**EXPLORING THE PIVOTAL ROLE OF CULTURE AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DR. K. GOMATHY, M.COM. M.B.A.,  M. PHIL., PH.D., Research Supervisor,  K.M.G College of Arts and Science, Gudiyattam  kgcom1979@gmail.com | C. NITHYA, Ph.D. Research Scholar (F.T), P.G and Research Department of Commerce,  K.M.G College of Arts and Science, Gudiyattam  nithyash17@gmail.com |

1. **ABSTRACT**

In the contemporary globalized landscape, culture and social media have emerged as indispensable catalysts shaping the dynamics of international business. This study embarks on the role of culture and social media in international marketing. Multinational companies operate in different host countries around the world and have to deal with wide variety of economic, political, legal, socio-culture and technological factors. By investigating the symbiotic interdependence between culture and social media, this research illuminates the manifold ways in which they synergistically influence cross-border interactions, market penetration, and brand dissemination. Drawing on an extensive review of literature, the study first delves into the nuanced role of culture in international business. Culture, as a potent matrix of beliefs, values, norms, and traditions, dictates not only consumer behavior but also managerial decision-making and negotiation tactics. Fathoming the intricacies of culture is indispensable for effective international market entry and establishing harmonious stakeholder relationships.

This dynamic digital domain serves as a conduit for branding, marketing, and customer engagement strategies, revolutionizing the way businesses connect with both domestic and international markets. The research then embarks on an analysis of the intersection between culture and social media. Cultural adaptation in social media content and communication strategies becomes crucial for navigating the intricacies of diverse markets. Successful companies adeptly employ localized content, language, and visual cues, resonating with audiences across cultural spectra. Simultaneously, social media serves as a gateway for cross-cultural exchanges, fostering intercultural dialogues and cultivating global awareness.

**Keywords -** Cultural factors, Barriers, Multinational companies, social media, Globalized, Branding, Marketing.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

In the contemporary era of globalization, international business has transcended geographical boundaries, offering unprecedented opportunities for companies to expand their horizons across diverse markets. Amidst this interconnected landscape, the dynamic interplay of culture and social media has emerged as a transformative force, reshaping the very fabric of global commerce. The amalgamation of cultural insights and social media prowess has become an indispensable recipe for success, enabling businesses to navigate the complexities of cross-border interactions with finesse. International business refers to the trade of goods and services, capital, knowledge and technology across borders on a global scale. International business transaction includes contractual agreements that permit foreign firms to utilize services, products and processes from different countries. Transactions also allow for the development and operation of manufacturing, sales distribution facilities and research and development in foreign markets. The shift towards a more integrated and global economy has expanded opportunities across for business in international market. International business may work in accounting, economics, marketing, law, healthcare or information technology. It includes not just international trade in products and services, but also capital, labor, technology, and intellectual property such as patents, trademarks and copyrights.

Culture, as a multifaceted construct, underpins the norms, values, and behaviors of societies, significantly influencing consumer preferences, decision-making processes, and business practices. In the international context, cultural diversity necessitates a profound understanding of local sensibilities to tailor products, services, and marketing strategies effectively. On the other hand, social media platforms have revolutionized communication, connectivity, and information dissemination, transcended physical barriers and fostered an interconnected global community.

This research embarks on an exploratory journey to unravel the pivotal interplay between culture and social media in the realm of international business. By investigating how these two interconnected forces shape and redefine business strategies, market penetration, and brand dissemination, this study seeks to shed light on the critical significance of cultural adaptation in social media communications. Moreover, it delves into the risks posed by cultural missteps and social media blunders, emphasizing the need for a delicate balance between globalization and localization.

**A. Modes of Entry in International Business**

A corporation can enter into international trade in a variety of ways listed below:

1. Export and Importing
2. Direct
3. Indirect
4. Contract manufacturing
5. Licensing
6. Franchising
7. Joint ventures

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **B. Benefits of International Business** | |
| **Benefits to Countries** | **Benefits to Firms** |
| * Foreign Exchange | * Profit Opportunity |
| * Efficient Resource Utilization | * Increase Resource Utilization |
| * Growth possibilities and job opportunity | * Growth Prospects |
| * Improve standard of living | * Decrease Competition |
|  | * Improved Business Vision |

**C. Culture**

According to the definition by House, Javidan et al. (2001, p. 494), culture is defined as shared motives values, beliefs, identities and interpretations or meaning of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations”. In general, culture is considered as the accepted behaviors, customs, and values of a given society (Dlabay and Scott, 2011).

Culture exerts a profound influence on international business, shaping the way companies interact with diverse markets and stakeholders. It impacts consumer preferences, decision-making processes, and business practices. Understanding cultural nuances is essential for effective market entry, product localization, and marketing strategies, as what appeals in one culture may not resonate in another. Moreover, culture shapes negotiation styles and business etiquette, influencing successful collaborations. Companies that embrace cultural diversity and adapt their approaches accordingly can foster trust, build strong relationships, and navigate the challenges of cross-border operations. Cultural sensitivity is, therefore, a fundamental pillar for achieving sustainable success in the complex and interconnected global marketplace.

**D. Social Media**

Social media wields a profound influence on international business, revolutionizing the way companies engage with global audiences. With its pervasive reach, social media enables instant and direct communication, transcending geographical barriers. Businesses can leverage these platforms to build brand awareness, engage with customers, and conduct market research, all on a global scale. Moreover, social media empowers real-time feedback and fosters intercultural dialogues, enabling businesses to adapt offerings to meet diverse market demands. Strategic use of social media facilitates cost-effective marketing, enhances brand loyalty, and enables agile responses to market trends. Embracing social media as a powerful tool can empower businesses to gain a competitive edge in the dynamic and interconnected international arena.

1. **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**
2. **Budzanowska -Drzewieeka (2016)** Culture influences numerous aspects of the international business communication, not only such as business relations, negotiations, international management, but also marketing communication strategies, decisions concerned with the brand or consumer behaviors.
3. **Isabel Cristina Panziera Marques (2023)** Adopting the research concept of socioemotional wealth (SEW) as applied to family firm leaders, this study aims to analyze the literature on succession and corporate governance processes in family firms in keeping with this still developing concept and thereby not only contributing to advancing knowledge on this field but also proposing a conceptual model of analysis and a future research agenda.
4. **Mohammed Hashim Abdulkareem Al-Sharaa, Sanil S. Hishan, (2022)** At cross-cultural transition aims is to increase retention rates and cultural understanding in the workplace by providing exemplary cross-cultural services that are supported by leading research in the field.
5. **Alarcon, M.D.C., Rialp, A. and Rialp, J. (2018)** Outbound knowledge transfer is promoted, as the firm can communicate with its customers regardless of the location. Social media enhances interactivity and allows developing and maintaining relationships across the international market.
6. **Almeida, F. and Santos, J.D. (2020**) Likewise, market intelligence is a relevant element that social media makes more accessible. Social media can greatly advance inbound flows of relevant knowledge for the needs of organizations operating in international environments. However, this is not without limits, because the contents are eventually generated by users of social media, and because the firm therefore cannot well validate the knowledge and information
7. **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**
8. To understand factors and barriers of culture in international business.
9. To understand cultural impact on international business their pros and cons in multinational companies.
10. To focus social media views in international business.
11. Analysis on how cultural and social media inter relate and influence international marketing.
12. **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Data refers to information or facts. Data could be broadly classified as Primary data and

Secondary data. Here we used Secondary data for the study. Secondary Data Collection: The secondary data are those which are already passed through the statistical process. The secondary data was collected from the books published journals and magazines, text boxes, newspapers, internet and report.

In business context, culture relates to what behavior is common and accepted professionally in one location, compared to another. What may be acceptable business practice in one country, may be very different from the approach that is used by business overseas. Culture has an impact on every aspect of the overseas business of multinational companies. Although society and culture are not directly included in business operations, they indirectly appear as key elements in shaping how the business is managed, from what goods are produced, and how and through what means they will be sold, to the establishment of managerial and operational patterns and the determination of the success or failure of foreign subsidiaries. Consequently, multinational companies should aware of predominant attitudes, values and beliefs in each host country were decided to expand their business activities. Differences in attitude and values among management of a parent company and expatriate managers at the subsidiary level, on the one hand, and managers and employees in host countries, on the other, can contribute to serious functional problems (Ajam, cool et al, 2006).

The socio- cultural environment is important for multinational companies. There is various socio- cultural factors that significantly affect the economic activity as well as the performance of multinational companies. The key socio-cultural factors that have a major impact on the operation of the multinational companies are (Trehan and Trehan, 2009);

* Culture
* Language
* Religion
* Level of education
* Customer preference
* The attitude of society towards foreign goods and services.

Socio-cultural factors are beyond the control of the managers of a foreign subsidiary. Consequently, in order to evaluate the actual performance of its foreign subsidiary, a multinational company should anticipate the impact of all socio -cultural factors that are beyond the control of the subsidiary’s managers (Drury, 2012).

1. **Culture**

One of the core cultural issues in international business is the failure of organization to understand local business customs. Ignorance of how to conduct business in a foreign country without considering cultural, political and economic influences is a significant roadblock in international trade.

Many components can be considered as elements of culture. These elements arise and are related to the beliefs and behavior of people. Form multinational companies’ perspective, a culture of every foreign country through its elements affects their business activities. The main elements of culture that may have an impact on the operation of multinational companies are (Vasudeva, 2007);

* **Attitude and beliefs**: In every host country, there are norms of behavior based on attitude and beliefs that constitute a part of its culture, The attitudes and beliefs vary from country to country. Multinational influences all aspects of human behavior, providing organization and directions to a society and its individuals. Identifying the difference in attitudes and beliefs among various countries helps the multinational managers more easily understand people’s behavior.
* **Attitude towards time:** It refers to people’s behavior about punctuality, responses to business communication, responses to deadlines and the amount of time that they spent waiting for an appointment. For instance, Americans are known to be punctual and the phrase *time is money* exactly explains their attitude towards time. In contrast people from other countries may show more flexibility towards time. Analogically multinationals operating in various countries should take into consideration these differences in attitude towards time.
* **Attitude towards work and leisure**: These are differences in attitude towards work and leisure among various countries. In some countries people work much more hours than is necessary to satisfy their basic needs of living. The attitude is indicative of their views towards wealth and material gain.
* **Attitude toward achievement:** Cultural diversity in the general attitudes towards work is related to people's achievement motivation.
* **Attitude toward change:** Multinational companies should anticipate a difference in attitudes toward change between separate countries. They should take into consideration some key cultural issues, such what aspects of a culture resist change, how the process of change takes place in different foreign countries, how the areas of resistance differ among them, and how long it takes time for implementing same change;
* **Attitude toward job:** The importance of certain profession in country significantly determinate a number and quality of people who want and seek to join that profession. Consequently, if the business is considered as a prestigious occupation in some country, multinational companies will have at their disposal broader pool of local professionals. The influence of culture on the operation of multinational companies is real and widespread. Multinational companies are affected by more than one culture at a time. Through their subsidiaries located in various countries, they are exposed to different national cultures. Consequently, a certain multinational company builds its corporate culture based on the cultural differences that exist among the countries where it operates. Therefore, it is very important for multinational companies to adapt their production, marketing, and sales activities depending on the culture of the given country. Culture in particular country directly, or indirectly, reflect on the achieved performance of multinational companies. However, cultural differences among various national countries are often quite challenging for multinational managers. In order to carry out many managerial tasks successfully, it is very significant for them to acquire a cross-cultural proficiency. In addition to that, multinational managers should be also proficient in (Cavusgil, Knight et al, 2008):
* Communicating and cooperating with business partners in host countries;
* Cooperating with national institutions in host countries;
* Selecting appropriate distributors and partners in host countries;
* Connecting with customers in host countries;
* Negotiating international alliances;
* Developing products and services in host countries;
* Preparing relevant promotional and advertising materials for each host county separately.

On the basis of results obtained from various surveys, it can be concluded that successful multinational companies develop acceptance and understanding of cultural diversity among countries and learn how to take advantage of opportunities, and cope with disadvantages that arise from different national cultures (Early and Mosakowski, 2004).

1. **Language**

Communication is one of the most important aspects of both personal and professional relationship. When doing business with companies overseas, there are bound to be some language barriers. However, those barriers can negatively impact both the corporate partnership and projects at hand. Companies need to actively work to improve communication between their global colleagues. International language barriers can pose significant challenges to businesses looking to expand into new markets. Even experienced companies can run into difficulties with suppliers or partners when language differences create miscommunications that threatens their business plant abroad.

**Table 1: The main languages of the world**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rank | Language | Approximate number of  speakers (in millions) | Number of  countries |
| 1 | Mandarin Chinese | 848 | 13 |
| 2 | Spanish | 406 | 31 |
| 3 | English | 335 | 101 |
| 4 | Hindi | 260 | 4 |
| 5 | Arabic | 223 | 59 |
| 6 | Portuguese | 202 | 11 |
| 7 | Bengali | 193 | 4 |
| 8 | Russian | 162 | 16 |
| 9 | Japanese | 122 | 3 |
| 10 | Javanese | 84.3 | 3 |

Source: author's elaboration according to S.T. Cavusgil, Op. cit., p. 108;

1. **Religion**

Religion is considered as “a socially shared set of beliefs, ideas, and actions that relate to a reality that cannot be verified empirically yet affects the course of natural and human events-a way of life woven around people’s ultimate concerns” (Hill, 2009, p. 519). The largest religion groupings in the world are Christianity and Islam (see Fig. 2). Christianity numbers about 2.1 billion followers or approximately 33% of the world’s population. On another hand, Islam is considered as the world’s second most practiced religion with 1.3 billion followers or about 21% of the world’s population (Morrison, 2008). In many countries around the world, religion plays a significant role in people's life. Religion even determines the way people think of work. Consequently, religion considerably effects on business activity and corporate culture. Many companies adapt their working process according to a predominant religion of a given country in terms of the holidays, working hours, food habits, a way of dressing, etc. From the perspective of the multinational company, religion is an important social factor that should take in consideration when some company decides to operate in a given country.

Religion, through its effects on people, affects a multinational company and its operations. Multinational companies, for instance, should be aware of religious holidays in each country where they operate. The most of the Islamic countries have ECOFORUM [Volume 7, Issue 1(14), 2018] significantly lower productivity during the month of the Ramadan fast. Likewise, the pace of work in many Asian countries is slow down during the celebrations of the Chinese New Year. The situation is similar during the Easter holidays in many European countries as well (Parboteeah and Cullen, 2017). In some countries, the followers of particular religions are required to dress or to maintain their physical appearance in a manner that is not appropriate to the company’s appearance norms. Also, multinational company’s products or ingredients used in manufacturing are forbidden in the certain country. For instance, multinational companies cannot produce or sell pork products because pork and all that is associated with it is rigorously forbidden according to Islam (Ajami and Goddard, 2014).

Source: author's elaboration according to J. Morrison, Op. cit., p. 124

**Figure 1: The world religions, as percentages of world population, 2005**

1. **Level of Education**

Education significantly affects the lifestyle of a population of any country in the world, the way of their thinking, their attitude toward work, etc. The level of education varies among countries. However, in many countries, the level of education has a tendency to increase. Education level and level of literacy of population of a given country are indicators of the quality of their potential workforce. Economic potential and progress of any country depend on the education of its population. Analogously, education has notably impact on international business. The most significant economic implications of education that are reflected on the operation of multinational companies are (Aswathappa, 2010):

1. Countries with a well-educated population attract high-wage industries. Every country that invests in education tends to create high-wage industries that are known as “brain power” industries;
2. The market potential of any country primarily depends on education. The counties rich in educational facilities, such Germany and England, are more likely to attract high-tech industries than the less educated countries such as Romania and Poland. The technology level of the company’s products may depend on the education level of the local population;
3. The level of education and the level of literacy of population in a given country considerable determine the way of marketing research, packaging and advertising conducted by multinational companies. In a country where the level of education of local population is higher, it is considered that expectations from multinational companies are proportionally higher. Buyers with a higher level of education require more quality products and services, a better price-quality ratio (a better VALUE-for-MONEY RATIO) and know their right as customers.

Also, well-educated local workforce requires better working conditions, more stable work, and greater opportunities for further improvement as the business environment changes.

1. **Customer preferences**

The needs and tastes of consumers in various countries are significantly becoming similar. According to some experts, this social trend is known as “global convergence”. As a result of the spread of global communication and facilitated travel opportunities, certain social behaviors are getting similar globally. Today, people around the world watch same movies, listen to the same music, play the same video games and use the same Internet websites. Consequently, the needs, tastes, and habits become identical on a global level.

The global convergence is most present among the younger population. Therefore, many multinational companies ECOFORUM [Volume 7, Issue 1(14), 2018] with global strategy offer same or very similar products in many various countries. As result, global market convergence is created whereby the world is considered as a global market of same products and services (Frynas and Mellahi, 2015). At another hand, many experts claim that multinational companies should be very careful about the “global convergence” because there are still visible cultural and social differences between countries.

Something that is liked by the people of one country does not mean that will be liked by those in some other country. Even if people like or use same or very similar products in various countries, they may use them for different reasons, on different occasions and under different circumstances in each country. Therefore, is very significant for multinational companies to modify their product and promotion strategies that will suit the preferences of the population of the different countries.

The multinational company should implement strategies that will be appropriate for a given socio-cultural environment. This type of strategic approach *LEADS TO SUCCESSFUL* *BUSINESS* outcomes (Cherunilam, 2011).

1. **The attitude of the society towards foreign business**

The social and government attitudes towards foreign business, especially towards foreign companies and their products, are one of the social factors that may have a significant impact on the performance of multinational companies. The social and governments attitudes of the particular country towards foreign companies and their products can range from complete acceptance and trust to complete distrust and antagonism.

Analogously, if the society of a given country is friendly towards foreign business, multinational companies will certainly benefit from a supportive local environment. On another hand, if social attitudes of a given country are antagonistic, the multinational companies may face difficulties, such as boycotts of their products. The antagonistic social attitude that companies may face in some foreign countries is often the result of their government's position towards some political issues (Shenkar, Luo et al, 2015). The purpose of boycotts is to shout completely the companies out of the particular market. The most publicized boycott campaign ever was 50 years boycott run by Arab countries against the companies that were engaged in business activities with Israel (Gillespie and Hennessey, 2016).

1. **Cultural barriers**

This is a result of the fact that people from different cultural groups approach challenges and problems in different ways. Different cultures think and react differently to the same situations. They get the job done in different ways. Those different approaches and mindsets, a culturally diverse team not only expands their skills and knowledge pool, but has the power to think in more abstract teams and find solutions on various levels.

Global leaders face not only the challenge of making a multi-cultural team work well together despite their differences, but often also of doing this while the team members are based in different international locations. In today’s globalized world, global leaders have to learn to understand a wider, richer array of work styles. They must able to determine what aspects of an interaction are a result of personality and which are a result of differences in cultural perspective.

Five causes of cultural barriers

* Language
* Stereotypes and prejudices
* Signs and symbols
* “Us” versus “them”
* Behaviors and belief

1. **Pros and Cons of Culture's Influence in International Business**

**Pros:**

* **Market Adaptation**: Understanding and embracing cultural nuances allows businesses to tailor products and services to suit specific markets, increasing the chances of success and acceptance by local consumers.
* **Building Trust and Relationships**: Cultural sensitivity fosters trust and strengthens relationships with stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, and partners, leading to more sustainable and productive collaborations.
* **Effective Communication**: Cultural awareness enables businesses to communicate effectively with diverse audiences, avoiding misunderstandings and misinterpretations that could hinder business operations.

**Cons:**

* **Miscommunication**: Cultural differences may lead to miscommunication and misunderstandings, potentially causing conflicts and hindering smooth business operations.
* **Cultural Barriers**: Cultural norms and practices might clash with business practices, impeding negotiations and cooperation between parties from different cultural backgrounds.
* **Ethical Dilemmas**: Operating in culturally diverse environments may expose businesses to ethical dilemmas, where local customs and practices may conflict with global ethical standards and corporate values.

1. **Social Media**

Social media in international business attract customers, get customer feedback and build customer loyalty, increase your market reach, including international markets, do market research and reduce marketing costs, increase revenue by building customer network and advertising. Social media helps in creating job opportunities, maintaining good relations between different countries as well as improving the living standards of people for improving the quality of life of people everywhere. Not only marketing and sales, but also other firm functions may benefit from a wise use of social media in the context of international business. Use of social media platforms may have a positive impact on expatriates’ wellbeing, knowledge transfer, and job performance, and allow finding new employees.

Social media plays a pivotal role in international business, transforming the way companies engage with global audiences and conduct their operations. Here are some key views on how social media impacts international business:

* **Global Market Reach**: Social media platforms offer businesses unparalleled access to diverse international audiences. By leveraging these platforms, companies can expand their market reach, target specific regions, and connect with potential customers worldwide.
* **Cost-Effective Marketing**: Social media provides a cost-effective alternative to traditional advertising channels. International businesses can promote their products and services through targeted ads and organic content, reaching a broader audience without substantial marketing expenses.
* **Real-Time Customer Engagement**: Social media enables real-time communication with customers across time zones. Businesses can address customer queries, concerns, and feedback promptly, fostering better customer relations and brand loyalty.
* **Cultural Adaptation**: To succeed globally, businesses must adapt their social media strategies to align with the cultural norms and preferences of different regions. By tailoring content and communication styles, companies can resonate with local audiences and avoid cultural misunderstandings.
* **Competitive Analysis**: Social media allows businesses to monitor their competitors' activities and marketing strategies in international markets. This information can provide valuable insights and help companies refine their own approaches for a competitive advantage.
* **Influencer Marketing**: Influencers on social media can significantly impact international consumer behavior. Partnering with relevant influencers in target markets can boost brand visibility and credibility, driving sales and brand awareness.
* **Crisis Management**: Social media plays a crucial role in crisis management for international businesses. Companies can use these platforms to address issues and manage reputational damage swiftly and transparently.
* **Market Research**: Social media platforms offer a wealth of data on consumer preferences, trends, and sentiment in various regions. Businesses can utilize this information for market research and to fine-tune their international business strategies.

1. **How Culture and Social Media inter-related in International Marketing**

Culture and social media are deeply interrelated in international marketing, and their interplay has a significant impact on how businesses approach and succeed in global markets. The relationship between culture and social media in international marketing can be understood through the following key aspects:

1. **Cultural Adaptation in Content**: Culture heavily influences consumer preferences, values, and communication styles. To effectively engage international audiences, businesses must adapt their social media content to resonate with the cultural norms and values of specific regions. This includes using language and visuals that are culturally relevant and avoiding content that may be considered offensive or inappropriate in certain cultural contexts.
2. **Consumer Behavior and Social Media Usage**: Culture influences how consumers interact with social media platforms and respond to marketing messages. Understanding cultural differences in social media usage allows businesses to tailor their marketing strategies accordingly. For example, some cultures may prefer more direct communication, while others may respond better to a more indirect and relationship-focused approach.
3. **Building Trust and Relationships**: Social media provides a platform for businesses to build relationships with international customers. Cultural sensitivity in communication and engagement fosters trust and rapport with diverse audiences, leading to more meaningful and long-lasting connections.
4. **Localization and Globalization**: The interplay of culture and social media allows businesses to strike a balance between localization and globalization. While globalization seeks to maintain a consistent brand identity across markets, localization ensures that marketing efforts resonate with the cultural nuances and preferences of each target market.
5. **Influencer Marketing**: Culture plays a critical role in influencer marketing. Influencers who are respected and admired within specific cultural contexts can have a significant impact on consumers' purchasing decisions. Partnering with culturally relevant influencers enhances the authenticity and effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns.
6. **Cross-Cultural Communication**: Social media facilitates cross-cultural communication and fosters intercultural dialogues. It allows businesses to engage with international customers, answer queries, and address concerns in real-time, breaking down communication barriers and fostering understanding.
7. **Market Research and Insights**: Social media provides a wealth of data on consumer behavior, sentiments, and trends in various cultures. Businesses can leverage this data for market research and gain valuable insights to refine their international marketing strategies.
8. **FINDINGS**

While social media presents numerous opportunities for international businesses, it also comes with challenges, such as the need to navigate diverse cultural sensitivities, manage multilingual communication, and ensure data privacy compliance across borders. Therefore, businesses must approach social media in international markets strategically, recognizing its potential as a powerful tool for global growth and success.

In summary, culture and social media are intricately linked in international marketing. Understanding and respecting cultural differences while effectively utilizing social media platforms empower businesses to connect with global audiences, build brand loyalty, and succeed in the diverse and competitive international marketplace.

The findings of this research endeavor aim to equip businesses with invaluable insights, empowering them to forge symbiotic relationships between culture and social media, and navigate the intricate pathways to international success.

1. **SUGGESTION**

Understanding cultural nuances is paramount for successful market entry and effective marketing strategies. Businesses that embrace cultural intelligence can tailor their products, services, and promotional efforts to align with local customs and preferences, thereby resonating more deeply with target audiences. Culture also dictates business practices, negotiation styles, and decision-making processes in international markets. Adapting to cultural norms and etiquettes is crucial for building trust and fostering harmonious relationships with stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, and partners.

Through social media, businesses can reach diverse international audiences instantaneously, breaking down geographical barriers and enabling direct communication with customers worldwide. This real-time engagement fosters brand visibility, facilitates market research, and enables businesses to adapt their strategies to meet diverse cultural preferences and trends. Moreover, social media empowers businesses to leverage user-generated content, influencer marketing, and interactive campaigns, facilitating authentic and meaningful connections with consumers. Cultivating social media communities across borders cultivates brand loyalty and advocacy, essential for sustained success in the global marketplace.

1. **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this research underscores the inseparable alliance between culture and social media in the realm of international business. Understanding and leveraging cultural insights facilitate market adaptation, while adept social media utilization engenders cross-border collaboration. Businesses that skillfully navigate this dynamic nexus gain a strategic advantage, propelling themselves towards prosperity and longevity in the global arena.

Society and culture have an impact on every aspect of the overseas business of multinational companies. Analogously, the socio-cultural environment is significant for multinational companies. The key socio-cultural factors that have a major impact on the operation of the multinational companies are 1) culture; 2) language; 3) religion; 4) level of education, 5) customer preferences, and 6) the attitude of the society towards foreign goods and services.

The influence of culture on multinational companies is real and widespread. Multinational companies are affected by more than one culture at a time. Through their subsidiaries located in various countries, they are

exposed to different national cultures. Culture in particular country directly, or indirectly, reflect on the achieved

performance of multinational companies. On the basis of the results obtained from various surveys, it can be

concluded that successful multinational companies develop acceptance and understanding of cultural differences

among various country and learn how to take advantage of opportunities, and cope with disadvantages that arise from different national cultures.

Religion is an important social factor that should take in consideration when some company decides to

operate in a given country. Religion, through its effects on people, affects a multinational company and its operations. Consequently, it can be concluded that an appropriate understanding and respecting of religion is extremely important for the efficient ‘functioning’ of multinational companies.

Overall, social media is a powerful tool that can propel businesses to unprecedented heights in international markets. When harnessed strategically and with cultural sensitivity, social media becomes a vehicle for brand globalization, market penetration, and sustainable growth. Embracing the transformative influence of social media in international business, companies can forge strong connections, capitalize on global opportunities, and thrive in the vibrant and interconnected global landscape. In summary, it can be concluded that it is very significant for multinational companies to anticipate the key socio-cultural factors in each host country separately in order to evaluate the actual performance of foreign subsidiaries and their managers.

**IX. REFERENCES**

1. <https://eurac.com> > cultural-barriers….
2. Ajami, A.R., Goddard, J.G. (2014) International Business: A Course on the Essentials, M. E. Sharpe, Inc., New York, p. 277;
3. Ajami, A.R., Cool, K., Goddard, J.G., Khambata, D. (2006) International Business: Theory and Practice, 2nd edn., M. E. Sharpe, Inc., New York, p. 202;
4. Aswathappa, K. (2010) International Business, Tata McGraw Hill Education Private Limited, New Delhi, p. 187;
5. Cavusgil, S.T., Knight, G., Riesenberger, J.R., Rammal, H.G., Rose, E.L. (2015) International Business, Pearson Australia, Melbourne, p. 108;
6. Cherunilam, F. (2011) International Business: Text and Cases, Prentice-Hall of India Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, p. 89;

**X. BIBILOGRAPHIES**

1. Budzanowska -Drzewieeka (2016) International Business: A Course on the Essentials, M. E. Sharpe, Inc., New York, p. 277.
2. Isabel Cristina Panziera Marques, João Leitão, João Ferreira, André Cavalcanti, The socioemotional wealth of leaders in family firm succession and corporate governance processes: a systematic literature review, International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research, 10.1108/IJEBR-01-2022-0092, 29, 1, (268-295), (2023).
3. Mohammed Hashim Abdulkareem Al-Sharaa, Sanil S. Hishan, The Impact of Cross-Culture Risk on International Business Negotiations, International Journal of Information Technology Project Management, 10.4018/IJITPM.311850, 13, 2, (1-13), (2022).
4. Almeida, F. and Santos, J.D. (2020), “The role of social networks in the internationalization of startups: LinkedIn in Portuguese context”, Management and Marketing, Challenges for the Knowledge Society, Vol. 15 No. 3, pp. 345-363.
5. Alarcon, M.D.C., Rialp, A. and Rialp, J. (2018), “Examining the impact of managerial involvement with social media on exporting firm performance”, International Business Review, Vol. 27, pp. 355-366.