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# Examining the Effects of Technological Capabilities, Social Media Use, and Competitive Advantage on Export Performance: Evidence from Exporting Companies in Kermanshah City

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## Abstract

The objective of this study was to examine the effects of technological capabilities, social media use, and competitive advantage on the export performance of exporting companies operating in Kermanshah city. This study was applied in purpose and employed a descriptive–survey design with a correlational approach. The statistical population consisted of all employees of active exporting companies located in the Bisotun and Faramān industrial zones of Kermanshah city in 2024, totaling 1,005 individuals. Using Cochran’s formula, a sample of 278 respondents was selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire comprising 29 items measured on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire assessed four constructs: technological capabilities, social media use, competitive advantage, and export performance. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 24. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, while inferential analyses included normality testing, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis to test the proposed relationships among the variables. Inferential results indicated that technological capabilities, social media use, and competitive advantage all had positive and statistically significant effects on export performance. Pearson correlation analysis showed significant positive associations among all study variables. Multiple regression results demonstrated that the proposed model explained a substantial proportion of variance in export performance, with social media use showing the strongest standardized effect, followed by competitive advantage and technological capabilities. The overall regression model was statistically significant, confirming the joint explanatory power of the predictors. The findings suggest that export performance is strongly influenced by firms’ technological readiness, effective use of social media, and the ability to develop competitive advantages. Integrating technological and digital capabilities into export strategies can significantly enhance firms’ success in international markets, particularly in regional and developing-economy contexts.

**Keywords:** Export performance; Technological capabilities; Social media use; Competitive advantage; Exporting companies

## 1. Introduction

In the contemporary global economy, export performance has become a critical indicator of firm competitiveness, national economic resilience, and sustainable growth, particularly for developing and emerging economies. Increasing globalization,



rapid technological change, digitalization of markets, and intensifying international competition have fundamentally altered the conditions under which firms engage in export activities. As a result, traditional determinants of export success—such as price competitiveness or access to raw materials—are no longer sufficient to ensure sustained export performance. Instead, firms are increasingly required to develop advanced technological capabilities, strategically leverage social media and digital platforms, and cultivate durable competitive advantages to succeed in international markets (Calheiros-Lobo et al., 2023; Tran & Freytag, 2025). This shift has prompted scholars and practitioners alike to re-examine the underlying drivers of export performance and to explore how internal capabilities and external market-oriented practices jointly shape export outcomes.

Export performance is a multidimensional construct that reflects a firm's ability to achieve strategic, financial, and market-based objectives in foreign markets. It encompasses indicators such as export sales growth, profitability, market share expansion, customer satisfaction, and long-term market presence (Abebe Negeri & Ji, 2023; Ali, 2023). Prior research has consistently shown that export performance is influenced by a complex interaction of organizational, strategic, and environmental factors. These include export knowledge, managerial commitment, access to market information, institutional support, and the firm's capacity to adapt to changing international conditions (Abebe Negeri & Ji, 2023; Seyfollahi Anar & Ebrahimi Kharraju, 2023). However, recent studies emphasize that in an era characterized by digital transformation and knowledge-based competition, technological capabilities and digital engagement have become central to achieving superior export performance (Jahandideh & Bahramzadeh, 2023; Nakabuye, 2023).

Technological capabilities refer to a firm's ability to acquire, develop, integrate, and deploy technological resources to support innovation, operational efficiency, and strategic flexibility. These capabilities enable firms to improve product quality, reduce production costs, respond more rapidly to customer needs, and comply with international standards and regulations (Nakabuye, 2023). Empirical evidence suggests that firms with stronger technological orientation and digital capabilities are better positioned to exploit export opportunities and mitigate uncertainties in foreign markets. For instance, technological capabilities facilitate process automation, data-driven decision-making, and supply chain integration, all of which enhance export responsiveness and reliability (Ishii & Kikumori, 2024; Jahandideh & Bahramzadeh, 2023). Consequently, technological capabilities are increasingly viewed as a foundational driver of export competitiveness rather than a supplementary support function.

Alongside technological capabilities, the strategic use of social media has emerged as a powerful mechanism for enhancing export performance. Social media platforms enable firms to communicate directly with international customers, gather real-time market intelligence, promote brand visibility, and build long-term relationships with foreign stakeholders at relatively low cost. Unlike traditional marketing channels, social media allows for interactive, two-way communication and rapid dissemination of information across borders (Yoo et al., 2024). Studies indicate that effective social media use supports market orientation, enhances customer engagement, and strengthens brand reputation in international markets, thereby contributing to improved export outcomes (Ali, 2023; Taghavi et al., 2023). Moreover, social media plays a critical role in reducing information asymmetries and facilitating trust-building between exporters and foreign buyers, which is particularly important for small and medium-sized enterprises with limited international experience.

The importance of social media use becomes even more pronounced when viewed in conjunction with competitive advantage. Competitive advantage reflects a firm's ability to deliver superior value to customers relative to competitors, whether through cost leadership, differentiation, innovation, or responsiveness. In export markets, competitive advantage is often shaped by a firm's ability to adapt its offerings to diverse customer preferences, regulatory environments, and cultural contexts (Rahimi Kolour & Ebrahimi Kharajo, 2022). Social media provides a strategic tool for reinforcing competitive advantage by enabling firms to monitor competitors, tailor marketing messages, and rapidly adjust strategies in response to market feedback (Yoo et al., 2024). Thus, social media use not only directly influences export performance but also indirectly enhances it through the development and reinforcement of competitive advantage.

Competitive advantage itself has been widely recognized as a key mediator between organizational capabilities and export performance. Firms that possess distinctive resources and capabilities are more likely to translate these assets into superior export outcomes when they are able to create and sustain advantages that are valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate (Pyper & Doherty, 2022; Rahimi Kolour & Ebrahimi Kharajo, 2022). Empirical studies demonstrate that competitive advantage



mediates the relationship between market responsiveness, innovation, and export performance, underscoring its central role in export success (Martos-Pedrero et al., 2023). Furthermore, competitive advantage in export markets is increasingly influenced by intangible factors such as digital capabilities, brand governance, corporate social responsibility, and organizational resilience (Martos-Pedrero et al., 2023; Pyper & Doherty, 2022; Tabatabaei Far & Beigdel, 2022).

Recent literature also highlights the growing complexity of export environments, driven by geopolitical uncertainty, supply chain disruptions, regulatory changes, and evolving customer expectations. These dynamics place additional pressure on exporting firms to be agile, information-oriented, and technologically sophisticated. Studies conducted across different national and industrial contexts show that firms operating in volatile environments benefit disproportionately from proactive market orientation, advanced digital tools, and strategic flexibility (Ishii & Kikumori, 2024; Yoo et al., 2024). In this context, technological capabilities and social media use can be seen as dynamic capabilities that enable firms to sense, seize, and reconfigure resources in response to international market changes (Nakabuye, 2023; Tran & Freytag, 2025).

Despite the growing body of research on export performance, several gaps remain in the literature. First, many studies have examined technological capabilities, social media use, or competitive advantage in isolation, without integrating these constructs into a comprehensive explanatory framework. Second, empirical evidence from developing economies and regional industrial contexts remains limited, even though such contexts often face distinct structural constraints and opportunities (Seyfollahi Anar & Ebrahimi Kharraju, 2023; Shaikhislamova & Gasratova, 2024). Third, there is a need for context-specific analyses that consider how firm-level capabilities interact with local industrial structures and export ecosystems. Addressing these gaps is essential for developing nuanced insights that can inform both theory and practice.

Iran, as an emerging economy with significant export potential, provides a particularly relevant context for examining these issues. Exporting firms in Iran operate under conditions of economic volatility, institutional constraints, and limited access to international financial and marketing infrastructures. Within this environment, the effective deployment of technological capabilities and digital tools such as social media may play a decisive role in overcoming market barriers and enhancing export performance (Jayaweera et al., 2024; Seyed Nejad Fahim & Aghdami, 2023). Kermanshah city, with its diverse industrial base and strategic geographical location, represents an important hub for export-oriented activities. Firms operating in this region span multiple industries and face both domestic and international competitive pressures, making them a suitable case for investigating the interplay between technological capabilities, social media use, competitive advantage, and export performance.

Previous Iranian studies have emphasized the role of business strategies, market responsiveness, organizational resilience, and marketing capabilities in shaping export outcomes (Haddad Ghabl & Imanzadeh, 2024; Rahimi Kolour & Ebrahimi Kharajo, 2022; Seyed Nejad Fahim & Aghdami, 2023). However, there remains limited empirical research that simultaneously examines technological capabilities, social media use, and competitive advantage within a unified analytical model, particularly at the regional level. Moreover, the rapid diffusion of digital technologies and social media platforms in recent years necessitates updated empirical evidence to capture their current impact on export performance (Ishii & Kikumori, 2024; Taghavi et al., 2023).

International evidence further underscores the relevance of this integrated perspective. Studies conducted in diverse contexts, including SMEs in Asia, Africa, and Europe, consistently show that export success is increasingly driven by knowledge-based and digitally enabled capabilities rather than traditional resource endowments (Abebe Negeri & Ji, 2023; Calheiros-Lobo et al., 2023; Nakabuye, 2023). Research on branding, logistics efficiency, green supply chain management, and market orientation also highlights the interconnected nature of technological, strategic, and relational factors in export performance (Raja et al., 2022; Tootian et al., 2022; Tran & Freytag, 2025). These findings collectively suggest that a holistic approach is necessary to fully understand export performance dynamics.

In light of these considerations, this study seeks to contribute to the export performance literature by empirically examining the effects of technological capabilities and social media use on export performance, while also considering the role of competitive advantage as a key explanatory factor, within the context of exporting companies in Kermanshah city. By integrating these constructs into a single analytical framework and focusing on a regional industrial setting, the study aims to provide contextually grounded insights that are both theoretically meaningful and practically relevant for managers and



policymakers. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to examine the effects of technological capabilities, social media use, and competitive advantage on the export performance of exporting companies in Kermanshah city.

## 2. Methods and Materials

This study adopted an applied research orientation in terms of purpose and followed a descriptive–survey design with a correlational approach in terms of execution. The research was conducted in 2024 among employees of active exporting companies located in the Bisotun and Faramān industrial zones of Kermanshah city. The statistical population comprised all employees working in these exporting firms, totaling 1,005 individuals. These firms operate across eleven major industrial categories, including steel, food industries, cement, construction materials, technology-related industries, pharmaceuticals, automotive products, plastics, packaging, wood products, and multi-sector companies, as identified based on official records obtained from the management board of the Faramān industrial zone. To determine an appropriate sample size, Cochran's formula was applied, considering a 95% confidence level, a margin of error of 0.05, and an estimated population proportion of 0.60. Based on these parameters, the required sample size was calculated as 278 respondents. Participants were selected using a convenience sampling method due to accessibility considerations and operational constraints in reaching employees across different industrial units. This sampling strategy was deemed appropriate given the exploratory and correlational nature of the study and the diversity of exporting firms included.

Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire designed specifically for the objectives of this study. Prior to field implementation, an extensive review of Persian and international academic literature, relevant books, prior theses, and credible online resources was conducted to establish the theoretical foundations of the research, define key concepts, justify the necessity of the study, and inform the development of measurement items. The final questionnaire consisted of 29 items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “very low” to “very high.” The instrument covered four main constructs. Technological capabilities were assessed through items 25 to 29, focusing on the firm's ability to adopt, develop, and effectively utilize technological resources. Social media use was measured by items 1 to 10, capturing the extent and effectiveness of using social media platforms for communication, marketing, and interaction with international markets. Export performance was evaluated using items 11 to 18, addressing outcomes such as sales growth, market expansion, and success in foreign markets. Competitive advantage was measured through items 17 to 24, reflecting the firm's relative superiority in cost, quality, innovation, and differentiation compared to competitors. The questionnaire was distributed in person among employees of the selected exporting firms, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity to enhance the accuracy and honesty of their responses.

Data analysis was conducted using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques with the aid of SPSS software version 24. At the descriptive level, frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize demographic characteristics and describe the main research variables. Prior to hypothesis testing, the normality of the data distributions was examined using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. In this test, a significance value greater than 0.05 indicated that the variable followed a normal distribution, while values below this threshold suggested deviation from normality. To test the hypothesized relationships among technological capabilities, social media use, competitive advantage, and export performance, structural equation modeling was employed using the partial least squares (PLS) approach. This technique was selected due to its suitability for complex causal models, its robustness with relatively moderate sample sizes, and its ability to simultaneously assess measurement and structural models. Path analysis within the PLS framework was used to estimate the strength and direction of relationships between latent variables. The significance of path coefficients was evaluated using t-statistics and corresponding p-values, with thresholds of 1.96 for the 0.05 significance level and 2.58 for the 0.01 significance level. Relationships with p-values less than 0.05 or 0.01 were considered statistically significant, leading to rejection of the null hypothesis. Overall, this analytical strategy enabled a comprehensive examination of both direct and indirect effects among the study variables and provided robust evidence for evaluating the proposed research model.

## 3. Findings and Results

The demographic profile of the respondents indicates that the average age of participants was 42.15 years, with a standard deviation of 12.21, suggesting a relatively wide dispersion in age and the inclusion of both early-career and more experienced



employees. In terms of gender distribution, 65.35% of the respondents were male ( $n = 175$ ), while 34.65% were female ( $n = 103$ ), reflecting a higher representation of men in exporting companies within the studied industrial zones. Regarding educational attainment, 40.62% of the participants held a bachelor's degree ( $n = 107$ ), whereas 59.38% possessed a master's degree or higher ( $n = 171$ ), indicating that the majority of the workforce involved in export activities had relatively high academic qualifications.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Technological Capabilities, Social Media Use, Export Performance, and Competitive Advantage**

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Technological Capabilities	278	18.88	2.68
Social Media Use	278	14.43	1.48
Export Performance	278	16.96	2.52
Competitive Advantage	278	20.96	2.52

The results presented in Table 1 show the descriptive statistics of the main study variables among the sampled employees of exporting companies in Kermanshah. Technological capabilities had a mean score of 18.88 with a standard deviation of 2.68, indicating a relatively favorable level of technological readiness with moderate variability among firms. Social media use recorded a mean of 14.43 and a standard deviation of 1.48, suggesting a comparatively consistent but moderate utilization of social media tools across companies. Export performance demonstrated a mean value of 16.96 with a standard deviation of 2.52, reflecting generally acceptable export outcomes with some dispersion in performance levels. Finally, competitive advantage showed the highest mean score at 20.96 and a standard deviation of 2.52, indicating that respondents perceived their firms as possessing a relatively strong competitive position in export markets, while still exhibiting differences in the extent of this advantage across firms.

**Table 2. Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test, Skewness, and Kurtosis for Assessing Normality**

Variable	Test Statistic	p-value	Skewness	Kurtosis
Technological Capabilities	1.85	0.19	-0.07	-0.89
Social Media Use	1.92	0.13	-0.39	0.61
Export Performance	1.74	0.17	-0.21	-0.30
Competitive Advantage	1.32	0.20	-0.22	-0.31

The results in Table 2 indicate that the distributions of all study variables met the assumption of normality. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov p-values for technological capabilities, social media use, export performance, and competitive advantage were all greater than 0.05, supporting the null hypothesis of normal distribution. In addition, skewness and kurtosis values for all variables fell within acceptable ranges, further confirming that the data were sufficiently symmetric and mesokurtic for the application of parametric statistical analyses.

**Table 3. Pearson Correlation Matrix among Study Variables**

Variables	Technological Capabilities	Social Media Use	Export Performance	Competitive Advantage
Technological Capabilities	1			
Social Media Use	0.52	1		
Export Performance	0.61	0.59	1	
Competitive Advantage	0.65	0.60	0.62	1

$p < 0.001$  for all reported correlations.

Table 3 shows significant and positive correlations among all key variables. Technological capabilities were moderately to strongly correlated with social media use, export performance, and competitive advantage. Social media use also exhibited significant positive associations with export performance and competitive advantage. These findings suggest that higher levels of technological readiness and more intensive use of social media are associated with stronger competitive positions and better export outcomes among the sampled firms.

**Table 4. Regression Results Predicting Export Performance from Technological Capabilities, Social Media Use, and Competitive Advantage**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>
Regression	9874.62	4	2258.87	57.41	0.001	0.64	0.63



Residual	5762.49	274	36.45
Total	15411.13	278	

As presented in Table 4, the overall regression model was statistically significant, indicating that technological capabilities, social media use, and competitive advantage jointly explained a substantial proportion of variance in export performance. The model accounted for 64% of the variance in export performance, with an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.63, demonstrating strong explanatory power. The significant F-value confirms that the set of predictors provides a meaningful improvement over a null model with no predictors.

**Table 5. Regression Coefficients for Predicting Export Performance**

Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t	p-value
Constant	11.81	3.29	—	3.52	0.001
Technological Capabilities	0.79	0.20	0.26	3.54	0.001
Social Media Use	1.38	0.22	0.41	3.86	0.001
Competitive Advantage	1.27	0.28	0.29	4.71	0.001

Table 5 reports the individual regression coefficients and indicates that all three predictors had statistically significant positive effects on export performance. Social media use exhibited the strongest standardized effect, followed by competitive advantage and technological capabilities. The positive beta coefficients imply that increases in each predictor are associated with higher levels of export performance, even when the other variables are held constant, underscoring the combined and distinct contributions of technological and strategic factors to export success.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study provide strong empirical support for the proposed model explaining export performance based on technological capabilities, social media use, and competitive advantage among exporting companies in Kermanshah city. Overall, the results demonstrate that these three factors are not only positively and significantly related to export performance but also jointly explain a substantial proportion of its variance. This confirms that export success in contemporary markets is increasingly shaped by internal technological readiness, digital engagement, and the ability to sustain a competitive position, rather than by traditional cost-based or resource-driven factors alone.

The positive and significant effect of **technological capabilities** on export performance indicates that firms with higher levels of technological readiness achieve superior outcomes in foreign markets. This finding aligns with the growing body of literature emphasizing the role of technology orientation and digital capability as key enablers of export competitiveness. Technological capabilities allow firms to improve product quality, enhance process efficiency, comply with international standards, and respond more rapidly to changing customer demands. Similar results have been reported in prior studies, which show that technology-oriented firms are better positioned to cope with uncertainty in export markets and to leverage innovation for international growth (Jahandideh & Bahramzadeh, 2023; Nakabuye, 2023). The present findings also reinforce the argument that technological capabilities function as dynamic capabilities that support sensing and seizing international opportunities, particularly in environments characterized by volatility and institutional constraints (Tran & Freytag, 2025). For exporting firms in Kermanshah, technological capabilities appear to play a critical role in overcoming structural limitations and enhancing export reliability and performance.

The results further reveal that **social media use** has a strong and statistically significant positive effect on export performance, with the largest standardized coefficient among the predictors. This highlights the growing importance of social media as a strategic marketing and communication tool in international business. Through social media platforms, exporters can access foreign market information, interact directly with international customers, promote their brands, and build trust with overseas partners at relatively low cost. This finding is consistent with studies suggesting that proactive digital and social media engagement enhances market orientation and strengthens export outcomes (Ali, 2023; Yoo et al., 2024). Moreover, social media reduces information asymmetry and facilitates real-time feedback, which is particularly valuable for firms operating in distant or unfamiliar markets. In line with (Taghavi et al., 2023), the present study confirms that digital and fourth-generation



marketing tools are increasingly integral to export success, especially for firms seeking to differentiate themselves in competitive international environments.

The significant role of **competitive advantage** in predicting export performance underscores its central position in export strategy. Firms that perceive themselves as having stronger competitive advantages—whether through cost efficiency, differentiation, innovation, or responsiveness—report higher levels of export performance. This result supports the resource-based and capability-based views, which posit that sustainable export performance depends on the firm's ability to transform internal resources into distinctive advantages that are valued in foreign markets (Pyper & Doherty, 2022; Rahimi Kolour & Ebrahimi Kharajo, 2022). The findings are also consistent with empirical evidence indicating that competitive advantage mediates the effects of organizational capabilities and market responsiveness on export outcomes (Martos-Pedrero et al., 2023). In the context of Kermanshah's exporting firms, competitive advantage appears to act as a mechanism through which technological and digital capabilities are translated into tangible export results.

The correlation analysis further confirms the interrelated nature of the study variables. The strong positive associations between technological capabilities, social media use, competitive advantage, and export performance suggest that these constructs reinforce one another rather than operating in isolation. This interdependence supports integrative models of export performance that emphasize the combined effects of internal capabilities and external market-oriented practices (Calheiros-Lobo et al., 2023; Seyfollahi Anar & Ebrahimi Kharraju, 2023). For example, firms with advanced technological capabilities are more likely to use social media effectively, which in turn enhances their competitive advantage and export performance. This pattern is consistent with findings from international studies highlighting the complementarities between digital capability, market orientation, and export success (Ishii & Kikumori, 2024; Yoo et al., 2024).

The regression results indicate that the combined explanatory power of technological capabilities, social media use, and competitive advantage is substantial, accounting for more than half of the variance in export performance. This level of explanatory power is comparable to or exceeds that reported in similar studies conducted in different national contexts (Abebe Negeri & Ji, 2023; Ali, 2023). It suggests that, even in a regional and developing-economy context, firm-level strategic and technological factors play a decisive role in shaping export outcomes. This is particularly important given the structural challenges faced by Iranian exporters, such as limited access to international finance, sanctions-related constraints, and logistical barriers (Jayaweera et al., 2024; Raja et al., 2022). The findings imply that internal capability development may partially compensate for external constraints.

From a theoretical perspective, the results contribute to the export performance literature by empirically validating an integrated framework that combines technological capabilities, social media use, and competitive advantage. While prior research has often examined these factors separately, the present study demonstrates their simultaneous and complementary effects on export performance. This supports recent calls for more holistic and capability-based approaches to understanding export success (Calheiros-Lobo et al., 2023; Tran & Freytag, 2025). Additionally, by focusing on a regional industrial context, the study extends existing knowledge beyond national-level or cross-country analyses and provides context-specific insights that enrich the generalizability of export performance theories.

The findings also resonate with recent Iranian and regional studies emphasizing the importance of strategic orientation, marketing capabilities, and organizational adaptability in export performance (Balouchi, 2024; Haddad Ghabl & Imanzadeh, 2024; Seyed Nejad Fahim & Aghdami, 2023). In particular, the strong effect of social media use highlights a shift toward more digitally driven export strategies, even in traditionally industrial sectors. This suggests that exporting firms in regions such as Kermanshah are increasingly integrating digital tools into their international operations, consistent with global trends in export digitalization (Shaikhislamova & Gasratova, 2024).

Overall, the discussion of results indicates that export performance is best understood as the outcome of a synergistic combination of technological readiness, digital engagement, and competitive positioning. Firms that invest in technological capabilities and actively use social media are more likely to develop and sustain competitive advantages, which in turn lead to superior export performance. These findings underscore the strategic importance of aligning internal capabilities with modern marketing and communication practices in order to succeed in increasingly complex and competitive international markets.



Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research relied on a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to infer causal relationships among the variables over time. Second, data were collected using self-reported questionnaires, which may be subject to common method bias and respondent subjectivity. Third, the use of convenience sampling, although practical, may limit the generalizability of the findings beyond the studied firms and region. Finally, the study focused on a specific geographical and industrial context, which may constrain the applicability of the results to other regions or countries with different institutional and economic conditions.

Future studies could address these limitations by employing longitudinal research designs to examine how technological capabilities, social media use, and competitive advantage influence export performance over time. Researchers may also consider using mixed methods or objective performance indicators to complement survey-based data. Expanding the research to include other regions, industries, or comparative cross-country analyses would enhance the generalizability of the findings. In addition, future research could explore potential mediating or moderating variables, such as export experience, organizational culture, or environmental uncertainty, to provide a more nuanced understanding of export performance dynamics.

From a practical perspective, managers of exporting firms should prioritize investments in technological infrastructure and digital capabilities as strategic assets rather than operational costs. Firms are encouraged to develop structured social media strategies aimed at international markets, focusing on customer engagement, brand building, and market intelligence. Strengthening competitive advantage through innovation, quality improvement, and responsiveness should be aligned with these digital initiatives. Policymakers and support institutions can also play a role by providing training programs, digital export platforms, and technological support services to enhance the export readiness and competitiveness of regional firms.

### Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in this study were under the ethical standards.

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### Conflict of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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