efficiency and competitiveness in the tourism industry by providing solutions to challenges. In light of the above discussion, we thus propose the following hypothesis for the current study.

H5: IV has a favourable influence on SS in the hotel sector.

Customer pressure (CU) and social media adoption (SS)

CU is the extent to which a company's customers who have embraced an innovation—like social media—put pressure on the business to adopt the same (Dahnil, 2021). According to Ndekwa & Katunzi (2016), social media sites like Facebook are useful in the travel and hospitality sectors when communications and advertising need to reach clients worldwide, because these clients use Facebook and blogs to request travel-related information. Also, Leung et al. (2015) state that in order to stay competitive in the business sector, one must now match client expectations due to the increased level of competition. Therefore, it is believed that customer expectations and demand are the driving force behind the adoption of ICT like social media by hospitality organisations. Moreover, Amoah et al. (2023) claim that in emerging economies, CU has a beneficial impact on the SS by small and medium-sized businesses (tourism, manufacturing, and microfinance firms). Thus, keeping in line with the above discussion, we propose that the current study look into the following hypothesis.

H5: CU has a favourable influence on SS in the hotel sector.

Competitive pressure (CO) and social media adoption (SS)

CO is the degree of pressure that an organisation faces from rivals in a market or industry (Qalati et al., 2021). Businesses in the same industry are usually motivated to adopt new technologies by pressure from competitors (Dahnil, 2021).According to Ezzaouiaa &Bulchand-Gidumal (2020), competitive pressure has a significant impact on hotels' use of IT. According to Sainaghi et al. (2017), hotels are motivated to integrate cutting-edge technology and creative ideas into their operations in order to stay competitive in the market, due to external factors including pressure from competitors. Woo et al. (2024) state that small company practitioners' views of external pressure and the benefits of using social media have been significantly positively correlated over time. This has affected the practitioners' intent to use social media and establish trust in the platform. Considering the discussion above, we suggest the following hypothesis for the current study.

H6: CO has a favourable influence on SS in the hotel sector.

Social media adoption (SS) and performance of hotel sector (PR)

As one of the latest ICTs, Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that builds on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content". Dahnil (2021) defines performance as the organization's capacity to use social media to achieve management objectives in business practice and their realised outputs by the conclusion of a specific time frame. Few studies examined the potential benefits of social media for improving business performance in the hospitality industry (Zhang et al., 2017). Businesses gain from it in the areas of marketing, customer relationship management and information accessibility. Another benefit of social media for enhancing business performance is its ability to be transformed into a booking channel for hospitality enterprises

(Harrigan et al., 2017). Ibrahim et al. (2021) found that social media marketing initiatives for coffee shops in Northern Cyprus have an impact on the following metrics: brand loyalty, brand trust, and intention to revisit. According to Zoubi & Al-Harazneh (2021), SS has a favourable effect on consumers' loyalty to Jordanian hotels. Yost et al. (2021) claim that highly engaged social media posts boost business performance in the hospitality industry by increasing sales. Qing et al. (2024) discovered that social media communications, in particular company-generated content and consumer-generated content, have a favourable impact on perceived brand authenticity in the luxury hotel sector. Additionally, customer-generated content and perceived brand authenticity had a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. In keeping with the foregoing debate, the following hypothesis is put up for empirical analysis for the current study.

H8: SS has a favourable influence on the PR.

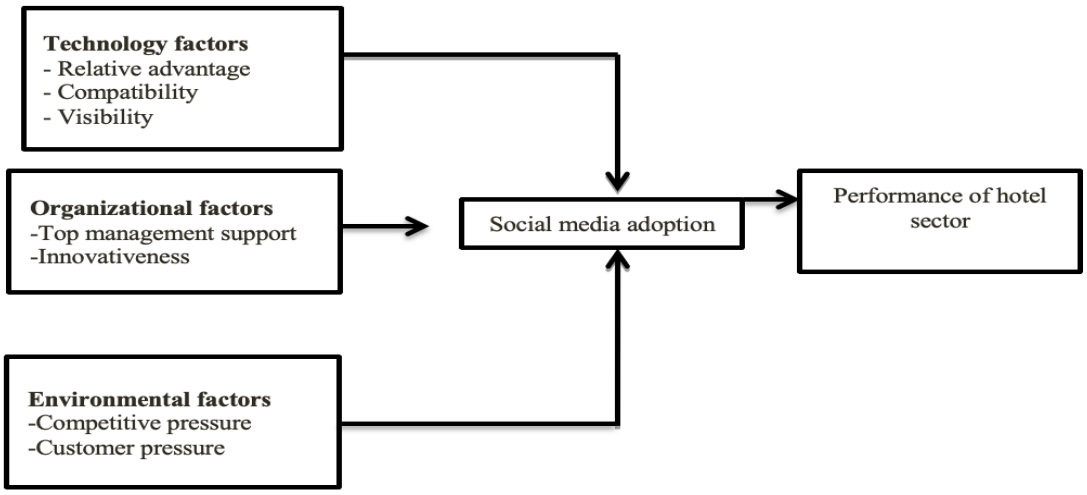

Figure 1. Research model

Research methods

The present study uses a single cross-sectional design and a simple random sample technique. The population list was sourced from the Department of Tourism records of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh. To gather the responses using a survey questionnaire, a 7-point Likert scale with the following categories: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Somewhat Disagree (3), Neither Agree Nor Disagree (4), Somewhat Agree (5), Agree (6), and Strongly Agree (7) was used. Modifications were made to the measurement items. The items for each construct and their source are displayed in Table A1. Both offline and online methods were used to disseminate the 750 questionnaires. Among all the participants, 448 provided beneficial responses for the data analysis. The Harman single-factor test was used to assess common method bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003), and the variation explained by a single component was less than 50%, indicating that there is no evidence of bias in the replies. As the study uses both reflective and higher-order formative constructs, measurement and structural models were assessed using the partial least squares structural equation model (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS4 (Ringle et al., 2023). Table 1 shows that male respondents made up 278 (62.05%) of the sample total of 448, while female respondents made up 170 (37.94%). Top managers/general managers/owners/CEOs make up the bulk of responders (45.98%), followed by managers (44.19%), senior managers (6.91%), and senior executives (2.90%).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

Gender	Male	278	62.05%
	Female	170	37.94%
Current position in the firm	Manager	198	44.19%
	Senior manager	31	6.91%
	Top manager/General manager/owner/CEO	206	45.98%
	Others(Senior Executives)	13	2.90%

Data analysis

Assessment of the measurement model

The assessment criteria for reflective models are applied to the measurement model in this study, with the exception of the second-order construct SS, which will be assessed using the standards for formative measurement models. The outer loadings of the indicator have to exceed 0.708 (Hair et al., 2013). The majority of the indicators have outer loadings greater than the 0.708 criterion (see Figure 2). Only one indicator had loadings that were less than 0.708, and was kept in the study since its removal had no effect on either composite reliability or average variance extracted (AVE). Table 2reports the composite reliability and AVE values. Construct reliability and convergent validity are obtained, according to the results, which indicate that the values of the composite reliability are greater than 0.6 and AVE is greater than 0.5 for each reflective construct. Discriminant validity is the next evaluation criterion. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the constructs' square root of AVE should be greater than the values for inter-construct correlation. Discriminant validity is supported by this (see Table 3).

The Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio is another criterion for proving discriminant validity. Henseler et al. (2015) suggest a threshold value of 0.85 for structural models that have dissimilar constructs and a threshold value of 0.90 for structural models with constructs that are conceptually similar. Based on the study findings, discriminant validity is proven since every HTMT value meets the 0.85 threshold (see Table 4). Second-order construct SS is evaluated in the next paragraph.

The SS construct is modelled as a second-order reflective–formative higher order construct(HOC), drawing on previous literature and is assessed as per the disjoint two-stage approach. The lower order constructs(LOCs) of SS were reflectively measured which include social media marketing (SO), customer relationship management (CR) and information accessibility (IN). The disjoint two-stage approach is applied in accordance with Sarstedt et al. (2019) instructions. Only the LOCs of higher-order constructs (HOC) were present in the path model at the first stage (see Figure 1). To analyse them, the reflective measurement criterion was applied. In the second stage (see Figure 3), which involved determining the latent variable scores of the LOCs of HOC, each LOC served as a formative indicator of its corresponding HOC. After that, formative indicator relevance and significance were assessed, together with VIF values, as advised by Haier et al. (2011). The VIF values of all the LOCs (SO=1.014, CR=1.012, and IN=1.013), which make up the indicators of their HOC at the second stage were less than 3 showing no issues of multi-collinearity. Furthermore, it was found that the outer weights of all the formative indicators were significant *(SO -> SS t-statistics=8.808; p-values=0.000, CR -> SS t-statistics=15.775; p-values=0.000, IN -> SS t-statistics=12.760; p-values=0.000)*, offering empirical support for the indicators. Thus, the results show that while the dimensions of SS, which include SO, CR and IN, are of first-order reflective constructs, SS itself constitutes the second-order reflecting-formative construct.

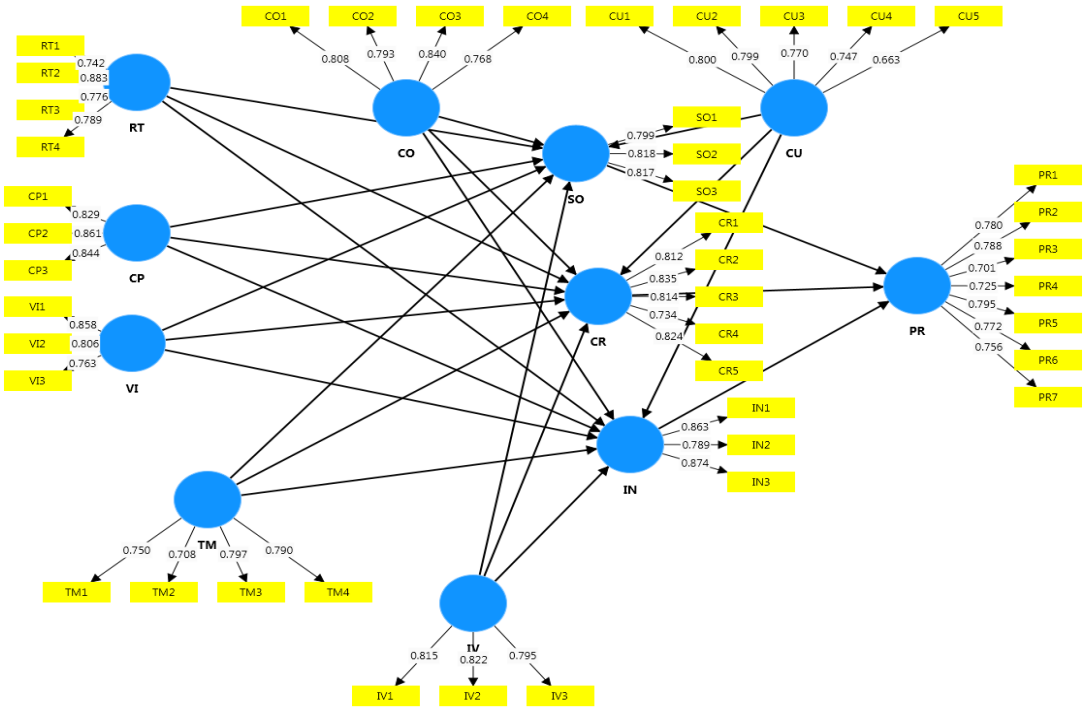

Figure 2. Item loadings

Table 2. Construct validity and reliability

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
CO	0.816	0.818	0.645
CP	0.800	0.803	0.714
CR	0.864	0.870	0.647
CU	0.813	0.820	0.574
IN	0.796	0.803	0.710
IV	0.740	0.741	0.657
PR	0.878	0.878	0.578
RT	0.811	0.830	0.639
SO	0.740	0.740	0.658
TM	0.758	0.763	0.580
VI	0.736	0.734	0.655

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker criterion

	CO	CP	CR	CU	IN	IV	PR	RT	SO	TM	VI
CO	**0.803**										
CP	0.087	**0.845**									
CR	0.297	0.141	**0.805**								
CU	0.355	0.180	0.433	**0.758**							
IN	0.306	0.264	0.078	0.342	**0.843**						
IV	0.255	0.002	0.229	0.325	0.265	**0.811**					
PR	0.354	0.210	0.461	0.361	0.354	0.187	**0.760**				
RT	0.218	0.084	0.295	0.287	0.181	0.131	0.281	**0.799**			
SO	0.257	0.138	0.085	0.262	0.087	0.153	0.372	0.204	**0.811**		
TM	0.322	0.120	0.417	0.333	0.263	0.275	0.310	0.173	0.255	**0.762**	
VI	0.404	0.225	0.383	0.321	0.340	0.211	0.328	0.188	0.162	0.308	**0.810**

Table 4. HTMT ratio

	CO	CP	CR	CU	IN	IV	PR	RT	SO	TM	VI
CO											
CP	0.107										
CR	0.349	0.167									
CU	0.439	0.221	0.507								
IN	0.379	0.329	0.136	0.424							
IV	0.329	0.055	0.281	0.416	0.343						
PR	0.418	0.250	0.527	0.428	0.424	0.232					
RT	0.264	0.105	0.345	0.349	0.228	0.168	0.323				
SO	0.330	0.179	0.111	0.337	0.114	0.207	0.461	0.251			
TM	0.410	0.158	0.506	0.425	0.341	0.369	0.376	0.217	0.339		
VI	0.523	0.294	0.475	0.414	0.441	0.280	0.409	0.244	0.221	0.412	

Assessment of the structural model

Values of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) were examined in order to rule out any multicollinearity problems before the structural model was evaluated. According to Hair et al. (2018)'s recommendation, each VIF value (shown in Table 5) was less than 3. The R2 of endogenous latent values is the primary criterion used to evaluate the structural models. For endogenous latent variables in the inner path model, R2 values of 0.67, 0.33, or 0.19 were deemed substantial, moderate and weak (Chin & Marcoulides, 1998). According to the present study, the endogenous latent variables SS and PR have moderate R2 values of 57.3 and 40.5. According to the path coefficient and t-values, technological factors (RT, CP, VI), organisational factors (TM, IV) and environmental factors (CO, CU)—all have t-values larger than 1.96 and p-values<0.005, thus are all positively correlated with SS, Similarly, PR is significantly impacted by SS with t-values more than 1.96and p-values<0.005. The structural model with R-squared and p-values is displayed in Fig. 2, and Table 6 provides a summary of hypotheses testing.

Table 5. VIF values

CO -> SS	1.347
CP -> SS	1.078
CU -> SS	1.381
IV -> SS	1.187
RT -> SS	1.116
SS -> PR	1.000
TM -> SS	1.252
VI -> SS	1.331

Table 6. Results of hypothesis testing

	Beta values	T statistics	P values
CO -> SS	0.133	2.996	0.003
CP -> SS	0.138	4.423	0.000
CU -> SS	0.272	6.798	0.000
IV -> SS	0.098	2.729	0.006
RT -> SS	0.158	4.359	0.000
SS -> PR	0.637	20.049	0.000
TM -> SS	0.249	6.923	0.000
VI -> SS	0.197	4.758	0.000

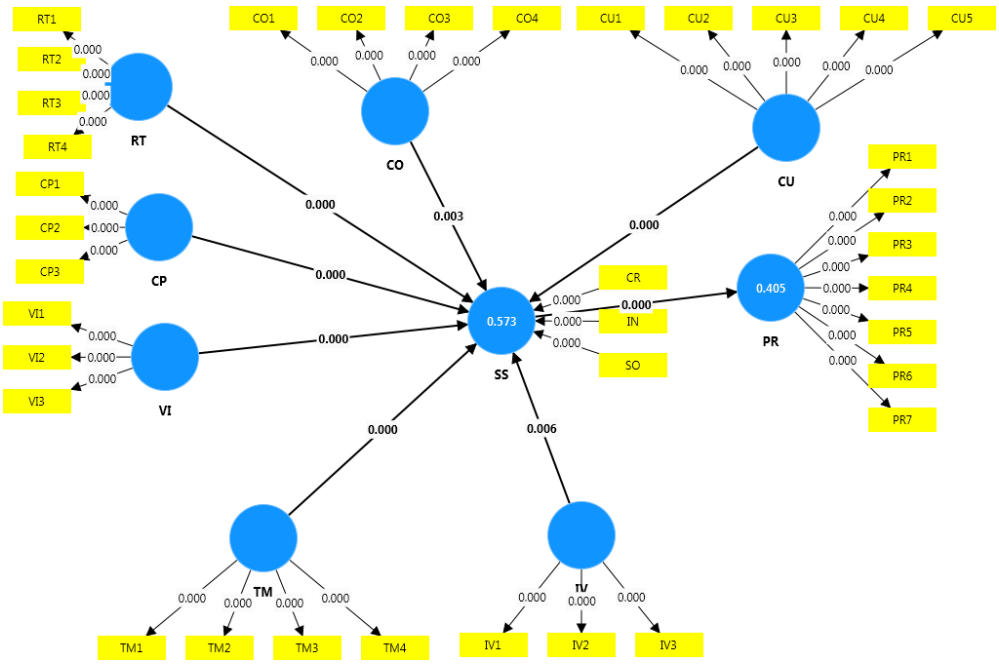

Figure 3. R2 and p values

Discussion

This study offers a comprehensive knowledge of the antecedents of SS and its impact on the PR. Three social media characteristics (RT, CM, and VI) that could persuade hotel businesses to use social media were included in the technological

factors. According to the results, there is a positive correlation ($P < 0.05$) between RT and SS. This could mean that the anticipated advantages of social media influence its adoption in the hotel industry. The RT results align with other studies suggesting that RT plays a significant role in the SS (Pateli et al., 2020; Tajudeen et al., 2018). In a similar vein, it was found that social media CT significantly influences how often organisations can use it in businesses ($P < 0.05$). Users of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter etc can access social media sites by having a basic Internet connection. Moreover, social media is such an easy technology for any organisation to implement, as it is very compatible with the current infrastructure. The CT conclusion is in line with earlier research, which discovered that compatibility plays a big role in how widely social media is adopted (Odoom et al., 2017; Rahman et al., 2020). The study's findings also indicate a strong correlation between SS and VI ($p<0.05$). These findings align with the findings of Pateli et al. (2020) and Qalati et al. (2021). Since almost half of the world population uses social media on a daily basis and spends an average of 2.5 hours on it, enabling businesses to embrace it for advertising, raise the company's profile and build brand awareness. Two organisational traits (TM and IV) were included in the organisational factors that could influence the SS among the hotel firms. The use of social media by the hotel industry has been found to be significantly influenced by the TM ($p<0.05$). This is in line with other studies conducted by Abu-Bakar et al. (2019) and Ahmad et al. (2019), who found that businesses need TM to commit greater resources to social media and that TM has a positive impact on the decision to use social media. The conclusion implies that managers can create an atmosphere that accelerates the adoption of new technologies by highlighting the potential benefits of the latest technologies. The results also show that there is a positive correlation between SS and IV ($p<0.05$). Results back up the claim that creative businesses are more likely to employ e-business since they prioritise investing large resources in creating innovative products and services, and are typically early adopters. These findings are in line with research done by Pateli et al. (2020), who reveal that organisational innovativeness is the main factor influencing SS in Greece's hospitality sector. The results are also congruent with the study of Da Silva et al. (2024), who found that by offering answers to problems, innovation has the potential to increase the tourism industry's competitiveness and efficiency.

Two aspects (CU, CO) of the operating environment of hotel businesses were included in the environmental factors, which could have an impact on their choice to adopt social media.CU results show statistical significance ($p<0.05$), suggesting that this element is important for hotel firms to consider when estimating the SS. These results are consistent with those of Ahmad et al. (2019) and Pateli et al. (2020), who indicate that firms are more likely to implement new technologies in response to customer demand or if their customers already use them. As demonstrated by the data, hotel organisations have a favourable and significant influence of CO on SS ($p<0.05$), which is consistent with research conducted by AlSharji et al. (2018) and Rahman et al. (2020). Companies use a certain technology because they feel compelled to do so in order to remain competitive when other companies in their industry do the same. The results suggest that the hotel business in J&K is affected by these phenomena on a large scale, which is why the pressure of industry competitiveness has led them to take positive steps towards embracing social media. The study findings indicate a significant positive correlation between SS and the PR ($p<0.05$), which is consistent with research done by Seow et al. (2021) and Spita et al. (2020). This suggests that SS in terms of SO, CR, and IN has a significant impact on the hotel sector's performance with respect to growing market share, sales, profitability, and customer satisfaction, as well as improved internal communication and customer loyalty. The use of social media as a marketing strategy by hotel organisations to get recommendations (word-of-mouth via likes, shares, and followers on various social media platforms like Facebook) may be responsible for the relevance of the study's findings. Furthermore, social media's interactive features and application as a CR platform might have added to the study's findings' importance. These characteristics facilitate bidirectional communication between companies and their clientele, empowering the hotel enterprises to carry out customer support operations, establish enduring connections, and enhance communication with their clientele. The importance of the study's conclusions may also be attributed to the commercial adoption of social media, which provides hotel businesses with access to general, consumer, and competitor data. They can understand the customer's preferences, needs, expectations, and concerns once they have access to such data.

Theoretical contributions

The current study adds three important new and novel insights to the current theoretical understanding of the subject: the first two contribute to the improvement and contextualisation of the TOE model. In contrast, the third contributes to the expanding body of knowledge in academia about ICT, particularly with reference to the hotel sector's perspective of SS. The present study looked into a number of variables to determine how they are related to SS. The majority of earlier research that used TOE framework employed only broad technological characteristics. This study examined the relationships between social media-specific factors (RT, CP, and VI). Comparably, earlier research on organisational contexts employed descriptive metrics such as the firm's size, scope, and centralisation, etc. This study examined the effect of TM and IV on technology adoption as opposed to the descriptive metrics. To improve the TOE framework and make it more suitable for use in the study of social media technologies and upcoming new technologies that enable businesses to become highly competitive and customer-centric, CO and CU were included in the current study from the environmental context, in addition to the commonly used factors. Prior studies have indicated that system utilisation can be assessed through a system-centred approach, assessing the tasks for which the information system (IS) is employed. Nonetheless, the majority of IS studies just consider frequency and length of use when measuring system usage. Merely quantifying the duration of system utilisation fails to fully encapsulate the correlation between system usage and the attainment of anticipated outcomes. As a result, the adoption of social media in this study was measured according to its multiple uses, which include SO, CR and IN. The influence of SS on PR is also explicitly identified and categorised in the current study, with specific examples including increased customer loyalty, improved service quality, increased market share, increased client satisfaction, increased revenue, more profitability, and improved internal

communication. All things considered, this study also confirms and strengthens the value of the TOE model as a general theory to understand the use of technology such as social media in the hotel sector.

Practical implications

The majority of organisations are unsure about SS due to the ongoing discussion regarding its advantages and disadvantages. This study offers a thorough understanding of the enabling factors for managers and decision-makers to recognise social media's true significance. It makes it easier for them to comprehend how, as the study suggests, appropriate and efficient use of social media would enhance the performance of the hotel firms in a number of areas. As an illustration, the study's conclusion demonstrates that social media benefits hotel businesses in the following ways: it boosts internal communication, revenue, profitability, market share, client satisfaction, and consumer loyalty. Lastly, social media has improved the availability of information on clients and rivals. The study's evidence of social media's advantages encourages senior management to offer early and ongoing support for SS in hotel businesses. Decision-makers can focus on the crucial elements that are positively correlated with SS because they have a better grasp of the antecedents of SS. Additionally, this paper details the different uses of social media that might be fruitfully implemented. Hotel businesses are able to comprehend the different ways that social media may be used to enhance their performance and select the ones that work best for them.

Limitations and future directions

Due to time and budgetary constraints, this study focused on the J&K region's hotel firms, which may not be representative of India's broader hotel market. In the future, research can be conducted in more states across the nation. Also, it is recommended that future studies look closely at the ways in which particular social media platforms are used in hotels or in different hospitality firms. Moreover, future research can examine mediating variables like innovation and marketing capabilities in addition to other antecedent elements like cost effectiveness, management style, government regulations, etc. Furthermore, a longitudinal strategy rather than a cross-sectional design may be used in subsequent research.

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