

**IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGIES ON CONSUMER
BEHAVIOR OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES IN KWARA
STATE**

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AUGUST, 2025

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BEHAVIOR OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES IN KWARA
STATE**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS
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SCIENCE DEGREE (B.Sc) IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

AUGUST, 2025

DECLARATION

I, ANTHONY, Caleb Musa (21/15BAA005), hereby declare that the dissertation ‘IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGIES ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES IN KWARA STATE’ is my original work, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been duly acknowledged and referenced in full accordance with academic standards.

ANTHONY, Caleb Musa

Signature/Date

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the research project titled: “Impact of Social Media Marketing Strategies On Consumer Behaviour of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Kwara State” is an original research work carried out by ANTHONY, Caleb Musa (21/15BAA005) complies with the requirements governing the award of the Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration at Thomas Adewumi University, Oko, Kwara State, Nigeria. The work has been examined and approved, and deemed to make a valuable contribution to knowledge, with an acceptable standard of academic presentation.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty, for the successful completion of my Bachelor of science degree in Business Administration. He is the source of my wisdom, strength, and inspiration. Without His grace, guidance, and unfailing love, this achievement would not have been possible. To Him be all the glory.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of social media marketing strategies on consumer behaviour, focusing on small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Kwara State, Nigeria. The objectives were to identify dominant social media marketing practices, evaluate their influence on consumer behaviour, and determine the most effective strategies for enhancing SME performance. Employing a quantitative research design, structured questionnaires were administered to a sample of 370 respondents comprising SME owners/managers and consumers, selected through purposive and random sampling techniques. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics to profile respondents and inferential techniques, including regression analysis, to test the relationship between social media marketing strategies and consumer behaviour indicators. The findings demonstrate that content marketing, influencer marketing, viral marketing, and corporate advertising exert statistically significant positive effects on brand visibility, consumer trust, and purchase intention. Regression results revealed that these strategies collectively explain a substantial proportion of the variance in consumer purchasing behaviour, with influencer marketing exerting the strongest effect. The study concludes that SMEs that adopt an integrated, data-driven social media marketing approach, underpinned by continuous performance monitoring and consumer-centred content creation, can significantly improve market competitiveness. The study recommends targeted investment in high-impact strategies, proactive online engagement, and alignment of marketing content with evolving consumer preferences to optimize outcomes.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Social media platforms have drastically changed marketing in recent years. In addition to transforming communication, social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube are now necessary for companies to successfully interact with their target markets (Smith, 2023). Due to its substantial impact on customer behaviour, social media marketing (SMM) has become a crucial strategy for businesses in a variety of industries (Chouhan et al., 2024).

Given the vast amount of users on social media platforms, practically every company uses social media marketing in one way or another these days. One of the various ways social media has been utilised for marketing is through adverts, which are frequently seen when browsing social media sites (Ibrahim & Ganeshbabu, 2018). The advent of digital marketing forced corporate companies to abandon the conventional approach and adopt fresh tactics. In addition to increasing customer communication, these digital marketing tactics provide a plethora of commercial prospects. Consequently, businesses adopted these tactics in order to stay competitive in the contemporary period (Johansson et al., 2021). Consequently, content marketing has become a vital instrument for digital marketing as a result of online marketing initiatives. These issues make it necessary to go through a large number of publications and investigate social media marketing tactics, their advantages and disadvantages, technology usage in marketing, and new developments in social media marketing.

The introduction of social media marketing has introduced a new suite of benefits; such as increased brand awareness, enhanced audience engagement, lead generations, stronger customer loyalty etc. (Hill & Moran, 2021; Hafele, 2021; Huang et al. 2019; Bucy, 2023).

Social media platforms provide a powerful channel for reaching and engaging with a large audience, which can help increase brand awareness and recognition. Engaging with customers through social media channels can help build stronger relationships and foster customer loyalty. It's often a less expensive option than traditional advertising methods, making it more appealing for smaller or start-up businesses (Montgomery, 2021). The nature of social media marketing also has plenty of benefits. Sharing links to your website or blog on social media can help drive more traffic to your website and increase the likelihood of conversions. In addition, social media provides a way to gather feedback from customers in real time, allowing for instant interaction and simplicity in communication (Hill & Moran, 2021).

In an effort to maintain a high level of social media marketing, businesses have developed a number of tactics. Using influencers (celebrities) to promote items is one tactic marketers employ to advertise their goods on social media (Jin et al., 2019). These endorsements are seen on social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and others. These influencers draw more buyers to businesses because they are thought to have a high social worth (Appel et al., 2019). Because they may quickly capture consumers' attention and potentially reach a larger audience than other conventional advertising techniques, celebrity influencers are effective marketing tools that can raise brand recognition and trust (Hashaw, 2019).

One of the most successful marketing tactics is content marketing. According to Weerasinghe (2019), a content marketing strategy is producing and disseminating valuable, consistent, and pertinent brand material in order to draw in audiences and generate revenue through certain goals. The material might appear as infographics, eBooks, movies, and blogs. To increase target reach, business brands should continue to produce high-quality content, publish frequently, and plan their posts appropriately. They may accomplish this effect by doing things like making hashtags. GoPro, for example, adds the hashtag #GoPro to all of their really

interesting videos (Sun, 2022). As a result of its strategy for marketing cutting-edge products, GoPro has emerged as the most significant camera brand.

The rise of digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn have opened new avenues for marketing, allowing SMEs to leverage various tactics, including influencer marketing, content marketing, and viral marketing, to build brand awareness and foster consumer loyalty. Influencer marketing, for example, has emerged as a powerful strategy that harnesses the credibility and reach of social media personalities to influence consumer behaviour (Smith, 2023). Similarly, content marketing enables businesses to craft compelling narratives that resonate with consumers, thereby enhancing brand engagement and trust (Nguyen & Simkin, 2019). Viral marketing, characterized by rapid and widespread sharing of content, offers the potential to exponentially increase brand exposure within a short span of time (Johnson & Lee, 2022).

Moreover, the adoption of social media marketing by SMEs in Kwara State is influenced by various factors, including digital literacy, access to technology, and the competitive landscape (Olalekan & Adebayo, 2020). These enterprises often operate under constraints such as limited marketing budgets and a reliance on traditional business practices, which can impede the effective implementation of digital marketing strategies. Consequently, there is a need for comprehensive research that not only evaluates the effectiveness of these strategies but also considers the contextual challenges that SMEs face in the region.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Social media has transformed the global marketing landscape, providing businesses, especially small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs), with cost-effective channels to promote their brands, engage customers, and influence buying behaviour. Despite the growing trend of social media utilization by businesses, the effectiveness of various social media marketing strategies;

particularly influencer marketing, content marketing, and viral marketing, in shaping consumer behaviour remains inconclusive and under-researched, especially in local contexts like Kwara State (Okeke & Nwafor, 2021).

Previous studies (Olasanmi, 2019; Lou & Yuan, 2019; Salem & Salem, 2021) have shown that influencer marketing can significantly affect consumers' purchasing decisions due to the perceived trust and authenticity of influencers. However, the extent to which this finding applies to SMEs in Kwara State, where consumer trust dynamics and influencer credibility may differ, remains unclear. Similarly, content marketing, which involves creating informative and engaging content, has been linked to stronger customer relationships and improved brand loyalty (Holliman & Rowley, 2014), yet many SMEs struggle with content strategy development and consistency due to resource constraints.

Viral marketing is another strategy that has been praised for its ability to rapidly increase brand awareness through user-generated sharing (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). Nonetheless, the unpredictable nature of virality and the difficulty in measuring its actual conversion into consumer action present significant challenges for SMEs aiming to rely on this method. Moreover, studies such as that by Olalekan and Adebayo (2020) suggest that while Nigerian SMEs are aware of the benefits of social media, their actual implementation and returns vary widely due to lack of expertise, strategy, and consumer insight.

These inconsistencies indicate a significant gap between the perceived potential of social media marketing and its practical impact on consumer behaviour in local SME settings. Without empirical evidence specific to Kwara State, SMEs may continue to allocate resources ineffectively, missing out on opportunities to harness social media as a strategic marketing tool. Therefore, there is a pressing need to investigate how influencer marketing, content marketing,

and viral marketing actually influence consumer behaviour within the SME sector in Kwara State.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions will be answered in the course of the study;

1. What is the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state?
2. What is the effect of content marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state?
3. What is the influence of viral marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state?
4. What is the influence of corporate advertising on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The aim objective of the study is to examine the impact of social media marketing on consumer behaviour on small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state. The specific objectives include to;

1. assess the impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state,
2. ascertain the effect of content marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state,
3. determine the influence of viral marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state.
4. ascertain the influence of corporate advertising on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state.

Ho2: There is no significant effect of content marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state.

Ho3: There is no significant influence of viral marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state

Ho4: There is no significant influence of corporate advertising on small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is delineated to focus on the impact of social media marketing on consumer behaviour within small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) operating in Kwara State, Nigeria. This research is confined to the examination of how various social media marketing strategies, namely influencer marketing, content marketing, viral marketing, corporate advertising affect consumer purchasing decisions and overall behaviour.

The study is geographically limited to Kwara State. This region provides a unique context for the investigation due to its distinctive socio-economic characteristics and the evolving digital landscape. The focus on Kwara State allows for an in-depth analysis of how regional factors such as local consumer preferences, digital literacy levels, and infrastructural challenges influence the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies. The research targets SMEs that have adopted social media marketing as a component of their business strategies. Both the enterprises and their consumers are integral to this study. For the SMEs, the study investigates the strategies they employ and the rationale behind their digital marketing practices. For consumers, the focus is on understanding how these social media marketing efforts influence

their buying behaviour. This dual focus ensures that the study covers both the supply and demand sides of the marketing equation.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for its possible theoretical and practical contributions to understanding the influence of social media marketing on customer behaviour in small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) in Kwara State.

Policymakers and government agencies responsible for SME development, digital innovation, and economic growth will benefit from this study by gaining insights into the role of social media marketing in shaping consumer behaviour. The findings can guide the formulation of supportive policies that promote digital literacy, provide incentives for technology adoption among SMEs, and improve the overall regulatory framework for digital marketing in Nigeria.

For SMEs, which often operate under budget constraints, this research provides valuable information on the most effective social media marketing strategies for engaging consumers and enhancing sales. The study will help business owners and managers make informed decisions about where to focus their marketing efforts, whether through influencer partnerships, content creation, or viral campaigns. Ultimately, this can improve brand visibility, customer loyalty, and profitability.

The study contributes to the growing body of literature on digital marketing and consumer behaviour, especially within emerging economies. It provides empirical evidence from Kwara State that can be used as a foundation for future research, comparative studies, or theoretical model development in the fields of marketing, entrepreneurship, and information systems.

Marketing, business administration, and communication students will benefit from the study as it offers a practical application of marketing theories and models in the context of local

SMEs. It also serves as a reference point for academic assignments, project work, or thesis development focused on digital business strategies and consumer psychology.

For the general public, especially consumers who are active on social media, the findings of this study will promote awareness of how marketing strategies are used to influence purchasing decisions. It encourages more informed and reflective consumer behaviour in an era where digital advertising is pervasive and sometimes manipulative.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Social media: online applications that enables the creation, sharing, and aggregation of user-generated content among virtual communities and networks.

Social media marketing (SMM): is using social media platform to promote products, services, or brands, build relationships with customers, and drive engagement.

Viral marketing: is a strategy that uses social sharing and word-of-mouth to rapidly spread a message or product, leveraging the power of online networks.

Consumer behaviour: is the study of how people make decisions about what they buy, want, need, or act in regards to a product, service, or company.

Small and Medium scale enterprise: Small and Medium Industries Enterprises Investment Scheme (SMIEIS) defines SME as any enterprise with a maximum asset base of N200 million, excluding land and working capital, with at least ten or more than 300 staff.

1.9 Operationalization of the Research Variables

$$Y = f(x)$$

$$CB = f(SMMS)$$

$$SMMS = IM, CM, VM, CA$$

Therefore, $Y = f(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4)$

$SMMS = f(IM, CM, VM, CA)$

Where;

Y = Dependent variable

X, x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4 = independent variables

SMM = Social Media Marketing Strategies

IM = Influencer marketing

CM = Content marketing

VM = Viral marketing

CA = Corporate Advertising

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Social Media

Many research have looked at the impact of social media platforms on consumer choices during the last ten years (Adegbuyi et al., 2015; Is-haq, 2019; Khan, 2021; Silvia, 2019; Wang & Wei, 2023). According to Kaplan and Haenlein, social media is an ecosystem of web-based applications that build on the technological and ideological principles of Web 2.0 and make it easier for people to create and share user-generated content (Andoh-Quainoo, 2022). Through advertising, social media transforms from a platform for social interaction to a business. Businesses have been investing more in advertising strategies that are specific to social media platforms as they realise how effective these platforms can be for promoting brands and engaging customers (Schuiteman, 2024).

In a marketing setting, social media are platforms where people build networks and exchange information and opinions. Through websites and apps like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube, businesses and customers can connect in ways that were previously impossible, allowing social networks to develop from common interests and beliefs (Haenlein & Kaplan, 2010). Social media studies people's connection patterns, and the strength of their social links can indicate the intensity of social engagement (Aral and Walker, 2014), and they also recognised the importance of social media influence in influencing consumer decisions. Data from social media platforms may be useful for idea generation, consumer analysis, and market research. Social media data may be used to characterise and quantify its value in order to create a new strategic resource that will improve marketing results (Gnizy, 2019).

Social media has become a vital component of modern marketing strategies, enabling opportunity for businesses to boost their exposure, generate sales, and develop meaningful relationships with customers. Brands now engage with customers in new ways as a result of social media's transformation into a business through advertising (Bajpai et al., 2012). Ads on social media have a significant impact on young users' perceptions of personalisation. Users find the social media advertisements valuable since it was tailored to themselves.

The relevance of advertising has a beneficial effect on perceived personalised ads (PA) on social media, indicating a substantial relationship between the PA and the user's online impulsive buying activity (Qudah, 2022). The user won't find the social media advertisement attractive if it doesn't have any influence over them. The user is drawn in by the advertisement's personal connection, which encourages them to click on it and learn more.

2.1.2 Social Media Marketing

According to Becker et al. (2013), social network marketing is the practice of using a social media platform to advertise a product or service and raise its online exposure. It may also help create a social network for the purpose of sharing knowledge and ideas. Different forms of communication are seen as more advantageous than others on some social media platforms. Instagram is a platform for sharing image-based content (Muñoz & Towner, 2017); YouTube is a platform for sharing videos (Indvik, 2011); Facebook is renowned for its strong customer relationship management platform (Popp et al., 2016); X, formerly known as Twitter, is renowned for its capacity to convey brand messages and prompt consumer responses in real-time (Culotta & Cutler, 2016). Social media marketing is the integration of social media into all stages and elements of the marketing mix through social media platforms. It helps promote the company's products and services as well as the brand (Olabanji et al., 2014). Salem and Salem (2019) state that social media enables consumers to find helpful information about other brands, and if this information matches the customers' expectations for the competitor's

product, strong customer satisfaction can develop, leading the customer to choose or continue to purchase the item. Businesses are gradually abandoning traditional media marketing in favour of social media marketing (Omotayo et al., 2015).

2.1.3 Social Media Marketing Strategies

2.1.3.1 Influencer Marketing

Product endorsements by celebrities or influencers are one tactic employed by marketers to advertise their goods on social media (Jin et al., 2019). Social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, and others are used to promote these products. These celebrities draw more clients to companies because they are seen as having a high social worth (Appel et al., 2019). Celebrity influencers are effective marketing tools because they may quickly capture consumers' attention and potentially reach a larger audience than more conventional advertising techniques. This can increase brand recognition and credibility (Hashaw, 2019). Currently, it is not uncommon for corporations to approach social media accounts with large followings in order to promote their products to these followers. These celebrities go live on their social media channels as part of these ads (Jin et al., 2019). According to earlier studies, celebrity endorsements may account for up to 10% of advertising budgets and 25% of all television ads (Erdogan, 1999). And because celebrities assist businesses in developing a distinctive position and a favourable brand image in the marketplace, there is a clear correlation between the usage of celebrities in commercials and increases in business revenues (Min, 2019).

The increasing significance of influencer marketing in influencing the beliefs and actions of consumers has been the subject of several studies. The size of an influencer's fan following and the degree of product variation determine how much of an impact they have on customers' opinions of businesses (Abraham et al., 2022). The credibility and worth of the message that

influencers convey to consumers also affects their perception of and trust in a business. According to these research, influencers are crucial to the fashion industry's retail sector, especially when it comes to influencing customers' preferences and choices (Alotaibi et al., 2019).

2.1.3.2 Content Marketing

User-generated content, or UGC, is another crucial component of social media marketing as it has completely changed how consumers research and assess products. Because it offers a more authentic and reliable source of information than traditional advertising, user-generated content (UGC), such as reviews and photos of items in use, has a significant influence on customers. Customers' opinions and assessments of a brand may be greatly influenced by their faith in other people's recommendations, which is a form of social proof (Hanks et al., 2022).

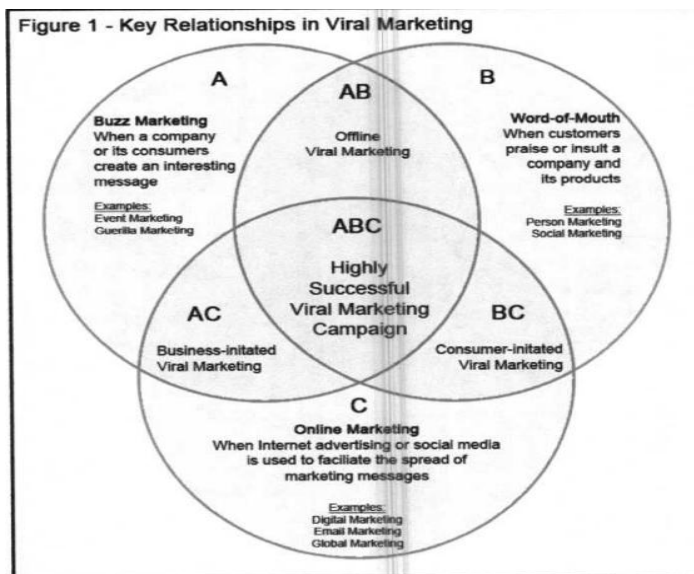
According to Weerasinghe (2019), a content marketing strategy is producing and disseminating valuable, consistent, and pertinent brand material in order to draw in audiences and generate revenue through certain goals. The content may be presented as blogs, eBooks, films, or infographics. According to a poll using a random sample, 61.4% of customers evaluate information on social media, whereas 38.6% do so online (Weerasinghe, 2019). This figure demonstrates how well content marketing works to engage social media users. To increase target reach, business brands should continue to produce high-quality content, publish frequently, and plan their posts appropriately. They may accomplish this effect by doing things like making hashtags. For example, all of Peak Milk's extremely engaging content includes the hashtag #ItsInYou.

2.1.3.3 Viral Marketing

In its most precise definition, viral marketing refers to all marketing messages that are disseminated through consumer-to-consumer contact (AMA, 2012). As a result, it is among

the most fundamental marketing phenomena and predates modern media. The growth of the Internet and the accompanying online media has increased the effectiveness of viral marketing. These days, internet businesses who launch viral marketing initiatives use the phrase "viral marketing" routinely in everyday speech (Summers, 2012). Figure 1 illustrates the link between buzz marketing, word-of-mouth marketing, and internet marketing, which is sometimes referred to as viral marketing. The three main precursors of effective viral marketing efforts are listed as buzz marketing, word-of-mouth marketing, and web marketing (Figure 1). Buzz marketing, which is the process of generating excitement through memorable marketing messaging, is represented by Set A in Fig. 1 (Emakina, 2007). Among the instances would be event marketing, which makes use of noteworthy occasions as chances to promote using strategies like sponsorships (AMA, 2012).

Guerrilla marketing, which relies on unconventional and striking marketing techniques like sidewalk chalk art that seems three-dimensional, is another type of viral marketing. Guerrilla marketing is frequently employed as a cost-cutting measure (AMA, 2012). Set B is an example of word-of-mouth advertising. When customers share marketing messages with other customers, this is known as word-of-mouth marketing (AMA, 2012). Word-of-mouth advertising was done via mail, phone, or in person prior to the Internet. According to Wiedemann (2010), word-of-mouth marketing encompasses a wide range of marketing phenomena, such as customers discussing noteworthy advertising campaigns and recommending goods or services. Social marketing and person marketing can help spread the word. The goal of each of these marketing strategies is to affect consumer behaviour. While social marketing affects groups of people or society as a whole, person marketing affects individuals (AMA, 2012).



Set A (131172 marketing) and Set B (word-of-mouth) overlap in Section AB. This was the main definition of viral marketing prior to the Internet (AMA, 2012). Offline viral marketing is what happens when a marketing message creates a lot of buzz and is discussed often. According to Sexton (2011), this still occurs today and is frequently the result of effective internet viral marketing.

Set A (buzz marketing) and Set C (internet marketing) overlap to form Set AC. Business-initiated viral marketing is what happens when businesses are able to create buzz online. Businesses make deliberate attempts to create marketing messages that fit within this category. Set B (word-of-mouth) and Set C (internet marketing) overlap to form Set BC. Businesses have little direct control over how these marketing messages propagate; this is known as consumer-initiated viral marketing. This includes all of the consumer communications made possible by the Internet regarding companies, their goods, and services. Another name for this is "word-of-mouth" (Bampo, 2008).

Set ABC is the intersection of web marketing, word-of-mouth, and buzz marketing. Strong marketing messages, or buzz, are a common way for businesses to indirectly generate word-of-mouth. Word-of-mouth, often known as "word-of-mouth" marketing, is a rapidly growing

and exponential marketing force that is made possible by the Internet. Put more simply, a very effective viral marketing strategy simply happens when businesses generate buzz online and customers spread it (Emakina, 2007). Viral marketing is based on audience participation (Phelps, 2004). Without reaching the viewer's sharing threshold, viral marketing messages cannot proliferate or "go viral" (Phelps 2004). Viewers of marketing communications will quickly or, in the most effective situations of viral marketing, exponentially, spread the message once this sharing threshold is reached (Bampa, 2008; Emakina, 2007). A marketing message needs to be particularly pertinent if it is to go viral. Several strategies, such as humour, visual impact or captivating content, interaction, and passionate peer-to-peer recommendations, can help messages attain commercial relevancy (Bampa, 2008; Emakina, 2007).

A lot of effective viral marketing efforts that are started by businesses emphasise humour, substance, and interaction above advertising. These commercials minimise the company's significance and give consumers the obvious sense that the businesses are motivated by factors other than sales. The commercials are produced more for the enjoyment of the customer than for the benefit of the business (Emakina, 2007). Customers see the business as being amiable, which enhances its credibility (Emakina, 2007). Customers are more inclined to buy items from a firm that they trust (Emakina, 2007).

2.1.3.4 Corporate Advertising

Corporate advertising is another tactic utilised in social media marketing that seeks to improve a company's reputation rather than only advertise its products and services (Yilmaz, 2015). There is an increase in commercials that just seek to notify the public of a company's existence, which piques their interest in learning more about the company. Social media marketing has been quite successful thanks to these tactics. The most successful social media marketing tactic is image appeals. According to Johansson and Hiltula (2021), image appeal includes both

orientation and cognitive responses to customers' impressions. Problem-oriented scenarios are a component of cognitive engagement, but the consumer's emotions are a component of orientation reaction. Customers become more knowledgeable and develop stronger emotional bonds when picture appeals are used. Consequently, this tactic successfully markets expressive and value goods to the intended market. To promote their brands, businesses use visual appeals on social media sites. For instance, after publishing an advertising featuring a woman wearing knickers, 'Blossom' from The First Media received the most views ever. On Facebook, the post had 12 million shares and more than 280 million views (Sun, 2022). Among the characteristics impacting such figures are aesthetic attractions that evoke strong feelings in customers.

2.1.4 Benefits of Social Media Marketing Strategies

Businesses and consumers may profit from social media marketing in a number of ways. First, it gives companies a chance to advertise their brands as well as the products and services they provide (Rugova & Prenaj, 2016). Si (2015) supports this assertion by pointing out how social media helps businesses connect with their customers directly and cut out intermediaries. Arca (2012) asserts that social media marketing helps companies to contact their target audience, create leads, learn more about the market and rivals, enhance human resources and public relations, reduce expenses, obtain feedback from customers, and raise brand recognition.

Based on user input and personal preferences, social media marketing may help target audiences and customers. By doing this, businesses may increase their word-of-mouth and efficiently contact the individuals who are most interested in what they have to offer (Nadaraja et al., 2013). One more benefit of social media marketing is that it gives companies the chance to provide clients customised products, which raises customer satisfaction (Al-Mohammadi & Gazzaz, 2020).

Ibrahim and Ganeshbabu (2018) point out the benefit of social media's analytics capabilities, which enable companies to track the effectiveness of their advertising initiatives and devise ways to improve them. According to Dwivedi et al. (2020), social media has advantages for the healthcare and wellness sector, including better patient outcomes and direct communication between healthcare providers and their patients. Social media marketing also helps small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) develop quickly and improves the education sector. The growing interest in social media marketing can be explained by these advantages.

According to Behera and Balaji (2019), marketing managers may evaluate brand intelligence with the use of social media marketing. The advantages of doing brand intelligence on social media are highlighted by coordination. As a result, social networks create a lot of traffic for corporate branding. Social media was once thought to impress primarily the younger generation. Managers may gain vital information from social media marketing, including product development, client segmentation, loyalty management, and consumer feedback (Weerasinghe, 2019). Businesses' brand recognition is also raised via social media marketing. According to Behera and Balaji (2019), social media marketing develops the best method for content syndication that expands a company's reach.

Influencer marketing, content marketing, viral marketing, and other tactics boost brand awareness because of their high level of customer interaction. By enlisting staff members, sponsors, and business associates to participate in "like" and "share" initiatives, marketing managers may raise awareness. People may engage with the material by interacting with it, which raises brand recognition and cultivates a respectable company image. For example, publishing a brand's content frequently broadens its audience since it creates a chain reaction that draws in both current and future customers. According to research, 91% of marketers think social media marketing greatly increases product exposure (Behera & Balaji, 2019). These findings support social media marketing's efficacy.

2.1.5 Challenges of Social Media Marketing Strategies

Social media marketing has led to a variety of difficulties. One illustration of this is the substitution of computer use for face-to-face communication techniques. Customers are consequently unable to provide businesses with direct information about their items. Businesses find it challenging to comprehend the unique demands of their clients when there is a lack of interpersonal connection between them. This raises the possibility of an inflow of items that are not in high demand (Michaelidou et al., 2011). Additionally, there is the problem of false information on social media (Di Domenico et al., 2021). Mischievous individuals can use social media to disseminate false information about a company's products, thus damaging the company's reputation. Using celebrities to endorse items may lead to overpromotion, which might mislead buyers about the greatest features and products available (Jin et al., 2019). In order to overcome these obstacles and preserve the positive reputation of their company, businesses must make sure they use social media responsibly.

Business companies have serious difficulties when it comes to social media marketing. Behera and Balaji contend that data mining, which includes gathering customer data, is a serious danger to social media marketing. But most customers choose not to provide their personal information. Accessing the private information of their clients is severely hampered by their privacy concerns. Social media marketing is always an option for data mining organisations looking to get customer data from posts and applications. Additionally, social media marketing is subject to regulations that control the quantity of posts and content. Therefore, in order to avoid account termination, firms need abide by a number of media rules (Behera & Balaji, 2019). Marketing managers may, however, take a number of steps to get beyond these obstacles. For example, they should steer clear of anything that asks customers for their personal information directly. Additionally, they have to publish content that complies with the rules of many platforms that forbid actions like nudity.

2.1.6 Consumer Behaviour

The concept of consumer behaviour has been well-defined by several researchers. Some Western researchers have defined consumer behaviour as the exactly how and the why individuals consume some given products or services (Bergadaa & Faure, 1995; Esso & Dibb, 2004). The definition of the concept of consumer behaviour given by Bergadaa and Faure (1995), Esso and Dibb (2004), is too narrowed and it does not bring out the motives around consumption not only in the context of Western consumption, but also in the other contexts such as Africa or Asian. Nassè et al. (2019) defined the concept of consumer behaviour as the how consumers examine, evaluate, decide, which products, and/or services they need, and then they make purchases with some specific motives related to choose, consumption, quality, taste, advertising, or price.

Galbete et al. (2017) have defined consumer behaviour as an aspect of the daily life styles that concerns diet and food. This aspect is always subject to some changes and to some variations that reflect the specific needs of every consumer. This definition of Galbete et al. (2017) is centered on the diet and food whereas consumption includes other type of products that may not be edible such as clothing, transportation, and housing. Thus, their definition is too narrow. For Nassè (2021) consumer behaviour is a decision mode, examination mode, and an evaluation mode of on products and some services before making their purchases or repurchases with some specific choice, consumption, quality, taste, advertising or price requirements and expectations.

2.1.7 Small and Medium Enterprise (SME)

Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) include both successful businesses with a big workforce and microbusinesses with a small number of employees. The term "SMEs" has no widely recognised meaning. SMEs are defined by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy as companies with fewer than 500 workers or a yearly revenue of up to 50

million euros (BMW 2014a). SMEs are defined by the European Commission as businesses with less than 250 workers or a yearly revenue of up to 50 million euros (EC 2017). SMEs are defined as businesses with a yearly revenue of up to 500 million euros by the KfW1, Germany's government-owned development bank (Schwartz, 2016). Nigeria uses the asset base criterion more frequently. In its 2005 guideline on the Small and Medium Enterprise Investment Scheme (SMEIS), the Central Bank of Nigeria defined a SME as any business with no higher or lower restriction on workforce and a maximum asset base of 200 million naira (excluding land and working capital).

For nations worldwide, SMEs and the generation of jobs are crucial. SMEs contribute to innovation and higher productivity in addition to being a significant source of jobs. Since they have been the primary driver of production growth and employment creation in both developed and developing nations, they are essential to economic development (Tambunan, 2008).

The operations of SMEs become more significant in developing countries since they have the ability to boost export growth, employment creation, poverty reduction, and income distribution. Additionally, it promotes the growth of industry, entrepreneurship, and the rural economy. Every economy depends heavily on small and medium-sized businesses because of the substantial production and jobs they create. Given their significance to the nation's economy, it is critical that the tax administration measures put in place improve the attitudes and compliance of small business taxpayers with regard to filing taxes. Since small businesses pay a much smaller share of taxes than larger establishments, tax authorities are more likely to focus on larger businesses. This implies that a sizable portion of SMEs avoid paying taxes that would have been used to fund programs that would have helped them grow. Since SMEs make up the bulk of company taxpayers in developing nations, their compliance levels have a direct influence on government tax revenue collections and the ability to cover the deficit budget.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2016, small businesses, particularly in developing nations, are important engines of economic growth in economies (Calza & Goedhuys, 2017). A semi-skilled and unskilled labour force in South Africa that would otherwise be jobless is given work by small firms (Makina et al., 2015; Rankin et al., 2013). A high failure rate (Adeniran & Johnston, 2011; Maye, 2014) and subpar performance (Fatoki, 2014) limit small enterprises' ability to contribute to the economy to the fullest extent possible. Tax expenses are one of the reasons given for small enterprises' subpar performance and ultimate demise (Herrington & Kew, 2016). Reports frequently highlight the expenses of tax compliance as a barrier to small business success (Battisti et al., 2011; Herrington & Kew, 2016; Schwab, 2016; Warfield & Stark-Jones, 2012).

Oyelaran-Oyeyinka (2020) cites CBN (2014) as saying that SMEs are companies with less than 30 workers and/or an annual revenue of less than N100 million. Approximately 96% of Nigerian companies are SMEs, according to IFC studies, compared to 53% in the US and 65% in Europe. About 90% of businesses in the manufacturing and industrial sector are SMEs, and they account for 1% of GDP, compared to 40% in Asian nations and 50% in European nations. SMEs in Nigeria are dispersed throughout areas in clusters. Vietnam views SMEs as having between 10 and 300 workers, whereas Egypt defines SMEs as any company organisation with fewer than 50 and no more than five people (Magiya, 2016). SMEs are defined by the Inter-American Development Bank as businesses with less than 100 workers and less than \$3 million in annual revenue. According to Emanuele (2012), they are classified as having less than 250 workers in Europe and fewer than 500 employees in the US.

According to the World Bank, SMEs are often defined as businesses that employ no more than 300 people, generate \$15 million in sales annually, and have \$15 million in assets. According to Kachembere (2011), SMEs play a key role in fostering equitable sustainable development

and grassroots economic growth, and a high rate of economic growth supports social and economic advancement as well as the fight against poverty.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

According to Emanuele (2012), they are classified as having less than 250 workers in Europe and fewer than 500 employees in the US.

According to the World Bank, SMEs are often defined as businesses that employ no more than 300 people, generate \$15 million in sales annually, and have \$15 million in assets. According to Kachembere (2011), SMEs play a key role in fostering equitable sustainable development and grassroots economic growth, and a high rate of economic growth supports social and economic advancement as well as the fight against poverty. Using system utilisation as the dependent variable and PEOU and PU as independent variables, Davis (1989) carried out a number of studies to verify TAM. He discovered that self-reported current consumption and self-predicted future usage had a strong correlation with PU. Additionally, PEOU showed a substantial correlation with both present and future consumption. All things considered, he discovered that PU and system utilisation were substantially more correlated than PEOU. Additional regression research revealed that PEOU may not be a direct predictor of system usage, but rather an antecedent of PU. In other words, PEOU indirectly influences technological acceptance (TA) through PU.

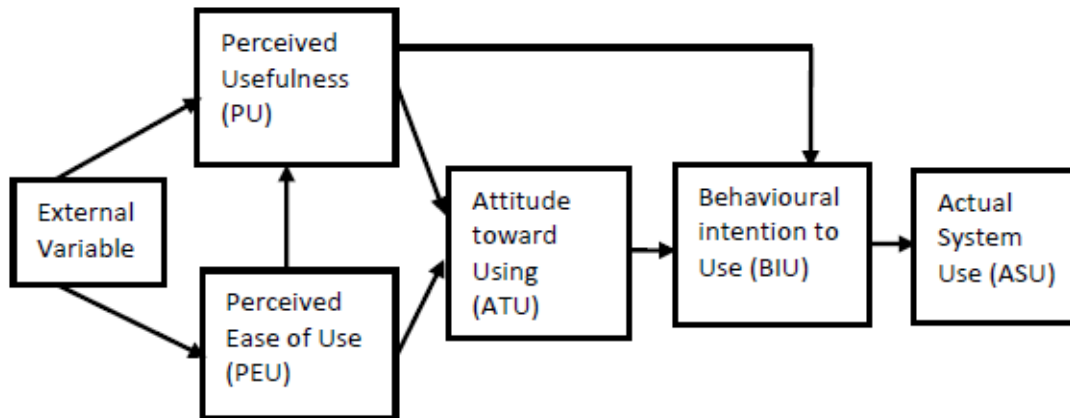


Fig 2.1: The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Source: Davis (1989)

ASU is a direct product of behavioural intention to use (BIU) of a technology, which Davis (1989) defined as the extent to which an individual has made conscious decisions to engage in or refrain from engaging in certain future actions (see Figure 2.1). Perceived usefulness (PU) and attitude towards usage (ATU) determine BIU.

ATU is a person's attitude towards executing the desired behaviour, whether it be good or negative (Davis, 1989). Perceived ease of use (PEOU) affects PU. According to the idea, PU and PEOU work together to determine ATU. According to the idea, external factors including social influence, system features, training, and the growth process have an impact on each PU and PEOU. However, Davis (1989) proposed that the two principles that determine ASU are PU and PEOU. He maintained that people will have a favourable attitude towards adopting a technology if they find it helpful (having PU) and simple to use (having PEOU). According to him, all of these will ultimately result in the behavioural intention to use (BIU) of the technology and, ultimately, its actual usage (ASU).

Bagozzi et al. (1992) contended that people develop attitudes and intentions towards attempting to learn how to use the new technology before starting efforts directed towards using it because new technologies, such as personal computers, are complex and decision makers have elements

of uncertainty regarding their successful adoption. Intentions to utilise the technology and attitudes towards its use may be unformed or may develop only after initial attempts to become proficient in its use. Accordingly, such attitudes and intentions could not have a direct or immediate impact on actual usage (Bagozzi et al., 1992).

2.2.2 Chaffey's Theory

The Chaffey's theory was propounded by Chaffey (2012), and it is of the opinion that social media marketing is informal (Gonzalez-Lafaysse & Lapassouse-Madrid, 2016). Man's behaviour, especially consumer behaviour, is focused on dialogue and networking, according to the notion. Consumer behaviour is affected by business-customer relationship. Thus, firms use social media to increase client purchasing alternatives, encourage purchases, and retain brand loyalty (Wang & Kim 2017).

The idea holds that consumer behaviour is influenced by business-customer interactions, and social media may be used as a tool to foster relationships. Chaffey (2016) states that social media strategies aim to establish and retain an engaged online community of followers and supporters. This strategy will increase brand loyalty by increasing product awareness and motivating customers to acquire, use, and repurchase online goods. This idea holds that social media is essential to internet marketing. Today's business is competitive. Social media let tiny companies stand out and allowed them to compete with larger organisations. by using social media to market their goods, interact with consumers, and produce content. Ashley and Tuten (2015) agreed with Chaffey (2012) that one-on-one social media interactions between companies and customers develop long-term relationships that benefit the firm financially.

Chaffey (2012) postulations expanded. Ashley and Tuten (2015) stressed that communication is essential to marketing. According to Rafiee & Sarabdeen (2013), social media may accomplish this goal by actively interacting with customers across a variety of channels. This

makes them happy and improves business performance and consumer satisfaction. Small company owners may preserve and maintain vital client data, such as contact information, preferences, and personalised interactions, with the help of social media marketing. They may customise marketing plans, provide excellent customer service by personally and promptly attending to client requests, grievances, and questions, and please clients. Customer satisfaction increases the likelihood that they will become devoted supporters, which can improve word-of-mouth recommendations, customer retention, and business expansion.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Chaffey theory. According to Chaffey (2012), social media marketing is an unofficial marketing strategy. The idea states that human conduct and consumer behaviour are based on communication and human networking. Consequently, social media marketing makes use of these stages to sway people's views about different products and services, which in turn motivates them to buy and maintains brand loyalty. This approach centres on social media as a relationship-building tool. These communication enhances the growth of strong bonds between the business and its clients. Because it presents a novel viewpoint on the consequences of social media marketing, this concept is important for the research (Heinze et al., 2016).

The performance of the business is impacted by long-term client connections, which also help to preserve it for the future. As a result, it is necessary to evaluate the short-term impacts of social media marketing while closely observing its long-term advantages. The theory does not, however, specify the conditions under which its assumptions would be valid. For example, previous studies such as Kimaru (2011) demonstrated that hurriedly constructed networks and communication might cause issues.

2.4 Empirical Review

Veronse et al. (2024) also looked at how social media networks help Kenyan small and medium-sized businesses penetrate foreign markets. Descriptive statistics were employed in the study, which focused on 65 respondents who ran SMEs in the Yaya centre in Nairobi. According to the research, the rewards of social media for internationalisation include the enormous exposure a business can create, the comparatively low expenses involved, the opportunities it offers for customer segmentation and targeting, and the market intelligence that can be obtained by examining customers' online behaviour and engaging with them on social media.

Research on social media marketing effect on customer purchasing behaviour was conducted by Shrestha et al. in 2023. The study surveyed 108 customers using non-probability convenience sampling and examined the impact of content marketing, social networks, social influence, and purchase intention. Multiple regression, ANOVA, correlation, and descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. The findings demonstrated that focusing on social networks, social influence, and content marketing might have an impact on the purchase decisions of customers.

Ogomegbunam (2023) investigated the use of social media marketing strategies and their influence on business survival among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Delta State, Nigeria. The study surveyed 398 SMEs, representing 10% of the 3,976 SMEs registered with SMEDAN, using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test three hypotheses. The finding revealed that cause marketing strategy significantly influenced customer loyalty greater use of cause marketing led to increased customer loyalty. Relationship marketing strategy was also positively associated with customer patronage. Scarcity marketing strategy significantly impacted sales volume. The

study concluded that social media marketing strategies play a critical role in improving customer engagement and boosting the survival of SMEs in Delta State.

A research by Gbandi and Iyamu (2022) examined the impact of social media marketing on company growth using data from a sample of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in Benin City, Nigeria. A custom created questionnaire was used to collect data for the study, which used a cross-sectional research methodology. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube were the four social media marketing facets selected for investigation. Every SMEs in Benin City, Nigeria, are included in the study's population. 500 chosen SMEs made up the study's sample size. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to examine the collected data. The expansion of SMEs was shown to be positively and significantly impacted by Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

Oloyede (2020) did a study on social media marketing and small-scale enterprises performance in Osun state, Nigeria: An Empirical Investigation. The study examined the impact of social media marketing on Small Scale Enterprises T(SSEs) in Osun State, Nigeria. A survey of one hundred and ten (110) randomly selected small-scale businesses in the three most urbanized cites (Osogbo, Ilesa and Ile-Ife) of the study area was conducted. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire designed for the study. Data was analysed with aids of Mean, Standard Deviation and Linear Regression. Results revealed that social media networks (LinkedIn, Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube and My Space) jointly and significantly influence SSEs performance measured by customer acquisition, retention and increase in market share with respectively. Furthermore, results also showed that Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter were independently predictors of SSEs performance.

The influence of social media marketing tactics employed by Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) on client acquisition and retention was investigated by Srinivasan et al.

(2016). Using judgement sampling, information was gathered from 50 Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMES). The social media marketing tactics employed by these MSMEs to attract and retain customers are investigated through exploratory research. The findings show that brand recognition and brand trust are strongly influenced by social media activity, and that these factors in turn have a significant impact on customer acquisition and retention. Additionally, the amount of time spent on social media and sales are strongly positively correlated. Market share growth and customer acquisition and retention are positively impacted by social media marketing tactics.

Additionally, Mwangi and Wagoki (2016) assessed how social media affected the performance of the advertising industry in Kenya's top five media groups: Mediamax Services, Nation Media Group, Standard Media Group, Radio Africa, and Royal Media Services. The stratified random sampling approach was used to create a sample of 82 responders. Data was gathered using a standardised questionnaire. The analysis used both descriptive and inferential statistics. According to the study, social media interaction and advertising company success were favourably correlated.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted the quantitative approach following that the analysis of the study was mainly quantitative where hypotheses were tested. In addition, the cross-sectional nature of the descriptive study design, which mostly uses questionnaires to collect data, is the primary reason it was selected.

3.2 Area of the Study

Kwara State is located in Western Nigeria. It has borders with Kogi State to the east, Niger State to the north, and the states of Ekiti, Osun, and Oyo to the south. Additionally, part of its western boundary forms the international border with Benin. Ilorin serves as the state's capital, and there are sixteen local government districts. With an estimated population of 3.2 million as of 2016, Kwara is the sixth least populated state in Nigeria and the ninth biggest in terms of area out of the 36 states (Nigeria Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

Kwara state was chosen as the study area, this is due to the state's business-friendly environment, coupled with infrastructural development and the rising adoption of digital technologies, makes it a suitable case for examining contemporary marketing trends such as social media marketing. According to the NBS (National Bureau of Statistics (2023)), there are over 5,000 registered SMEs in Kwara State, spanning across sectors such as marketing, fashion, agriculture, technology, and hospitality. Many of these businesses are increasingly leveraging social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok to reach new customers, promote their products, and engage consumers. However, despite the growing adoption of these platforms, empirical study on how such digital marketing strategies influence consumer behaviour in the state remains limited.

Furthermore, Kwara State has a diverse consumer population composed of students, civil servants, traders, and professionals who actively use social media. This makes the state ideal for studying how different demographics respond to influencer marketing, content marketing, and viral marketing strategies used by SMEs. The findings from Kwara State can offer practical insights not only for local business owners but also for stakeholders in similar socio-economic regions in Nigeria and other developing economies.

Additionally, the choice of Kwara State is also influenced by the accessibility of respondents, availability of data, and proximity for the researcher. As a student-based researcher located within the state, this ensures better access to SME owners and managers, reduced logistics cost, and efficient data collection, which ultimately contributes to the feasibility and success of the research.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population for this study comprises all registered Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) operating in Kwara State, Nigeria. This focus is appropriate given the study's objective, which is to examine the impact of social media marketing on consumer behaviour in the SME sector. SMEs play a vital role in the economic development of the state and are known to increasingly rely on digital tools, including social media, for marketing and customer engagement.

The study focuses on SMEs as a result of their critical role in the economic development of Kwara State and Nigeria at large, serving as key drivers of employment, innovation, and income generation. Given the increasing digitalization of business operations, it is crucial to understand how social media marketing influences consumer behaviour, particularly within this segment. More so, the study targets key decision-makers within these enterprises, such as managers, and owners. These individuals are directly involved in strategic marketing decisions

and can provide informed insights into how social media marketing affects consumer behaviour. Their perspectives are critical in understanding both the internal business rationale and observed external consumer responses to social media marketing initiatives.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2023), there are 5,008 registered SMEs in Kwara State. This figure represents the total population from which the study's sample will be drawn, ensuring that the findings can be generalized to the broader SME context within the state.

3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample size

The multi-stage sampling approach was used for this investigation. First, the sample was chosen using a judgemental approach based on accessibility. Next, a stratified strategy was used to identify a sample from each of the four local governments in Kwara state. Finally, a basic random technique was used to choose from the sample that was identified. Avoiding subjective bias brought on by a person's choice of sample units is the goal. Every member of a relevant population has an equal probability of being chosen when using a sampling procedure. In order to determine the sample size, a sample of the population will be chosen using the sampling procedure. Using Taro Yamane's (1964) sample size, this study utilised 370. The formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n= size of the sample, N= size of the population, e = degree of significance or sample error.

The sample size is given thus

$$n = \frac{5008}{1 + 5008(.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{5008}{13.52}$$

n = 370.414

n = 370

3.5 Source of Data

The researcher used primary data, a significant source of information, in the pursuit of the information needed for this study. A questionnaire was used to collect primary data directly from the research sample size. The questionnaire consists of typed questions that respondents answered according to the researcher's offered options. The Likert scale principle was used in the formulation of closed-ended questions.

3.6 Method of Data collection

Primary sources of data are the technique of data collecting that is employed. Additionally, the questionnaire was employed to gather the data for this study. The Likert scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (AD), strongly disagree (SD), disagree (DA), and undecided (UD) was reflected in the questionnaire's format. Average responses to the questions were given a mean rating of five Likert points. Therefore, if the computed mean value is less than 3, the null hypotheses will be accepted, and if not, the alternative hypotheses will be rejected. This will be the primary decision rule.

3.6.1 Reliability of Instrument

Reliability is an assessment of the degree of consistency between multiple measurement of a variable (Pallant, 2005). Copies of questionnaire as administered to the owners of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Ilorin metropolis and a Cronbach's Alpha was conducted on their responses in order to ensure the instrument used for the study has internal consistency.

3.6.2 Validity of Research Instrument

The degree to which a tool measures what it was designed to measure is known as its validity. Both content and construct (convergent) validity were evaluated for the measures used in this

investigation. Convergent validity is demonstrated by constructs to the degree that they are high, meaning they have converged on a similar underlying construct.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The study used simple percentage to explain the bio-data information of the respondents because it helps to show the number or proportion of the sampled variables belonging to a particular variable. The multiple regression analysis of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to explain the predictive effect of the explanatory variables of independent on dependent variable, i.e., the four hypotheses formulated in the study was tested using the multiple regression analysis technique.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Demographic Statistics

Demographic Characteristics Analysis

Table 4.1 Analysis Result of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents by Gender

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	223	60.3
Female	147	39.7
Total	370	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

The demographic characteristics of the participant were examined to understand the composition and background of the study sample. The distribution on gender discloses that the majority of the respondents were male, accounting for 223 (60.3%) of the total sample. Female respondents made up 147 individuals, representing 39.7%. This indicates a moderately male-dominated sample, which may reflect the gender structure within the study's target population or sector.

Table 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents by Age

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age		
18-25 years	26	7.0
26-35 years	72	19.5
36-45 years	149	40.3
46 years and above	123	33.2
Total	370	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

In terms of age distribution, respondents were fairly diverse. The age group 36–45 years constituted the largest proportion with 149 respondents, representing 40.3%, followed by those aged 46 years and above, who accounted for 123 (33.2%). Respondents within the 26–35 age range represented 72 (19.5%), while the youngest group (18–25 years) made up only 7.0% of

the total. The dominance of mature age groups suggests that the majority of participants had considerable life or business experience, which may contribute to the reliability of their responses.

Table 4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents by Education Qualification

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Higher Education Qualification		
SSCE	103	27.8
OND/NCE	84	22.7
HND/B.Sc.	161	43.5
M.Sc. and above	22	5.9
Total	370	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

Regarding educational qualifications, the data show that the highest number of respondents, 161 (43.5%), possessed either Higher National Diplomas (HND) or Bachelor's degrees (B.Sc.). This was followed by 103 respondents (27.8%) with Senior Secondary School Certificates (SSCE), and 84 respondents (22.7%) holding OND/NCE qualifications. Only 22 participants (5.9%) had attained postgraduate qualifications (M.Sc. or above). This distribution suggests a relatively educated sample, with the majority having post-secondary education, which is important for interpreting perceptions and behaviours requiring a basic to moderate level of literacy and exposure.

Table 4.4. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents by the Type of Business

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Types of Business		
Agriculture	54	14.6
Manufacturing	67	18.1
Retail	154	41.6
Education	95	25.7
Total	370	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

The types of business engaged in by the respondents indicate that retail activities dominated the sample, with 154 (41.6%) operating in this sector. This was followed by those in education-

related enterprises (25.7%) and manufacturing (18.1%), while the smallest group was involved in agriculture (14.6%). The predominance of retail businesses may reflect the urban or semi-urban nature of the study area and prevailing economic activities.

Table 4.5 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents by Location

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Location		
Ilorin	105	28.4
Offa	101	27.3
Omu-Aran	71	19.2
Jebba	93	25.1
Total	370	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

The result on the geographical distribution of respondents showed that Ilorin had the highest number of participants 105 (28.4%), followed closely by Offa (27.3%), Jebba (25.1%), and Omu-Aran (19.2%). This relatively even distribution suggests a balanced representation across different local government areas within the study scope.

Table 4.6 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents by the type of Social Media used

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
How often do you use social media?		
Never	7	1.9
Rarely	4	1.1
Occasionally	36	9.7
Weekly	175	47.3
Daily	148	40.0
Total	370	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

When asked about their frequency of social media use, nearly half of the respondents (47.3%) reported using social media weekly, while 40.0% indicated daily usage. Occasional users constituted 9.7%, and very few respondents reported rare or no use at all (1.1% and 1.9%, respectively). This implies that social media usage is a common practice among respondents, with a significant proportion engaging with it frequently.

Table 4.7 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents by the social media platforms

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Which social media platforms do you use most often?		
Facebook	49	13.2
Instagram	79	21.4
WhatsApp	55	14.9
Twitter	12	3.2
TikTok	142	38.4
YouTube	33	8.9
Total	370	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

Finally, in terms of preferred social media platforms, Tik-Tok emerged as the most widely used platform, with 142 respondents (38.4%) indicating it as their most used. Instagram followed with 79 users (21.4%), and WhatsApp with 55 (14.9%). Other platforms such as Facebook (13.2%), YouTube (8.9%), and Twitter (3.2%) were less dominant. This finding underscores the popularity of visual and entertainment-oriented platforms like Tik-Tok and Instagram among business operators, possibly due to their promotional benefits and wide reach.

4.2 Frequency Distribution Analysis of Questionnaire Items

Table 4.2 I am more likely to buy a product if promoted by a social media influencer.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	14	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Disagree	48	13.0	13.0	16.8
	Undecided	31	8.4	8.4	25.1
	Agree	236	63.8	63.8	88.9
	Strongly Agree	41	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

The majority of respondents (63.8% agree, 11.1% strongly agree) indicated they are more likely to buy a product if promoted by a social media influencer. Only 16.8% expressed disagreement, suggesting that influencer endorsements play a significant role in driving purchase intent.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	20	5.4	5.4	5.4
	Disagree	81	21.9	21.9	27.3
	Undecided	91	24.6	24.6	51.9
	Agree	126	34.1	34.1	85.9
	Strongly Agree	52	14.1	14.1	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

A combined 48.2% agreed or strongly agreed, indicating moderate trust in influencer recommendations. However, 27.3% disagreed and 24.6% remained undecided, showing that trust in influencers varies and is not universal.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	2.2	2.2	2.2
	Disagree	23	6.2	6.2	8.4
	Undecided	60	16.2	16.2	24.6
	Agree	138	37.3	37.3	61.9
	Strongly Agree	141	38.1	38.1	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

Most respondents (37.3% agree, 38.1% strongly agree) acknowledged that celebrity endorsements shape their brand perception. Only 8.4% disagreed, underscoring the persuasive impact of celebrity branding.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	15	4.1	4.1	4.1
	Disagree	28	7.6	7.6	11.6
	Undecided	73	19.7	19.7	31.4
	Agree	171	46.2	46.2	77.6
	Strongly Agree	83	22.4	22.4	100.0

	Total	370	100.0	100.0	
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Source: Field survey, 2025

Nearly 70% agreed or strongly agreed they had made purchases based on influencer promotions, suggesting influencer marketing effectively converts interest into sales.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	12	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	24	6.5	6.5	9.7
	Undecided	21	5.7	5.7	15.4
	Agree	155	41.9	41.9	57.3
	Strongly Agree	158	42.7	42.7	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

A significant 84.6% agreed or strongly agreed, confirming that influencer marketing is a powerful tool for brand and product awareness.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	17	4.6	4.6	4.6
	Disagree	53	14.3	14.3	18.9
	Undecided	41	11.1	11.1	30.0
	Agree	174	47.0	47.0	77.0
	Strongly Agree	85	23.0	23.0	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

About 70% agreed or strongly agreed, indicating that high-quality, informative SME content directly influences purchase decision-making.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	1.9	1.9	1.9
	Disagree	19	5.1	5.1	7.0
	Undecided	21	5.7	5.7	12.7

	Agree	170	45.9	45.9	58.6
	Strongly Agree	153	41.4	41.4	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

An overwhelming 87.3% agreed or strongly agreed, showing that visual and engaging content is highly effective in sparking brand interest.

Table 4.15 Regular content updates from a brand make it more trustworthy.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	1.9	1.9	1.9
	Disagree	11	3.0	3.0	4.9
	Undecided	57	15.4	15.4	20.3
	Agree	129	34.9	34.9	55.1
	Strongly Agree	166	44.9	44.9	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

Nearly 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, suggesting consistent posting builds consumer trust.

Table 4.16 I prefer to engage with brands that post high-quality content.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	14	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	4.9
	Undecided	7	1.9	1.9	6.8
	Agree	105	28.4	28.4	35.1
	Strongly Agree	240	64.9	64.9	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

A dominant 93.3% agreed or strongly agreed, highlighting that quality content is key for engagement.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	12	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Disagree	3	.8	.8	4.1
	Undecided	27	7.3	7.3	11.4
	Agree	165	44.6	44.6	55.9
	Strongly Agree	163	44.1	44.1	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

Most respondents (88.7%) agreed or strongly agreed, suggesting a strong link between content marketing and brand loyalty.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	12	3.2	3.2	6.2
	Undecided	34	9.2	9.2	15.4
	Agree	161	43.5	43.5	58.9
	gStrongly Agree	152	41.1	41.1	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

A total of 84.6% agreed or strongly agreed, indicating that there exist a wide reach of viral campaigns.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	2.2	2.2	2.2
	Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	3.2
	Undecided	26	7.0	7.0	10.3
	Agree	140	37.8	37.8	48.1
	Strongly Agree	192	51.9	51.9	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

Nearly 90% agreed or strongly agreed, showing that peer-shared viral content significantly impacts purchasing.

Table 4.20 I have shared interesting brand content with others on social media.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	11	3.0	3.0	5.9
	Undecided	28	7.6	7.6	13.5
	Agree	133	35.9	35.9	49.5
	Strongly Agree	187	50.5	50.5	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

A high 86.4% agreed or strongly agreed, indicating that brand content is widely re-shared by consumers.

Table 4.21 I am more likely to remember a brand with a viral campaign.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	1.1
	Disagree	19	5.1	5.1	6.2
	Undecided	68	18.4	18.4	24.6
	Agree	166	44.9	44.9	69.5
	Strongly Agree	113	30.5	30.5	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

A total of 75.4% agreed or strongly agreed, showing that viral marketing boosts brand recall.

Table 4.22 Viral marketing creates a stronger impression than traditional advertising.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	1.1
	Disagree	14	3.8	3.8	4.9
	Undecided	67	18.1	18.1	23.0
	Agree	160	43.2	43.2	66.2
	Strongly Agree	125	33.8	33.8	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

A combined 77% agreed or strongly agreed, reflecting a consumer preference for viral over traditional advertising.

Table 4.23 I feel more emotionally connected to brands that tell their corporate story on social platforms.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	8	2.2	2.2	2.2
	Undecided	19	5.1	5.1	7.3
	Agree	181	48.9	48.9	56.2
	Strongly Agree	162	43.8	43.8	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

Over 92% agreed or strongly agreed, indicating storytelling is a powerful engagement tool.

Table 4.24 Social media campaigns that highlight a company's achievements or history positively affect my perception of the brand.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	14	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Disagree	46	12.4	12.4	16.2
	Undecided	92	24.9	24.9	41.1
	Agree	116	31.4	31.4	72.4
	Strongly Agree	102	27.6	27.6	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

About 59% agreed or strongly agreed, suggesting corporate storytelling positively shapes brand image.

Table 4.25 I become more aware of a company's existence through their corporate advertisements on social media.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	2.2	2.2	2.2
	Disagree	10	2.7	2.7	4.9
	Undecided	23	6.2	6.2	11.1
	Agree	115	31.1	31.1	42.2

	Strongly Agree	214	57.8	57.8	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

Nearly 89% agreed or strongly agreed, confirming that social media advertising increases brand awareness.

Table 4.26 I consider a company more reputable if it consistently promotes its brand identity online.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	18	4.9	4.9	4.9
	Disagree	11	3.0	3.0	7.8
	Undecided	36	9.7	9.7	17.6
	Agree	139	37.6	37.6	55.1
	Strongly Agree	166	44.9	44.9	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

Over 82% agreed or strongly agreed, showing a link between online brand consistency and perceived reputation.

Table 4.27 I have made a purchase decision influenced by a company's social media presence rather than its product ads.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	16	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Disagree	7	1.9	1.9	6.2
	Undecided	60	16.2	16.2	22.4
	Agree	196	53.0	53.0	75.4
	Strongly Agree	91	24.6	24.6	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

A total of 77.6% agreed or strongly agreed, highlighting the importance of an active social media presence.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	16	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Disagree	29	7.8	7.8	12.2
	Undecided	110	29.7	29.7	41.9
	Agree	135	36.5	36.5	78.4
	Strongly Agree	80	21.6	21.6	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

58.1% agreed or strongly agreed, although 29.7% remained undecided, indicating some uncertainty about direct behavioural influence.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	1.1
	Disagree	41	11.1	11.1	12.2
	Undecided	88	23.8	23.8	35.9
	Agree	136	36.8	36.8	72.7
	Strongly Agree	101	27.3	27.3	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

About 64.1% agreed or strongly agreed, showing that brand activity on social media builds trust.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	1.1
	Disagree	17	4.6	4.6	5.7
	Undecided	131	35.4	35.4	41.1
	Agree	125	33.8	33.8	74.9
	Strongly Agree	93	25.1	25.1	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

A total of 58.9% agreed or strongly agreed, though 35.4% were undecided, showing mixed awareness impacts.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	1.1
	Disagree	8	2.2	2.2	3.2
	Undecided	37	10.0	10.0	13.2
	Agree	140	37.8	37.8	51.1
	Strongly Agree	181	48.9	48.9	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

An overwhelming 86.7% agreed or strongly agreed, showing strong consumer preference for digital marketing channels.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	36	9.7	9.7	9.7
	Undecided	107	28.9	28.9	38.6
	Agree	133	35.9	35.9	74.6
	Strongly Agree	94	25.4	25.4	100.0
	Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2025

Over 61% agreed or strongly agreed, highlighting the role of social proof in purchase decisions.

4.3 Test of Hypotheses

4.3.1 Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant impact of influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state.

Table 4.33 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.576 ^a	.332	.330	.814

a. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer marketing

Source: Field survey, 2025

The strength and explanatory power of the independent variable (influencer marketing) on the dependent variable (customer purchasing behaviour) are shown by the regression model summary. Influencer marketing and customer purchasing behaviour have a somewhat favourable link, according to the output's correlation coefficient (R), which is 0.576. This implies that consumer purchasing behaviour rises in tandem with the influence or intensity of influencer marketing.

R Square is 0.332, meaning that approximately 33.2% of the variance in consumer buying behaviour is explained by influencer marketing. This value shows that influencer marketing has a meaningful, though not exhaustive, explanatory power. The remaining 66.8% of the variation in consumer buying behaviour is attributed to other factors not included in the model.

The Adjusted R Square value of 0.330 is very close to the R Square value, indicating that the model has not been overfitted and that the independent variable contributes meaningfully to explaining the outcome. The slight reduction from the R Square suggests minimal loss of explanatory power when adjusting for the number of predictors in the model.

Table 4.34 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	121.114	1	121.114	182.995	.000 ^b
	Residual	243.559	368	.662		
	Total	364.673	369			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour

b. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer marketing

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4.34 provides statistical evidence on the general significance of the regression model that predicts consumer buying behaviour using influencer marketing. The F-statistic is 182.995, which is considerably high. This value is used to test the null hypothesis that the regression model does not describe a significant amount of variance in the dependent variable. The associated significance level (p-value) is .000, which is less than the conventional threshold of 0.05. This indicates that the regression model is statistically significant.

Table 4.35 Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.912	.162		11.792	.000
Influencer marketing	.564	.042	.576	13.528	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour
Source: Field survey, 2025

According to the linear regression model, the regression coefficients table offers comprehensive information on how influencer marketing affects customer purchasing decisions.

Influencer marketing has a coefficient of 0.564 and a standard error of 0.042. This indicates that, assuming all other factors remain same, consumer purchasing behaviour is predicted to rise by 0.564 units for every unit increase in influencer marketing efforts or influence. A clear and favourable correlation between the independent and dependent variables is shown by this positive coefficient.

The study accepts the alternative hypothesis, which holds that influencer marketing significantly affects the purchasing decisions of small and medium-sized businesses in Kwara State, and rejects the null hypothesis because the p-value (.000) is significantly less than the 0.05 significance level.

4.3.2 Hypothesis Two

Ho₂: There is no significant effect of content marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.797 ^a	.635	.634	2.01354

a. Predictors: (Constant), Content marketing.

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4.36 shows a R value of 0.797, indicating a very strong positive connection between content marketing and consumer buying behaviour. The R Square value of 0.635 implies that content marketing explains 63.5% of the variance in consumer buying behaviour. This is a substantial proportion, suggesting that content marketing is a major driver of consumer purchasing decisions among SMEs in Kwara State. Adjusted R Square (0.634) approves the model's reliability, attesting for the degrees of freedom in the model. The standard error of the estimate is 2.014, which reflects moderate variability in predicting consumer buying behaviour.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2596.977	1	2596.977	640.543	.000 ^b
	Residual	1491.996	368	4.054		
	Total	4088.973	369			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour
b. Predictors: (Constant), Content marketing

Source: Field survey, 2025

The ANOVA table reveals an F-statistic of 640.543, which is statistically significant at $p = .000$. This shows that the overall regression model is a good fit for the data, meaning content marketing significantly improves the prediction of consumer buying behaviour compared to a model without predictors.

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	8.331	.445		18.733	.000
Content marketing	2.899	.115	.797	25.309	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour

Source: Field survey, 2025

Content marketing has an unstandardised coefficient (B) of 2.899, a t-value of 25.309, and a standard error of 0.115. Strong statistical significance is shown by the matching p-value of .000. This indicates that customer purchasing behaviour rises by 2.899 units for every unit increase in content marketing activities. A very significant impact size is further confirmed by the standardised beta coefficient of 0.797.

The alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho2) is rejected since the p-value is considerably less than 0.05. This suggests that among SMEs in Kwara State, content marketing significantly and favourably influences customer purchasing behaviour.

4.3.3 Hypothesis Three

Ho₃: There is no significant influence of viral marketing on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.652 ^a	.426	.424	2.52613

a. Predictors: (Constant), Viral marketing

Source: Field survey, 2025

Viral marketing and customer purchasing behaviour have a substantial positive link, as seen by the correlation coefficient (R) of 0.652 from the regression result in table 4.8. With a coefficient of determination (R Square) of 0.426, viral marketing appears to account for 42.6% of the variation in the purchasing habits of SMEs in Kwara State. After controlling for the number of

predictors, the Adjusted R Square of 0.424 demonstrates that this explanatory power does not change.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1740.637	1	1740.637	272.770	.000 ^b
Residual	2348.336	368	6.381		
Total	4088.973	369			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour

b. Predictors: (Constant), viral marketing

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4.40 shows an F-statistic of 272.770, with a corresponding p-value of .000. This indicates that the overall regression model is statistically significant and that viral marketing contributes meaningfully to explaining variations in consumer buying behaviour. The high F-ratio implies that the model provides a significantly better fit than a model without the predictor.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	11.083	.513		21.613	.000
Viral marketing	2.165	.131	.652	16.516	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour

Source: *Field survey, 2025*

Viral marketing in table 4.41 revealed 2.165 as coefficient value, with a standard error of 0.131, and a t-value of 16.516. The p-value of .000 indicates a highly significant result. This means that for every one-unit increase in viral marketing efforts, consumer buying behaviour increases by 2.165 units. The standardized beta coefficient is 0.652, confirming that viral marketing has a strong and statistically significant influence on consumer buying behaviour.

Given that the p-value is significantly less than the 0.05 threshold, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It is therefore concluded that viral

marketing has a significant influence on consumer buying behaviour among small and medium-scale enterprises in Kwara State.

4.3.4 Hypothesis Four

Ho₄: There is no significant influence of corporate advertising on small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.493 ^a	.243	.241	.866

a. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate advertising

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4.42 reveals a R value of 0.493, indicating a modest positive relationship between corporate advertising and consumer buying behaviour. The R Square value of 0.243 shows that corporate advertising accounts for 24.3% of the variance in consumer buying behaviour. Although not as strong as content or viral marketing, this is a meaningful level of explanatory power. The Adjusted R Square (0.241) confirms that the model’s explanatory strength remains consistent after adjusting for degrees of freedom. The standard error of the estimate is 0.866, indicating the average distance between observed and predicted values.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	88.647	1	88.647	118.184	.000 ^b
	Residual	276.026	368	.750		
	Total	364.673	369			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour

b. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate advertising

Source: Field survey, 2025

The F-statistic is 118.184, with a corresponding p-value of .000, which indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. Therefore, corporate advertising significantly

contributes to explaining the variation in consumer buying behaviour among SMEs in the study area.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.016	.191		10.579	.000
Corporate advertising	.486	.045	.493	10.871	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4.44 revealed an unstandardized coefficient (B) for corporate advertising of 0.486, with a standard error of 0.045, and a t-value of 10.871. The p-value (.000) asserts the statistical significance of the predictor. The standardized beta coefficient (0.493) also affirms that corporate advertising has a moderate positive influence on consumer buying behaviour. This implies that a one-unit increase in corporate advertising is associated with a 0.486-unit increase in consumer buying behaviour.

Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the study rejects the null hypothesis (Ho4) and concludes that corporate advertising has a significant influence on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium-scale enterprises in Kwara State.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The study examined the impact of social media marketing strategies on consumer buying behaviour of small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara state. The strategies examined in the study include; influencer marketing, content marketing, viral marketing and corporate advertising. Linear regression analysis technique was used to analyse and test the hypotheses formulated in the study.

The results of the regression analysis for hypothesis one which is to achieve objective one set in the study, provide empirical support for the assertion that influencer marketing significantly

influences consumer buying behavior among small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Kwara State. Influencer marketing and consumer purchase decisions have a moderate to strong positive link, according to the statistical research, which found a standardised beta value of 0.576. The null hypothesis (Ho1), which claimed that influencer marketing had no discernible effect on customer purchasing behaviour, was rejected as a result of this relationship's strong significance ($p < 0.001$).

These findings align with a growing body of literature emphasizing the persuasive power of influencer marketing in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviours. According to Gbandi and Iyamu (2022), social media influencers often serve as credible opinion leaders whose endorsements can significantly impact consumer trust and product perceptions. The current study confirms this by demonstrating that influencer-driven content not only garners attention but also translates into behavioural intentions, such as purchase decisions, particularly in the SME sector. Empirical studies further reinforce these observations. For instance, Lou and Yuan (2019) found that the perceived authenticity of influencers significantly drives engagement and buying behaviour, especially among digital-savvy demographics. Similarly, Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) observed that micro and celebrity influencers positively affect followers' buying intentions due to their perceived relatability and lifestyle appeal, factors that resonate strongly in this study.

The results are also consistent with the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), which asserts that an individual's behavioural intention is shaped by attitudes and subjective norms. Influencers, through their interactions and endorsements on platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp (as identified in the demographic data), create subjective norms that subtly guide followers' purchasing decisions. When consumers see trusted influencers using or recommending a product, they are likely to develop a positive attitude toward the product, which in turn fosters purchase intention.

The implication of this finding is especially important for SMEs in Kwara State and similar environments, where traditional marketing channels may be either cost-prohibitive or ineffective in reaching targeted consumers. Influencer marketing, by contrast, offers a cost-efficient and high-impact alternative that leverages social proof and peer influence—critical drivers of consumer behaviour in digital environments.

The findings from hypothesis two show that content marketing is a powerful predictor of consumer buying behaviour in the SME sector. The strong explanatory power ($R^2 = 63.5\%$) and the large standardized beta coefficient (0.797) highlight content marketing as a strategic communication tool capable of influencing consumer decisions significantly. This aligns with previous research. Shrestha et al., (2023) emphasized that content marketing, which includes blogs, videos, infographics, and educational materials, helps businesses engage consumers meaningfully, build trust, and drive conversions. Similarly, Oloyede (2020) found that well-planned content marketing campaigns help firms tell stories that resonate with consumers, thereby increasing engagement and purchase intent.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings support the Chaffey's theory which suggests that consumers are more likely to be persuaded when presented with high-quality, relevant, and informative content. Content marketing provides consumers with detailed information and consistent brand messaging, which facilitates decision-making and fosters brand loyalty. Content that educates, entertains, or solves consumer problems can guide consumers through this decision-making funnel effectively. In Nigeria's digital landscape, where traditional advertising channels may not reach all consumer segments effectively, content marketing offers a cost-effective, scalable, and impactful approach to influencing buying behaviour. With increasing smartphone and internet penetration in Kwara State and beyond, SMEs that invest in quality content can significantly enhance consumer engagement and drive sales growth.

The findings of the third hypothesis test indicate that viral marketing significantly influences the buying behaviour of consumers, especially within the context of SMEs operating in Kwara State. The R^2 value of 42.6% is a substantial explanatory power, indicating that nearly half of consumer behaviour can be attributed to viral marketing strategies such as trending social media campaigns, customer-sharing incentives, user-generated content, and meme-based promotions. This result aligns with existing empirical studies that highlight the transformative potential of viral marketing. Veronse et al., (2024) argued that viral marketing taps into peer-sharing behaviour, enhancing brand visibility exponentially through digital word-of-mouth. Similarly, Srinivasan et al., (2016) noted that emotionally engaging and socially shareable content leads to rapid dissemination, creating broad consumer awareness and stimulating purchase intent.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings are supported by the Chaffey's Theory, which posits that ideas flow from media to opinion leaders and from them to a wider audience. Viral content often originates from influencers or consumers with high social capital, whose endorsements dramatically influence the behaviour of their followers and social circles. The findings also reflect the increased responsiveness of digital-age consumers to socially-driven content that is authentic, humorous, or emotionally resonant. As consumers are inundated with advertisements, viral marketing breaks through by appearing less commercial and more organic, thus influencing behaviour in a more subtle yet powerful manner. In the context of SMEs in Kwara State, viral marketing offers a cost-effective and impactful method of engaging potential customers without the high costs of traditional media. SMEs can craft campaigns that invite customer participation, such as video challenges, tag-and-win promotions, or creative memes, that rapidly increase brand awareness and drive buying behaviour.

The findings from hypothesis four test suggest that corporate advertising plays a statistically significant and moderately strong role in influencing consumer buying behaviour in the SME

context. While the impact ($R^2 = 24.3\%$) is lower compared to content and viral marketing, it nonetheless confirms the relevance of formal advertising efforts, such as TV, radio, print media, billboards, and branded campaigns, in shaping consumer decisions. This finding corroborates the work of Ouma and Oloo (2024), who emphasized that corporate advertising helps build brand identity and consumer trust by communicating consistent values and quality assurance. Similarly, Gbandi and Iyamu (2022) assert that advertising is essential for shaping consumer perceptions and maintaining brand recall in competitive markets.

Theoretically, the result aligns with the marketing equities theory, which suggests that advertising affects consumers in a stepwise fashion, beginning with awareness, then leading to interest, desire, and ultimately, action (purchase). Corporate advertising supports these early and middle stages by ensuring that consumers are aware of and familiar with the brand offerings of SMEs. In relation to SMEs in Kwara State, corporate advertising may also help legitimize business operations, particularly in markets where consumers may be cautious about trust and product authenticity. This formal visibility helps bridge credibility gaps that might exist due to the small scale or limited history of the business.

However, the relatively lower R^2 compared to content and viral marketing also suggests that traditional corporate advertising alone may no longer be sufficient to drive consumer behaviour in a highly digitized and socially influenced environment. Modern consumers, particularly in emerging markets, increasingly rely on peer influence, content engagement, and authenticity in decision-making, areas where digital and influencer-driven strategies excel.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

Influencer marketing, content marketing, viral marketing, and corporate advertising are the four main digital marketing tactics that were examined in this study in relation to the purchasing habits of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study used a quantitative methodology, gathering information from 370 participants via structured questionnaires. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the hypotheses.

The results indicated the following:

Influencer Marketing: Exhibited a significant positive effect on consumer buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.564, p < 0.001$), accounting for 33.2% of the variation in consumer decisions. This implies that trusted influencers can stimulate buyer interest and loyalty toward SMEs' products and services.

Content Marketing: Had the strongest effect, with a beta coefficient of $\beta = 2.899$ and $p < 0.001$, explaining 63.5% of the variation in consumer behaviour. This highlights the strategic role of well-crafted and relevant content in consumer engagement and conversion.

Viral Marketing: Also significantly influenced buying behaviour ($\beta = 2.165, p < 0.001$), explaining 42.6% of the variance. Viral messages spread through social networks had a powerful impact on consumer awareness and purchasing choices.

Corporate Advertising: While its influence was comparatively moderate, it still significantly affected buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.486, p < 0.001$), explaining 24.3% of the variation, reaffirming the enduring value of brand reputation and visibility.

All four hypotheses were rejected, confirming the significant effect of each social media marketing strategy on consumer buying behaviour.

5.2 Conclusion

This study concluded that digital marketing strategies are critical determinants of consumer buying behaviour in the SME sector in Kwara State. Among the strategies assessed, content marketing was found to be the most effective, followed closely by viral marketing, influencer marketing, and corporate advertising. These findings suggest a paradigm shift in marketing practices, where traditional advertising must now be complemented by digital methods that resonate with the consumer's values, preferences, and online behaviour.

The results support theoretical frameworks such as the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), which emphasize the role of persuasive communication and social influence in shaping behavioural intentions. The study underscores the need for SMEs to adopt multi-channel digital strategies in order to remain competitive and enhance customer engagement in a rapidly digitizing marketplace.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- i. SMEs should prioritize content marketing, investing in the creation of educational, engaging, and emotionally compelling content that aligns with their customers' needs and lifestyle.
- ii. Partnerships with relevant influencers should be fostered, particularly micro-influencers who share strong ties with niche audiences and can drive trust-based marketing.
- iii. Businesses should leverage viral marketing techniques by encouraging user-generated content, sharing campaigns, and interactive posts to amplify brand visibility at minimal cost.

- iv. Corporate advertising strategies must be restructured to integrate both online and offline channels, ensuring consistency, credibility, and resonance with digital-savvy consumers.
- v. Government and business support agencies should develop digital marketing training programs for SME owners to build competence in emerging marketing technologies.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

The contribution include:

- i. It provides empirical evidence on the relative effectiveness of specific digital marketing tools in influencing consumer behaviour within the SME context in Nigeria.
- ii. The study enhances existing literature by examining multiple marketing dimensions concurrently, unlike previous studies that often focused on a single strategy.
- iii. It adapts and validates the application of marketing communication theories in an African SME environment, offering insight into consumer response to digital influence mechanisms.
- iv. The findings offer a context-specific framework for SME managers and policy makers to formulate data-driven marketing strategies aimed at consumer engagement and growth.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The limitations are outlined below:

- i. Geographical Scope: The research was limited to SMEs within Kwara State, which may not fully reflect the realities or behaviours of consumers in other states or regions of Nigeria. As such, the generalizability of the findings to other locations may be restricted.

- ii. The findings are based on self-reported responses from consumers, which may be influenced by social desirability bias, recall bias, or misunderstanding of the questions. These factors may affect the accuracy and reliability of the data collected.
- iii. Quantitative-Only Approach: The research relied solely on quantitative methods, which, while useful for generalization, did not allow for deep qualitative insights into the motivations and emotional drivers behind consumer decisions.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

In view of the study's limitations and scope, the following are suggested for future research:

- i. Geographical Expansion: Similar studies should be conducted in other states or regions in Nigeria to enhance generalizability.
- ii. Inclusion of Moderating Variables: Further research may incorporate factors such as consumer trust, digital literacy, or demographic characteristics as moderators or mediators.
- iii. Qualitative Approaches: In-depth interviews or focus groups could explore the psychological and emotional underpinnings of consumer responses to digital marketing in greater detail.

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APPENDIX QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information for a study titled ‘Impact of Social Media Marketing Strategies on Consumer Behaviour of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Kwara State’. All information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used strictly for academic purposes.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Section A: Demographic Information of Respondents

1. Gender:

Male Female

2. Age:

Under 18 18–25 26–35 36–45 46 and above

3. Educational Qualification:

SSCE OND/NCE HND/B.Sc M.Sc and above

4. Business Sector: _____

5. Location: _____

5. How often do you use social media?

Daily Weekly Occasionally Rarely Never

6. Which social media platforms do you use most often?

Facebook Instagram WhatsApp Twitter Tik-Tok YouTube

Section B:

Influencer Marketing

S/N	Statement	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	I am more likely to buy a product if promoted by a social media influencer.					
2	I trust product recommendations from influencers I follow.					
3	Celebrity endorsements on social media influence my perception of a brand.					
4	I have purchased products after seeing them promoted by influencers.					
5	Influencer marketing improves my awareness of new brands/products.					

Section C: Content Marketing

S/N	Statement	SA	A	UD	D	SD
6	Informative content from SMEs helps me make purchase decisions.					
7	Product videos or posts on social media influence my interest in a brand.					
8	Regular content updates from a brand make it more trustworthy.					
9	I prefer to engage with brands that post high-quality content.					
10	Content marketing increases my loyalty to a brand.					

Section D: Viral Marketing

S/N	Statement	SA	A	UD	D	SD
11	I often come across viral marketing campaigns on social media.					
12	Viral ads shared by friends influence my buying decisions.					
13	I have shared interesting brand content with others on social media.					
14	I am more likely to remember a brand with a viral campaign.					
15	Viral marketing creates a stronger impression than traditional advertising.					

Section E: Corporate Advertising

S/N	Statement	SA	A	UD	D	SD
16	I feel more emotionally connected to brands that tell their corporate story on social platforms.					
17	Social media campaigns that highlight a company's achievements or history positively affect my perception of the brand.					
18	I become more aware of a company's existence through their corporate advertisements on social media.					
19	I consider a company more reputable if it consistently promotes its brand identity online.					
20	I have made a purchase decision influenced by a company's social media presence rather than its product ads.					

Section F: Consumer Buying Behaviour

S/N	Statement	SA	A	UD	D	SD
21	Social media marketing positively influences my buying behaviour.					
22	I trust brands more when they are active on social media.					
23	I often learn about new products via social media marketing.					

24	Social media marketing is more persuasive than TV or radio ads.					
25	I consider online reviews and comments before purchasing from SMEs.					