

Effect of marketing literacy on the success of entrepreneurial projects

Effect of
marketing
literacy

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Abstract

Purpose – This research aims to determine the effect of marketing literacy on the success of entrepreneurial projects (EPS) in Palestine.

Design/methodology/approach – To attain the study's purpose, the researchers employed the questionnaire, which was applied to a random sample of 298 individuals from the owners of entrepreneurial projects in Palestine. The data were analyzed and tested using SmartPLS 4 software.

Findings – The study reached a set of results, including that the level of marketing literacy among owners of small businesses in the Gaza Strip was significantly higher for customer service (CS), management style (MS), technology (T) and customer retention (CR). In particular, the results implied that CS, MS, T and CR significantly and positively affect EPS.

Practical implications – This research would help the start-ups in Palestine spread marketing literacy among the workers in entrepreneurial projects.

Originality/value – Today, most countries tend to support entrepreneurs and owners of creative ideas and entrepreneurial projects through various programs. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this research is distinguished by its modernity and scarcity in the Arab world, particularly in Palestine. Thus, it would help raise awareness of marketing literacy among owners of entrepreneurial projects and provide empirical evidence of success for those who are about to establish an entrepreneurial project.

Keywords Marketing, Marketing mix, Marketing literacy, Entrepreneurial projects, Palestine

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Marketing began as a purely economic thought and then turned into a managerial thought in all institutions with different specializations and philosophies (Franco, de Fatima Santos,



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Ramvalho, & Nunes, 2014). The importance of marketing is increasing now due to the intensity of competition, whether at the level of the internal market or at the level of external markets. Enterprises, through the functions of production and marketing of goods or services, can fulfill their obligations towards society, the consumer and the owners of these enterprises (Hunt, 2017). These two functions create economic benefit, which represents the ability of a product or service to satisfy a consumer's need or desire. In order for all organizations to remain or continue to create economic benefit, the basis for creating economic benefit is the design and marketing of goods and services that satisfy consumers' needs (Furlow, 2008; Bettiol, Di Maria, & Finotto, 2012). Relying on a marketing mix according to scientific foundations is the modern trend through which it can contribute to raising performance rates in various fields (Musayeva & Usmanov, 2022), as the main task of marketing is to facilitate the flow and transfer of goods and services from production centers to purchasing centers (Budaya, Agustino, & Martha, 2022). The marketing mix is described as a collection of integrated and interdependent activities in marketing with the aim of effective performance of marketing functions as planned by the organization (Rachmawati, Juminawati, Akbar, Bahri, & Cakranegara, 2018).

Marketing literacy is an essential component of the marketing mix in all organizations (AL-Taie & Alsiede, 2022), and it is closely related to sharing beliefs and values that assist employees in understanding the marketing function (Sun & Lee, 2022). Moorthy and Sahid (2022) define it as a set of shared beliefs and values that influence the behavior of individuals working in the marketing field and can be adopted as a means to provide distinguished and quality services to customers in order to obtain and retain their satisfaction. Thus, it reflects the organization's image at home and abroad (Shahriari & Mahmoudi-Mesineh, 2021). Shanker (2018, p. 335) defines it as the way things are marketed by service staff. Accordingly, marketing literacy is the organization's tool that ensures the focus of efforts, the organization of operations (Chang, 2022; Sadiku-Dushi, Dana, & Ramadan, 2019), the coordination and cooperation of the various departments in the organization towards achieving the goals (Abdul-Rasool & Khadhim, 2019), as well as the map that clearly and explicitly includes the steps necessary to complete the work perfectly (Rashad, 2018). Hence, the important role of the elements of marketing literacy becomes clear, as it poses a challenge to any organization because of its impact on the behavior and performance of employees. Marketing literacy is also a comprehensive philosophy that reflects the organization's policy in managing marketing operations and all other administrative processes, and in order to be able to apply it in a flexible manner, it must be based on three foundations (Kotler, Keller, Manceau, & Dubois, 2006; Fowler & Bridges, 2017; Engelen & Brettel, 2011):

- (1) The continuity and survival of the organization are related to the continuation of the available marketing opportunities.
- (2) The customer is the main source of profit for the organization and the profits of the organization depend on the desires, needs, preferences and behaviors of the customer.
- (3) Marketing, with its components, is seen as an equation consisting of a set of numbers, and the customer represents the most difficult number in it.

In light of this, we find that marketing literacy is a reliable means to achieve success and excellence and formulate the organization's strategies in the long term (Sadiku-Dushi & Ramadan, 2020). Therefore, most researchers focus on the issue of marketing literacy as an important criterion for the success or failure of organizations, especially in complex, dynamic environments characterized by intense competition and constant change in customer tastes and desires (Harrison & Shaw, 2004). Marketing performance and the

success of the organization require working to increase awareness of the importance of marketing literacy by improving the skills of employees and the method of internal communication to create a marketing literacy that enables the organization to increase sales, profits and market share and enhance its position in the work environment (Kotler, 2006; Huhmann, 2017).

These projects are among the pillars of the economy in various countries of the world (Budaya *et al.*, 2022), and most countries today tend to sponsor entrepreneurs and creative ideas through various programs, institutions and bodies (Anitha, 2022). This is because of the importance of these projects for the economic and investment growth of countries (Al Maqtari, Farhan, Al-Hattami, & Khalid, 2020; Al-Hattami, 2022; Saleh & Al-Hakimi, 2022; Goail & Al-Hakimi, 2021). Entrepreneurial projects of all kinds also highlight new creative ideas and open up prospects for creating job opportunities for graduates (Ahn, 2020). As envisioned in the global poverty reduction plan, this would reduce severe poverty by 2030 (Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019). Examples of the contribution are SMEs and their impact on the domestic product (Bandara *et al.*, 2020), their contribution of more than 50% in Jordan (Al-Weshah, Kakeesh, & Alhammad, 2022), 48% in Morocco (Del Giudice, Vrontis, Malhotra, & Sharma, 2022) and 40% in India (Chakraborti, Dutta, & Jana, 2022). It also represents 95% of businesses in Palestine (Elmobayed, 2022).

Recently, incubation and sponsorship programs for owners of entrepreneurial ideas and small projects have increased in Palestine, where the beneficiaries enjoy financial and technical support and access to scientific expertise and facilities (Cahya, 2022). According to Elmobayed (2022), start-ups in Palestine operate in a changing and complex environment in which the degree of fear, failure and uncertainty about the possibility of success is very high. The political, economic and social situation in Palestine has not been stable for many years until the present, which has negatively affected all economic and commercial sectors. Besides government support, marketing, especially promotion, sales, good customer service (CS) and hard work are among the most crucial elements for the success of entrepreneurial projects (EPS) (Elfarrar, 2017; AlAstal, 2023). Such cases are small projects and their owners, which require these projects to adopt a marketing literacy based on behaviors, values and beliefs that focus on developing and providing higher value to customers and retaining them for a long period of time or for life and a marketing orientation that guarantees them a distinct competitive place among their competitors from similar projects, whether big or small. Marketing literacy is expected to bring a radical change in entrepreneurial activities (Baggen & Kaffka, 2022; Chatterjee, Chaudhuri, Vrontis, & Basile, 2022). This is what prompted the researchers to determine the effect of marketing literacy on the EPSs in Palestine.

While there is a body of research on entrepreneurship and marketing literacy, there is a noticeable gap in understanding how specifically marketing literacy influences the EPSs in the unique context of Palestine. One study mentioned the importance of business how-to skills and marketing strategies for successful entrepreneurs (Davis, 2020). Another study highlighted the pedagogical and practical gaps in entrepreneurial and digital marketing education (Amjad *et al.*, 2020a, b). A study by Moorthy and Sahid (2022) conducted in Malaysia found digital marketing literacy has a significant influence on entrepreneurial behavior among public university students. Financial literacy can increase people's awareness of company chances, the requisite risk management abilities and market knowledge for entrepreneurship, according to a research on the link between financial literacy and entrepreneurial intention (Alshebami & Al Marri, 2022). However, these studies did not specifically measure the influence of marketing literacy on the EPSs.

Overall, while there is evidence to suggest that marketing literacy is important for entrepreneurial behavior (Sabella, Farraj, Burbar, & Qaimary, 2014; Barghouthi, Khalili, & Qassas, 2018; Elmobayed, 2022), there is a lack of research specifically measuring the effect of

marketing literacy on the EPSs. With this background, the aim of this study is to address this research gap by investigating the impact of marketing literacy on the EPSs in Palestine. To the best of our knowledge, such a study is novel and rare in the Arabic context, particularly in Palestine. Therefore, it would help raise awareness of marketing literacy among owners of entrepreneurial projects in such countries and provide empirical evidence of success for those who are about to establish an entrepreneurial project.

The next section is related to the literature review. The methodology is detailed in [Section 3](#). The data analysis and results are displayed in [Section 4](#). The discussion and conclusion are found in [Section 5](#). Finally, this article concludes with implications and limitations.

2. Literature review

2.1 *The context description*

Palestine is a region in the Middle East, comprising the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The economic landscape in Palestine is characterized by unique challenges due to its political situation. The gross domestic product (GDP) of Palestine refers to the total value of goods and services produced within the Palestinian territories. According to the World Bank, the GDP of Palestine in 2022 was worth \$19.11 billion [\[1\]](#). The market structures in Palestine are characterized by a mix of different types. The economy consists of both formal and informal sectors. The formal sector includes registered businesses, government entities and international organizations. The informal sector comprises unregistered businesses and self-employment activities. Palestine has seen a growing number of start-up projects in recent years, particularly in the technology (T) and innovation sectors. Start-ups with an entrepreneurial spirit are seen as hubs of innovation, as they are built on the foundation of creating and implementing business models that can be developed ([Di Vaio, Hassan, Chhabra, Arrigo, & Palladino, 2022](#)). These start-ups often focus on developing solutions to address local challenges and create job opportunities ([AlAstal, 2023](#); [World Bank, 2020](#)). The longevity of businesses in Palestine can vary due to several factors, including economic conditions, political instability and access to resources. Some businesses have managed to thrive despite the challenges, while others may struggle to sustain their operations. The Palestinian government and international organizations provide support and resources to promote the growth and longevity of businesses in the region ([World Bank, 2020](#); [Elmobayed, 2022](#); [Cahya, 2022](#)).

2.2 *Hypotheses development*

Entrepreneurship represents the discovery of opportunities, transforming ideas into realistic projects and action plans and providing new services and products to society through the use of factors of production in an appropriate combination ([Elfarra, 2017](#)). Entrepreneurship is highly associated with small and medium projects, which are the main forces in the development of the market economy and represent most of the existing projects in Palestine ([Elfarra, 2017](#); [Elmobayed, 2022](#)).

Entrepreneurship is the primary driver of luxury. Not just for its effect on the development of new businesses but also in light of the transition to a prosperous and sustainable society as well as the pursuit of responsible and inclusive economic growth ([Baggen & Kaffka, 2022](#)). The importance of entrepreneurship has aroused the interest of many scholars in management, sociology, economics and others ([Prasandha & Susanti, 2022](#)). Therefore, many of them conducted numerous studies and research on successful entrepreneurs and business owners to discover the reasons behind their excellence and creativity in their work and their success (see, e.g. [Agarwal, Lenka, Singh, Agrawal, & Agrawal, 2020](#)). Among those, the significant role of marketing literacy in the organization and EPSs and in the transition

towards a resilient and sustainable society cannot be underestimated (Rashad, 2018; Baggen & Kaffka, 2022; Moorthy & Sahid, 2022; AL-Taie & Alsiede, 2022). This study addresses marketing literacy and its effect on the EPSs.

Sabella *et al.* (2014) discussed entrepreneurship and economic growth in Palestine, while Barghouthi *et al.* (2018) debated the motivations, challenges and barriers faced by women entrepreneurs. On the other hand, Elmobayed (2022) examined the impact of entrepreneurial knowledge on the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in start-ups in Palestine. However, these studies do not specifically address the impact of marketing literacy on the EPSs in Palestine. The relationship between marketing literacy and the EPSs is an important topic, particularly in a region like Palestine where entrepreneurship can play a significant role in economic development (Sabella *et al.*, 2014; Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019; Bandara *et al.*, 2020; Elfarrar, 2017).

Based on prior literature, the study identified four dimensions of marketing literacy: CS, management style (MS), T and customer retention (CR) (Figure 1). CS: these are activities that aim to enhance the level of customer satisfaction (Lariviere & Kandampully, 2019). MS: it represents the rules governing the operations and activities that are based on the application of marketing techniques and the management of the organization's marketing resources of diversity and difference (Gimenez-Fernandez, Ferraris, Troise, & Sandulli, 2022). T is represented in the knowledge and experiences that contribute to the implementation of marketing operations through the use of available techniques, machines, equipment and means (Husnain, Khan, Syed, & Akhtar, 2019). CR: the success of business organizations and achieving their goals depend on the philosophy of understanding the customer and meeting his needs (AL-Taie & Alsiede, 2022).

Due to its importance in shaping marketing choices, marketing literacy is gaining traction in both the developed and developing worlds. Numerous studies have demonstrated that small and medium-sized businesses run by entrepreneurs who have a firm grasp of marketing strategies outperform their less literate rivals (Baggen & Kaffka, 2022;

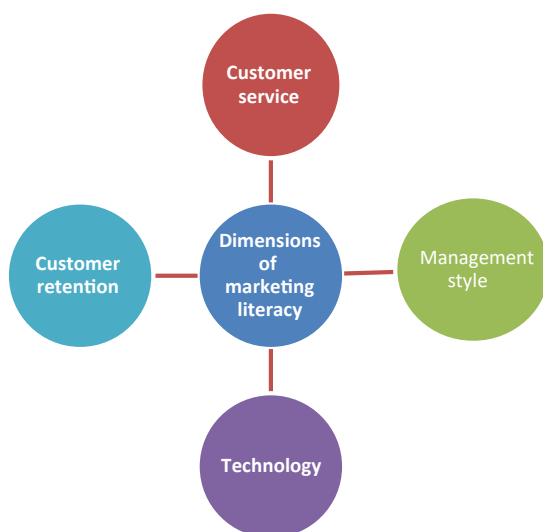


Figure 1.
Dimensions of
marketing literacy
used in the current
study (researchers'
design)

Chatterjee *et al.*, 2022). Based on the dimensions of marketing literacy identified previously, our study develops its model (Figure 2) and hypotheses as follows:

2.2.1 *Customer service.* In a competitive market, CS can serve as a key differentiator. It is a critical component of any business, and its impact on entrepreneurial project success is well documented (Al-Hattami, Hashed, & Kabra, 2021; Chatterjee *et al.*, 2022). Exceptional CS leads to higher levels of satisfaction and loyalty. Customers who are satisfied and loyal are more likely to make repeat purchases and refer the company to others, which boosts sales and the possibility of expansion (Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2016; Al-Hattami *et al.*, 2023). Entrepreneurs who prioritize exceptional service create a unique value proposition that sets them apart and helps them gain a competitive advantage (Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019). Positive CS experiences can result in favorable word-of-mouth marketing, which is highly influential in attracting new customers. A strong reputation for good CS can differentiate an entrepreneurial project from its competitors and contribute to sustained success (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, & Gremler, 2002; Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019). Entrepreneurial projects can use CS interactions as a source of feedback for improvement. Listening to customers' concerns and suggestions can lead to product or service enhancements that align better with customer needs (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985). While none of these studies directly address the relationship between CS and entrepreneurial success, they provide background information on the factors that affect entrepreneurial success. Based on these studies, it can be inferred that CS may positively affect entrepreneurial success.

H1. CS positively affects entrepreneurial projects success.

2.2.2 *Management style.* Effective management is widely acknowledged as a crucial factor in the EPSs, including SMEs (Elfarra, 2017; Al-Hattami, 2022; Al-Hattami & Kabra, 2022; Al-Hattami *et al.*, 2023). Entrepreneurs' MSs can have a significant impact on a variety of aspects

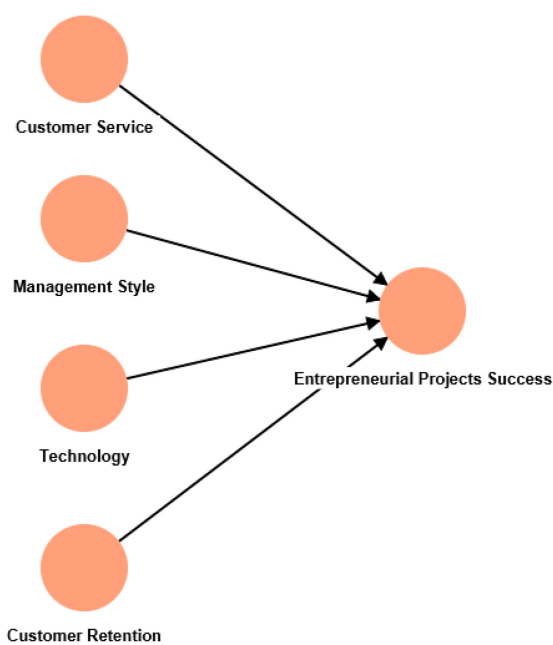


Figure 2.
Research model

of their businesses, including decision-making, team dynamics, resource allocation and overall project performance (Al-Hattami, 2022; Gimenez-Fernandez *et al.*, 2022; Omar, Zan, Hassan, & Ibrahim, 2020). Research has shown that different MSs can influence entrepreneurial projects in various ways (see, e.g. Mgeni, 2015; Baron & Ensley, 2006; Ellahi, Rehman, Javed, Sultan, & Rehman, 2022; Gimenez-Fernandez *et al.*, 2022). Accordingly, this research assumes that:

H2. MS positively affects entrepreneurial projects success.

2.2.3 Technology. In the midst of the pandemic, T has received widespread attention, especially in the context of education and marketing (Al-Adwan, Nofal, Akram, Albelbisi, & Al-Okaily, 2022; Al-Hattami, 2021). T enables entrepreneurs to effectively reach and engage with their target audience through digital marketing channels, social media and online advertising (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Al-Hattami *et al.*, 2023; Moorthy & Sahid, 2022). T facilitates data collection, analysis and interpretation. Entrepreneurs can gather insights about market trends, customer preferences and competitor behavior, leading to informed decision-making and a competitive advantage (Shafique *et al.*, 2021). However, while T offers numerous benefits, there are also challenges related to implementation and the need for ongoing skill development. This implies that knowledge and skills gained through entrepreneurial education can contribute to the success of projects that rely on T (Dana, Tajpour, Salamzadeh, Hosseini, & Zolfaghari, 2021). Based on this background information, we can formulate the following hypothesis:

H3. T positively affects entrepreneurial projects success.

2.2.4 Customer retention. The ability of a company to retain its current clients over time is referred to as CR (Vroman, 1996). It is essential to the success of any firm as it contributes to a stable revenue stream and reduces the cost of customer acquisition. Acquiring new customers can be expensive due to marketing and promotional efforts. Research by Kumar and Reinartz (2016) indicates that it is more economical to keep current clients than to find new ones. Loyal customers are more likely to recommend a business to others, leading to positive word-of-mouth marketing. Al-Hattami, Al-Adwan, Abdullah, and Al-Hakimi (2023) research on mobile wallet services is in support of this. In the context of entrepreneurial projects, where resources might be limited and competition can be fierce, maintaining a loyal customer base becomes even more crucial (AL-Taie & Alsiede, 2022; Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019). Building strong relationships with customers can lead to long-term partnerships, contract renewals and ongoing collaborations, contributing to the sustainability of entrepreneurial projects (Davis, 2020; Agarwal *et al.*, 2020; Al-Hattami *et al.*, 2023). From this reasoning, the following hypothesis was framed:

H4. CR positively affects entrepreneurial projects success.

3. Methodology

3.1 The study instrument and sample

This study employs a quantitative approach, utilizing a questionnaire for gathering data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The Corona pandemic made it difficult to deliver paper questionnaires; thus, this study used an online questionnaire (Al-Hattami, 2021). This instrument consists of two parts: The first is made up of personal information, such as gender, age, educational attainment and expertise (Table 1). The second section includes the five dimensions of the study (Table A1), as follows: First, the CS dimension, which includes five items adapted from Abdul-Rasool and Khadhim (2019), Shanker (2018) and Abdul-Razzaq, Jasim, and Bakr (2021), Second is the MS dimension, which includes seven items

Particulars	Number	%
<i>Gender</i>		
M	114	38.3
F	184	61.7
<i>Age</i>		
Less than 30	184	61.7
30–40	92	30.9
41–50	19	6.4
Above 50	3	1.0
<i>Educational level</i>		
High school	42	14.1
Diploma	78	26.2
Bachelor's	141	47.3
Postgraduate	37	12.4
<i>Expertise</i>		
Less than 5	192	64.4
5–10	77	25.8
11–15	26	8.7
Above 15	3	1.0

Table 1.
Respondents'
personal data

adapted from prior research (Baron & Ensley, 2006; Gimenez-Fernandez *et al.*, 2022). Third is the T dimension, which includes six items adapted from past studies (e.g. Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Moorthy & Sahid, 2022). Fourth is the CR dimension, which includes five items adapted from previous literature (e.g. Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019). Fifth is the EPS dimension, which includes five items adapted from earlier papers (e.g. Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019; Moorthy & Sahid, 2022). Each item relied on a five-point Likert scale. This instrument was applied online to a random sample of individuals who are the owners of entrepreneurial projects in Palestine in October 2022. This resulted in 298 questionnaires valid for analysis. This sample size is appropriate and adequately strong for the statistical examination (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017; Newman & McNeil, 1998).

3.2 Statistical processing tools for the study

In order to analyze the study data and test the research hypotheses, SPSS and SmartPls 4 were used. SPSS was used for initial analysis, such as frequencies and missing values (Stehlik-Barry & Babinec, 2017). SmartPls was used for measurement analysis and structural analysis (testing hypotheses). This software is commonly used in marketing research and information systems (Sarstedt & Cheah, 2019; Al-Okaily, Al-Okaily, Shiyyab, & Masadah, 2020; Al-Hattami, 2022). This is due to its flexibility in dealing with small and large samples, unlike other software such as Amos. It is also characterized by its exploratory method, unlike the Amos software, which is applied only in the case of models based on strong theories (Dash & Paul, 2021; Hair *et al.*, 2017). In addition, it is characterized by its ability to deal with all kinds of independent, dependent, intermediate, etc. variables (Hair *et al.*, 2017).

4. Data analysis and results

To analyze the data and extract the results according to the SmartPls, two basic steps must be followed: first, ensuring the quality and conformity of the measurement model. Second,

ensuring the quality of the structural model and testing the significance of the structural paths of the study model (Tenenhaus, Amato, & Esposito Vinzi, 2004; Hair *et al.*, 2017).

4.1 Measurement model

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), factor loadings and discrimination validity were used to assess the measurement model. From Table 2, it was found that the value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the composite reliability of all study variables are greater than 0.70, which is the minimum required (Hair *et al.*, 2017). The AVE values for all study variables also exceeded the required minimum of 0.50 (Hair *et al.*, 2017). In addition, the factor loading values for all study items exceeded the required minimum of 0.60 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). According to Table 2, the discrimination validity values indicate their differences from each other; there is no intersection between them, and each variable represents the same. That is, the square root of the AVE for any latent variable is greater than the value of its association with other latent variables (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Table 2 also displays the variance inflation factor (VIF) for measuring multicollinearity problems and the common method bias (CMB). According to Kock (2017), when all VIF values ≤ 3.3 , the model can be deemed free of multicollinearity problems and CMB. As is clear from Table 2, all VIF values are < 3.3 , implying that the multicollinearity problem and the CMB are absent in this study.

Variables and items		Reliability and convergent validity				Discriminant validity and VIF							
		Factor loading	α	CR (rho_c)	CR (rho_a)	AVE	CS	MS	T	CR	EPS	VIF	
CS	CS1	0.698	0.753	0.835	0.763	0.503	0.709						1.759
	CS2	0.788											
	CS3	0.639											
	CS4	0.717											
	CS5	0.696											
MS	MS1	0.760	0.857	0.891	0.859	0.538	0.605	0.734				2.031	
	MS2	0.674											
	MS3	0.790											
	MS4	0.717											
	MS5	0.743											
	MS6	0.730											
	MS7	0.717											
T	T1	0.708	0.848	0.887	0.851	0.568	0.497	0.618	0.754		2.169		
	T2	0.782											
	T3	0.775											
	T4	0.738											
	T5	0.790											
	T6	0.724											
CR	CR1	0.683	0.812	0.870	0.814	0.572	0.550	0.563	0.675	0.756		2.102	
	CR2	0.761											
	CR3	0.796											
	CR4	0.744											
	CR5	0.792											
EPS	EPS1	0.681	0.808	0.867	0.807	0.567	0.458	0.502	0.520	0.506	0.753		-
	EPS2	0.781											
	EPS3	0.755											
	EPS4	0.758											
	EPS5	0.785											

Table 2.
Measurement model

4.2 Structural model

In order to evaluate the structural model, the following measures were used: First, the coefficient of determination R^2 , which indicates the predictive power of the model within the study sample. It further indicates the amount of variation in the dependent latent variable. R^2 value of 0.20 is considered high in research disciplines such as consumer behavior (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). Second, the Q^2 measure assesses the predictive ability of the study model outside the study sample. According to Hair *et al.* (2011), it is required to be greater than zero. As shown in Table 3, the R^2 value of EPS is greater than 0.20 and the Q^2 value is positive, indicating the ability of the study model to test the hypotheses and predict the degree of impact of the independent factors on the dependent factor.

To test the hypotheses of the study, bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples was run in SmartPls 4. Accordingly, all hypotheses of the study were valid (H1–H4). The structural model (Table 4; Figure 3) shows beta, *t*-value and *p*-value. The higher the absolute value of beta, the stronger the effect. It is recommended to accept the hypothesis when the *t*-value is greater than 1.96 with a significance level of $p < 0.05$ (Hair *et al.*, 2011).

5. Discussion

5.1 A comparative analysis with previous studies

The direct effects of CS, MS, T and CR have satisfactorily explained a 35.9% variance in EPS using the study model. The results of the analysis in the previous section showed support for all the hypotheses of the study.

The validity of the first hypothesis has been confirmed due to the following evidence: beta = 0.141, T statistics = 2.190 and *P-value* = 0.029 (<0.05). Hence, it can be said that there is a direct and significant positive effect of CS on EPS. This result is in line with Khaksar, Nawaser, and Afshar (2010) and Dzogbenuku and Keelson (2019). High-quality CS can add significant value by creating demand for goods and services and thus enhancing EPS. In many industries, the quality of CS can be a key differentiator. Entrepreneurs who prioritize exceptional service can stand out from their competitors and attract a loyal customer base. This loyalty can contribute significantly to the success and sustainability of their projects (Lariviere & Kandampully, 2019; Al-Hattami *et al.*, 2023). Positive CS experiences also contribute to a positive reputation for the entrepreneurial project. A strong reputation can attract new customers, partners and investors, creating a virtuous cycle of growth (Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2002; Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985). CS interactions provide valuable insights into customer preferences, pain points and suggestions. Entrepreneurs can use this feedback to

Table 3.
Evaluation of the
structural model
quality

Latent variable	R^2	Q^2
EPS	0.359	0.193

Table 4.
Hypotheses testing

Path (hypothesis)	Beta	T Statistics	<i>P</i> Values
H1: Customer Service → EPS	0.141	2.190	0.029
H2: Management Style → EPS	0.182	2.453	0.014
H3: Technology → EPS	0.216	2.347	0.019
H4: Customer Retention → EPS	0.180	2.036	0.042

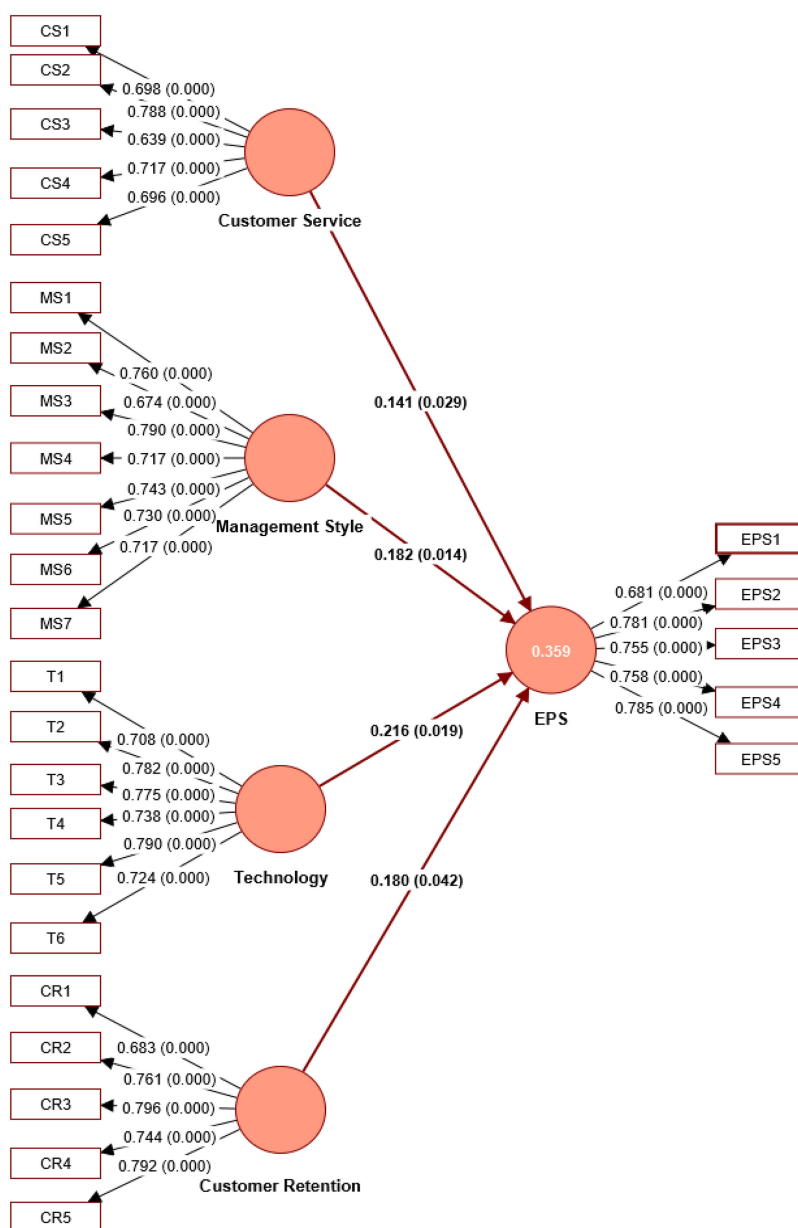


Figure 3.
Structural model

refine their products or services, leading to continuous improvement and innovation (Khaksar *et al.*, 2010; Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019). In fact, improving CS is critical for entrepreneurial projects to succeed; this is what our results confirmed (hypothesis 1).

MS, as a factor of marketing literacy, has also shown a positive and significant effect on EPS (beta = 0.182, T statistics = 2.453 and *P-value* = 0.014 (<0.05)). A proper MS promotes facing and dealing with situations. It further enables business completion, the planning of marketing campaigns and expansion. This, in turn, would enhance EPS. This result is supported by [Elfarrar \(2017\)](#), who pointed to good MS as one of the most important factors for the EPSs. The result is also in line with [Mgeni \(2015\)](#), who found a significant and strong positive correlation between entrepreneurial leadership style and project performance. Moreover, [Ellahi et al.'s](#) research (2022) explored how MSs (e.g. servant leadership) are related to the EPSs. The study emphasized the significance of a MS that balances strategic planning with adaptability. It was argued that successful entrepreneurs are capable of adjusting their management approaches to suit changing circumstances, ultimately leading to better project outcomes.

Today, growing numbers of businesses use T tools to communicate with suppliers, customers and end users. New ways of marketing have given small businesses a chance to grow in a dramatic and dynamic way ([Eid & El-Gohary, 2013](#)). Our results also support the role of T in influencing EPS (beta = 0.216, T statistic = 2.347 and *P-value* = 0.019 (<0.05)), in line with other previous research such as [Omar et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Ardelean \(2021\)](#). Indeed, T plays a significant role in the EPSs. It reduces the cost of starting up, increases consumer trust and provides a platform for businesses to operate globally. Furthermore, innovation in T-based start-ups can lead to long-term profits ([AlAstal, 2023](#); [Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019](#); [Ardelean, 2021](#)).

Finally, the results have shown a significant impact of CR on EPS (beta = 0.180, T statistics = 2.036 and *P-value* = 0.042 (<0.05)). CR is a critical factor and the goal of every enterprise that seeks to survive and succeed, as it enables the enterprise to increase profitability and revenue ([Alkitbi, Alshurideh, Al Kurdi, & Salloum, 2021](#)). Thus, a slight increase in CR can have a significant effect on EPS. This result aligns with [Kumar and Reinartz \(2016\)](#), [Dzogbenuku and Keelson \(2019\)](#). These studies collectively support the idea that CR is closely tied to the EPSs and businesses in general. Retaining customers not only generates repeat business but can also result in positive word-of-mouth marketing, reduced marketing costs and improved overall financial performance.

5.2 Theoretical implications

[Di Vaio et al. \(2022\)](#) confirm that providing theoretical or academic implications helps fill gaps in the extant literature. Accordingly, this research contributes significantly from a theoretical standpoint. This research adds to the existing literature by highlighting an important aspect of marketing that has not been adequately addressed, namely the impact of marketing literacy on EPS. Moreover, such a study is novel and rare in the Arabic context, particularly in Palestine. Therefore, it would help in raising awareness of marketing literacy among owners of entrepreneurial projects in such countries and provide empirical evidence of success for those who are about to establish an entrepreneurial project. Marketing literacy enables entrepreneurs to understand their target audience better. Entrepreneurs who are well-versed in marketing concepts can conduct thorough market research, identify customer needs and preferences and tailor their products or services accordingly ([Kotler & Armstrong, 2016](#)). This can lead to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty, which in turn could enhance success and sustainability ([Dzogbenuku & Keelson, 2019](#); [Di Vaio et al., 2022](#)).

5.3 Practical implications

Improving the likelihood of success for entrepreneurial projects primarily requires marketing literacy. This research aimed to provide recommendations to decision-makers and policymakers on the role of marketing literacy in the EPSs, which ensures that they play a

crucial role in economic development. The study offered an empirical assessment of the most significant factors influencing entrepreneurial projects' success. The study's findings showed the importance of these factors, which can help small business owners and marketing managers plan and steer their future policies, plans and strategies. In turn, this will have a positive effect on the economy. Notably, the findings of the empirical analysis revealed that the literacy of marketing T is the most influential factor on EPS, with $\text{Beta} = 0.216$. Thus, in order for entrepreneurs to enhance the success of their projects, T literacy must be given great attention; this is also what other researchers have stressed, such as Budaya *et al.* (2022), Cahya (2022) and Chakraborti *et al.* (2022). Besides, the results showed that the dimensions of MS, CR and CS are no less important than the T dimension, where $\text{Beta} = 0.182, 0.180$ and 0.141 , respectively; this is also what previous studies have indicated, such as Alkitbi *et al.* (2021) and Khaksar *et al.* (2010). Hence, entrepreneurs should enhance their knowledge of marketing literacy to achieve EPS.

5.4 Limitations and future research

Some limitations exist, as with any study and should be taken into account. First, we evaluated marketing literacy by using CS, MS, T and CR, while there is evidence that marketing literacy is a broader construct that could include, for example, innovation (Mostafiz, Ahmed, & Hughes, 2022), specialization (education) (Ferrell, Hair, Marshall, & Tamlia, 2015) and language literacy (Huhmann, 2017). Second, the data were collected from only one Arab country (Palestine); future research could include other Arab countries to compare the results. Third, our study used the questionnaire as a measurement instrument; future research could consider adding another instrument, such as interviews, to enhance the generalization of results. Fourth, the study focused on the demographic data of entrepreneurial project owners. In future research, it could be useful to learn more about the sector and business longevity. Finally, the study did not use any mediators or control variables that future research could think of.

6. Conclusions

Marketing literacy refers to the knowledge and understanding of marketing principles and strategies that individuals, including entrepreneurs, possess. It plays a significant role in shaping how entrepreneurs develop and execute their marketing efforts, which in turn can affect the success of their projects.

Entrepreneurship research expands research by fully exploring the role of marketing literacy in the success of start-up projects. In the context of Palestine, there is a noticeable gap in understanding how specifically marketing literacy influences the EPSs. The study develops research on the relationship between marketing literacy and EPS in Palestine. The results indicate that marketing knowledge achieves entrepreneurial excellence, thus ensuring the EPSs. Specifically, the results identify CS, good MS, T and CR as important and critical factors in enhancing the EPSs. Indeed, these positive results encourage entrepreneurs to be involved in entrepreneurial projects, thus gaining business success.

Note

1. <https://tradingeconomics.com/palestine/gdp>

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Appendix

Effect of marketing literacy

Construct	Items
Customer service	<p><i>CS1</i>: The entrepreneurial project provides services and products that meet the desires of its customers</p> <p><i>CS2</i>: The entrepreneurial project secures effective communications with its customers</p> <p><i>CS3</i>: The customer is the basis for the presence of the leading project in the market</p> <p><i>CS4</i>: The entrepreneurial project takes into account that its employees have the skills of communication and communication with customers</p> <p><i>CS5</i>: The entrepreneurial project prepares training programs for its employees to enable them to provide the best services and products to customers</p>
Management style	<p><i>MS1</i>: The entrepreneurial project adopts advanced administrative methods to perform its activities in customer service</p> <p><i>MS2</i>: The entrepreneurial project plans its operations to exchange benefits with its customers</p> <p><i>MS3</i>: The entrepreneurial project is keen to develop a marketing strategy in line with its general strategy</p> <p><i>MS4</i>: The senior management of the entrepreneurial project is concerned with all administrative functions in it</p> <p><i>MS5</i>: The management of the entrepreneurial project sets plans to achieve its objectives</p> <p><i>MS6</i>: Coordination takes place between the various management teams of the entrepreneurial project with the intention of cooperation</p> <p><i>MS7</i>: Coordination takes place between the various management teams of the entrepreneurial project in order to achieve the objectives of customer service</p>
Technology	<p><i>T1</i>: The entrepreneurial project selects the best technologies to develop customer-oriented marketing activities</p> <p><i>T2</i>: The entrepreneurial project employs modern technologies in the service of collecting and retrieving marketing information</p> <p><i>T3</i>: Modern technologies contribute to solving the marketing problems facing the entrepreneurial project</p> <p><i>T4</i>: The entrepreneurial project has a database of its employees</p> <p><i>T5</i>: The modern technologies adopted by the entrepreneurial project contribute to reducing costs, which helps improve the quality of services</p> <p><i>T6</i>: The technologies adopted in the entrepreneurial project contribute to identifying marketing opportunities</p>
Customer retention	<p><i>CR1</i>: The entrepreneurial project adopts a philosophy to understand the customer and meet his needs within the foundations of his work</p> <p><i>CR2</i>: The entrepreneurial project makes its customers feel important from the first contact with them</p> <p><i>CR3</i>: The marketing department in the entrepreneurial project identifies the customers to whom it directs its efforts</p> <p><i>CR4</i>: The entrepreneurial project is interested in knowing the motives behind the purchasing decisions of its customers</p> <p><i>CR5</i>: The entrepreneurial project places customer satisfaction as the basis of its presence in the market</p>
Entrepreneurial projects success	<p><i>EPS1</i>: Organizational commitment</p> <p><i>EPS2</i>: Communication between workers and their subordinates</p> <p><i>EPS3</i>: Communication between employees and each other</p> <p><i>EPS4</i>: Administrative control of employees</p> <p><i>EPS5</i>: Administrative control of product quality</p>

Source(s): Table by authors

Table A1.
The survey
validated items