

Entrepreneurs and social media: a personality-driven deep dive

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Abstract

Purpose – This study investigates the influence of entrepreneurs' personality traits on their likelihood of adopting social media as a strategic marketing tool. Given social media's growing significance in shaping individual and organizational behaviour, this research aims to uncover the psychological determinants that drive its adoption within entrepreneurial contexts.

Design/methodology/approach – A qualitative research design was employed using semi-structured interviews with 10 entrepreneurs. The data were analysed thematically through NVivo software. The analysis explored how the big five personality traits (openness, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and neuroticism) along with core entrepreneurial characteristics, influence entrepreneurs' perceptions and utilization of social media platforms.

Findings – The findings reveal that both personality dimensions and entrepreneurial traits significantly shape entrepreneurs' perceptions of social media and their willingness to integrate it into business strategies. Perceived innovation characteristics of social media emerge as key mediators linking individual traits to adoption intentions. Entrepreneurial traits positively influence innovation perceptions, while all Big Five traits except neuroticism show significant effects.

Practical implications – Insights from this study can help policymakers, incubators and digital training programs tailor interventions that align with entrepreneurs' psychological profiles to foster social media adoption.

Originality/value – This research extends existing knowledge by integrating personality, innovation adoption theory and entrepreneurship. It highlights the nuanced mechanisms through which individual differences drive digital adoption behaviour among entrepreneurs.

Keywords Social media, Personality traits, Entrepreneurs, NVIVO

Paper type Conceptual paper

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Introduction

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant term in modern discussions, indicating the swift transformation of the global job market. The traditional view of entrepreneurship frequently emphasizes resources, expertise, and knowledge (Jardim, 2021). Recent research (Bayero & Adeiza, 2021; Hachana, Berraies, & Ftiti, 2018; Shimoli, Cai, Abbas Naqvi, & Lang, 2020) has highlighted the role of personality traits in entrepreneurial success. They found that extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and emotional stability are important indicators of entrepreneurial behaviour and performance. Researchers identified that the interaction between traits of entrepreneurial behaviour impacts the formulation of strategy in business and decision-making (Chatterjee & Das, 2015). One important choice that managers must make while managing a business is whether to use social media for the company (Zafar et al., 2017; Jagongo, 2019). Social media has proliferated in the business world, and as many as 77% of small businesses are using it to connect with customers globally (Wong & Jain,

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2024). Several studies (Ahmad, Abu Bakar, & Ahmad, 2019; Olanrewaju, Hossain, Whiteside, & Mercieca, 2020; Alam, Eryanto, & Fadillah, 2023; Tarambiwa Mataruka, Muzurura, & Mataruka, 2023) have examined the need for social media adoption in entrepreneurship. The business world is hyper-connected, and social media has grown into a vital way for entrepreneurs to communicate, market, and create customer engagement. On the other hand, if entrepreneurs do not utilize social media, they are at a disadvantage in terms of competitiveness and utilizing the market reach.

As social media platforms develop further to become significant in the business world, entrepreneurs' usage patterns of social media are influenced by their personality traits (Lampropoulos *et al.*, 2022a, b). Lampropoulos *et al.* (2022a, b) found in a study that extroverts might utilize social media platforms to connect with others and promote their brand. They also found that introverts show moderation in their participation on social media platforms. Therefore, entrepreneurs must know how to use personality traits as tools for success in the hyper-connected business world. In this context, various existing research studies (Ahmad *et al.*, 2019; Olanrewaju *et al.*, 2020; Alam *et al.*, 2023; Tarambiwa Mataruka *et al.*, 2023) have identified broad personality traits as an influential factor in entrepreneurship. However, there is a limited understanding of how these traits specifically impact social media adoption. These include the determinants of usage, frequency, interaction style, and content generation (Aroean, Dousios, & Michaelidou, 2019; Barrera & Villarroel, 2022).

Social media enables real-time communication and interaction among users, fostering collaboration and engagement (Kaplan, & Haenlein, 2010). Additionally, social media is widely accessible across devices and locations, making it an integral part of daily life for billions of users, which influences user behaviour, engagement, and psychological dynamics. Therefore, this study aims to address the critical gap in understanding how the amalgamation of entrepreneurial and individual personality traits influences the adoption of social media among entrepreneurs by employing a qualitative research design that includes structured, in-depth interviews with entrepreneurs in India. Considering the strategic importance of social media among entrepreneurs, the research question examined in this study is, “*How do entrepreneurial and individual personality traits influence the adoption of social media among entrepreneurs?*” To answer this research question, the researcher assesses entrepreneurs' perceptions and experiences with social media by emphasizing the role of perceived innovation characteristics of social media and personality traits.

Review of literature

The synthesis of entrepreneurial personality and social media adoption

Entrepreneurs' personality traits are widely recognized as influential determinants of business decisions and outcomes. The Big Five personality model—comprising openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism—provides a robust framework for understanding these traits (Kerr, Kerr, & Xu, 2018; Antoncic, Bratkovic kregar, Singh, & Denoble, 2015; Şahin, Karadağ, & Tuncer, 2019). Conscientiousness enables entrepreneurs to be organized, dependable, and detail-oriented, which are essential for planning and executing business strategies (Kerr *et al.*, 2018). Extraversion is associated with strong social skills and networking abilities, allowing entrepreneurs to build teams and establish connections with stakeholders (Setia, 2018; Kerr *et al.*, 2018). Openness to experience fosters innovation and adaptability, encouraging entrepreneurs to seek new opportunities and adjust to market changes (Kerr *et al.*, 2018). Agreeableness supports cooperation and empathy, facilitating teamwork and collaboration (Setia, 2018). Neuroticism, while often linked to negative emotional responses such as anxiety and depression, can heighten self-awareness in some contexts; however, high neuroticism generally correlates with lower entrepreneurial intention and resilience (Kristanto & Pratama, 2020).

The field of personality is characterized by a remarkable diversity of concepts, theories, and measurement approaches, reflecting the complexity of individual differences in cognition,

emotion, and behaviour. This gap is especially pronounced when considering the relationship between entrepreneurial personality and social media adoption, as little research has systematically explored how entrepreneurial traits interact with digital platforms.

Beyond the Big Five, entrepreneurs' propensity to utilize social media is shaped by both personality traits and contextual factors. Social media platforms offer significant advantages, including cost-effective value creation, enhanced communication, and improved marketing strategies (Olanrewaju, Whiteside, Hossain, & Mercieca, 2020; Bansal & Saini, 2022). These platforms enable entrepreneurs to identify opportunities, network with peers and mentors, and foster knowledge sharing and collaboration (Adenola, 2019; Olanrewaju *et al.*, 2020). Empirical studies indicate that social media adoption can accelerate business growth, increase brand visibility, and promote innovation through customer engagement and co-creation (Nilasari, Jasar, & Sri Wahyudi, 2019; Nayana, 2019; Manurung, Dalimunthe, & Lumbanraja, 2024). Two-way communication facilitated by social media allows entrepreneurs to gather feedback, address customer concerns, and build strong relationships with their target audience (Martín Rojas, García Morales, & Bolívar Ramos, 2020; Secundo, Del Vecchio, & Mele, 2021).

Perceived innovation characteristics of social media such as relative advantage, compatibility, ease of use, and observability play a critical mediating role in technology adoption (Lim, 2016; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Zolkepli & Kamarulzaman, 2015). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) posits that perceived usefulness and ease of use are key drivers of social media adoption among entrepreneurs (Davis, 1989; Alismaiel, Al Rahmi, & Alismaiel, 2022). Social media's intuitive interfaces and real-time interactions make it accessible and attractive for business use, even for those with limited technical expertise (Zolkepli & Kamarulzaman, 2015; Kitchen & Panopoulos, 2010). The outcomes of social media usage, such as increased engagement, viral content, and business growth, are highly visible, encouraging entrepreneurs to experiment with innovative strategies (Zolkepli & Kamarulzaman, 2015).

Despite the growing body of research on entrepreneurial personality and social media adoption, several critical gaps remain. First, most studies have focused on developed countries, with limited attention to the contextual challenges and opportunities faced by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries such as India (Ahmad *et al.*, 2019; Dewan & Kraemer, 2000). Second, there is a paucity of research examining how perceived innovation characteristics of social media mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial personality traits and actual adoption behaviour (Zolkepli & Kamarulzaman, 2015; Olanrewaju *et al.*, 2020). Third, not enough research has looked at how specific traits of entrepreneurs, like taking risks, being adaptable, and being resilient, affect their use of social media and how well their businesses perform in changing environments.

Given these gaps, the present research seeks to address the following question: What are all the dimensions of personality that are related to social media adoption among entrepreneurs? The objective is to identify and examine the full spectrum of personality constructs relevant to social media use, employing a qualitative methodology to allow for a comprehensive and nuanced exploration. Qualitative methods are especially suitable for this study because they allow for a deep look into people's experiences, motivations, and behaviours, showing connections between personality traits and social media use that might not be clear with just numbers. By using this method, the study seeks not just the clear connections between personality traits and social media use, but also how different personality-related factors interact with this relationship. To address the research question, the study employs a qualitative methodology to explore entrepreneurs' experiences, perceptions, and motivations regarding social media adoption. This approach provides a contextually grounded and nuanced understanding of how personality-related factors interact with perceived innovation characteristics of social media, ultimately shaping entrepreneurs' engagement with digital platforms. Addressing the theoretical gap, Kamboj and Sharma (2023) explored consumer innovativeness and participation intention as psychological drivers of social media adoption.

Their findings emphasize that personality traits such as openness, curiosity, and risk-taking serve as core antecedents of digital participation. Extending their perspective to the entrepreneurial domain, it is likely that entrepreneurs' personality-driven dispositions shape not only their decision to adopt social media, but also the extent and depth of their engagement with these platforms.

Complementing this, [Becker, Escos Barragan, Huge sive Huwe, Ernst, and Strina \(2023\)](#) examined the interplay between entrepreneurial personality, startup innovativeness, and technology adoption. Their research found that entrepreneurial traits (innovativeness, proactiveness, resilience) positively affect startup innovativeness, and that this relationship is mediated by technology adoption. This finding lends strong empirical support to the present study's conceptual framework, which posits that Perceived Innovation Characteristics of social media (PICSM) mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial and personality traits and social media adoption.

Together, these studies ([Troise, Dana, Tani, & Lee, 2021](#); [Kamboj & Sharma, 2023](#); [Becker et al., 2023](#)) substantiate the argument that social media adoption, while technological in nature, is fundamentally personality-driven. The integration of entrepreneurial psychology with digital adoption theories enables a more holistic understanding of how individual traits translate into strategic behaviour within digital ecosystems.

Research methodology

Research design

In the study, explorative qualitative analysis is undertaken to answer the primary research question, which is to examine the impact of personality and entrepreneurial traits on the entrepreneurs' willingness to adopt social media. The data is collected using the qualitative method of semi-structured interviews to facilitate the investigation. This approach presents participants a controlled timeframe to articulate their perspective on the usage of social media by entrepreneurs while allowing the researcher to gain an understanding of the phenomenon rather than verify pre-phenomenon knowledge ([Shah, Dhir, Joshi, & Tripathy, 2023](#)).

Sample and data collection

Based on the knowledge gained from the literature review, 10 business owners from across India were chosen using purposive sampling. According to [Bekele and Ago \(2022\)](#), a sample size of 10 to 20 key research participants is sufficient to cover any major issues of a study. [Hennink and Kaiser \(2022\)](#) suggest that a sample size of 9–14 participants is ideal for interviews, as beyond this, the study may not gain any new insights. The researcher also ensured data triangulation by including interviewees from different industries, backgrounds, and modes of conducting business. These business owners were contacted using social media sites like LinkedIn and Facebook that facilitate professional networking. The researcher conducted interviews with a representative cross-section of the population, and [Table 1](#) below displays the participant profile. The criteria for the sample are outlined below. The sample was the inclusion of entrepreneurs who had experience of at least 3 years as an entrepreneur and had knowledge about social media and experience with using different social media platforms of at least 1 year.

[Table 1](#) indicates that the respondents come from various industries, including healthcare, manufacturing, trading, kitchenware, and services. Additionally, the respondents were asked about their mode of business operation: 40% operated offline, 30% online, and the remaining 30% had both online and offline operations. About the proportion of each mode, the online operation ranges from 10% to 100%, while the offline operation ranges from 0% to 90%. The offline operation ranges from 0% to 90%, while the online operation ranges from 10% to 100%. Seventy percent of entrepreneurs used an online mode of payment, while thirty percent preferred cash on delivery (COD). Lastly, the respondents believe that online payment methods are not risky to use.

Table 1. Descriptive profile of the respondents

Participant	Product nature	Business operations	Online proportion	Offline proportion	Payment method	Payment method risky
P1	Healthcare	Online	90%	10%	COD	No
P2	Manufacturing	Offline	10%	90%	COD	No
P3	Product trading	Both	30%	70%	Online	No
P4	Services	Both	30%	70%	Online	No
P5	Services	Both	30%	70%	COD	No
P6	Manufacturing	Offline	15%	85%	Online	No
P7	Healthcare	Offline	10–15%	85–90%	Online	No
P8	Software	Online	100%	0%	Online	No
P9	Product trading	Online	100%	0%	Online	No
P10	Kitchenware product manufacturer and trader	Offline	10%	90%	Online	No

Source(s): Authors' own creation

The researcher made initial contact using phone and email. The participants were contacted with the project proposal, interview protocols, and consent form that outlined the goals of the study. The researcher conducted each interview in English over a period of 30 to 60 minutes. The interview schedule included pre-specified categories of questions designed to help identify the participants' motivation and willingness to adopt social media in their entrepreneurial ventures. We coded the demographic profile of the interview participants to protect their anonymity and the confidentiality of the collected data. We rigorously assessed the inter-rater agreement using Cohen's Kappa coefficient to ensure the reliability and validity of the coding process. The ratings from raters were organized into a contingency table, revealing agreement on 15 out of 16 variables, resulting in a high observed agreement of 93.75%. The probability of chance agreement, calculated based on each rater's rating distribution, was approximately 73.44%. Using these numbers, Cohen's Kappa coefficient was found to be 0.77, showing that there was a strong agreement among raters and confirming that the classification process was very consistent and trustworthy, with ratings probably not just happening by chance (Schober, Mascha, & Vetter, 2021; Landis & Koch, 1977; McHugh, 2012). This high level of inter-rater reliability enhances the credibility of the collected data. In addition to reliability, validity was assessed using face validation. This involved expert review and stakeholder feedback to ensure that the identified themes accurately reflected the data and were contextually appropriate. Themes were cross-checked against the raw data to confirm their coherence and intuitive accuracy. The face validation process demonstrated that all categories were relevant and logically aligned with participants' experiences, further supporting the trustworthiness and analytical soundness of the study.

Data analysis

First, the audio files were analysed. We then analysed the audio files using grounded theory principles, which facilitated a deeper analysis of key ideas and concepts (Watling, Cristancho, Wright, & Varpio, 2017). This procedure enabled the derivation of codes categorized thematically. We used the NVIVO qualitative data software for transcript analysis. Utilized items were identified using open coding, first-order constructs using axial coding, and second-order constructs using selective coding. The initial coding phase involved closely examining and analyzing all transcripts to generate open codes for detailed understanding. This stage was followed by line-by-line coding to systematically categorize the data. In the subsequent cycle, codes were organized into groups. Careful consideration was given to the specific social media-related content, which was a focal point in many of the interviews. Table 2 presents the

Table 2. Themes of entrepreneurial traits

Traits	Category	Sub-themes	Themes
Stress management	Resilience	Entrepreneurship trait	Entrepreneurship trait
Patience			trait
Passionate	Altruism	Agreeableness	Big 5
Desire to work for the forthcoming generation			
Negotiation skills	Negotiation	Entrepreneurship trait	Entrepreneurship trait
Consistency	Consistency	Entrepreneurship trait	
Building brand	Brand building	Entrepreneurship trait	
Dissatisfaction or urge to grow more	Ambition	Entrepreneurship trait	
Adaptability	Flexibility	Openness	Big 5
Idea generation	Idea-generation	Openness	
Creativity	Creativity	Entrepreneurship trait	Entrepreneurship trait
Tech savvy	Technical proficiency	Entrepreneurship trait	
Responsible	Integrity	Conscientiousness and agreeableness	Big 5
Ethical			
Active speaker or communication skills	Interactivity	Extraversion	
Knowledge about customers	Insight	Entrepreneurship trait	Entrepreneurship Trait
Self-efficacy	Self-efficacy	Entrepreneurship trait	
Risk-taking	Risk-taking	Entrepreneurship trait	
Innovativeness	Innovativeness	Entrepreneurship trait	
Openness	Openness	Openness	Big 5
Agreeableness	Agreeableness	Agreeableness	
Extraversion	Extraversion	Extraversion	
Neuroticism	Neuroticism	Neuroticism	
Conscientiousness	Conscientiousness	Conscientiousness	

Source(s): Authors’ own creation

codes. We employed an inductive approach for thematic analysis after coding, which allowed themes to emerge from participants’ real-life experiences.

Results

Entrepreneurship traits

Entrepreneurship traits are defined as the characteristics that contribute to the success of running and starting a business. The presence of entrepreneurship traits in an individual could lead them to adopt social media for improved business performance (Fan *et al.*, 2021).

In the assessment of the 2021 responses, analysis indicates that entrepreneurs exhibiting traits such as risk-taking, creativity, flexibility, strategic decision-making, and technological familiarity are more proactive in adopting social media. Traits like *engagement* and *consistency* further support this, with participants highlighting the importance of regular content posting and sustained interaction to build and maintain their audience base. Participants described this as “bringing new ideas and maintaining” “Bringing efficiency to work is essential for staying connected with clients” (P4). Traits like *tech-savviness* emerged as fundamental, enabling entrepreneurs to utilize multiple platforms effectively for marketing, customer engagement, and brand building. Content adaptability, driven by traits such as creativity and ethics, allows entrepreneurs to respond dynamically to evolving digital environments, maintaining relevance and competitiveness. Participants also emphasized that social trends and digital insights heavily influence decision-making, particularly in terms of understanding customer preferences and market trends. Roughly 80% of respondents reported

that social media substantially affects their marketing strategies and customer relationship management, highlighting its strategic role in business planning. Participants explained that social media provides valuable market intelligence and customer insights, which inform strategic choices. For instance, one participant noted, “Social media acts as a catalyst for attracting new clients, especially younger generations, and helps us establish our online presence” (P7).

Conversely, infrastructural challenges such as inconsistent internet connectivity and content management complexities pose significant risks. Entrepreneurs highlighted the importance of reliable technical infrastructure and clear communication standards to mitigate operational risks, underscoring traits like resilience and adaptability as critical for overcoming these barriers. These findings suggest that entrepreneurs characterized by adaptability, technological proficiency, and strategic orientation are better equipped to leverage social media for sustained growth, whereas those with limited resilience or infrastructural support face barriers to effective engagement.

Big 5 personality traits

The analysis of personality reveals that certain Big Five traits are associated with distinct patterns of social media behaviour. Entrepreneurs *are high in behaviours*. This reflects an individual’s motivation to maintain smooth interpersonal relationships and avoid conflicts (Tobin & Graziano, 2020; Hasanah, Kusmaningtyas, & Riyadi, 2022). Participants emphasized terms such as “connect,” “decision,” and “relations” to highlight the importance of direct customer engagement in building trust and loyalty. Participants cited techniques such as word of mouth and social media tools like LinkedIn. One participant noted, “Yes, being in a project business, you need to understand the business’s requirements in depth” (P2). Many participants noted the challenges in engaging social media influencers, given their business’s niche market or early stages. Participants stated, “No, not currently, but we do realize the importance...we might be doing something like this in the future” (P5), highlighting agreeableness in social media adoption, though its role in perceived innovation was less pronounced. Openness to experience, which is characterized by receptivity and flexibility (Christensen, Cotter, & Silvia, 2018), defines a level of curiosity and creativity. Words such as “creativity,” “introduce,” and “technologies” dominated the discussions among participants, underscoring sub-themes of experimentation and innovation. Significantly, 90% expressed a willingness to experiment, albeit with attitudes ranging from cautiousness to passion. “Yes, we love to test new technology, making changes per market demands” (P3) underscores openness to innovation, influenced by participants’ receptivity to new technologies.

Extraversion, defined by behaviours of sociability and positive emotions (Preissler & Sc, 2021), appeared prevalent among participants. They used platforms like LinkedIn (50%) and WhatsApp (30%) to engage and acquire customers. “Definitely WhatsApp is bringing all the clients to me” (P1) illustrates extraverted entrepreneurs’ preference for social media to enhance visibility and stakeholder engagement, prioritizing professional image building. **Neuroticism** is characterized by negative emotions like anxiety and stress experiences (Milke, 2024; Munjirin, Fajra Pahlevi, Diah Karmiyati, & Nurul Fajri Assakinah, 2023). Participants reported frequent stressful situations, mostly concerning customer expectations and technical challenges. They overcame such hurdles creatively, predominantly while establishing their business. Participants conveyed, “Many times, we face technical glitches... solved with an expert’s help” (P2), illustrating that neurotic entrepreneurs often have less preference for social media due to stress impacts. **Conscientiousness** facilitates goal-oriented behaviour underpinned by impulse control (Sisodia, 2022). Participants used terms like “new,” “repetition,” and “order,” emphasizing a strategy of continuous social media updates and knowledge growth. “Knowledge is never-ending, and social media is continuously updating” (P4) highlights how conscientious entrepreneurs utilize systematic, social media-based strategies for meticulous planning and organizational success.

Overall, traits associated with *extraversion*, *openness*, and *conscientiousness* promote active, innovative, and strategic social media engagement, whereas high levels of *neuroticism* may impede consistent participation, emphasizing the importance of resilience in digital contexts.

Perceived innovation characteristics of social media (PICSM)

Perceived innovation characteristics of social media (PICSM) defines the characteristics that motivate an individual to adopt social media as an innovative tool for communication, marketing, and collaboration. The presence of traits like practicality, risk-taking attitude, experimenting, or initiative results in motivating an individual to innovate (Cahyaningsih, Prasajo, & Usman, 2020). The presence of innovation characteristics among individuals is essential for improving the performance of a business and its productivity (López & Oliver, 2023).

This study examined participants' perspectives on social media adoption, focusing on three sub-themes: platform usage, perceived complexity, and factors affecting adoption. The analysis used recurrent language themes, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and WhatsApp, in participant narratives. The first sub-theme highlights the critical role social media platforms play in reaching a wider audience, with 80% of participants affirming their significance. Most participants recognized the value of platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube in raising awareness, generating leads, and engaging with stakeholders. For instance, P1 noted, "I'm using Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. Instagram is at number one..." These platforms enable businesses to tailor content to meet diverse demographic demands, underscoring their strategic importance in digital engagement.

The complexities mentioned by others included the time investment required for effective strategies, lack of technical knowledge, and the broad array of available platforms. These insights suggest a need for businesses to streamline processes and adopt a proactive attitude toward learning and risk-taking in social media strategy. One participant remarked, "I have been using it for a long time... I don't find it very difficult to operate on social media" (P6).

This sub-theme revealed that reach (39%) and investment (33%) are the primary factors motivating social media adoption. Participants highlighted social media's capacity to connect with large audiences at a low cost as a crucial driver. Additionally, the ease of use and communication benefits were noted as significant motivators. A participant reflected this sentiment, stating, "Social media has the strong capacity to reach people widely with a low cost of investment" (P2).

In conclusion, more entrepreneurs show a preference for adopting social media to navigate evolving business landscapes, but their personality and entrepreneurial traits significantly influence these choices.

Social media adoption

Social media adoption has increasingly become important in organizations and businesses. This becomes even more critical for entrepreneurs by providing them with a means of having more marketing opportunities and cost-effective communication (Pakura & Rudeloff, 2020). Entrepreneurs' adoption of social media enhances consumer purchase intention (Manzoor, Sajjad Ahmad Baig, Muhammad Hashim, & Abdul Sami, 2020). In business terms, the utilization of social media helps enhance brand visibility, drive sales, and engage customers.

Analysis revealed that many participants began leveraging social media after the COVID-19 pandemic, starting around 2020, due to increased consumer reliance on online platforms. As participant P3 noted, "Social media is basically a digital platform to connect with people across the globe and showcase your business. We started using it 3–4 years ago." Similarly, P4 mentioned that this occurred during COVID, approximately 3 years ago. Most participants acknowledged social media's critical future role. They highlighted plans to use it for capturing more customers (40%) and expanding their market reach (50%) due to its potential to connect

with a broader audience. As P6 expressed, “We can say that we will be increasing our social media usage because people are moving more and more toward the technology side.”

Thus, while fewer businesses are now present online, the analysis showed that most people understand the significance of social media and want to capture more markets and attract new customers in the future by adopting social media.

Discussion and conclusion

Although the present study employs a qualitative methodology, the following conceptual framework is developed and shown in Figure 1 to fill this research gap and hypotheses are articulated to guide the analysis. These hypotheses provide a focused lens for interpreting the qualitative findings and a foundation for future empirical studies.

- H1. Openness, conscientiousness, and extraversion in entrepreneurs are positively associated with social media adoption.
- H2. Entrepreneurial traits such as risk-taking, resilience, innovativeness, and consistency enhance the likelihood of adopting social media.
- H3. Perceived innovation characteristics of social media mediate the relationship between personality traits and adoption.
- H4. Higher neuroticism is negatively associated with social media usage among entrepreneurs.

The framework above presents the independent variable of social media usage among entrepreneurs. Different personality traits related to active engagement, i.e. extraversion, openness, and conscientiousness, contribute to affecting social media usage. The main entrepreneurial traits identified in the review are risk-taking, resilience, self-efficacy, innovativeness, creativity, and consistency, which were considered in the study. Additionally,

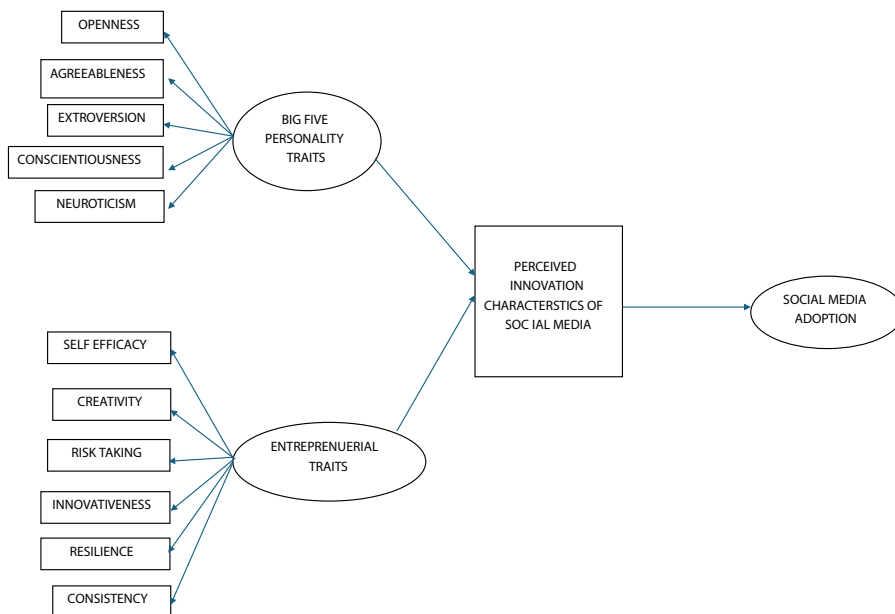


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

perceived characteristics of innovation serve as mediators that enhance entrepreneurs' willingness to adopt social media. The entrepreneur's flexibility and adaptability reflect the trait of openness. This enables them to generate new ideas and make changes in the business to suit the needs of the customers. The researcher also found a link between the trait of extraversion and the entrepreneur's ease of connecting with people. These entrepreneurs locate it easy to convey their messages using social media. The platform also creates a strong online presence. These findings are in line with [Lampropoulos et al. \(2022a, b\)](#) work, wherein the authors found openness and extraversion to be the most significant traits that predict the usage of social media among entrepreneurs. Further, the results of the primary analysis suggest that entrepreneurs with high conscientiousness are methodical in their approach. While adopting social media, these traits help entrepreneurs set clear objectives and make use of performance metrics. Agreeableness among the entrepreneurs was found to be linked with the characteristics of being ethical, responsible, and altruistic. Neuroticism increases stress for entrepreneurs, which discourages them from using social media usage. Conscientiousness and agreeableness help entrepreneurs build trust and credibility with their customers. These also help develop long-term relationships. These findings are in line with [Tarar and Baig's \(2024\)](#) work, wherein they found agreeableness to have a strong positive relationship with social media adoption.

Conclusively, the adoption of social media among entrepreneurs is influenced by their personality and entrepreneurial traits. The traits of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism, and agreeableness play separate roles in shaping how entrepreneurs use social media. It was also found that characteristics of social media of compatibility, complexity, relative advantage, and perceived usefulness act as mediators in the relationship between the adoption of social media among entrepreneurs and their personality traits. Personality traits of entrepreneurs can help them choose suitable social media strategies that align with their business. By using social media to their strengths, entrepreneurs can effectively drive growth and build relationships with customers.

Theoretical implications

The findings of the study broaden the understanding of how the amalgamation of entrepreneurial and individual personality traits of entrepreneurs influences the adoption of social media. [Figure 1](#) presents the theoretical model of the study, illustrating the entrepreneurial and personality traits that influence the adoption of social media. The analysis identified that for driving innovation in business, the traits required are entrepreneurship, openness to experience, and conscientiousness. The study links the traits of openness to new experiences with an innovative and proactive orientation. These entrepreneurs are likely to see social media as a novel opportunity to reach a broader audience. Entrepreneurs with high conscientiousness tend to plan and approach the social media opportunity. These entrepreneurs are more likely to assess their risk tolerance. Entrepreneurs will compare the risks and benefits of using social media and may engage with it based on the potential rewards. The study also discovered a link between extraversion and creativity among entrepreneurs, which enables them to engage more effectively with their customers. They use their connection to build relationships and promote their business. The agreeableness trait helps entrepreneurs to make consistent efforts to build community on social media. Lastly, neuroticism defines the persistence of stress among entrepreneurs, and with the usage of social media, there is the constant need to be connected with clients; thus, more neuroticism's discourages entrepreneurs from using social media. From the customer perspective, entrepreneurs with traits like openness and extraversion are likely to provide more innovative and engaging social media interactions, improving service and responsiveness. By recognizing the role of personality traits in social media adoption, government agencies can tailor training and capacity-building initiatives to help entrepreneurs develop digital competencies, manage online stress, and build effective online communities. Furthermore,

policy interventions such as digital literacy campaigns, incentives for technology adoption, and mental health support can address barriers faced by entrepreneurs with lower digital confidence or higher stress levels. Ultimately, such stakeholder-focused strategies can contribute to a more digitally inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem, drive innovation, and enhance service delivery to the broader public.

Practical implications

Firstly, the study is important for practitioners as it sheds light on how entrepreneurial and personality traits combine to impact the willingness to adopt social media among entrepreneurs. The study will predict how specific traits will impact the level of adoption of social media among entrepreneurs. The data can be used to create targeted training programs. The study also emphasizes the creation of tailored social media strategies that enhance the effectiveness of social media adoption. The findings indicate that key entrepreneurship traits, such as openness to experience and conscientiousness, drive innovation among entrepreneurs; therefore, to promote innovation, efforts should focus on developing these traits in employees. Lastly, the findings can be used to guide policies to support entrepreneurial ventures through appropriate skill development.

Limitations of the study and future directions

While the study provides valuable insight into the adoption of social media by entrepreneurs, firstly, the study has a limitation in terms of sample size, as it concentrates on the analysis of only 10 entrepreneurs. Secondly, the study has attempted to examine the views of entrepreneurs from diverse industries; however, the geographical reach is limited. Thirdly, the data collection tool of the interview may introduce some bias, such as social desirability, making entrepreneurs answer the questions in a favourable light.

Future research can address the limitations of the current study. This includes considering a larger and more geographically diverse sample of entrepreneurs to allow generalization of the findings. In addition, future studies can also take a mixed approach to the research study. The results will allow the researcher to validate the relationship between personality traits and social media adoption among entrepreneurs. Furthermore, an examination of the negative personality traits that may be a barrier for entrepreneurs in the adoption of social media can be conducted in the future.

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