

**Marketing, Customer Relationship Management and Performance of Small and
Medium Enterprises in North East Nigeria**

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Certification

This is to certify that **Mohammed Lawal INUWA** with Matriculation number **LCU/PG/001834** carried out this research work titled **‘E-marketing Customer Relationship Management and performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in North East Nigeria’** in the Department of Management and Accounting, Lead City University Ibadan, Oyo State for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (P.h.D.) degree in Business Management and that this has not been previously submitted.

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Dedication

This research is dedicated to God Almighty, who generously gave me knowledge, strength and other resources to successfully accomplish this research work. Also, to my Parents – Alhaji Inuwa Mohammed (Chiroman Madakin Bauchi) and Hajiya Aisha Saidu Ghani of blessed memory with whose efforts I am educated today.

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Abstract

This research investigates the moderating role of CRM in the relationship between E-marketing and SME performance in North East Nigeria. The literature review identifies a gap in existing studies, emphasizing the novel focus on the moderating effect of CRM on the relationship between E-marketing and performance of SMEs in North East Nigeria. The study employs a survey research design involving 157,000 registered SMEs with a sample size of 384 in the Six North Eastern states of Nigeria. Structured questionnaires were deployed as the instrument of choice, while descriptive statistical analysis and PLS-SEM were used to analyze the data. The findings of the structural model analysis provide mixed evidence regarding the effectiveness of e-marketing in enhancing SME performance: - E-marketing has a significant positive effect on market share ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.05$) and customer retention ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.05$). - However, the hypothesized direct relationships with competitive advantage ($\beta = 0.09$, $p > 0.05$) and sales performance ($\beta = 0.07$, $p > 0.05$) were not found to have a statistically significant effect. Additionally, Customer Relationship Management did not appear to moderate the relationship between e-marketing and SME performance. The results suggest that while e-marketing can be an effective tool to improve customer retention and increase market share, its impact on other performance metrics may vary within this unique local context. To ensure sustainable growth and competitiveness, SMEs in North East Nigeria must consider a holistic approach to their business strategies and incorporate e-marketing among other key elements.

Keywords: E Marketing, CRM , SME Performance, North East Nigeria ,PLS-SEM

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List of Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
WOM	Word of Mouth
SMI	Social Media Influencer
SLT	Social Learning Theory
LGA	Local Government Area
AIDMA	Attention, Interest, Desire, Memory and Action
AISAS	Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are acknowledged as one of the primary drivers of job creation and economic development and they play a significant role in the global economy. The current revolution in communications as well as information technology (IT) has altered how individuals do business. Electronic marketing, as a new marketing phenomenon and concept, has the potential to expand extremely dramatically and dynamically as more and more organizations use the Internet and other electronic media in their marketing campaigns. As such, the application of electronic marketing (E-marketing) by small businesses has the potential to alter the global composition and characteristics of SMEs. The reason for this is the rise in the use of the Internet and other digital marketing tools that is mobile phones, extranets, and intranets in electronic transactions may greatly increase SMEs' chances while also removing many risks from both the internal and external environments.

The World Bank estimates that SMEs make up the majority of firms globally and are crucial to the creation of jobs and expansion of the international economy. SMEs make up 90% of enterprises worldwide and generate more than 50% of jobs; in developing nations, they account for up to 40% of GDP¹. SME performance is important to the Nigerian economy, as it has contributed over 48% of the country's GDP during the past

five years. On the other hand, inside the nation's financial system, the sheer number of enterprises plays a significant role in generating income and jobs². Nigeria's development is closely correlated with the success of its small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)³. Thus, underscoring the importance of SMEs to the global and national economy. In this era, characterized by global markets, fierce competition, and open borders, marketing has become an indispensable tool for the survival of SMEs.

Additionally, customers can access goods and services fast and are not constrained by time or place thanks to the various forms of modern communication. Because of the aforementioned developments, institutions now need to think about new marketing strategies and restructure established ones to stay in business and stand out from the competition. In the present era of globalization, SME marketing in several economies is limited to face-to-face, but less marketing with the online system via the Internet, or E-Commerce. The World Wide Web (WWW), the Internet, IT, and communication advances have all developed quickly, creating new and effective digital channels for advertising. Today, the majority of businesses deem having a digital presence to be crucial^{3,4}. How consumers obtain information about goods and services is changing, and conventional methods of purchasing are developing quickly.

For companies of all sizes, social media has transformed into an essential component of an integrated marketing communications strategy⁵. In recent years, academic and managerial interest in E-marketing has grown. Despite insufficient practical data to support the assertion that EM can be used anywhere, the current wave of publications in

this field may suggest otherwise. Some have even dubbed EM the "new marketing paradigm." Meanwhile, in the last three decades, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are considered the driving force that propels global economic growth and development; they have attracted considerable attention from scholars and practitioners. The idea that innovation is critically dependent on the capacity of entrepreneurial SMEs, especially in the information technology (IT) industry is the main source of this interest. That being said, corporate ties with consumers have taken center stage in today's business environment, beaming the spotlight on Customer Relationship Management CRM.

Therefore, businesses have redoubled efforts to develop, maintain and enhance their relationships with customers. Relationships with customers involve more than just communication. For the majority of enterprises, the key concerns are what to say, to whom, and how often⁶. Many studies have demonstrated the impact of CRM on business performance. CRM enhances organizational performance by means of activities like boosting customer satisfaction and loyalty, leveraging referral marketing to cross-sell products and services, and improving organizational profitability through improved delivery of goods and services that results in a number of additional benefits for the organization⁷. Successful CRM implementation will impact the effectiveness of marketing and financial performance, which are cumulatively measured as business performance⁸. It is in view of this discussion that the study intends to examine the moderating role of CRM in the relationship between e-marketing and the performance of SMEs in North-east Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are vital to a country's economic development. As a result, the performance of the SME sector is strongly linked to the nation's performance. They are primarily responsible for private sector employment globally. The growth of small businesses is crucial to achieving development goals including reducing poverty, fostering economic growth, and advancing more democratic societies⁶. Unfortunately, SMEs in Nigeria and the North-east lack the necessary competitive advantage required to fast-track the achievement of the aforementioned objectives. Thus, to help the business in maintaining a competitive edge, it has to have adaptable structures, strong scientific human capabilities, and competences that allow it to rapidly and easily adjust to the dynamics of the technological environment, both locally and globally^{7,8}.

Another daunting challenge impeding the performance of the SME sector is customer retention. The high level of switching behavior exhibited by customers of SMEs continues to retard the sales performance of SMEs in the North-east sub-region. It is implied that to retain clients while preventing them from switching to competitors, businesses must be proactive⁹. Customers switching service providers makes it more difficult for affected businesses to post a profit and remain in business. Competitive advantage and market share are related and gaining one will promote the other. Undoubtedly, SMEs with competitive advantage tend to gain a favorable market share. Acquiring Market Share is a major priority for businesses. The rationale is that market

share acts as the foundation for attracting clients, who are the source of revenue and profit for businesses¹⁰.

In Nigeria, increasing attention has been given to the SME sector and to the contribution that business enterprises can make in transforming the economy, especially in the present global economic situation¹¹. Internet-based business programs, or e-commerce, can be used as one way to enhance and increase the competitiveness of SMEs^{12, 13}. Multinational corporations' use of EM has, in part, altered the character and structure of their global business¹⁴. The World Wide Web (WWW), the Internet, ITs, communication technologies, social media, and computer sciences have all quickly spread, creating innovative electronic mediums for marketing, and the majority of businesses now consider having a digital identity to be imperative¹⁵.

Despite the enormous marketing opportunities offered by e-marketing, SMEs in Nigeria face a variety of challenges in an e-marketing ecosystem, such as those related to infrastructure, government, education, building effective and efficient websites, poor credit payment and assistance, etc¹⁶. These problems have allowed many SMEs to lose their prospective customers to other competing firms within the industry.

Several studies on acceptability and implementation of E-marketing by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries have been conducted, but only a handful of these studies have been conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)¹⁷. Again, a considerable body of research has been done globally on E-marketing and corporate business performance^{18,19,20,21}, but only a few studies on E-marketing and Performance of

SMEs currently exists in the Nigerian context, especially in North-east Nigeria ^{22,23} thus establishing a knowledge gap. Likewise, the question of how customer relationship Management can strengthen relationships between e-marketing and SME performance is a lingering question. Averagely, studies tend to center on the viewpoint of the customer, for example, by examining factors that influence online buying habits ²⁴ and analyzing word-of-mouth on social media ^{25, 26, 27, 28}. Based on these gaps identified, this study will examine the role of customer relationship management in fostering the relationship between e-marketing and SME performance in North-eastern Nigeria.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The research aims to examine the effect of e-marketing on the performance of SMEs in North-East Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. examine the effect of e- marketing (social media Marketing, Online Advertising, E-mail Marketing) on competitive advantage.
- ii. examine the effect of e-marketing on sales performance
- iii. investigate the role of e-marketing on customer retention
- iv. determine the effect of e-marketing on Market Share
- v. ascertain the moderating role of Customer relationship management on the relationship between e-marketing and performance of SMEs in North-east Nigeria

1.4 Hypotheses

- i. E-marketing will have no significant effect on Competitive advantage of SMEs in North-east Nigeria
- ii. E-marketing will have no significant effect on the Sales performance of SMEs in North-east Nigeria
- iii. E-marketing will have no significant effect on Customer retention of SMEs in North-east Nigeria
- iv. E-marketing will have no significant effect on the Market share of SMEs in North-east Nigeria
- v. There will be no significant moderating effect of customer relationship management on the relationship between e-marketing and the performance of SMEs in North-east Nigeria

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study will focus on e-marketing and the performance of SMEs in the North-eastern region of Nigeria; the moderating role of Customer Relationship Management.

The political and security conditions in Nigeria, especially in the North-east informed the geographical scope of this study also, the large population of registered SMEs in the North-east enabled the conduct of this research in the study area as it would be possible

to get an excellent representation of a random sample and readily extrapolate the findings to the full population. The sub-indicators for the independent variable, e-marketing include Social Media Marketing, Online Advertising and Email marketing while, the sub-indicators for the dependent variable, SME performance include Competitive advantage, sales performance, customer retention and Market share. The relationship between e-marketing and SME performance will be moderated by customer relationship Management which has Attitude, knowledgeability, and Two-way communication as its sub-indicators. The units of analysis for the study include all the registered SMEs that have deployed e-marketing in North-east Nigeria

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant to SMEs, the Government, Academia, and Society. The results of this research will help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) comprehend how e-marketing impacts their business., thus, fostering growth through faster and smoother transactions, better marketing strategies, increased revenues, and lower operational costs. Other benefits accruable include more details of products and services, an effective feedback mechanism, and a variety of payment options. These benefits are achievable as owners of SMEs will leverage the findings of this study to assess their customer relationship management strategies to catalyze them to enhance their business performance.

This study will reveal the computer literacy level of the public and serve as a call to action for Government, Non- Governmental Organizations, and the public to improve the

computer literacy level of society. Government can leverage the results of this research to create policies and programs that will improve computer literacy and use for commercial transactions.

The findings of this study will indeed become a humble contribution to literature and fill an existing void in the subject matter. This study will extend existing knowledge by determining the role of e-marketing on the performance of SMEs. The deployment of CRM as a Moderating variable in the study will deepen the application of the theoretical underpinnings by articulating the gains of the findings of this study and perhaps, set the stage for future related models. Previous studies have focused on E-marketing and corporate business performance, but only a few studies on E-marketing and SME performance currently exist in the Nigerian context. In light of this, the purpose of this study is to determine how the performance of SMEs in North-east Nigeria and e-marketing are related.

1.7 Operationalisation of Variables

The study is based on three major constructs, namely, E-marketing, SME Performance, and Customer Relationship Management, that is:

$Y = f(x)$, where Y = SME Performance (Dependent Variable) and X = *E-Marketing* (Independent Variable). Therefore, SME Performance as a dependent variable is operationalized with the following indicators:

$$Y = f(x, z)$$

$$Y = y_1, y_2, y_3, y_4,$$

Where y_1 = Competitive Advantage

y_2 = Sales Performance

y_3 = Customer Retention

y_4 = Market Share

Similarly, E-marketing was measured based on the following indicators:

$X = x_1, x_2, x_3$

x_1 = Social media Marketing

x_2 = online Advertizing

x_3 = E-mail marketing

Furthermore, the moderating variable (Z variables) were measured with the following parameters:

$Z = z_1, z_2,$

z_1 = Customer support

z_2 = Leadership

1.8 Limitations to the Study

i. **Sampling Limitations:** Stratified random sampling procedures were used in an attempt to produce a representative sample, although biases in the sampling process may still exist. The generalizability of the results might be impacted by the possibility that some SMEs were not included in the sample frame and that those who were not registered with SMEDAN were omitted. None the less, the selected sample frame-

NBS/SMEDAN 2021 report remains the most authentic official records available at this point in time.

ii. Data Collection Constraints: Self-reported information obtained via questionnaires was the main source of data used in the study. Response bias is a risk factor for this approach, since participants may give false or partial information. However, in comparison to other data collection methods, the questionnaire still remains the instrument of choice for this type of study design.

iii. Generalisability: The study's exclusive emphasis on SMEs in North East Nigeria may have limited the findings' applicability to SMEs in other regions that have different socio-economic settings or commercial environments. In various circumstances, variables including market dynamics, infrastructural discrepancies, and cultural variations may have a distinct impact on the link between e-marketing, CRM, and SME success.

iv. Data Analysis Methodology: Despite being a suitable method for multivariate analysis, Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) has limitations that should be recognized. The study findings' robustness may be impacted by PLS-SEM's potential for less accurate parameter estimates when compared to other techniques like **covariance-based SEM**. However, after rigorous assessment of the strengths and weakness of the SEM –PLS in comparison to other analysis tools the researcher felt compelled to settle for the chosen option due to its superiority, fewer drawbacks and suitability for this study.

v. **Temporal Limitations:** The study used data from the 2021 collaboration Survey of the National Bureau of Statistics and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria. However, due to the rapid evolution of business practices and technology in the e-marketing and CRM domains, the data may not accurately reflect the current state of the industry or trends in the performance of SMEs. None the less, at this point in time the NBS/SMEDAN 2021 report is the most current official data available.

vi. **External Factors:** The study might not have taken into consideration all of the environmental factors that could affect the success of SMEs, such as governmental regulations, the state of the economy, the nature of competition, and developments in technology beyond e-marketing and CRM. Ignoring these factors might restrict how thorough the study is and how accurate the results are. However, given the fact that every study has to be delimited, no single study can effectively cover all the factors.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Customer support

Providing help when customers have trouble with a company's products or service

E-marketing:

The term "e-marketing" in this study refers to online marketing.

Competitive advantage: In this study, competitive advantage means a condition or circumstance that put a company in a favorable or superior business position.

Customer Retention: In this study, customer retention means the ability of a business to retain its customers over some specified period.

Customer Relationship Management: In this study, Customer relationship management refers to the method by which a company manages its communications with clients. Usually, a lot of information is studied through data analysis.

Leadership: The act of leading a group of people or an organization.

Market Share: In this study, Market share means the percent of total sales in an industry generated by a particular company.

Online Advertising: In this study, Online advertising is a type of marketing and advertising that promotes goods and services via the internet.

Sales Performance: In this study, sales performance means the volume of sales a firm makes over a period of time.

SME Performance: In this study, SME performance means the Productivity of small and medium enterprises.

Social media marketing: For the sake of this study, social media marketing refers to online advertising that makes use of social media apps.

Technology is the practical use of scientific knowledge, particularly in commerce.

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Chapter Two

Literature Review

Preamble

This chapter comprise of conceptual review, theoretical review, Empirical review, conceptual framework and Gaps in literature.

The conceptual review identified and defined the constructs and variables. The second section focused on the identification and review of related theories with respect to the topic. Finally, the applicable empirical findings were reviewed and efforts to fill gaps in the literature were highlighted.

The purpose of this section is to review and link the measurable variables of the constructs associated with the study. The Constructs of this study are Electronic-Marketing, Customer Relationship Management and SME performance. Electronic - Marketing has social media marketing, Online Advertizing and E-mail Marketing as it's variables, while the moderator, Customer Relationship Management, has Customer support and Leadership as it's sub variables. The dependent variable has four variables including Competitive advantage, Sales performance, Customer retention and Market share.

In order to facilitate a good understanding of the research study, this chapter is divided into five parts, namely Conceptual review, Theoretical review, Empirical review, Conceptual Framework and Gaps in literature.

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 SME Performance

Performance of SMEs is a measure of how well small and medium-sized businesses perform in terms of their finances, management, sales, and marketing plans and activities¹. It refers to how well SMEs are able to accomplish their unique short-, medium-, and long-term business objectives. The ability of SMEs to meet the criteria and goals that employees as well as managers have set for them is a key indicator of their performance. Additionally, it investigates how well SMEs strategies work to achieve organizational goals and objectives in the areas of resource allocation, human resource management, production, distribution, sales, marketing, and pricing, among others². Because SMEs make up the majority of developing countries' economy, their performance plays a crucial role in determining the economic progress of most emerging African nations³. Because SMEs make up the majority of developing countries' economy, their performance plays a crucial role in determining the economic progress of most emerging African nations³. This means that when SMEs operate more productively and effectively, the economy as a whole improves, jobs are generated, local demands are met, living standards rise, living costs fall, and exporting to international markets increases. Because of this and their awareness of the connections between SMEs and the larger national economy, the governments of several emerging African nations, including Nigeria, Ghana, Angola, and South Africa, are funding projects and support programs aimed at assisting SMEs in expansion⁴. But before SMEs

can perform better, it is necessary to understand the true dimensions or performance metrics of SMEs. The success of SMEs may be broadly classified into two categories: financial and non-financial indicators⁵. Financial parameters including revenue, return on investment, equity, profitability, liquidity, financial assets, capital base, profits before tax, earnings after tax, and others are all seen as financial indicators that are directly related to the financial well-being of SMEs. The marketing and management metrics—such as hiring, motivating, and retaining staff—as well as company image, customer loyalty, market share, volume of sales, new market acquisition, and customer demand, are examples of non-financial indicators^{7,8}.

Many countries, especially developing ones, rely heavily on small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) to propel their economies forward³. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) make up the bulk of businesses worldwide and are important providers of employment and sustainable economic growth. Over 50% of jobs created globally and up to 90% of all businesses are owned by them⁹. Even in developing nations, formal small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) contribute up to 40% of GDP growth. According to estimates, 600 million jobs would be needed by 2030 to meet demand for workers worldwide, thus governments everywhere should place a high priority on the growth of SMEs⁹. In the Nigerian context, SMEs account for 48% of the country's gross domestic product, 96% of commercial companies are SMEs, and 84% of employment employed in the nation are produced by SMEs¹⁰. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria have made significant contributions to the country's economy, but they face many challenges to their continued existence and development, including

limited access to capital, poor infrastructure, unreliable power supplies, harmful taxes and regulations from the government, and, lately, the COVID-19 pandemic ^{11,12}. The promotion of goods and services via the internet is known as electronic or online marketing¹³. It comprises putting marketing plans and campaigns into action using online and digital platforms. Electronic marketing includes marketing activities carried out via wireless communication channels like cell phones, satellite communication networks, wireless local area networks (WLANs), wireless sensor networks, terrestrial microwave networks, and e-mail¹⁴. It is not just restricted to marketing activities carried out online. It helps businesses interact with their clients by utilizing a variety of digital tools ¹³.

Some SMEs have increased their adoption and application of digital technologies, particularly social media, and the internet, as they rush to come up with response plans to lessen the pandemic's effects and guarantee their ability to continue operating in the future ^{14, 15, 16, 17}. Therefore, SMEs from a range of sectors are increasingly embracing social media channels (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp); email marketing (email newsletters, acquisition emails, retention emails, and promotional emails); search engine optimization; mobile marketing; and online advertising (pop-up advertisements, banner advertising, and direct-response advertisement) to promote their offerings. Some small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) seem to have significantly increased their acceptance and utilization of the web and social networks for marketing needs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's advent and consequent spread throughout Nigeria. The majority of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria shifted

their marketing activities to social media networks during the almost 10-month-long lockdown, when human and vehicle movements were prohibited. They used free or paid postings, videos, images, and a combination of all to promote their services. Some SMEs (particularly those dealing with ICT and fashion accessories) have found success using email marketing and online advertising platforms such as websites, display ads, pay-per-click, affiliate promotions, and pay-per-click. This is in reaction to the pandemic¹⁹. In both developed and emerging nations, e-marketing is one of the digital marketing strategies with the quickest rate of growth²⁰. It allows businesses to reach out to new clients and expand their consumer base more effectively²¹.

A number of scholars have defined e-marketing. One definition is the fusion of traditional marketing media and electronic communication technologies for the purpose of acquiring and providing services to consumers. Comparably, the phrase "e-marketing" encompasses social media marketing²³, digital marketing, internet marketing, and online marketing, among others. E-marketing seems to be a key component in gaining a competitive edge in a variety of business ventures, including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by enhancing marketing effectiveness and company efficiency²⁴. Although e-marketing has become critical to SMEs, there are still not enough of them using it, which limits the use of the technology²⁵.

SMEs must use e-marketing effectively to improve their marketing strategies to become and remain competitive. However this technology appears to be new to SMEs in developing nations, where ignorance of how to properly use it can be a major hindrance, resulting in a restricted applicability²⁶. Most SMEs in developing nations use e-

marketing to a limited extent, which may be attributed to expensive development costs and a lack of understanding about how it enhances business success²⁷. Furthermore, the primary barriers preventing SMEs in developing nations from using e-marketing are a lack of resources, inadequate infrastructure, fierce rivalry, owners' willingness to take on hazardous investments, and the relative newness of the field of e-marketing²⁸. SMEs employ the majority of workers in African nations, therefore utilizing contemporary technology like e-marketing has become essential. As a result, SMEs must use e-marketing technology to increase rates of adoption, become more competitive, and investigate new business prospects.

According to previous research, e-marketing is crucial to the competitiveness and performance of SMEs. For example, Asian research discovered that e-marketing significantly affects marketing improvement and firm performance²⁴.

E-marketing solutions also have a favorable impact on SMEs' marketing performance, efficacy, and pre- and post-sale activities²⁹. On the other hand, the primary barriers to SMEs' adoption of e-marketing in the Nigerian setting were insufficient power supplies, expensive internet access fees, and poor communication infrastructures³⁰.

When considered collectively, these studies highlight the benefits and challenges that SMEs in developed and developing countries—particularly those in the UK, Asia, and Africa—face when putting e-marketing into practice³¹. Within the framework of this research, social media marketing refers to the use and acceptance of social media platforms and networks (such Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) for the purpose of promoting their products and services and

fostering client loyalty. Online advertising is a method by which SMEs use online tools and platforms, such websites, banner ads, and display ads, to promote their products and services in an effort to raise awareness and persuade customers to use them. Similarly, email marketing is the process by which SMEs engage with current and prospective clients by email about new and ongoing offers in an effort to sway their decisions to make favorable purchases. In contrast, market coverage refers to how well SMEs are able to use their distribution and promotional methods to reach their targeted audiences in order to gain market share. Consumer patronage is the financial support that consumers give small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) each time they purchase a product from them or pay for a service.

The success of Iranian enterprises that export pistachios is directly impacted by e-marketing ³². The companies enhance their non-financial and financial performance by achieving more asset turnover, increased export share, sales and export growth, and increased customer attraction and retention in export markets. The internet helps distributors and agents of the companies improve their marketing efforts and close the information gap between them and their clients on their products, promotions, prices, and competitors. Small and medium-sized enterprises have distinct marketing needs than do giant organizations, which makes internet marketing more difficult for them. Compared to major organizations, small businesses are less likely to successfully utilize internet marketing due to their limited resources and knowledge ³⁴.

According to Facebook data, some of the most active small companies that make money on Facebook through adverts are run by Kenyan entrepreneurs. Many SMEs

have adopted electronic marketing at the moment, therefore it's critical to understand how it affects sales growth, and that in turn affects profitability. One way that SMEs may still contact the market to raise awareness of their products and services is through digital marketing. To improve their competitiveness, SMEs must understand the best digital strategies to employ and how to communicate with as many customers as possible³⁵.

Because the tourist industry is so competitive, effective internet marketing is essential³⁶. Small rural businesses in Nigerian must use efficient search engine optimization to increase their online visibility. Business owners need to understand which keywords to use to enhance their company's search engine rankings. Using a search engine optimizer helps boost the number of consumer responses³⁷. Furthermore, it is remarkable how important social media is and how companies may increase word-of-mouth by connecting with tourists on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Performance is usually the final result that is anticipated from any business activity^{37, 38, 39, 40, 41}. The sum of the performance of the organization's marketing, finance, and human resource departments over a specific period represents the overall performance of the SME. Businesses set goals and objectives that must be completed in a specific amount of time. Performance evaluates an organization's efficacy concerning these predetermined goals. Therefore, the ability of an organization to employ the appropriate tactics to achieve its objectives—such as a high profit margin, high-quality product, a greater market share, and superior financial results—at the designated period is referred to as organizational performance. Numerous aspects of organizational performance can

be challenging to assess, however, financial as well as non-financial metrics have been included in the process ^{42,43}.

SME performance compares an organization's projected outputs (or aims and objectives) to its actual outputs or results. In the modern field of management research, it is one of the most significant factors. Despite being widely used in academic literature, the notion of SME performance is still not widely agreed upon.

SME performance is comprised of three distinct areas of firm effects⁴⁴: (a) financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment, etc.), (b) product market performance (sales, market share, competitive advantage, etc.); and (c) shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added, etc.). The performance of SMEs can be evaluated concerning a variety of goals, including growth, productivity, profitability, and satisfaction among employees. SMEs performance is a measure of efficiency and effectiveness of the sales, marketing, financial and managerial activities and strategies of small and medium-sized enterprises⁴⁵. It refers to how well SMEs are able to accomplish their unique short-, medium-, and long-term business objectives. The performance of SMEs is determined by their ability to meet the goals and criteria that employees and managers have set forth⁴⁶. Additionally, it investigates how well SMEs' strategies work to achieve organizational goals and objectives in the areas of resource allocation, production, distribution, sales, marketing, pricing, and human resource management, among others.⁴⁵ Since SMEs make up the majority of developing nations' economy, their performance plays a crucial role in determining the economic progress of most African emerging countries⁴⁶. This means that when SMEs operate more

productively and effectively, the national economy as a whole improves and domestic employment is generated. For this reason, the governments of a number of emerging African nations, including South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, and Angola, are funding projects and support programs aimed at SMEs' development and an awareness of their connections to the country's larger economy⁴⁷. But before SMEs can perform better, it is necessary to understand the true dimensions or performance metrics of SMEs.

The success of SMEs may be roughly divided into two categories: financial and non-financial indicators⁴⁸. Financial parameters including revenue, return on investment, equity, profitability, liquidity, financial assets, capital base, profits before tax, earnings after tax, and others are all seen as financial indicators that are directly related to the financial health of SMEs⁴⁹. Marketing and managerial metrics, such as staff recruitment, contentment, and motivation, are examples of non-financial indicators^{50,51}.

Electronic marketing can reach new customers and provide them individualized attention, raising awareness and thus spurring growth⁵². SMEs may be able to reach potential clients more affordably by using digital channels including social media, email, and online advertising. The majority of digital marketing methods, including SEO, internet advertising, and viral marketing, are employed to boost the expansion of small and medium-sized businesses.

2.1.1.1 Competitive Advantage

The companies developed and started utilizing customer relationship management software, which provided marketing firms with extensive knowledge about the needs of

their clients. As a result, these firms were able to identify their top priorities and establish enduring bonds with their clients⁵³. Furthermore, customers have started looking for the products they wanted to purchase online instead of through sales representatives. Naturally, this has made it even more important for businesses to discover electronic ways to sell their goods. These days, the majority of businesses utilize digital marketing strategies, either fully or in part, and the phrase "electronic marketing" has gained popularity. Additionally, researchers anticipate that because of the work and time invested, its utilization will increase over the next few years⁵⁴. It is interesting to observe that one of the by-products of globalization—openness to the world in terms of culture, economy, politics, and technology—is competitiveness.

Nonetheless, globalization necessitates improving performance in all financial, marketing, and informational operations to stay up with all the factors. For instance, the Al-Razi Group strives for a competitive edge in its marketing endeavours, which necessitates the adoption of innovative techniques that align with technical advancements to generate said advantage. In order to survive in the business world, competitiveness must therefore rely on resources and capabilities to achieve differentiation in innovation, risk tolerance, and tendencies toward staking risks ahead of competitors. It also needs to be highly effective in seizing market opportunities and obtaining the largest market share⁵⁵. As such, business-oriented organizations attain a state that is characterized as proactive, reflecting their capacity to be a market leader and not a slave to any processes related to anticipating future market needs and attempting to satisfy them before the competitors know how to achieve this goal. Thus, bold

competition becomes a reflection of the organizations' approach to business, enabling them to significantly outperform their competitors^{56,57}. Additionally, businesses reach a certain level of performance excellence in their pursuit of competitive advantages, the creation of new opportunities, and the interconnectedness and capabilities of their business units, as well as their readiness to take advantage of these opportunities and confront challenges in order to advance their goals^{58,59}. Flexible structures, competences, and strong scientific human capabilities that allow the organization to rapidly and easily adjust to the dynamic soft technological environment—whether on the local or international side—are necessary to help it in maintaining a competitive position⁶⁰.

Regarded as one of the front-runners in the human pharmaceutical business, Jordan is among the nations that have achieved international recognition. By enacting laws and regulations that allow the pharmaceutical industry in Jordan to grow and avoid the adverse effects of economic globalization, the country continuously works to improve its pharmaceutical sector, which stands at the third rank in the structure of exports. Apart from Jordan's entry into the World Trade Organization and the signing of a European cooperation agreement that necessitates domestic laws, the country relies on carving out a niche and forging a competitive edge.

Additionally, the Jordanian Ministry of Health has created a strategy based on the enactment of a drug legislation that addresses advancements and quick changes in the world while maintaining the competitiveness of Jordanian pharmaceutical exports in order to accomplish this aim. In order to attract Arab and foreign investments and safeguard the country's established pharmaceutical industry from any negative impacts,

Jordan cleared the path for this step by passing the Intellectual Property Protection and Patent Law. Additionally, the pharmaceutical industries in Jordan are going through a phase when they are forming partnerships with overseas businesses. As a result, Jordanian enterprises depend on these partnerships for their marketing and manufacturing needs. As a result, pharmacies strive to stay up to date with the latest advancements and changes in the industry by either refining their marketing strategies or practicing them. This helps them stay competitive and continue to provide customers with the best possible service at a lower cost, in less time, and with less effort than their rivals. In order to remain competitive and successful, pharmacies must implement best practices. In order to remain relevant and competitive in the face of constant change, it must be more inventive, environmentally conscious, embracing technology, and successfully focusing on its target market^{61, 62}.

As a result of the rapid changes in the world, such as the acceleration of globalization and integration into the global economy, as well as the policies of openness and market liberalization, the concept of competitive advantage is receiving a great deal of attention on a global scale. In fact, it is currently at the top of the lists of priorities and concerns for many nations. As a result, an enterprise's ability to succeed in competition is essential to its development and survival⁶³. especially as it is generally believed that an organization's competitive edge serves as the main pillar upon which its success is constructed. It is consequently unusual for firms to have a competitive precedence in every industry because of the organization's limitations. However, in order to come up with novel decisions, the organization does accept reciprocal decision-making and exchange. Thus, it

is believed that identifying competitiveness as a pillar is crucial to business organizations' success and long-term survival⁶⁴. A company's competitive edge is its capacity to set itself apart from other companies in the same industry. This is dependent on how well the organization manages its operations and resource allocation. However, one could argue that an institution's main source of competitive advantage comes from the value it can offer to customers in order to charge less than rivals who provide similar benefits or by including unique features in the product that more than make up for the sizeable price increase⁶⁵. Furthermore, this notion focused on the value that the company offers to its customers, which may be articulated as a proprietary product or as lower prices than competitors with same benefits. The importance of competitive advantage has been examined by many academics, and they all concur that it has an internal component that is embodied by investing and having a thorough awareness of potentials and skills. By delivering value to the clients, a firm may get a competitive edge and address customer demands more efficiently than their rivals⁶⁶. Because of this, competitive advantage is seen as one of the primary factors in a company's ability to survive in the market, where a company's strength is determined by its worth. However, competitive advantage may take several forms. The first is cost reduction, which refers to an organization's capacity to create, produce, and sell goods at a lower cost than its rivals⁶⁷. These codimensions—innovation, renovation, and creation—reshape fresh ideas to appear in new ways. They do this by finding an answer to a particular issue or by developing a novel concept with closely related technological applications⁶⁸. The third component is flexibility, which serves as the cornerstone for gaining a competitive edge by promptly adapting product

designs to changing market demands and client preferences⁶⁹. Quality, the fourth dimension, is the act of doing things correctly in order to produce goods that meet the demands of customers⁷⁰. Because competitive advantage is the foundation of any strategy, this is the premise that underlies the concept of generic strategies. As a result, general strategies for competitive advantage are as follows: Cost leadership refers to an organization's goal of offering goods and services at the lowest possible cost in comparison to other businesses operating in the same industry. This can be accomplished by generating financial savings and acquiring technology that helps them use raw materials more wisely and reduce costs. Additionally, this can be accomplished by growing within the same industrial sector to which it belongs or by branching out into adjacent industries⁷¹. This implies that the company will be able to execute at the lowest costs in comparison to rivals by demonstrating production, disposing of waste, and maintaining strict control on the cost components⁷².

Differentiation is the strategy that is embodied in creating a product or service that is exceptional in value for customers, has distinctive qualities, and is either superior to or distinct from those of competitors in order to command premium prices for the product⁷³. However, differentiation also refers to a business's attempt to stand out in the market by offering unique selling propositions (USPs) that provide significant value to clients. In this case, the company uses USPs to differentiate its goods and services within the target market sector. However, differentiation may also be achieved by developing strategies for differentiating the institution's goods and services from those of other businesses or by lessening the benefits that rival institutions and organizations provide⁶³.

In addition, the companies aim to offer products that outperform those of their rivals, adding value to their marketing and production procedures by incorporating novel features and features like user-friendliness, or by offering after-sales services like upkeep, delivery, and credit options in an inventive manner. Thus, the concept pertains to the customer's awareness of these novel qualities and their perceived worth, which sets them apart from competitors⁶⁶.

Concentration is the act of concentrating on a certain market segment and its offerings. For this, two factors are exploited; the first is to get a competitive edge in concentration. In the meantime, the second strategy aims to gain a competitive edge in attaining differentiation focus in the target market through restricted product offerings and geographic reach. This approach is predicated on choosing a limited range of competitors within the industry, with a portion of the selection coming from a group of industry sectors and alignment of its strategy for target groups ⁷⁴. Consequently, even though the target sector lacks a competitive edge overall, the firms aim to gain one for it. The focus technique thus provides two variables: concentrate on costs or excellence ⁶⁶. A person is aware that his desire to set himself apart from others is motivated by his need to satisfy his own wants. This is especially true given that all businesses strive to get a competitive edge that sets them apart from rival businesses. As a result, the marketing activity is impacted by the significant advancements in the information and communication technology sector, much like other activities inside the institution or company. Marketing, which began as the productive concept, moved on to the selling concept, and finally to the social concept, found applications on the internet under the

umbrella of "Electronic Marketing." In addition, this global network has given businesses a wealth of opportunities to reach customers worldwide ^{75,76}. Since customers are frequently dissatisfied with customer service as a result of the lack of personal attention, entertainment, and social interactions experienced in traditional marketing activities, the number of people using the internet worldwide has increased, which has led to the expansion of application fields for its use, particularly in the field of commercial marketing⁷⁷.

The argument, however, is that digital marketing offers consumers worldwide significant potential benefits by providing them with access to a wider range of goods at lower prices and by utilizing completely new and many more products, in addition to product categories like books, CDs, and travel packages, to customers who live far from traditional trade centers throughout the world. This claim has been contested⁷⁸. These days, businesses are vying for the attention of as many consumers as they can in order to increase the value of their earnings and boost their brand. To this end, many of these businesses are using digital technology to broaden their marketing channels⁷⁹.

2.1.1.2 Sales Results

Enterprises are essential to the global economy's growth. AOECD research states that companies may be categorized as micro-sized, meaning they employ less than ten people, small-sized, meaning they employ ten to forty-nine people, medium-sized, meaning they employ twenty to twenty-four people, or large-sized, meaning they employ more than 250 people⁸⁰. Of these, businesses with fewer than 250 employees make up 99 percent of all businesses⁸¹. The phrase "enterprise life-cycle" can be used to characterize an

enterprise's present state. After organizational components are evaluated, the small firm life cycle may be split into five stages: existence, survival, success, take-off, and resource maturity⁸². A research examining the lifespans of 36 firms identified five distinct stages in the corporate life cycle: birth, development, maturity, revival, and decline. The growth stage is one of the most important phases of the company life cycle because of its strong correlation with the survival of SMEs⁸³.

For SMEs to sell their goods and services and generate more income, meeting their marketing objectives is essential. Customer databases provide SMEs with accurate customer information (including historical, current, and prospective data), enabling them to choose the best marketing tactics⁸⁴. Additionally, 76 consumers who participated in the survey showed that it had a good impact on their propensity to repurchase. Repurchase intention growth can boost SME sales and growth⁸⁵. Additionally, one of the most important marketing objectives for SMEs is to improve customer service.

2.1.1.3 Customer Retention

A selling business may keep customers by generating demand and regularly meeting that need. This is known as customer retention⁸⁶. Another way to put it is as clients declaring they would keep doing business with a company⁸⁷. A company's ability to keep clients will mostly depend on the caliber of the goods and services it provides, as well as how well it takes care of them⁸⁸. Moreover, exceeding consumers' expectations to the point where they become devoted brand ambassadors is a key component of customer retention, which goes beyond simply meeting their needs⁸⁹.

Customer retention is the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to turn new or first-time clients into loyal, long-term patrons. On the other hand, sales performance refers to the quantity of goods and services that SMEs sell as well as the total amount of money they make. It is the efficacy and efficiency of SMEs' sales efforts. This study postulated a causal relationship of some kind between E-marketing (social media marketing, online advertising, and email marketing), Customer Relationship Management (Customer support, and Leadership), and SME performance (competitive advantage, sales performance, customer retention, and market share) based on an existing empirical review of related studies. As a result, a conceptual model was created to illustrate the moderating role of CRM in the relationship between E-marketing and SME performance. But since it costs more to attract prospective customers than it does to keep existing ones, marketers who want to be successful in keeping their current clientele must first establish contact with them and then monitor their efforts⁹⁰.

In recent times, relationship marketing has gained significant interest from both academic and practical circles. Leonard Berry distinguished between relationship and transaction (conventional) marketing when he originally defined relationship marketing in 1983. According to him, modern (relationship) marketing is all about the consumer, whereas conventional marketing is all about product quality. The rationale behind this is that as consumer preferences change and the world changes, globalization and the necessity for businesses to survive have made these constructs more critical⁹¹. Furthermore, the problem of client retention has not been overcome even with the introduction of relationship marketing. Once more, as there are now no best practices on the issue,

businesses lack a clear and effective strategy on how to deal with the exploitation of telecom facilities. Furthermore, defining and quantifying relationship marketing returns is challenging. To close these gaps and increase the retention of customers, this study explores a workable definition of relationship marketing.

Still, very few studies have examined the impact of relationship marketing on customer retention, even though there are a plethora of existing research on the topic in both developed and developing nations^{92,93,94}. However, this research might not be replicated in Nigeria due to the variance in business environment and regulatory policies. In addition, the focus of this research is the consumer angle.

Several relationship e-marketing elements that includes are as follows: Trust: Since trust is crucial to customer retention, firms that want to grow in this area must win over customers' confidence⁹⁵. From the standpoint of Relationship E-Marketing, trust is the feature of a commercial relationship that determines how much one party believes and can rely on the other's sincerity when making promises. It is likewise an essential component of corporate partnerships. In general terms, it indicates a high level of trust between the customer and the provider, which increases the likelihood that their partnership will last a long time. Many scholars acknowledge the importance of trust in characterizing customer retention for two reasons. First, a lot of service markets are validated by retention. Second, confidence among clients is bolstered by trust.

First, a lot of service markets are validated by retention. Second, confidence among clients is bolstered by trust.

Similar to trust, commitment is consistently employed in the majority of studies on customer relationships, indicating that this dimension is crucial for creating long-lasting bonds with customers and a key relationship performance indicator⁹⁶. Since most service companies need payment in advance of receiving the service, transparent communication is essential, reduces issues, and raises consumer expectations. Therefore, honest communication between partners is essential for a committed and long-lasting partnership. Since communication may establish shared values that may foster trust and increase client retention, it is a crucial component of relationship marketing⁹⁷. Two crucial components of transaction marketing are sales and communication. We must modify the demands or preferences of the consumer in terms of communication and restart the communication cycle. This represents the pinnacle of relationship marketing."

The goal of perspective marketing communication, as it relates to relationship marketing, is to create a two- or occasionally even a multi-way communication process. Even if not all activities include direct two-way communication, attempts at communication need to elicit a reaction of some kind that advances the exchange. All marketing communication messages should be in line with maintaining and strengthening long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders and consumers in order for relationship marketing to be effective. Quality of Service: The formula $SQ = P - E$ is derived from the comparison of perceived expectations (E) and perceived performance (P) of a service. This comparison determines the service quality (SQ). SERVQUAL is a well-known service quality measuring model that was developed by ⁹⁸. The following five factors are used by the model to quantify the discrepancy between consumer expectations and

perceptions: Tangibles: How a service company's actual buildings, tools, personnel, and marketing materials look. Reliability: The capacity of a service provider to consistently and precisely deliver the promised service. Assurance: Knowledge and conduct of staff members on civility and their capacity to inspire confidence and trust. Response: A service provider is ready to assist clients and deliver services on schedule. Empathy: A service provider gives its clients personalized attention and care in addition to flexible business hours.

As a result, a company that offers high-quality services will both meet and surpass client expectations and maintain its financial competitiveness. Empirical research indicates that enhanced service quality boosts long-term economic competitiveness and profitability.

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Businesses in today's cut-throat marketplace are looking for ways to improve client retention; academics are looking into and creating useful models, theories, and tactics. Establishing relational ties is a potent tactic employed by service providers to establish enduring buyer-seller partnerships ⁹⁹. One of the key elements of enduring buyer-seller partnerships has been shown to be strong relationship linkages ¹⁰⁰. Establishing enduring customer relationships requires dedication. Trust and dedication are essential for developing the most successful relationship marketing strategies ¹⁰¹. In a similar vein, relationships are built on reciprocal commitment; without it, a rapport cannot be solidified¹⁰². Bonds significantly affect consumer loyalty, according to an empirical research conducted in the context of Chinese commerce ¹⁰³. Bonds have a significant impact on customer satisfaction and the development of enduring ties between businesses and their clients. A further empirical investigation on the Chinese e-retailing environment discovered a clear correlation between financial bonds and customer satisfaction¹⁰⁴.

2.1.1.4 Market share

Market share is a company's sales during a specific time divided by the total sales of the industry. Additionally, it is thought that having a larger market share is a sign of success, whereas having a smaller market share indicates bad business practices and is typically associated with failure. Sales volume is the total number of products sold by a firm during a specific time, such as a fiscal quarter or a year ¹⁰⁵, or the quantity of goods sold or services provided by a corporation at any point in time. Similar to this, sales volume is used to calculate how much of a product is being sold at any one moment, typically

measured in cartons, crates, etc¹⁰⁶. This is commonly used as well with products but it could be as used within a service company

Sales concept refers to the group of products, services or materials provided by the company, factory or enterprise ¹⁰⁷. The relationship is positive, i.e., the more diversified the services and the products at competitive prices, the greater the material return of this company and the more its growth and development.

Market share: The Company's market share is defined as the Company's sales of a product, expressed as a percentage of total sales in the industry as a whole. Market share is a measure or a tool for distinguishing between winning and losing companies. Accordingly, business organizations can be seen in a race to seize opportunities and gain the largest share of the market. This race track requires an additional effort to identify external forces and their forces, including opportunities and threats, and to match that acquired knowledge with the strengths and weaknesses of the particular company. This is the choice of opportunities and their investment, an attempt to acquire the market and access to the largest market share. Which is a very important and fundamental element for the company. Through this, the company can achieve the high profitability it can use in expanding its business, which will lead to increased productivity, lower costs and increased profits.

Income: The revenue earned by a company, plant or business from its business activities, which is usually the sale of goods or services to buyers. This is the income the company is entitled to from its normal business activities, such as the sale of a goods or service to

customers and consumers. Revenue is referred to as turnover. Profit, or net income, generally

means total revenue minus total costs and expenses in a given period. In accounting terminology, revenue is often referred to as the "top line" because of its location in the income statement, if at the top while the net income is at the bottom of the statement, so it is known as the "bottom line".

Profitability is the objective of the business and a gauge of its suitability. It is the link between the earnings gained by the organization and the investments that helped to generate these profits. Either the link between profits and sales or the relationship between earnings and the investments that helped to obtain them is used to determine profitability.

Based on two dimensions of sales activation that emerged in the study model as follows:

Buying ratio: Buying plays an important role in the supply operations of the establishment and it is an important element in the rest of its other functions. This is by providing all its production units with different materials and production requirements, in the right quantity and at the right time and in the appropriate quality and price. The purchase function is defined as: "the function responsible for the material cycle from the time a category is requested to the time it is delivered to the entity that uses it." Repeat the purchase: All purchase information begins to recognize the need, which should be accurately described to identify all the parties to the items to be purchased, and this requires monitoring and follow-up stocks in a permanent way to ensure that there are no items in the stores to avoid duplication in the purchase and must know the energy in

advance.

It is important to know the quantity that can be accommodated and know the deadlines and delivery times. Sometimes there is a case of urgent request and this is due to the depletion of stocks to determine the level of safety inventory or an estimate error requirement.

2.1.2 Electronic Marketing

The method of conducting marketing operations utilizing digital technology, primarily on the internet, is referred to as "e-marketing," which also includes display advertising, mobile phones, and any other digital channel ¹⁰⁸. The process of promoting products, services, facts, and concepts using the internet and other electronic channels like mobile phones, intranets, and extranets is known as e-marketing, and it is a relatively new invention in business ¹⁰⁹. A small enterprise using electronic marketing might change the face of their industry globally. Using e-marketing might help small businesses not only take advantage of new possibilities but also counteract risks. E-marketing is the use of information technology to develop, convey, and provide values to consumers as well as to manage connections with them in a way that is advantageous¹¹⁰. According to this definition, e-marketing encompasses much more than merely using information technology to sell products and provide services. E-marketing also describes the techniques used by companies to promote their products and services and enhance the customer experience via digital media ¹⁰⁹. These channels include, but are not limited to, mobile applications, websites, blogs, banner advertisements, social media, email, and

search engine optimization (SEO). Due to the sharp rise in the number of people using the internet every day and the digitization of many daily activities like shopping, education, government services, and communication, e-marketing has become a crucial component of the marketing mix for many businesses and organizations¹⁰⁸.

Information technology advancements have completely changed marketing operations. Several businesses are adopting the Internet and other electronic media in conducting their marketing operations. As a result, e-marketing has emerged as a novel marketing philosophy and has grown significantly. E-marketing is a contemporary corporate strategy that involves using the Internet and other electronic channels to promote products, services, ideas, and information ¹⁰⁸. E-marketing is the process of planning and carrying out the creation, offering, selling, and distribution of concepts, products, and services in order to generate exchanges that meet both corporate and individual objectives¹¹⁰. Electronic customer relationship management systems and digital consumer data management are two aspects of marketing operations that are managed via the use of digital media ¹¹¹.

E-marketing, in general, entails using the Internet and other digital technology to accomplish marketing goals. In the digital age, the concept of marketing has evolved. It is now essential for all firms to establish an online presence in order to remain competitive. The majority of business organizations across all economic sectors (banks, insurance companies, hotels, airlines, education service providers, etc.) have joined the online business community and embraced the internet as a strategic tool in their daily marketing activities due to the widespread use of personal computers, mobile smart phones, and

improved access to internet service facilities. Nigerian marketing practices are affected by the increasing use of e-marketing as a technique for obtaining a competitive edge.

The increased importance of the measure of digital marketing success as an effective tool has been made possible in several business in today's Android world, due to its dynamism and effective usage. Digital marketing channel share some manners or were measuring various business owners¹²². One of the approaches used by entrepreneurs in operating marketing is through analytics built in most of the digital marketing channels. Therefore, there has been rapid growth driven by the marketing technology (e-marketing). The availability of data and digital platforms has provided many possibilities to inferences by marketers from the data and assist in making the right decisions⁵².

Various studies have reviewed similar result concerning the concept of digital marketing and the growth of SMEs. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, a study was done on the impact of digital marketing strategies on the performance of Kenyan companies that export cut flowers. The results showed that digital marketing significantly increases market share, which in turn increases profit ⁷. As a result, it was discovered that digital marketing offers significant advantages in terms of interactions and time saved. Analogously, a second research was carried out in Kenya to examine the effects of digital marketing platforms on businesses' sales. The study assesses the efficacy of digital marketing by using primary data to look at a sample of 150 businesses and 50 managers who were chosen at random. Both the correlations coefficient test and descriptive statistics techniques were used to analyze the data. The outcome demonstrates the beneficial effects of digital marketing. The company's sales are impacted by a number of

tools, including social media influence, email marketing, web marketing, and advertising¹¹².

In conclusion, the research's criteria were to collect data on problems that needed to be described and to choose goals that would aid in understanding and identifying the needed data using a compelling methodology and body of literature. Combining data from research articles and journals written by various writers has examined the guidelines established to move forward with methodology. The research will now go on to talk about the E-marketing sub-indicators that were used.

A group of online platforms or networks known as social media encourages participatory, two-way virtual conversations and content exchanges between and among registered users¹¹³. Therefore, social media marketing is the adoption and use of social networks and platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter for the purpose of running ads or other promotions, interacting with target customers, providing customer service, conducting sales, and fostering positive relationships with the target market¹¹⁴. It is the incorporation of social media into businesses' marketing strategy and the use of social media sites and networks as conduits for the implementation of marketing campaigns.

The more social media spreads and permeates the corporate world, the more successful social media marketing becomes in improving the performance of businesses. As a result, businesses utilize social media to sell their brands, engage with current and new consumers, and improve sales and marketing performance, while customers rely on social media to learn about possible purchases^{115,116}. A research that found a substantial

association between social media marketing and the performance (revenue, market share, and profitability) of flower businesses in Kenya lends credence to this theory ⁷. The study, which found that social media marketing significantly improved the performance of SMEs in Nasarawa State, lends further credence to the hypothesis ¹¹⁷. Similarly, another study that found social media had a major impact on SMEs' marketing performance supports the above concept ¹¹⁶.

In both developed and developing nations, electronic marketing, or e-marketing, is one of the digital marketing strategies with the quickest rate of growth ¹¹⁷. It gives businesses the chance to reach out to new clients and expand their consumer base more successfully¹¹⁸. Several academics have characterized e-marketing. One definition of e-marketing is the use of traditional marketing channels and electronic communication technologies for the purpose of acquiring and providing services to consumers ¹¹⁹. Digital marketing, internet marketing, online marketing, and social media marketing are all included under the umbrella term "e-marketing"¹²⁰. In a number of company settings, particularly Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), e-marketing seems to be one of the most important factors for attaining a competitive edge through improved marketing and business efficiency ¹²¹. Research indicates that SMEs account for over 200% of firms and employ around 60% of the labor force in emerging nations, especially in Africa ¹²². Even if e-marketing is crucial for SMEs, there are still not enough of them using it, which limits the technology's application ¹²³.

The phrase "e-marketing" is sometimes used interchangeably with "e-business," "e-commerce," and "internet marketing," which is inaccurate since, despite their

similarities, these concepts have distinct scopes¹²⁴. Internet marketing is more focused than e-marketing. However, the breadth of e-business and e-commerce is far greater than that of e-marketing. The sequence of scope is as follows: internet marketing; e-business; e-commerce; e-marketing¹²⁵.

All information exchanges mediated electronically are referred to as e-business¹²⁶. It is the application of digital technology to the management of many business operations, including marketing campaigns, sales and purchases, corporate communications, and R&D. Conversely, e-commerce describes the interchange of information and the purchase and sale of goods over electronic networks. Customers may choose from a variety of businesses or items and shop or conduct transactions year-round, 24 hours a day, from nearly any place. Additionally, e-commerce enables speedy delivery for digital goods. While e-marketing encompasses all of the aforementioned as well as the administration of digital consumer data and electronic customer relationship management, internet marketing refers to marketing via the internet, email, and wireless media. It offers a virtual marketplace where businesses may advertise, support sales of their goods and services, handle client information, and have direct lines of communication with clients. E-marketing is the term used to describe all of a company's online and offline electronic media operations that are designed to build a brand, draw in new clients, and keep existing ones. It connects companies with their customers by utilizing a variety of technologies. It helps a business to foster improved customer relationship management and more direct client interactions.

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one of the digital marketing strategies with the quickest rate of growth¹¹⁹. It gives businesses the chance to reach out to new clients and expand their consumer base more successfully¹²⁰. Several academics have characterized e-marketing. One definition of e-marketing is the fusion of traditional marketing media and electronic communication technologies for the purpose of acquiring and providing services to consumers¹²⁷. Digital marketing, internet marketing, online marketing, and social media marketing¹²⁸ are all included under the umbrella word "e-marketing." E-marketing seems to be a crucial factor in gaining a competitive edge through enhanced marketing and business efficiency across a range of commercial operations, including Small and Medium-Sized operations (SMEs)²⁴.

E-businesses are defined as those operations that manage an organization's business using digital and information technologies in order to use traditional marketing applications. As a result, E-marketing encompasses technology that let the company deliver text messages, manage supply chains, manage resources, and manage consumer connections. Therefore, to run a successful online business, you need to use effective marketing that incorporates all the necessary components, such as a unique branding strategy, the keywords that customers use to find your products, frequent Internet search engine advertising, and maximizing sales from your e-commerce website. It is crucial to note that one of the main objectives of shopping is to ascertain the demands and preferences of the target markets and to outperform rivals in achieving the needed satisfaction. Furthermore, when the definition of electronic marketing is included, we are discussing a setting and set of resources that the Internet and other technologies have

made available to facilitate interpersonal communication ³⁷. In addition to the aforementioned, the rise in internet users worldwide has also resulted in the extension of the domains in which it is utilized, particularly in the¹²⁹ commercial marketing industries.

Consequently, the current state of marketing science differs greatly from that of the past due to the rapid advancements in scientific and technological fields as well as the openness of markets, which exposed consumers to an enormous volume of marketing messages¹³⁰. It is interesting to note that the fundamental idea of marketing is categorized under human needs, which also encompasses the individual wants for information and self-expression as well as the basic material requirements of clothes, food, warmth, safety, and belonging. These requirements are fundamental to the human condition; they are not the product of marketers. Thus, E-Marketing refers to the use of social networks by businesses for marketing objectives, as it serves as a channel of communication with clients, helping to understand their needs and behaviors and fostering a stronger relationship with them¹³¹. E-marketing is the technique of leveraging digital technology and the internet to help businesses reach their marketing objectives and spread contemporary marketing concepts ¹³². Therefore, compared to other forms of traditional marketing, Internet marketers are able to more readily and freely disseminate information about their company and goods.

The Internet highlights the significance of e-marketing as a useful tool for defining the target market and for assisting in the analysis of industry needs ^{132, 133}. In addition, it facilitates the provision of goods that, by design quality, may satisfy the demands of consumers and, subsequently, satisfy these design requirements via quality of

conformity¹³⁴. However, a failure to match quality will have a negative impact on real performance, which means that a failure to fulfil customer demands will follow from a failure to design quality and compliance. This has an impact on both actual performance and customer needs. As a result, the client considers quality to be a combination of the product's meeting his wants and expectations as well as its ability to meet specifications and standards. Therefore, cutting expenses and expanding customer reach are the main advantages of e-marketing. It is often thought that the cost of a digital marketing platform is less than that of conventional marketing platforms, such as in-person interactions with sales representatives or distributors/intermediaries¹³⁵. In contrast to other significant traditional marketing methods, email marketing campaigns, web signboards, online directory advertisements, telemarketing, and other interactive marketing strategies yield over double the return on marketing investment¹³⁶.

Furthermore, since both individuals and corporations commonly use the internet as a search engine, it stands to reason that businesses who are reluctant to embrace digital marketing would do worse than those who have embraced the idea with gusto¹³⁷. Because of this, digital marketing offers a number of genuine advantages, such as quicker reaction times, increased response rates, worldwide reach, more cheap market access, greater conversion rates, round-the-clock marketing, and scalable and traceable communication¹³⁷. In addition, E-Marketing gives already-existing businesses access to new markets and fosters the development of novel business models such as virtual organizations, all the while facilitating simpler and more comfortable screen interactions for consumers¹³⁸. By

communicating with clients, electronic marketing also helps businesses to become more successful and efficient¹³⁹.

2.1.2.1 Social Media

Marketing on Social Media SMM also referred to as social network marketing, is an electronic marketing strategy that makes use of social networking sites and platforms as a vehicle for promotion¹⁴⁰. To assist a business in expanding its client base and raising brand awareness, social media marketing (SMM) aims to provide content that consumers will want to share with their social networks. The most economical way to sell is through social media, and creating a profile on the most popular social media site won't cost you anything. SMS Promotion: The purpose of Short Messaging Service (SMS), sometimes referred to as "Text Messaging," is to make it easier for people to communicate with each other using mobile phones¹⁴⁰. A user may send and receive texts via any operator, with a maximum of 160 characters, thanks to this electronic messaging system¹⁴¹. SMS marketing, as used in this study, is the practice of sending promotional text messages. SMS marketing is primarily a method for informing current or future consumers who have given you permission to send them text messages about offers and other information. SMS marketing is the practice of sending quick text messages, or MMS multimedia messaging services, to specific target consumers on behalf of businesses^{142, 143}.

A group of digital technologies collectively referred to as social media include websites and programs that enable online communication between users. Social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, facilitate online connections and information sharing among users. Companies are increasingly making an effort to build their social

media presence in order to inform current and future customers about who they are and what they do.

Social media and the expansion of online social networks on the internet are frequently related. These social networks are essential for bringing individuals together and enabling the public to share knowledge. According to a study by ¹⁴³, there are around 1.56 billion people on the planet. Global social media usage is expected to reach 3.29 billion people by 2022. Businesses have the chance to learn about the demands of their customers and tailor the marketing of their goods and services thanks to this tremendous development. Because of its genuine potential, social media has become a highly popular instrument for marketing in the past 10 years. Social media is simply a digital marketing channel that small businesses utilize to interact with customers through advertising and discover their preferences and inclinations.

Social media refers to certain websites and services (like WhatsApp, Instagram, Blackberry Messenger BBM, Skype, etc.) that are used for connection building and communication (Facebook, Twitter, Mob mob, Eskimi, MySpace, Badoo, etc.)¹⁴⁴. Customers may interact and communicate with each other through the tools, platforms, and applications that make up social media marketing ¹⁴⁵. The process of enabling the promotion of websites, goods, and services using online social networks is known as social media marketing¹⁴⁶. It encompasses marketing-related actions including posting content online, blogging, and photo sharing. Social media is becoming the most reliable and quickly developing way to interact and remain updated about goods and services¹⁴⁷. Internet marketing includes social media marketing. Anyone with an internet

connection is able to utilize this platform. The act of using social media networking sites to increase website traffic or brand exposure is sometimes referred to as social media marketing. The primary goal of social media marketing is to provide material that is very distinctive and aids in grabbing consumers' attention. Additionally, it ought to encourage visitors to forward it to others. Electronic word of mouth, or eWoM, is the driving force behind this kind of marketing, which produces earned media rather than purchased media¹⁴⁸.As of January 2018, the top 159 social media platforms globally are as follows, arranged by the number of active users (measured in millions): Table 1

Table 1- Number of Active Social Media Users Worldwide as at January 2018

Name of social media	Number of active users in
Facebook	2,1993
YouTube	1,500
WhatsApp	1,300
Facebook Messenger	1,300
WeChat	20102
QQ	2163
Instagram	2120
Tumblr	2114
QZone	568
Sina Weibo	3208
Twitter	330
Baidu Tieba	300
Skype	300

Source: Lamminen 2018

Social media marketing may assist the company in achieving a number of goals. Increasing website traffic or activity, raising consumer knowledge of the brand, building a favorable brand association, and developing a brand image are a few possible goals. They said that it would facilitate better connections and

communication with prospective clients. Although there are several social media networking sites, each one requires a unique set of tools, methods, or marketing tactics. Some social media networking sites and platforms that are used for marketing include YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and so on. Because social media platforms are more affordable and provide clients with longer customer retention than traditional marketing methods, social media marketing is quite popular these days.

a. Facebook

Facebook Marketplace began in May 2007 and allows users to publish classified ads to sell goods and services. Additionally, the platform was considering corporate uses for the site in addition to personal accounts. By the end of 2007, Facebook had launched business pages to accommodate the 160 firms that had joined up. Even the tiniest businesses will be able to advertise on the platform thanks to their current goals to increase ad income. Similar to Facebook's official page, 42% of US marketers said in 2018 that Facebook is crucial or significant to their company. Additionally, as of May 2013, 16 million local business pages have been established, a 100% increase from the 8 million that existed in June 2012. Facebook marketing has transformed how business is conducted, and its use by local businesses to extend their markets continues to explode¹⁴⁹. Facebook is seen to be the perfect substitute for telemarketing or traditional marketing, which irritates consumers with its barrage of unsolicited calls and visits via call centers. Utilizing Facebook for business has more benefits than drawbacks. Facebook provides a wider geographic reach and penetration for potential consumers. Additionally, businesses

may simultaneously target local and worldwide audiences. For companies who provide specialized goods and can easily identify their customers through Facebook pages, it is quite helpful. As click-through and eyeball conversion into purchases are easily measurable, Facebook marketing is more effective than traditional marketing platforms where promotion ROI cannot be determined with accuracy. Facebook is seen to be the perfect substitute for telemarketing or traditional marketing, which irritates consumers with its barrage of unsolicited calls and visits via call centers. Utilizing Facebook for business has more benefits than drawbacks. Facebook provides a wider geographic reach and penetration for potential consumers. Additionally, businesses may simultaneously target local and worldwide audiences. For companies who provide specialized goods and can easily identify their customers through Facebook pages, it is quite helpful. As click-through and eyeball conversion into purchases are easily measurable, Facebook marketing is more effective than traditional marketing platforms where promotion ROI cannot be determined with accuracy. He further adds that a page on Facebook where threads or posts have to be posted can be created for free, which has become a budding marketing venue for small and big-time entrepreneurs alike, writers, celebrities, organizations and many others¹⁵⁰.

In an article entitled “Facebook as a Marketing Communications Tool by – Facebook Official Pages Content Analysis for Jordanian Telecommunications Companies in the Mobile Operators Sector” finds that Jordanian telecommunications companies in the mobile operators’ sector utilize Facebook as a marketing communications tool to reach consumers in a transparent way. They don’t seem to control their messages on their page,

as they let consumers speak freely and criticize their companies in public. Jordanian consumers criticize and spread negative word of mouth much more than praising the companies and they engage the most with giveaways and lowest with societal posts.¹⁵¹ Jordanian telecommunications companies in the mobile operators' sector use Facebook as a marketing communications tool to reach consumers in a transparent manner, according to an article titled "Facebook as a Marketing Communications Tool by - Facebook Official Pages Content Analysis for Jordanian Telecommunications Companies in the Mobile Operators Sector." They don't appear to be in control of the posts on their page as they allow customers to openly critique their businesses. Jordanian customers are significantly more likely to complain and disseminate bad news about businesses than to praise them, and they interact with freebies and social media postings the most and least, respectively. Studies on Facebook as a marketing platform are few because the field is still in its infancy. There is still much to learn about the financial benefits of utilizing Facebook as a business tool, despite the fact that a few papers have tried to evaluate this. Additionally, the researcher noted that there aren't any explicit publications that talk about mompreneurs use Facebook as a tool for marketing. In light of this, this study might help us comprehend how Facebook marketing affects mompreneurs that sell baby goods. Facebook is a social networking platform where users may exchange photos and videos and communicate with friends, family, and supporters¹⁵². Individual users who also purchase products and services advertised and supplied by retailers have accounts on

Facebook. Facebook facilitates two-way communication between marketers and consumers, which might accelerate the dissemination of information about a company and improve performance¹⁵³.

Facebook is therefore a highly significant and large platform where marketing activities may be conducted and utilized by marketers. Facebook is an enjoyable and incredibly user-friendly website¹⁵⁴. It just takes a few minutes to roll in, after which you are sent to their main website. There, users may personalize their profiles to make them as distinctive and eye-catching as they choose.

b. Instagram

Using Instagram to increase your audience, leads, sales, and brand exposure is known as Instagram marketing. Instagram is a very powerful marketing tool for companies, entrepreneurs, and innovators. It is the preferred social media network for users between the ages of 16 and 34. Among the Instagram marketing techniques are Natural content: Reels, Stories, and photo, video, or carousel postings. Instagram advertisements, such as Stories and Shopping advertising, are examples of paid content marketing using influencers. Instagram checkout, live shopping, product tags and catalog, shop tab, and shopping advertisements Instagram's visual format gives it a significant edge over other social networking sites. Instagram is the ideal place to highlight your business if you offer a service with a clearly visible outcome or if your product design makes a significant contribution to your business. No matter how great a new social media platform works for someone else's business, developing a plan before hopping on it will help you stay focused on your objectives and, most crucially, your target audience.

Instagram has over 1 billion active users each month, making it the ideal platform for reaching a large audience. Instagram is the second most popular social network behind Facebook, with users spending 53 minutes there daily on average. Instagram makes it easier to keep up your connections with clients and potential clients. Ninety percent of Instagram users follow at least one business, demonstrating how much consumers love connecting with companies on this platform. The potential for Instagram to accelerate sales should also be taken into account. In 2019, Facebook conducted research and found that 65% of respondents went to a brand's website or app after seeing it on Instagram. Of those surveyed, 46% made both online and physical purchases from a brand. Instagram marketing offers companies access to a large audience that actively engages with them and wants to purchase from them. This is one of its main advantages. Nevertheless, there are a few more advantages to this social network.

Instagram has changed over the last several years from being a place to flaunt money or accomplishments to becoming a useful tool for businesses. Instagram may benefit your business in four different ways bolstering the brand: Marketing on Instagram is a great way to raise brand exposure. According to 83% of users, this social network aids in their discovery of new goods and services. Even better, consumers have greater faith in the companies that are featured on Instagram. 78% of users think brands with Instagram profiles are popular, and 74% of users think they are relevant. Conversely, potential clients are likely to steer clear of companies without an Instagram presence. Enhanced engagement: Social media is one of the greatest platforms for keeping in touch with clients. They let you interact with your audience with engaging content, solicit feedback

through likes and comments, tell them about exclusive deals, and much more. Consequently, Instagram outperforms other social media platforms in terms of consumer engagement. Instagram posts often receive 23% more interactions than Facebook posts, despite Facebook having twice as many active users. Increased sales: We already know that Instagram users only voluntarily make purchases. With 11% of US social media users shopping on Instagram, this buying audience is enormous. Aware of this quirk, Instagram enables companies to maximize the potential of their platform. With Instagram's extensive toolkit, users may purchase directly from the platform. These include advertisements, shopping tags, Instagram Stories connections, and more. Take a look at the Instagram website's complete list. Opportunities for growing the audience: Instagram expands the market for your company by enabling you to pinpoint your ideal clientele. Because of its targeting possibilities, Instagram Ads Manager offers this chance. With them, you may identify the ideal audience based on their demographics, hobbies, and behavior, among other factors. Better yet, Instagram ads manager provides you with robust re-targeting options. Targeting and re-targeting coupled allows you to not only drive more qualified Instagram leads but also nudge leads from other channels down the sales funnel effectively. The Instagram analytics tool allows you to measure your ad performance. You can track outreach, total campaign spending, the number of purchases, cost per purchase, conversions, and more. To sum it up, Instagram marketing strengthens your brand, brings you a willing-to-buy audience, and keeps them engaged with your business. Read on if you want to get maximum value from this channel. In the next part, we'll find out how to set up an Instagram marketing strategy.

WhatsApp: Instant messaging apps like Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp have grown in importance as means of having private conversations with loved ones. Along with increasing popularity, there was a rise in interest in using these channels for profit. WhatsApp for Business was just introduced by Facebook, Inc. Beginning in January 2020, users of WhatsApp's direct messaging feature will have the ability to start private chat conversations with brands (such as businesses, political candidates, and non-governmental organizations) in the same manner that they would with friends or family. This chat session may be conducted with a brand employee or a chatbot, which is a conversational agent designed to converse with users in normal language and carry out particular tasks automatically when asked;¹⁵⁵.

This development has some potential benefits for commercial parties, such as providing consumers with quick responses, the opportunity to tap into new audiences (such as younger consumers that are very active on messaging platforms), and the convenience to interact with consumers in a conversational way¹⁵⁶. But there are also possible negative effects on society and consumers. In particular, customers may not be entirely aware of these firms' promotional intents due to the private nature of the WhatsApp environment. One of the outcomes can be the unintentional sale, combination, or repurposing of customers' personal information (to other businesses).

This presents a possible clash with consumer protection laws, regulations against unfair business practices, and fundamental rights to privacy and data protection. Furthermore, because these WhatsApp talks with marketers are private, one-on-one discussions that are hidden from the general public, it is nearly hard to keep track of the information that

brands share with customers. This adds a whole new level of complexity to enforcement issues. Due to the private nature of the chat, this creates an environment that may be more favorable to (manipulative, inappropriate, etc.) attempts by brands or other institutions to sway consumers' opinions in order to benefit themselves (e.g., financial profit, political votes). Regulators are largely unaware of this. This justifies the necessity for a comprehensive grasp of how consumers see and want to use the WhatsApp brands. This study offers and examines a research model using brand trust as its key component, based on structural equation modeling (SEM). It is among the most crucial components in building connections between consumers and companies and, consequently, plays a significant role in figuring out what customers want to do with businesses on WhatsApp ^{157,158}.

Twitter: One of the most widely used social networking sites, it has 255 million active monthly users and 500 million tweets posted per day, according to ¹⁵⁹. Compared to Facebook users, Twitter users visit the platform more frequently: 29% of users visit the site many times a day, and 46% of users visit the network daily ¹⁶⁰. Marketers are aggressively integrating social media into their programs in reaction to the growth of platforms like Twitter, since these channels may enhance user and consumer interaction with the company ¹⁶¹. More than 80% of Fortune 500 businesses were active on Twitter by the end of 2013, and the top brands gained an average of 20% more followers in the last quarter of 2013 ¹⁶². However, Twitter is being utilized more and more for advertising as well as marketing ^{163,164}.

Exposure to large audiences is one of Twitter's evident advantages. Twitter is the sixth most popular website in the United States. Its technological characteristics facilitate the finding of submitted material, making it a platform with the ability to reach a wide range of people. To view tweets from a public Twitter account or "Twitter handle," which is the name that a person chooses when they sign up for Twitter, a user does not need to log in. Because reciprocity is not required in a technical or social sense, it is simple to read information and begin following someone on Twitter ¹⁶⁵. People are drawn to Twitter by celebrities' fame and presence on the platform. As a result, a growing number of marketers are incorporating celebrity tweeting into their array of endorsement tactics, expanding the ways in which brand material may be shown in users' Twitter feeds ¹⁶⁶. Other Twitter customs, including the habit of re-tweeting, which may draw in new audiences, and the use of hash-tags, which can improve content discovery, can also help spread Twitter messages, as we will address later. It has been said that Twitter functions as a broadcasting network because of these capabilities, and publications have found that Twitter is a more efficient means of delivering articles than Facebook ¹⁶⁷.

The popularity and visibility of celebrities on Twitter attracts users. Because of this, more and more marketers are adding celebrity tweeting to their repertoire of endorsement strategies, hence increasing the ways in which brand content might appear in consumers' Twitter feeds ¹⁶⁶. As we shall discuss later, other Twitter habits can also aid in the dissemination of Twitter messages. These include the practice of retweeting, which may attract new audiences, and the usage of hashtags, which can enhance content discovery. Because of these features, Twitter has been compared to a broadcasting network, and

newspapers have found that Twitter is a more effective way to distribute content than Facebook ¹⁶⁸. Twitter has the potential to enhance customer interaction with brands in a number of ways. These include incorporating weblinks and hashtags to encourage retweeting, keeping an eye on and answering online comments from customers, utilizing trending hashtags like #FF (Follow Friday) to advertise organizational products or services, and utilizing celebrities in brand conversations to highlight new or undiscovered brands ¹⁶⁶.

Additionally, Twitter has developed into a venue that encourages brand dialogue, which in turn makes customers more inclined to spread word of mouth¹⁶⁹. While some word of mouth will inevitably be uncontrollable, companies may encourage good word of mouth by consistently tweeting relevant information. As was previously said, monitoring social media may reveal emotion towards a business and offer a way to counteract unfavorable rumors¹⁷⁰. Twitter may be used to disseminate information and have conversations with stakeholders during a crisis. Monitoring can be used to track and respond to mentions of the brand's handle. For instance, in 2010, when a volcanic eruption in Iceland caused severe disruptions to aviation, Air France-KLM utilized Twitter to reach out to ¹⁷¹ "huge waves" of customers.

In general, trust arises from a truster's assessment of the likelihood that the trustee would act in accordance with their expectations ^{172; 173}. Numerous academic fields, including psychology, sociology, economics, communication science, and marketing, have given trust a lot of attention. In terms of brands, it denotes a mental state that is seen as "confidence" in the brand's ability to achieve its goals¹⁷⁴. Stated differently, it involves

attributing to the brand positive intentions toward the welfare and interests of the consumers. One of the most crucial components of building consumer-brand relationships is trust, which is influenced by customers' past encounters and experiences with the brand ¹⁷⁵.

With regard to WhatsApp, it's critical to distinguish between customer trust in external brands using the platform and consumer trust in the WhatsApp brand itself. This study aims to address this distinction. In this context, believing that a brand consistently acts "the right thing" on WhatsApp is brand trust. It alludes to a set of requirements that must be met by the brand on WhatsApp, and these requirements may vary from person to person. According to existing research, two important factors that influence people's trust in commercial actors are their perception of privacy and the security of their online environment ^{176,177}.

In addition to these two elements, the perceived socialness of the online setting has been emphasized as another significant factor that positively affects trust in commercial parties ^{178,179}. This is because online environments are progressively introducing social cues in the consumer-brand online relationship (for a more social consumer experience). These three viewpoints may also be quite important when it comes to WhatsApp: According to a recent survey on consumer impressions of WhatsApp, the app was frequently linked to the terms social, privacy, and security¹⁸⁰. next this line of thinking, the next part will discuss how a user's trust in a brand on WhatsApp may be influenced by their impressions of perceived socialness, perceived security, and perceived privacy of the

messaging service. We also highlight information privacy concerns as a further factor that might help to explain some variance in brand trust.

Research that back up the Computers Are Social Actors (CASA) paradigm have mostly shown that when websites feature social cues, people prefer to regard them as social entities^{181,182}. According to this line of inquiry, perceived socialness has a significant role in trust¹⁸⁴. Due to its potential to strengthen the relationship between customers and brands, this socialness has a favorable impact on relationship commitment¹⁸⁵. The latter is based on the theory that building a trust connection between trustee and truster requires growing the perceived socialness of a channel or medium¹⁸⁵. Studies reveal that social cues—that is, a brand's sensitive, gregarious, and intimate online interactions—can increase consumer trust;^{186, 187}.

WhatsApp can be considered a channel with social richness, because its main purpose is interaction with contacts that one knows personally, such as friends, family, and acquaintances—or, in other words, interpersonal communication with close ties. Messages can be more personalized with photos and video or voice messages. This social nature of WhatsApp use may be generalized by users, who may perceive any interaction on the platform as more social than on other platforms, which are used less for interpersonal communication. Therefore, we argue that perceived socialness will increase trust in brands on WhatsApp.

Apart from the perceived socialness, perceived security is a crucial characteristic. Customers' perceptions that their personal data—that is, their personal information—won't be accessed, retained, or utilized by unauthorized persons are known as perceived

security.¹⁸⁸ One of the most important aspects of designing a business-to-consumer (B2C) website is security. Previous studies have indicated a favorable correlation between it and trust in websites^{189, 190}, particularly social networking sites¹⁹¹. Regarding particular security enforcement techniques,¹⁹² encryptions were suggested as a crucial precondition for information security. Therefore, customer views of an app's security enforcement principles are favorably correlated with their level of confidence in commercial entities¹⁹³. Given that WhatsApp employs end-to-end encryption and notifies all users of this security concept, this is a crucial component to look at.

The notion of marketing has been changed in the era of the internet. It is now essential for all firms to establish an online presence in order to remain competitive. The majority of business organizations across all economic sectors (banks, insurance companies, hotels, airlines, education service providers, etc.) have joined the online business community and embraced the internet as a strategic tool in their daily marketing activities due to the widespread use of personal computers, mobile smart phones, and improved access to internet service facilities. Nigerian marketing practices are affected by the increasing use of e-marketing as a technique for obtaining a competitive edge.

In both developed and developing nations, electronic marketing, or e-marketing, is one of the digital marketing strategies with the quickest rate of growth¹²⁹. It offers better business opportunities to attract potential and existing customers¹³⁰. Many academics have characterized e-marketing. One definition of e-marketing is the fusion of traditional marketing media and electronic communication technologies for the purpose of acquiring and providing services to consumers¹³⁷. Digital marketing, internet

marketing, online marketing, and social media marketing are all included under the umbrella term "e-marketing" ¹³¹. E-marketing seems to be a key component in gaining a competitive edge through improved marketing and business efficiency in a variety of company operations, including Small and Medium-Sized operations (SMEs)¹³². Research indicates that SMEs account for over 200% of firms and employ over 60% of the labor force in emerging nations, especially in Africa¹³³. Even while SMEs find e-marketing to be important, the proportion of SMEs that have implemented e-marketing is still low, which results in restricted use of the technology ¹³⁴.

The word "e-marketing" is sometimes used interchangeably with "e-business," "e-commerce," and "internet marketing," which is inaccurate since, despite their similarities, these concepts have different scopes. Internet marketing is more focused than e-marketing. However, the breadth of e-business and e-commerce is far greater than that of e-marketing. The sequence of scope is as follows: internet marketing ; e-business; e-commerce; e-marketing¹³⁵.

All electronically mediated information exchanges supporting a variety of business operations, both inside an organization and with external stakeholders, are collectively referred to as e-business¹³⁶. It is the application of digital technology to the management of many business operations, including marketing campaigns, sales and purchases, corporate communications, and R&D. Conversely, e-commerce describes the interchange of information and the purchase and sale of goods over electronic networks. Customers may choose from a variety of businesses or items and shop or conduct transactions year-round, 24 hours a day, from nearly any place. Additionally, e-commerce enables speedy

delivery for digital goods. While e-marketing encompasses all of the aforementioned as well as the administration of digital consumer data and electronic customer relationship management, internet marketing refers to marketing via the internet, email, and wireless media. It offers a virtual marketplace where businesses may advertise, support sales of their goods and services, handle client information, and have direct lines of communication with clients. E-marketing includes every action a company does. It uses a range of technologies to help connect businesses to their customers. It helps a business to foster improved customer relationship management and more direct client interactions.

One of the types of digital marketing that is expanding the quickest in both developed and emerging nations is electronic marketing, or e-marketing¹³⁶. It gives businesses the chance to reach out to new clients and expand their consumer base more successfully¹³⁰. Several academics have characterized e-marketing. One definition of e-marketing is the fusion of traditional marketing media and electronic communication technologies for the purpose of acquiring and providing services to consumers¹³⁷. Digital marketing, internet marketing, online marketing, and social media marketing are all included under the umbrella term "e-marketing"²¹⁶. "E-marketing is an umbrella phrase that includes digital marketing, internet marketing, online marketing, and social media marketing. Gaining a competitive advantage across a range of economic sectors, including Small and Medium businesses (SMEs)¹³², appears to depend heavily on e-marketing.

E-businesses are operations that employ digital and information technology to run the business of an organization so they may use traditional marketing tools. Thus, E-marketing includes technologies that enable the business to manage resources, supply

chains, text message delivery, and customer relationships. Therefore, to run a successful online business, you need to use effective marketing that incorporates all the necessary components, such as a unique branding strategy, the keywords that customers use to find your products, frequent Internet search engine advertising, and maximizing sales from your e-commerce website. It's crucial to note that one of the main objectives of shopping is to determine the requirements and preferences of the target audiences and to acquire. Besides, if the description of electronic marketing is added, then, we are talking about an environment and tools that the Internet space combines with all such technology has enabled for communication between individuals¹³⁹.of addition to the aforementioned, the rise of internet users worldwide has also resulted in the extension of the domains in which it is utilized, particularly in the area of commercial marketing²¹⁷.

Due to the tremendous development it underwent in the scientific and technological fields as well as the openness of markets to one another, which in turn exposed consumers to an enormous amount of marketing messages, marketing science is no longer the same as it was in the past⁶⁷.

It is interesting to note that the fundamental idea of marketing is categorized under human needs, which also encompasses the individual wants for information and self-expression as well as the basic material requirements of clothes, food, warmth, safety, and belonging. These needs are not created by marketers, but, are an essential part of the human structure. Thus, E-Marketing refers to the use of social networks by businesses for marketing objectives, as it serves as a channel of communication with clients, helping to understand their needs and behaviors and fostering a stronger relationship with them¹⁴¹.

E-marketing is the technique of leveraging digital technology and the internet to help businesses reach their marketing objectives and spread contemporary marketing concepts⁴¹. Therefore, compared to other forms of traditional marketing, Internet marketers are able to more readily and freely disseminate information about their company and goods.

The Internet highlights the significance of e-marketing as a useful tool for identifying the target market and for assisting in the analysis of industry needs^{143,144}. In addition, it facilitates the provision of goods that, by design quality, may satisfy the demands of consumers and, subsequently, satisfy these design requirements via quality of conformity¹⁴⁵. However, a failure to match quality will have a negative impact on real performance, which means that a failure to fulfil customer demands will follow from a failure to design quality and conformity. This brings us to the opposite side of the argument. As a result, in addition to conformance, the client defines quality as a collection of features of the product that satisfy his wants and expectations. Therefore, cutting expenses and expanding customer reach are the main advantages of e-marketing. It is often thought that the cost of a digital marketing platform is less than that of conventional marketing platforms, such as in-person interactions with sales representatives or intermediaries/distributors¹²¹.

In contrast to other significant traditional marketing methods, email marketing campaigns, web signboards, online directory advertisements, telemarketing, and other interactive marketing strategies yield over double the return on marketing investment¹⁴⁶. Furthermore, since most people and organizations use the internet as a search engine, it

stands to reason that businesses who are reluctant to use digital marketing would struggle more than those who have accepted the idea with open arms ¹⁴⁷. Because of this, digital marketing offers a number of genuine advantages, such as quicker reaction times, increased response rates, worldwide reach, more cheap market access, greater conversion rates, round-the-clock marketing, and scalable and traceable communication ¹⁴⁷. In addition, E-Marketing gives customers quicker and more convenient screen interactions while opening up new markets for already established businesses and generating new business models like virtual organizations ¹⁴⁸. By communicating with clients, electronic marketing also helps businesses to become more successful and efficient¹⁴⁹.

Following the enactment of the cashless policy in 2013 and the privatization of the telecommunications industry in 2000, companies in Nigeria are now more likely to use e-commerce and, consequently, e-marketing⁴¹. Since 2013, Nigeria's internet user base has steadily increased. According to the data, there was an increase in internet users from around 50 million to 203 million⁴². Despite Nigeria's ubiquitous internet access, nothing is known about how it is used for e-marketing. Nonetheless, the government's initiatives to create a cashless society might be seen as a significant advance for e-marketing in Nigeria.

It has been discovered that e-marketing adoption enhances business performance. ⁴³ noted that e-marketing offers a plethora of financial advantages as a substitute medium via which companies may expand their customer base. This is a result of e-marketing giving customers and companies access to an entirely new range of possibilities. It helps a business to develop new services, broaden its clientele, become more visible and

customer-responsive, and grow²¹⁸. It provides particular advantages to enterprises of all sizes and types, such as: Global reach: New technologies made possible by information technology allow for a greater number of marketing initiatives to be carried out globally. For instance, anyone with internet connection anywhere in the globe may view a website. This enables a company to expand into new areas and fight on a global scale. Local, national, and worldwide markets are included in the expansion of the market. By building and managing a website, a company may list its goods and services as well as other pertinent information that consumers can access from anywhere in the globe, helping to market its brands and goods internationally.

Reduced costs: Compared to traditional marketing techniques, e-marketing that is well-planned and precisely targeted may reach the appropriate clients for a lot less money. It provides cost reductions, especially in the areas of print, distribution, digital media platforms, customer service, and transactional expenses. Additional advantages of e-marketing encompass: 24-hour advertising Customers can use e-marketing to learn more about items and make purchases from a company even if its physical locations are closed or nonexistent. Customers anticipate that a company's offerings should remain uninterrupted and available around-the-clock.

Personalization: E-marketing gives a business the ability to gather, retain, and identify specific consumer data. If the website and customer database are connected, the business may welcome visitors with offers that are specifically tailored to them. The more they purchase, the more the company can better target their profile and market to them. One-to-one marketing: E-marketing enables businesses to connect with and respond to

specific client needs and to clients who are eager to learn about their offerings immediately. Additionally, it allows clients to pay the business directly.

Enhanced interactivity: Another benefit of e-marketing is the increased level of engagement it provides. With the use of chat, music, images, and videos, it enables businesses to develop interactive campaigns. A company may include its audience and provide them more influence over their online experience by using interactive games, quizzes, and two-way communication.

Enhanced capacity to monitor outcomes: E-marketing facilitates the assessment of marketing campaigns' efficacy. It enables a business to utilize techniques like pay per click or pay per action to get comprehensive data about how consumers react to advertisements.

New product development: Product information and new product development may be found on the internet. It is a somewhat inexpensive way to gather market research on how consumers see items, which is useful for creating new products and enhancing old ones.

Information and communication technology is relevant and beneficial, but there are still obstacles in the way of its advancement and application in e-business, e-commerce, and e-marketing, particularly in Nigeria.¹⁹⁴ When compared with Asia, Europe and America, Nigeria is still lagging behind. Some of the factors responsible for this include¹⁹⁵.

Inadequate Internet Infrastructure: The major platform for e-marketing is the internet. Currently, the level of accessibility to the internet in Nigeria is still low especially in most

rural areas where majority of businesses do not have access to internet facilities and thus are unable to engage in e-marketing.

Cost of getting connected: Availability of computer and fast speed internet connection are prerequisites to the practice of e-marketing. The cost of getting connected is high especially for small and medium businesses. The high cost of accessing internet services is also a major factor in the adoption of e-marketing in Nigeria. In addition, the cost of maintenance is high.

Unreliable power supply: One of the biggest obstacles to e-marketing in Nigeria is the problem of an unpredictable power supply. The electricity needed to power the devices needed for e-marketing is scarce.

Insufficiently knowledgeable personnel: One of the main obstacles to the expansion of e-marketing is the lack of staff experience, which is a result of both a general scarcity of highly qualified individuals and inadequate training. In Nigeria, computer literacy is still rising.

Sentence of insecurity: Another significant barrier to the spread of e-marketing among companies and consumers is the perception of a lack of security in on-line transactions. Security is the defense against identity theft and fraud, which can provide unauthorized parties easy access to personal data and allow them to misuse it. Utilizing ICT to its fullest potential for e-marketing application delivery requires an understanding of and commitment to addressing security risks.

Internet marketing is a business idea that may help one customer overcome the constraints of traditional marketing by utilizing contemporary technologies. This

incredibly complex and ever-evolving technology calls for both technical know-how and a natural flair for marketing. Creating incredibly complex websites is a common practice among huge internet marketers. Consequently, the fact that certain websites are difficult for potential clients to access is one of the primary drawbacks of internet marketing. The website may have issues that impact the overall user experience, or error messages may appear while attempting to visit a link updating any feature or material on a website is essential for successful internet marketing. If not, it will hurt the company's operations. It is quite tough to survive and maintain the place in the world of the internet since there is fierce competition. Internet marketing is not at all simple; it takes a lot of perseverance, diligence, and financial resources. The services are not provided for free; the price of internet marketing covers every facet, such as website creation, upkeep, online advertising, etc. Despite the growing popularity of online shopping, many individuals still do not want to purchase online. Because of security concerns, many consumers are afraid to use credit cards while making online purchases. Security and privacy issues are reported to be impeding the growth of e-commerce. Consumers worry that other parties could learn personal information about them without their permission. Due in large part to consumer worries about credit card security, safe payment options have been more widely used. Passwords are a type of authentication used by e-commerce companies to reinforce security measures by verifying that the user is the one who actually has access rights to the account. Most clients want assurances that no information they provide will be sold to outside parties without their permission¹⁴⁶.

2.1.2.2 Internet Promotion

Simply put, the word "online advertising" refers to advertising that is done online, or via the internet ¹⁹⁶. This type of advertising leverages the World Wide Web and the internet to spread marketing messages that draw in customers. Online advertising is a type of promotion that targets customers by using the internet and global web to spread marketing messages. When compared to major corporate organizations, a customer may be aware of even little businesses. Focus has also been placed on the numerous online advertising trends, which has led to the realization that online advertisements are now competing with print ads because of the instantaneous access to data provided by social media and other online apps. This is a useful tool for business advertising that raises awareness. Public relations, direct marketing, sales promotion, and other marketing communication techniques make up a significant portion of the E-commerce strategy. Electronic marketers use these tools to convey awareness, preference, and choice ¹⁹⁷. Web advertising will have the most impact on the advertising business in the next ten to fifteen years, according to ¹⁹⁸. Online advertising in the twenty-first century gives consumers greater visibility, control, and the ability to choose how much commercial content they want to see. Customers get access to promotion exploration, price details, product design involvement, delivery scheduling, sales, and post-purchase assistance.

Search Engine Marketing

One component of internet marketing is search engine marketing. This technique aids in the promotion of a website by making it more visible through the use of tools like

search engine optimization, sponsored adverts, and other search engine services that will boost the website's search traffic. When compared to search engine optimization, search engine marketing is a more general word. Most people believe SEO to be a component of SEM. While SEM helps us target consumers with paid advertising links in the search engine results page along with the organic search results so that the targeted visitors would visit the website, SEO helps us obtain better organic search results. It is advised that search marketers utilize several paid search platforms¹⁹⁹. Among them, Google AdWords is the most widely used sponsored search platform, followed by Yahoo and Bing Ads. In addition to that, there are several different Pay Per Click platforms and PPC advertising options on a few well-known social media networks. The most notable aspect of search engine marketing is that it gives sponsors the opportunity to place their ads in front of consumers who are prepared to make a purchase at that exact moment⁵⁰.

Search engines were developed to facilitate user access to the vast quantity of information available on the Internet by using computer algorithms to crawl, index, retrieve, and display pertinent information for users³⁷. Search Engine Marketing (SEM) may be broadly described as an online marketing strategy used by businesses and organizations to increase their exposure on search engine results pages (SERPs) using either paid or unpaid methods³⁹. SEM comes in a variety of ways, such as organic optimization and sponsored inclusion. The three main types are as follows: 1) Organic search-based strategies, often known as search engine optimization, which include using ways to raise a website's placement when a user enters pertinent terms

in a search engine.. These include of managing inbound and outbound linkages to other websites, producing relevant online content, and organizing an effective website structure; 2) Paid inclusion, wherein the website is included in search engine results by paying the firms; 3) Paid placement, often known as search engine advertising, refers to purchasing display slots at a search engine's or its content network's paid listing section. Now, the two most widely used services, Google AdWords and Yahoo! Precision Match, are where sponsored placement listings appear as "Sponsored Links."

Human resource management plays a crucial part in accomplishing customer relationship management²⁰⁰. When employees are happy, customers are most likely to be satisfied as well. However, a number of academic writers have challenged that claim, arguing that while CRM implementation cannot be completed by a single organizational activity, it can be achieved through the complementary functional intersection of people, processes, operations, and marketing capabilities, all of which are strengthened by information technology and applications²⁰¹. The necessity of alterations to the organizational structure for the effective execution of CRM was emphasized by more writers²⁰². Organizational structure modifications must be implemented to the point where they encourage staff members to understand the benefits of CRM and to use cutting-edge management techniques to guarantee that new changes are handled effectively²⁰³.

In addition, a lot of businesses nowadays understand that their employees are their most valuable resource as they are the key to their success²⁰⁴. Since people determine whether company plans and strategies succeed or fail, they are the cornerstone of customer

relationship management strategy ²⁰⁵.The department that oversees and manages people matters through a variety of activities is known as human resources management, and it is one of the independent variables in this study. These activities include planning for human resources, recruiting, selection, orientation, training, performance management, compensation and benefits, and career development ²⁰⁶.Additionally, hiring, selection, and recruiting will serve as a representation of HRM activities in the CRM strategy's implementation for the sake of this study.

If establishing a long-term connection with consumers was a strategic organizational aim, then recruitment is the process of finding, identifying, and attracting suitable applicants. As such, the business will make an effort to attract individuals who can interact amicably with customers.

Display Advertising

Typically, display advertising targets particular demographics. Based on sites, locations, times, and other variables, businesses may tailor the distribution of their ads. The ad unit is only shown to interested parties based on their data properties. Exhibit advertising is frequently employed in branding campaigns. But they may also be used for other things without having to know about the product, such as enhancing product memory and improving patronage and sales

Unlike search ads, display ads do not target consumers that are actively looking to make a purchase. Nonetheless, they assist companies in reviving the memory of customers who previously did not need their product ²⁰⁸. They do this by sparking people's initial attention and making it possible for them to remember it later on. Consequently, this

particular brand has come to be associated with that particular product. Establishing a display advertising campaign could seem like a straightforward process because many platforms provide marketers real-time optimization and total workflow automation. It's true that finding quality inventory for ad placement is far simpler today than it was ten years ago. These systems offer audience-based ad delivery that is highly customized in addition to automated. Computers link cookies with campaign settings and automatically display advertisements without the need for human interaction. But user attention is extremely competitive, so it's important to always pay attention to campaign controls, messaging, and design²⁰⁹.

On-line display advertising uses text, logos, videos, photos, and other visuals to visually convey a brand message. It is a type of online keyword advertising. Digital advertising displays aim to enhance the efficacy of their advertisements and overall campaign success by focusing on particular user demographics. When customers are using mobile devices and applications, checking Gmail, seeing YouTube videos, or perusing Facebook, display advertisements may help you advertise your brand. Ninety percent of Internet users worldwide are reportedly reached by Google's Display Network, which spans millions of webpages, news pages, blogs, and Google properties like YouTube and Gmail. Targeting the appropriate person with the appropriate message at the right moment is the key to success with display advertisements. When managed effectively, your brand may raise sales and conversions, promote recurring business, raise website traffic and clicks, and raise brand recognition.

Display ads come in a variety of sizes, shapes, colors, and designs that may be customized to match the content of an organization's website ²¹⁰. A traditional banner display at the top of a business website, for instance, might attract customers and inspire them to take action. An infographic or video advertisement, on the other hand, can be more appropriate for engaging with the community surrounding your business on a social media page. The flexibility of display ads to choose from a wide range of advertising pictures is one of the key reasons they make an excellent addition to digital marketing strategies. Another benefit of incorporating display ads within your digital marketing strategies is that they allow you to target certain customer markets ²¹¹. You may monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of your initiatives as well as the size of your target audience using a variety of digital advertising campaigns. After that, you may use the data to examine your target audience. Subsequently, you may utilize this information to guide the creation of further targeted market strategies.

Display ads may also tell you which readers interact most with your digital material, which can help you better understand how the company's goods and services satisfy the needs of those readers. Analytics related to digital marketing and advertising may be tracked with the use of display ads. You may monitor important metrics such as duration on page, bounce rate, click-through rate, and other criteria to ascertain which visual displays work best and which methods you can adjust to engage your audience²³¹. Since most of the channels that offer display advertising services frequently provide detailed information on the prices the firm spends on each advertising approach it uses, display advertisements are also helpful for keeping track of digital advertising expenses.

Pop-up Advertising

Pop up advertisements have seemingly always been a part of the Internet user experience, and they have been well researched since their inception in the late 1990s. They now exist on many types of websites, including online gaming and news. Pop-up advertisements were very influential in the early days of internet advertisement. However, now many good internet browsers such as Google Chrome have gotten fairly advanced at blocking these ads ²¹². However, the designers of these JavaScript pop-up windows continuously evolve the technology to place advertisement copy, image, and video in front of the user's eye²¹³.

The literature on pop-up windows runs the gamut from studying the efficacy of pop-up ads to studying consumer behavior regarding them to gauging how long-term exposure to pop up ads affects individual consumers. The primary ideas, defenses, and conclusions of the most current studies on the subject are outlined below: The effectiveness of pop-up adverts in influencing or driving customer behavior is one of the key goals of research on the subject. Despite attracting more attention and being clicked on by users, pop-up advertisements may also make people feel bad about themselves since they obstruct the user's ability to do tasks on websites. For example, pop-up advertisements are said to be more annoying than other types of advertisements when browsing the internet ²¹⁴. There are a lot of online or internet-based adverts, such as floating, wallpaper, interstitial, pop-ups, skyscrapers, and banners. Pop-up advertisements are the most frequent source of irritation and rage ²¹⁵. Furthermore, another study reported a negative attitude of the consumer towards the pop-up ads compared to the other six advertising formats ²¹⁶.

However, people who have a negative attitude towards pop-ups do not usually have negative thoughts about the brands whose pop-up ads are shown.

A very recent study by ²¹⁷into the impact of advertising value in online gaming and their effect on online gamers. It also shows how the presence of advertising may affect gamers experiences. Their study found that the perceived value of the advertised entity could negatively or positively affect a user's experience. For example, when high-end luxury brands were shown, gamers tended to feel more inspired to play, while low-end brands and pop-up advertising was likely to have the opposite effect. ²¹⁸studied the long-term effects on Internet users of pop-up adverts and web advertising in general. Pop-ups are typically just implicitly recalled and seen with little attention. They discovered that prolonged exposure to these kinds of ads may have an adverse effect on internet users' ability to complete tasks and their cognitive abilities, indicating that these ads are detrimental to both the workplace and educational settings. According to a recent experimental study, fixation time and count are greater for delayed pop-up advertising if they arrive on the page after a 20-second delay²¹⁹.

2.1.2.3 Email Marketing:

Email is the most rapidly expanding communications technology in history, and it has evolve into an essential part of daily life ²²⁰. Email and the internet have a particularly

close connection, with most internet sessions involving the use of e-mail ^{35, 36}. Email marketing and online shopping have an equally close relationship: in the virtual world of the internet, where seller-buyer interactions are limited, e-mail serves as a vital communication tool in customer relationship management. Furthermore, such two-way interactions can occur in real-time, thereby providing quick and convenient solutions for both buyer and seller ^{221,35}. This has convinced a lot of businesses to choose email marketing as the mainstay of their communications plan.

One of the most popular methods for businesses to reach and attract new clients is email marketing²²². It's a component of online advertising. With the use of email, email marketing is a strategy that facilitates direct client contact. In essence, it aids in directly promoting products and services to consumers. It is a technique that enables us to efficiently and affordably contact a large number of potential consumers. It assists in immediately communicating the business's message to those who are educated and interested in the firm's area of expertise but are unaware of the business or have not considered using the products or services through the use of images, material, and links. Additionally, email marketing's efficacy is simply trackable. Additionally, many businesses allow their clients or viewers the option to "unsubscribe" from receiving emails. Additionally, businesses may receive direct input from prospective clients. This would assist the company in identifying the aspects of the promotion that customers appreciated or found objectionable, allowing for the development of future campaigns or tactics that are even more successful.

Email may be used for a variety of marketing functions, such as informing customers about products and services, promoting them, creating brands, directing them to websites, warning consumers, and updating them on the progress of orders. Today's marketers employ a variety of email strategies, including community building, reward systems, and newsletters³⁶. As the name implies, newsletters "are possibly the most popular vehicles for establishing on-going dialogue with customers, probably because they offer an excellent means of communicating a highly personalized blend of information, entertainment, and promotions."²⁰².

Welcome Email

A welcome email is one of the more important types of emails that is sent to new subscribers. Welcome emails are what a customer receive when he/she submit their email address to an online store. A welcome email is the first email communication a company has with a prospect. It is often a part of on-boarding emails that help users get acquainted with the brand. They usually see them in their inbox after creating an account or joining a newsletter. A welcome email, often part of a series of on-boarding emails, is the very first email communication you have with a shopper or current customer. This communication could be a subscription confirmation or, in some cases, a post-purchase email. Unlike a standard business email format, this is sent to people who have chosen to engage with your brand. The welcome email the customer send sets the foundation for the rest of their communications with a new customer. Depending on the action such as making a purchase or joining your company newsletter your welcome message is the one broadcast everyone will see, which means the impression it leaves will compound over time.

Welcome emails enable brands to set the foundation for the kind of cooperation they will have with their subscribers. Given that these emails are sent after purchase or upon subscribing to a company's newsletter, many of these messages are read which, means that the impression they give the reader is what they will hold over time. According to²²³, 74 percent of people look forward to receiving a welcome email after subscribing to a brand's email list. So, to ensure that these emails get to customer inboxes as soon as possible, it makes sense to work with a reliable email marketing service. A good email marketing service offers ready-made email templates, flexible email campaign builder, a bunch of useful features and authentication options for better email deliver-ability. Welcome email not only sets the tone for further cooperation with a customer but helps reach the following goals:

- i. Welcome emails have higher engagement levels compared to other types of emails. As such, they give a business the perfect opportunity to engage new subscribers and convince them to act. According to ²²⁴ welcome emails have four times more opens and five times more clicks than other marketing emails. Moreover, these emails have a 50 percent open rate, thus making them 86 percent more effective than newsletters.
- ii. Welcome emails are sent to new subscribers automatically. Hence, they keep marketers from having to connect with new leads manually, which is often a time-consuming task. With Send Pulse Automation 360, you can set up a welcome email campaign once and let the service do the rest for you.

- iii. Welcome emails introduce a brand to the customer. As such, the next time the business sends an email, the customer will be receptive to it. This will, in turn, reduce the chances of subscribers raising spam complaints or unsubscribing. Brands usually add the link to the Preference Center, where subscribers can choose the desired email frequency as well as the content to receive. This way, the brand can create different user segments to meet subscribers' needs.
- iv. With the right welcome email campaigns, businesses forge lifelong relationships with customers. How so? These emails enable marketers to develop a sense of community in the recipient. For instance, an email with a message such as "Welcome to the club, Anne!" will make Anne feel like she belongs somewhere. In turn, she will feel loyal to the brand that sent her the message.
- v. Another way welcome emails foster customer loyalty is by providing readers with several opportunities to interact with a company. These emails give marketers a chance to add links to websites, blogs, and social media accounts related to their brand.
- vi. Welcome emails also enable businesses to make informed decisions that go a long way in boosting customer loyalty. Marketers can use these emails to collect useful data on leads. After that, they can use that information to precisely target their customers. And by providing them with a better experience, customers are more inclined to stay.

Email Newsletter A newsletter is a letter that contains the news. In a more sophisticated manner, an email newsletter is a type of email used in email marketing

campaigns²²⁵. It informs the subscribers about the latest content (news, blogs, product reviews, announcements, and other similar stuff) on your website. It is a way to keep the audience in the loop. With the help of newsletters, you can always keep them excited and wanting for more. At times, it also contains a push-button for them to do a specific action, like clicking on a button to enter a giveaway and other similar acts. They can also be used to promote new products or services of the organization. An e-newsletter is an email that is sent to your subscribers regularly to keep them informed about the latest news and updates about your product or brand²²⁶. Depending on the kind of content you have to share and the frequency in which subscribers expect your newsletters, you can send them on a weekly or monthly basis. An email newsletter is a neatly put together piece of content that's created to engage your subscribers and update them with new information. Personalize your newsletters to your subscribers' behavior, and boost the chance of success.

According to the research, 60% of people want to receive promotional emails from brands weekly, and more than 80% monthly. A little over 10% of people would like to get an email every day. Take into account that these stats apply to promotional emails. An email marketing strategy usually implies sending not only advertising emails but newsletters, trigger, and transactional emails. This means that you should thoroughly plan the entire number of campaigns you send so that you don't scare away your audience. To send consistently but not to overdo it, we strongly recommend creating an email marketing calendar. It should contain all the emails

you're going to send users each month. This way, you will have a clear picture of your marketing activities and you will be able to make changes on the go. The best option is to ask subscribers how often they would like to hear from you. Provide each email newsletter with a link to an email preference center where users can set up the desired frequency. Also, it's a great idea to inform leads about your email sending frequency in the subscription form. This way, they will be fully aware of your email marketing strategy.

It is a popular marketing tool for regularly communicating with your network and delivering the information you want in their mailboxes. In practice, we all receive numerous newsletters per day. It serves as a method to stay in touch with the brands we follow regularly. Email newsletters allow you to publish intriguing content, improve sales and drive traffic to your site. Email campaigns are easy to track and modify, allowing you to track your accomplishments and make essential modifications that lead to additional gains. An email newsletter can play a vital role in your overall marketing strategy. Though some marketers believe that newsletters are simple to set up, meticulously designed newsletters can pay off handsomely. The key is that it should look like it comes from a helpful friend instead of a salesperson. An email newsletter's purpose is to keep your subscribers informed about your company, products, and services. Generally, these emails are not about selling; they are about fostering customer loyalty through valuable content. However, websites, blogs, or e-commerce often use newsletters to promote a product, content, or article, communicate an event, or engage in re-marketing efforts. Here are a few objectives

that you can achieve by sending out newsletters.

- i. **Traffic Generation:** Email newsletters typically include helpful hints, how-to guides, short checklists, and links to actual articles and posts where visitors may learn more about the product or the company. You may simply increase traffic to your website or blog in this manner.
- ii. **Brand Awareness:** the company subscribers will eagerly await your following email newsletter if company provides quality and unique content. They will correlate the remarkable experiences with your emails, the logo, sender name, and blog or business. Hence, it functions as a brand awareness strategy.
- iii. **Inside Sales:** Despite their non-commercial character, email newsletters might indirectly assist you in increasing sales. For example, you could send your recipients a detailed guide on how to get the most out of your service or a case study of one of your happy customers. Suppose your audience finds this material to be reasonable. In that case, those who have not yet opted to purchase will have more reasons to do so.
- iv. **Social Media Promotion:** You can easily advertise your business's Facebook or Instagram presence by including links in your email newsletter. Explain why your account is worth following and what information you share on social media with the recipients. You must generate unique material for each channel; otherwise, subscribers would have no reason to join your community.

2.1.3 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Customer relationship management is a strategy or activities employed by an organization to have an edge over its competitor²²⁷. In essence, it is identifying and implementing the right activities at the right time to out-do their counterparts”. CRM is a technique for determining the wants of the client and building a rapport with them by offering tailored goods and services to turn them into devoted patrons ²²⁸. This benefits the company by lowering marketing expenses and strengthening client ties. Based on the literature review on customer relationship management and interviews with managers of specific organizations, ²²⁹ hypothesized that CRM is a multi-dimensional concept that includes four behavioral dimensions: customer orientation, CRM organization, knowledge management, and technology-based CRM. The researchers additionally confirmed that their results align with the general framework of CRM implementation, which includes business processes, strategic functions, technological advancements, and most importantly, human architects—the members of the organization and how they interact with the aforementioned factors to improve the organization's performance. Additionally, the customer orientation perspective, which has been applied to enhance the customers and hotel organizations ²³⁰, is where customer relationship management originated. Thus, the Customer Relationship Management and its Determinants previously studied are included in this study. In fact, these dimensions closely align with the core idea of customer relationship management, which is centered around business processes, strategic functions, technological advancements, and people.

2.1.3.1 Customer Support

Customer support is the provision of technical services to customers prior to, during, and following a purchase. It is a set of activities intended to raise the degree of customer satisfaction, or the sense that a product or service has fulfilled the expectations of the customer ²³¹. The significance of customer support varies depending on the product or service, industry, and customer. Employees who can adapt to the guest's personality will be key to the success of these interactions. Additionally, customer support has a significant impact on the performance of small and medium-sized businesses. To provide good customer support, the organization in designing must focus entirely on the customer. This brings us to the question of who is the real customer. A customer is a person or an organization that decides what to buy, and one of business's ²³² main goals is to create new customers. Other organizational components won't last very long without a consumer. As a result, businesses create customer support initiatives with the goals of attracting new clients, exceeding client expectations, and cultivating client loyalty. Customer support refers to contacts between a company and its clients that are intended to make the client more satisfied with the company's goods, services, and goals in general. Customer support basically refers to any exchange of information between a company and its prospective, existing, or former clients. This includes discussions in-person, over the phone, or by email to resolve specific technical issues ²³³. Inadequate customer service can cause clients to get enraged or frustrated, which could result in future business being done poorly. Companies who offer excellent customer service have an advantage over rivals in the market. Increased corporate revenues, customer retention, and quality customer service are all correlated ²³⁴. Furthermore, devoted and content

consumers are a valuable source of free promotion through recommendations and referrals, but dissatisfied customers are more likely to leave and tell other prospective customers about their bad experiences.

After-sale assistance is a critical component of customer care. Provide free services to consumers following their purchase of a product, regardless of the kind or quantity of the item, the method of payment, or the customer's location²³⁵.

The word "after sales service" describes how clients are handled following a sale ²³⁶. It might be used to support a product's increased price. It also affects future sales and the long-term reputation of the company. A service provided to a consumer following the delivery of items is known as after-sales service ²³⁷. The selling process should involve more than just providing goods and services; it should also involve taking "follow-up" steps to make sure customers are happy, as this will ensure that they make repeat purchases. Additionally, after-sales services seem to be particularly important to the overall "product-mixture" that manufacturers and retail businesses provide, since they have an impact on consumers' behavioral intentions as well as their level of satisfaction²³⁸. Many businesses rely heavily on after-sale service procedures, and as retail items grow more and more comparable, offering after-sale services has emerged as a key differentiation among industry participants. Customer satisfaction with offerings is the most crucial milestone for every expanding company. The primary factor determining a venture's success or failure is its customer base. Offering top-notch post-purchase services is among the greatest strategies that businesses may implement in the modern day ²³⁹. All actions made for the consumers' well-being following the sale are included in after-sale services. As part of

after-sales services, a number of tasks are also completed to ascertain whether or not the customer is satisfied with the purchase. The foundation of any corporate organization is its customers. As a result, they will constantly receive the right direction and assistance to keep them satisfied and enable them to establish a positive rapport with the vendors. The purpose of after-sale service is to ensure that customers' expectations are appropriately fulfilled. Keeping clients calm about the company turns out to be highly beneficial when it comes to after-sale services ²⁴⁰.

Keeping customers happy and offering excellent after-sales support demonstrates to your clients that you want to establish a lasting relationship with them in order to gain their loyalty and retain their business. After-sales service tactics are used by many prosperous companies to increase revenue, foster client connections, and streamline sales.

2.1.3.2 Technology

Innovation and the availability of new technologies in small businesses boost output and customer satisfaction with products acquired in the market because they are timely and of the right quantity, decreasing shortages, speeding up transactions, and also simplifying businessman's tasks ²⁴¹. Thanks to technological advancements, people can now buy products that will be delivered right to their door and transfer money instead of physically traveling there. Customers are more satisfied as a result of having all of their demands met and being able to get them quickly, which increases the rate at which they consume the items ²⁴². New technologies enable small and medium-sized businesses to compete internationally. Through the use of a website, small companies may now employ internet technology to offer their goods and services to potential customers

worldwide. Internet technologies offer comprehensive product packaging and descriptions, giving potential customers all the information they need to make an educated purchase choice ²⁴². Without having to connect in person, social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter enable businesses to network with people who might be interested in their industry. Technology aids entrepreneurs in minimizing expenses ²⁴³. A small company can employ automation to lessen his reliance on workers to complete some essential production tasks. This allows the company to save money on labor costs including pay, benefits, and turnover. Technology reduces waste and simplifies the production process. For example, using a "lean" manufacturing method like Six Sigma can help you satisfy client demand more rapidly and effectively. Technology may have a favorable impact on small and medium-sized businesses' competitiveness, efficiency, productivity, quality, and market share ²⁴⁴.

Small and mid-size businesses (SMEs) are focusing more on using technology to drive growth, client value, and market differentiation in today's increasingly complex world. As a result, these companies are embracing cutting-edge technologies for game-changing change and diversification, which will eventually be the case in a recovering global economy. Innovation in technology is a key factor in boosting SMEs' economic efficiency. Fundamentally, SMEs must adopt technological innovation as the primary strategy if they are to fulfill market demands and adjust to the ever-changing external environment. In actuality, the majority of prosperous SMEs depend on ongoing technical innovation for their steady development and expansion ²⁴⁵.

Through investments in fixed assets, export production, and technological integration, SMEs are critical to the success of advanced economies. It has been noted that SMEs have a significant influence on industrial production tactics and export profits in a number of recently industrialized nations, including Taiwan, Malaysia, South Korea, and Singapore. Notably, as ²⁴⁶ observed, SMEs serve as the large-scale firms' production wheels in these nations. SMEs are the driving force behind faster economic development and expansion. But Nigeria has not yet achieved the much-anticipated faster rate of economic development through SME.

In an attempt to achieve balanced industrial development and increase the economic effectiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the Federal Government of Nigeria has chosen to encourage the growth of these enterprises through domestic industrial activities. The goal of this is to reposition the industry for global competitiveness and to turn it into a source of export revenue. In order to do this, technological innovation and participation in R&D-related activities might help SMEs perform even better ²⁴⁷.

Technology has made marketing more digital, enabling transactions and communication to happen anywhere in the globe at any time. This facilitates communication between customers and corporate players. The simplicity and advantages of digital payments will affect SMEs' intentions to use them, and there is a strong correlation between these factors and SME actors' intentions to use digital payments ^{248, 249, 250}. Fintech's emergence has a big impact on SMEs by making payment gateways more prevalent. The financial performance of SMEs is positively and significantly impacted by the use of technology in

marketing^{251, 252, 253}. The quick development of digital marketing has improved SMEs' financial performance and made sales and marketing across a range of media more feasible and manageable. As a result, the digitalization phenomena spreads from the poorer to the top classes of society. As a result, technology has changed sales and marketing procedures, making them more successful and efficient. A concept that advances in an evolutionary or revolutionary manner and has the potential to provide new technological improvements is the source of change. Effective technology and digital marketing may boost business owners' sales turnover, which may alter how consumers choose and carry out purchases and sales transactions^{246, 247, 255}. Because of this, SMEs are encouraged to innovate in order to profit financially from the present technical advancements as well as to survive^{254, 255}. The usage of digital payments will have an effect on performance that SMEs can employ to enhance or improve their financial performance^{252, 253, 256}.

Micro, small, and medium-sized firms (MSMEs), who often find it difficult to sustain them, much alone develop under such extreme circumstances, were also significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of their commercial performance²⁵⁷. Businesses experiencing such a crisis must embrace new perspectives, approaches, and workable solutions to manage uncertainty, stay ahead of the curve, and be ready for future issues²⁵⁸. Digital marketing and cutting-edge technology for company transactions could be some of these strategies. The majority of businesses now understand the advantages of implementing cutting-edge digital technologies to support operations that demand rapid and accurate information²⁵⁹. It is true that digital technologies have

changed how people live and how organizations operate, particularly in the areas of communication and information exchange. This change has also increased competition. Presently, digital apps and online technologies are considered by many to be the best ways to build stronger client interactions. In today's extremely unpredictable economic climate, traditional marketing methods are becoming less and less effective to provide growth and a lasting competitive advantage ²⁶⁰.

Everybody's life was drastically altered by the COVID-19 epidemic, and companies were forced to adjust to a market that was changing quickly. Consumer Relationship Management (CRM) enables businesses in these situations to meet evolving consumer expectations, embrace product and service innovation, stay adaptable, and create new avenues for customer communication ²⁶¹.

2.1.3.3 Marketing Support

Marketing support involves relying upon team of experts to create and sustain marketing campaign. Marketing support service provides the capacity to support marketing activities and increase the marketing efficiency of small and medium enterprises. The marketing support services include marketing mix, marketing communication, advertising and marketing strategies ²⁶².

The firm's business strategy depends heavily on marketing support services since they give the company a direct or latent competitive edge over rivals and improve performance ²⁶³. The 4Ps of marketing, often known as marketing strategies, are the foundation of marketing support services (Product, Pricing, Promotion and Place/distribution) ²⁶⁴.

Organizations may utilize the marketing mix to develop and enhance their marketing initiatives and aid in goal achievement ²⁶⁵. While the marketing mix may be seen of as a conceptual framework that marketing managers use to develop strategies for meeting customer requirements and targeting their market ²⁶⁶. Both long-term and short-term goals may be developed using the marketing mix. A marketing mix is a combination of marketing tactics that companies use to elicit the desired response from their target audience. The four factors that make up the marketing mix are referred to as the 4Ps. The marketing tactics of product, pricing, place, and promotion are employed by firms to respond to external and internal factors, ultimately helping them to accomplish their goals ²⁶⁷. Businesses that have successfully adopted marketing strategies can gain a competitive edge, improve sales performance, and expand their market share.

Organizations employ marketing strategies to create demand for their goods and boost performance by offering their target client high-quality items at competitive prices, interacting with their distribution channels, and implementing successful promotional campaigns ²⁶⁸. Organizations utilize the marketing mix as a business tool to get a competitive edge. The term "marketing mix" refers to the seven principles that businesses utilize in their marketing strategy to satisfy both consumer requirements and company objectives. Product, pricing, place, and promotion are among the tactical marketing strategies that marketing managers may use to accomplish the necessary goal ²⁶⁹.

Distribution channel management and company performance have been found to be positively correlated in several research, and distribution strategy has an impact on business performance ^{270, 271, 272}.

Exporting companies may implement innovative export marketing strategies with the help of marketing assistance by repurposing and combining resources in novel and creative ways, which can adapt to the dynamic nature of the global market ²⁷³. Businesses require marketing support services in order to outperform their competitors in the export market, meet customer expectations, and accomplish their goals. These services will help businesses create, deliver, and communicate greater customer value to their selected target market more effectively than their rivals. In order to investigate and create new goods that will serve the target markets, a strategic emphasis must be developed. This relates to new product innovation ²⁷⁴. In this situation, entrepreneurs must have a thorough awareness of their existing and potential clientele, as well as their requirements, desires, and expectations. They must then create, market, price, and deliver their goods in a way that best suits their clients' present and future needs²⁷⁵. The term "marketing support services" refers to activities including pricing strategies, cooperative marketing, product creation and development, access to international market data, and trade show participation that are seen to be causally related to the success of SMEs.

In order to ensure the continuity and growth of the organization and increase the chances of strategic success in a highly volatile business environment, marketing support based on the agility of organizational resources and the speed at which changes in customer needs could be responded to was thought to be the primary pillar of customer retention and attraction ²⁷⁰. The digital revolution has brought about a number of profound shifts in how people manage their lives, with a greater emphasis now being placed on the use

of digital software and applications in a variety of daily activities, such as choosing between available brands and making purchases ²⁷⁵. Traditional marketing techniques are no longer able to achieve exceptional marketing performance that helps the organization enhance its competitiveness and achieve sustainability in its competitive advantage ²⁷⁵. Instead, business organizations have struggled to maintain their customers and achieve strategic goals in these dynamic conditions.

In an effort to achieve ongoing, interactive communication with customers and better understand their interests and needs, businesses have recently been implementing modern marketing strategies and policies centered on the use of digital content and its mix of entertainment and education to promote their goods and services ²⁷⁶. Social Media Sites, In an attempt to boost marketing support, businesses have made significant investments in social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to advertise their goods and services based on helpful digital content. This helps businesses differentiate their goods and establish their brand because it gives customers the freedom to voice their opinions and provide feedback on the goods and services offered by the business.

2.1.3.4 Leadership

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) are regarded as one of the key drivers of the global economy, contributing significantly to the advancement of economies in both developed and developing nations. The significance of this industry has led numerous nations to further acknowledge it because of its enormous potential to significantly boost GDPs, raise living standards, foster innovation, create jobs, accelerate national industrialization, and act as a catalyst for sustainable growth ²⁷⁷. But in a highly

competitive economic environment, small and medium-sized businesses face a number of issues. In strategy development, operational success for SMEs has emerged as the primary emphasis for generating competitive advantages. Businesses used to place a lot of importance on their bottom line ²⁷⁸. It should thus contain non-financial measures that may be used to evaluate an organization's operational performance and strengthen its competitive advantages, such as quality and customer satisfaction ²⁷⁹.

In order to accelerate their economic growth, several nations are currently concentrating on the development of the SME sector ²⁸⁰. However, it is easier said than done. Due to a number of variables, including globalization, fierce competition, information technology advancements, stakeholder pressure, and quick shifts in consumer expectations, the majority of SMEs are confronting enormous hurdles ^{281, 282, 283, 284}.

All SMEs, regardless of their size, nature, or location—manufacturing, services, and commerce in both domestic and foreign markets, for instance—are under attack from these and other causes. SMEs must make significant investments in human resources, particularly in leadership and the perceived leadership styles of their leaders, in order to overcome these difficulties.

One of the most important elements in successfully and efficiently managing a SME's business activities is leadership. By impacting important organizational outcomes including employee performance, job satisfaction, and decreased staff turnover in addition to customer satisfaction, organizational effectiveness, and performance, it helps firms become more profitable and productive ²⁸⁵. Another way to think of leadership is as an individual's technique of persuading a group of people to accomplish the shared

objectives of an organization²⁸⁶. This description aligns with the assertion made in paragraph that leadership is a dynamic process where a single person persuades a group of people to voluntarily participate to the achievement of predetermined goals ²⁸⁷. Leadership can be defined as a reciprocal influencing process in which leaders and followers influence one another to achieve organizational goals ²⁸⁸. However, leadership can also be defined as a transaction or exchange relationship between two parties, such as leaders and subordinates ²⁸⁹. This definition of leadership deviates slightly from the previous one. To achieve the goal and maintain a cohesive company, leadership is really all about listening to others, supporting, encouraging, persuading, and including them in the decision-making and problem-solving processes.

Many academics now believe that a leader's style has a significant impact on every aspect of an organization's operations. This is particularly true for SMEs, where the working environment and productivity levels have a significant impact on leadership styles ²⁹⁰. Actually, a leader's behavioral pattern or patterns in a given circumstance to accomplish the unique objectives of an organization are referred to as their leadership style. A leader's attitude to explicit and implicit behaviors is what motivates, inspires, and guides their team members to carry out an organization's goal .

The managing abilities and leadership style that the SME owners and managers in the companies use will determine the success or failure of the SME, along with all other factors of leadership ²⁹¹. Positively impacting SME performance requires an effective leadership style ^{292, 293, 294}. In contrast, under the wrong leadership style, employees lack initiative and motivation to give the organization their all and consistently experience low

output. This is because under the right leadership style, employees are willing to go above and beyond to contribute to the growth and sustainability of the organization.

A compelling vision from a transformational leader may motivate their people to take the initiative to finish activities and accomplish their goals ²⁵⁶. Furthermore, new ideas may be fostered within their companies by transformational leaders, and they may operate as "creativity-enhancing forces" by setting an example. Success in developing innovation depends on transformative leadership²⁹⁵.

A leader often oversees many tasks, makes the majority of decisions, and has complete command over organizational resources ²⁹⁶. The primary cause of SMEs success is the existence of a suitable leadership style²⁹⁷. Therefore, in order to accomplish the organizational goals SME owners and managers must possess the keen ability to employ a suitable leadership style to influence the behavior of subordinates and convince them to follow the correct path ^{298, 299}.

However, given their incapacity to recognize the connection of leadership styles with SME management, it is not unexpected that the majority of SMEs' owners/managers are unable to use the appropriate leadership styles when taking the situational context into consideration—a state that eventually results in leadership ineffectiveness ²⁸⁸. One of the most traditional forms of leadership is the autocratic one. This is an extreme type of leadership conduct in which the leader has all the authority and makes choices alone, without seeking input from team members or followers ^{300,301}. Typically task-oriented, this style is acquired by means of commands, rules, regulations, threats, and punishments ³⁰². The fundamental tenet of the authoritarian leadership style is that followers are

inherently unreliable, sluggish, and suspicious, and as a result, leadership and management responsibilities should be handled by the leader alone, with no input from the subordinates³⁰³. To put it briefly, an autocratic leader feels he has the power to treat his people whatever he pleases and has complete control over them. The primary advantage of autocratic leadership is its ability to make choices swiftly and to start activities promptly in order to put them into action^{302, 304}. The participatory or collaborative leadership style is another well-known traditional leadership style that is in use³⁰⁵. This type of leadership is nearly the exact opposite of the autocratic leadership, which emphasizes decision-making collaboration between leaders and followers, with the leader carrying out the choice after fostering consensus among the team or group³⁰⁶. Actually, a democratic leader encourages their followers to form their own opinions while relying mostly on their knowledge and skills to complete the task. When a certain amount of control is needed to utilize leadership behavior to fight against despotic leadership and the misuse of authority, such as in banks, hospitals, professional services businesses, government organizations, etc., this leadership style works best. This method works well when workers do regular tasks. However, the issues brought on by this leadership style since democratic leadership is predicated on the fundamental tenet that all individuals are inherently accountable, dependable, and self-driven, everyone is given the chance to engage, ideas are freely shared, and debate is encouraged during the decision-making process³⁰⁷.

Another conventional leadership approach based on organizational hierarchy and structure is bureaucratic leadership³⁰⁸. The leadership style is what persuades individuals

to abide by the laws, guidelines, directives, and practices intended to guide them toward the accomplishment of corporate objectives ³⁰⁹. It is true that bureaucratic bosses have a tremendous commitment to their policies, practices, and procedures, but not to their subordinates ³¹⁰. A bureaucratic boss oversees everything "by the book," meaning that everything must be carried out in compliance with the laws, regulations, and guidelines³¹¹. Additionally, bureaucracy produces unnecessary paperwork and red tape.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This research will employ four theories to effectively underpin the study. The institutional theory is the main theory, while the other supporting theories include: Generational theory, Social Network theory and collective intelligence theory.

2.2.1 Institutional Theory

This study examines how E-marketing adoption supports small firms in maintaining their legitimacy and achieving higher performance outcomes, drawing on institutional theory. Later, the hypothesis was expanded by ³¹².

According to institutional theory, organizations frequently react to external influences that may have an impact on how well they perform. Businesses frequently undergo change as a result of coercive pressure from customers, or the necessity to comply with the requirements and norms of customers who have the ability to reward and punish. For example, many firms are moving to social media marketing since it has become a primary means of engaging customers who spend a significant amount of time on-line. In addition, there is mimetic pressure, or the need to behave in a way that is consistent with

other groups. Companies are using social media marketing in an effort to stay competitive with highly visible online competition.

Social media platforms are regularly used by thousands of individuals, and social media marketing enables companies to reach and interact with a big audience for little to no cost³¹³. Clothing companies have been compelled by this to switch from traditional to social media marketing strategies. Disconnectedness, or the ability to meet new people and connect with possible consumers, generate new connections, form new networks, and establish business colleagues, is the main objective of social media adaption³¹⁴. This Theory explains the association between social media marketing activities and company performance for small enterprises, which makes it suitable to the current study. Put differently, this study will apply institutional theory to describe how social media is used by small businesses for marketing purposes, namely to entice clients to buy products and services.

2.2.2 Generational Theory

The recurrent generation cycle in Western and American history was proposed by the Strauss–Howe generational theory. The hypothesis holds that recurrent generational identities (archetypes) are linked to historical events. Every generational identity ushers in a new period, known as a turning, that lasts for twenty to twenty-five years and ushers in a new social, political, and economic milieu (mood). They are components of a wider cyclical "saeculum"—a lengthy human life expectancy of 80–100 years, with greater saecula occurring. According to the hypothesis, every saeculum in American history has

a crisis that is followed by a rebound (high). Institutions and communal values remain robust during this recovery. In the end, generational archetypes that emerge later on undermine and assault institutions in the name of individualism and autonomy. This leads to a turbulent political climate that eventually makes conditions more favorable for future crises. ³¹⁵ created the foundation for this thesis in their 1991 book *Generations*, which examines American history as a sequence of generational biographies beginning in 1584. The authors of *The Fourth Turning* (1997) developed this idea further, focusing on a quadruple cycle of generational types and recurrent moods to explain American history, encompassing the Thirteen Colonies and their British forebears. The authors have, however, also looked at global generational patterns and documented comparable cycles in a number of wealthy nations.

According to generation theory (GT), which was first put forward by ³¹⁶, a person's perspective of the world is influenced by the age in which they were born. Additionally, GT suggests that during our early years, our communities, families, friends, important life experiences, and the age in which we are born all influence the values we hold dear ³¹⁷. According to generational marketing theory, people who were born in the same era—typically a 20-year period—have comparable attitudes and behaviors since they shared formative experiences that shaped their worldviews.

The customer journey is attempted to take generational theory into account via traditional behavioral marketing. However, the issue is that all brands find it difficult to simultaneously inform everyone about their product until the toolkit is developed. Large

brands attempt to simultaneously employ many cultural codes for various target populations. Usually in vain. It is impossible to please everyone at once, thus trying to appeal to the "mass customer 18-54" does not provide results. Therefore, companies up to a particular scale should usually concentrate on one audience throughout the product launch stage.

An attempt has been made to describe precisely how one may reach each audience with the generation theory. Thus, one example of a highly clever cultural code of the younger generation is the social network TikTok. There are obviously a lot of prospective customers seated there, but it's unclear how to engage with them just now. In fact, TikTok lacks conversion, calculation tools, and an interaction system. While they are unable to directly reach this demographic at this moment, businesses are nonetheless making an effort to get in front of them. As such, the costs for big businesses on TikTok are now similar to, say, the budgets for the same Instagram.

Although the generation hypothesis appears to be highly appealing, all attempts to apply it appear to be controversial. An attempt has been made to describe precisely how one may reach each audience with the generation theory. Thus, one example of a highly clever cultural code of the younger generation is the social network TikTok. There are obviously a lot of prospective customers seated there, but it's unclear how to engage with them just now. In fact, TikTok lacks conversion, calculation tools, and an interaction system. While they are unable to directly reach this demographic at this moment,

businesses are nonetheless making an effort to get in front of them. As such, the costs for big businesses on TikTok are now similar to, say, the budgets for the same Instagram.

Although the generation hypothesis appears to be highly appealing, all attempts to apply it appear to be controversial. You must conduct study to find out what code generation Z has and what matters to it in a certain product. These are not problems that can be answered by generational theory alone. Large businesses begin their communications with six zeros, so before launching anything, it's critical to ascertain the precise language this audience speaks. Ad Recall will then be rather high. Ad Recall, for instance, was 67.7% in one of our ads promoting conventional dairy products. As a result, the generation theory is now evolving under the world-view coding standards. It was once thought that since each generation has its own value orientations, communication was required with them. Even if our descriptions of our value orientations vary, it is evident that we all share the same values today. This idea also clarifies how a person's perspective of the world might be influenced by the era of their birth. Additionally, it shows how our beliefs have changed throughout time as a result of our family, friends, society, experiences, and the year we were born³¹⁷.

According to the notion of generational marketing, customers who were born in the same era typically exhibit similar behaviours as a result of the influences that have shaped them. Social media may be used to identify our contemporary era as one of digital or technological information. Given how each generation uses digital marketing, generational theory is pertinent to this field. This theory is helpful to the research since it

enables SMEs to determine the demands of their target audience and then create relevant marketing material for them through e-marketing.

2.2.3 Social Network Theory

The network approach is rooted in a variety of structural ideas that were first introduced by anthropologists and sociologists like Georg Simmel, whose research was heavily reliant on their comprehension of various social networks. Thus, social networks theory examines all types of interactions, whether they involve humans, animals, or objects. Therefore, social networks are used to learn about patterns that emerge inside them, as well as their attitudes or impacts. The owners' equity in a business may also be determined via social networks. Usually, social network diagrams are used to demonstrate these ideas. Social ties are seen by the social network theory as lumps and stalemates. They are connected to the players in some way and behave like participants inside the network. As a result, several impasses are offered for examination. In light of this, e-marketing solutions are crucial since they enable marketers to hear and understand what their customers have to say. Furthermore, the majority of research has demonstrated that in varied networks, potential users have the greatest influence.

To sum up, the theory is helpful in our research since it enables us to identify the ways in which SMEs utilize their networks to please their customers ³¹⁸.

2.2.4 The Collective Intelligence Theory

According to the hypothesis of collective intelligence, a large number of people can come together to reach a particular degree of knowledge while simultaneously attempting to accomplish their goals. According to the theory of collective intelligence, groups are often

more productive than when they function independently. Collective intelligence requires the following four essential components in order to function: spreading/distribution, acting generally, honesty, and peering.

In order for collective intelligence to function well, honesty is required. Individuals or businesses must submit their ideas to internet users and be truthful in doing so in order for their product to be considered reliable. Peering is the process of evaluating valuable products or information and adapting it to fit new needs so that consumers may utilize it. Spreading demonstrates how members may exchange or give away intellectual property. As a result, it is critical that we foster an ongoing dialogue and welcome constructive criticism in order to increase the enterprise's efficiency.

Information technology and the degree of progress businesses have achieved in organizing and cooperating with all of their networks are the foundation of universal action. This enables one to get past obstacles like local acting or thinking and concentrate more on novel concepts, fresh talent, and specialized markets. Conclusively, the theory enabled these research that show how E-marketing might facilitate improved connections between SMEs and their diversified clientele, potentially strengthening their performance³¹⁹.

2.3 Empirical Review

The goal and objectives of this study provide the foundation for the empirical literature that is included in this analysis.

2.3.1 Face book and SME performance On social networking sites like Facebook, individuals may interact with other people by creating a public profile ³²⁰. According to research, company owners on Fb are not making the most of the features, settings, and usage of their business pages. Similarly, social media may be a place to find entrepreneurial marketing strategies that capitalize on societal domination, particularly when combined with tried-and-true methods like celebrity endorsement³²¹. Another study looked at the efficacy of Facebook advertising conducted online and found that West Africans used Facebook at a rate that was around three to four times lower. 10% or so of Facebook users who were specifically targeted interacted with the content by like, commenting, sharing, or clicking on. Because targeted Facebook advertising are thought to be a less expensive alternative for campaign implementers than conventional outreach efforts, the survey found that less than 3 in 10,000 consumers who saw the advertisement on Facebook were willing to continue their commercial transactions ³²². According to a study done on Facebook's effectiveness in marketing products among Saudi Arabians, the platform's advertising allows businesses to leverage member data for niche marketing. Facebook also presents itself as the best place for businesses to display their products in the target market ³²³. The legitimacy of celebrity supporters increases the likelihood that followers of sponsored Facebook fans would make a purchase, according to a long-term research investigating the impact of entrepreneurial marketing on Facebook. According to those studies, brand distinctiveness has two functions: it boosts the legitimacy of celebrity endorsers' influence on brand image while reducing the impact of brand image on

purchase intention. This suggests that the ability to influence purchase intent over an extended period of time is a very potent force, which makes the celebrity endorser approach an essential tool in the toolbox of entrepreneurial marketers, especially in light of earlier research highlighting the possible negative effects of traditional revealed commercial posts on Facebook ³²⁴. Similarly, Facebook appeared as the most popular platform among Nepalese among the several social networking sites, according to an online research of 200 randomly selected Facebook users in Kathmandu, Nepal ³²⁵. Additionally, the report suggested that marketers should personalize their Facebook ads and use more accurate information when promoting items. This is a result of Facebook users becoming worried about the promoted products' quality. In the realm of social media marketing, it is imperative for marketers to stay current and actively engage with consumers, since clients want a greater level of connection and product expertise on these platforms. This suggests that some consumers research items on Facebook and discuss and express their opinions before making a purchase.

2.3.2 Instagram and SME Performance

Another site that has grown in popularity among marketers that use product photographs as the basis for their advertisements is Instagram. Seven of the top ten companies have an Instagram account, according to Instagram marketing research that examined the content of Malaysian restaurants ³²⁶.

As its popularity with sellers develops, photo-based social media presence seems to be efficient in restaurant promotion. Social media marketing with rich visual components has replaced text-based social media marketing in recent years. Instagram is a well-liked

social media photo-sharing tool that companies use to share images with their customers³²⁷. This suggests that photo-based media websites like Instagram are a great tool for businesses that deal with providing and selling commodities that fulfill fundamental human needs, such as food, shelter, or clothes, to share high-quality images of the products or services they offer. Instagram marketing has a strong positive and direct inspiration on brand equity, according to a quantitative research that looked at how it affects customer behavior overall. Second, it was noted that brand equity acted as a moderator in the interaction between customer behavior and Instagram marketing.

Additionally, it has been discovered that marketing initiatives on Instagram positively and directly affect consumer interests, willingness to pay a premium, and brand loyalty³²⁸. This finding implies that, any marketing made on Instagram has a certain stimulus on consumers' response.

A study conducted in Australia also revealed that Instagram use has been important in stimulating growth and development of small business as it enhances linkage between customers and business owners hence facilitate increase of sales³²². Similarly, a team of researchers tested this relationship using semi-structured interviews with two famous personal Instagram pages, as well as a semi-structured interview with a Digital PR & Social Media strategist and found that Instagram is one of the most essential social media platforms because it allows businesses to reach out to their target audiences through visual storytelling³²⁹.

2.3.3 Twitter and SME Performance

Twitter is primarily utilized as a communication tool, and by disseminating knowledge and information, it improves business performance. A qualitative investigation was done to find out how well Twitter works as a tool to improve small company marketing strategy. Using a qualitative method, they concluded that, although Twitter shouldn't be the only platform we use for communication, it is still a valuable tool, especially for companies that need to monitor and influence consumer sentiment. According to the experts' analysis, social media and Twitter could be just as beneficial for businesses in terms of connecting, forming relationships, and developing their online brands as they can cause costly and irreversible harm due to negative electronic word of mouth. (e-WoM) carried out a study on Twitter promotional campaigns—the challenges and the opportunities. The world's biggest companies in the automotive and luxury sectors, such as Gucci, Burberry, and Hyundai, as well as Hyundai, Honda, and Kia, provided data from their two years of Twitter activity. Their findings show that, while likes, retweets, and listing frequency may all be used to gauge user interest, retweet frequency is typically a sufficient proxy. Due to their tight relationship, retweeting and favoriting combined in any dimension scheme contributes little information and acts as a signal for potential secondary reach ¹⁷⁰. According to a related research, Twitter, like the majority of other social media marketing platforms, promotes the growth of business alliances by facilitating the real-time exchange of information between like-minded organizations and between companies and their suppliers, customers, and colleagues ³²⁰.

2.3.4 Social Media Marketing and SME performance

As a result, mainstream media in large businesses would be a best-fit hypothesis as it aids in effectively positioning direct clients and allows firms to divide the topic of their food products and armed forces very instantly²². Customer satisfaction organization that will fulfil customers' requirements and wishes for the duration of the item or service, adhering to client piety and repurchasing policies. Public media, on the other hand, is adept at becoming second-hand for consumer concerns¹¹³. In this way, they contribute to buyer understanding and receive payment for buyer participation¹¹⁴.

Furthermore, a small percentage of Chirp and Face book users confessed that, once the corporation started using shared media, they were expected to talk about, recommend, or trade meals for it¹¹⁶. Group media marketing is highly beneficial to the family because it enables employees to connect with clients, particularly those across multiple geographic zones. It also enables organizations to engage in appropriate and direct end-to-consumer connection at a reasonable cost and higher levels of efficiency than can be attained with additional traditional tools for idea exchange¹⁴⁶.

A group of online platforms or networks known as social media encourages participatory, two-way virtual conversations and content exchanges between and among registered users¹⁹⁹. The adoption and use of social networks and platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter, for the purpose of running ads or other promotions, interacting with target customers, providing customer service, conducting sales, and fostering positive relationships with the target market is known as social media marketing. It is the incorporation of social media into businesses' marketing

strategy and the use of social media sites and networks as conduits for the implementation of marketing campaigns¹⁴⁷. The more social media spreads and becomes more ingrained in consumer cultures, the more successful social media marketing becomes in improving the performance of businesses. As a result, businesses utilize social media to sell their brands, engage with current and new consumers, and improve sales and marketing performance, while customers rely on social media to learn about possible purchases^{153,171}.

A research that found a substantial association between social media marketing and the performance (revenue, market share, and profitability) of flower businesses in Kenya lends credence to this theory²⁵². The study, which found that social media marketing significantly improved the performance of SMEs in Nasarawa State, lends more credence to the hypothesis³¹⁶. The aforementioned hypothesis is also supported by a study that found social media significantly impacted SMEs marketing performance³²⁰.

2.3.5 Online Advertising and SME performance

Although consumers use a variety of media to become informed, internet media is preferred the most. Online PR, window displays, banner advertisements, blogs, and other media are examples of online media. Additionally, compared to advertising through traditional media, consumers are exposed to these kinds of internet advertising more frequently nowadays. The majority of customers think businesses should employ internet marketing initiatives. Because internet activities provide businesses better access and a wider consumer base, they should take advantage of this by including online advertising in their marketing strategy³³⁰.

The non-personal, paid presentation and promotion of products, services, and ideas via the internet by a designated sponsor is known as online advertising³³⁰. In order to inform, educate, and sway customers' opinions in favor of a company and its offerings, it is necessary to use tools such as search engine optimization, display advertising, company-owned or affiliated websites, among others, to spread information about a business, its goods, and services to particular online user groups (customers)²⁰.

Online advertising is the process of using customer data to target certain consumer groups with the goal of educating them about goods and services they might need and influencing them to make purchases. Because online advertising is flexible, creative, economical, and has a wider audience, it gives businesses—especially small and medium-sized companies (SMEs)—the opportunity to market their goods and services to a large audience. A firm may quickly become well-known in the market and achieve high product sales volumes with a well-designed and implemented internet advertising campaign¹¹². This implies that a company's marketing performance might be significantly enhanced by internet advertising. A research that found internet advertising had a major beneficial impact supports this theory.

2.3.6 Email Marketing and SME performance

Email marketing is the practice of businesses using email to target particular customer groups and sell and present goods and services to them with the intention of educating, reminding, and encouraging purchases²²². Email is a tool used in the formulation and execution of marketing initiatives. Businesses frequently employ a range of strategies, such as requiring registration or purchasing from web marketers, to obtain their clients'

email addresses. These email addresses are used to create mailing lists based on distinct consumer preferences and behavior patterns. Customers on these mailing lists are then periodically sent messages with details about products and services that are available. Email marketing is defined as utilizing email to communicate a commercial message, usually to a list of recipients. In business, email marketing has grown to be a highly common communication method³³¹. Instantaneous consumer acquisition and increased patronage are the goals of email marketing. Email may be used to collect marketing data, convey information to consumers quickly and efficiently, and customize communications to suit needs and preferences when utilized as part of a marketing plan ³³¹.

Email marketing is a powerful E-marketing technique that may significantly enhance an organization's marketing success in a variety of sectors. Research that found a substantial association between e-mail marketing and the performance (revenue, market share, and profitability) of flower businesses in Kenya supports the aforementioned notion⁷. This assumption is further supported by research that found a strong positive correlation between email marketing and the success of small and medium-sized family businesses in Malaysia ³³¹. Similarly, research that found a significant positive relationship between email marketing and the performance of SMEs in Kenya supports the assumption⁵⁰.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This study focused on the performance of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in northeastern Nigeria, e-marketing, and customer relationship management. It aimed to ascertain how much E-marketing, and customer relationship management may impact SMEs' performance. To make evaluation easier, e-marketing was broken down into three

distinct indicators: email marketing, social media marketing, and online advertising ^{113,222}.

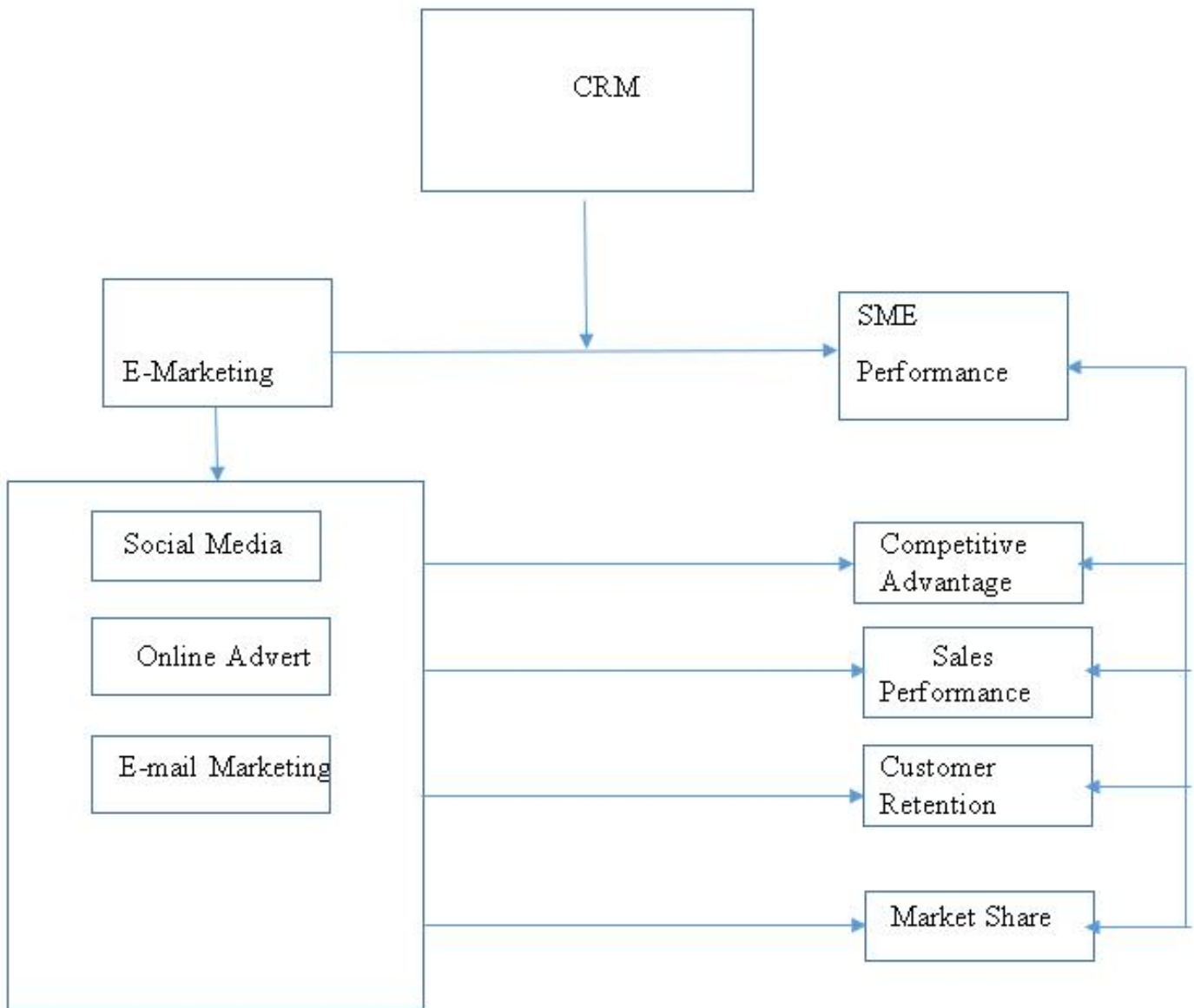
On the other hand, the dependent variable (performance) was broken down into distinct marketing performance indicators, which were taken from research ^{2,29} and included market coverage, customer patronage, customer retention, and sales performance. Within the framework of this research, social media marketing refers to SMEs' adoption and use of social media platforms and networks (including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) to advertise their products and services and entice customers to make purchases. Online advertising is the purposeful process by which SMEs use online tools and platforms, such as websites, banner ads, and display ads, to promote their products and services in an effort to raise awareness and persuade customers to use them. Similarly, email marketing is the process by which SMEs engage with current and prospective clients by email about new and ongoing offers in an effort to sway their decisions to make favorable purchases.

In contrast, market coverage refers to how well SMEs are able to use their distribution and promotional methods to reach their targeted target audiences in order to gain market share. Customers' financial support of SMEs each time they purchase their goods or make a payment is known as customer patronage. Customer retention is the capacity of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) to turn new or first-time clients into loyal, long-term patrons. On the other hand, sales performance refers to the quantity of goods and services that SMEs sell as well as the total amount of money they make. It is the efficacy and efficiency of SMEs' sales efforts. This study postulated a causal relationship of some kind between SMEs' performance (competitive advantage, sales performance, customer retention, and market share) and e-marketing (social media marketing, online advertising,

and email marketing), based on an existing empirical review of related studies. As a result, a conceptual model was developed by applying customer relationship management as the moderator, to graphically illustrate the causal link between the independent variable (E-marketing) and the dependent variable (performance).

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Conceptual Model



the literature regarding how SMEs can effectively leverage social media to boost their performance. Exploring the strategies, challenges, and successes of SMEs in utilizing social media marketing could provide valuable insights for both academics and practitioners.

Integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in e-marketing CRM: AI technologies, such as machine learning and natural language processing, have the potential to revolutionize customer relationship management in the e-marketing context. Exploring how AI can be effectively integrated into e-marketing CRM systems to enhance customer engagement, personalization, and overall performance could be an interesting area for further investigation.

Ethical considerations in e-marketing CRM: As e-marketing continues to advance, it's important to address the ethical implications of CRM practices. Research could delve into the responsible use of customer data, privacy concerns, and the transparency of e-marketing CRM strategies. Understanding the ethical challenges and developing guidelines for responsible e-marketing CRM could be valuable for both researchers and practitioners.

Cross-cultural perspectives in e-marketing CRM: E-marketing CRM strategies can vary across different cultural contexts, and it's important to explore how cultural factors influence customer relationships and CRM outcomes in SME performance.

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Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional survey approach with a descriptive study design since it required collecting data from a large number of survey respondents within the parent community in a short time. Furthermore, it is suitable for the deployment of the Questionnaire as an instrument of choice ^{1,2,3,4}.

The study utilized a combination of primary and secondary data sources. The primary source was obtained from Small Businesses that have deployed the use of E-marketing in North East Nigeria through questionnaires. While the sampling frame for the study was drawn from a list of registered SMEs in the study area which will be extracted from the 2021 collaboration Survey of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria and National Bureau of Statistics SMEDAN/NBS.

3.2 Population of the study

The population of the study includes all the registered small and medium-scale enterprises in Northeastern Nigeria. There are 157,314 registered SMEs in Northeastern Nigeria⁵. The population of the study includes all SMEDAN-registered small and medium-scale Enterprises in the Northeastern States which include Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Taraba, Borno, and Yobe States. The table below provides a breakdown of the population:

Table 3.1 The population of SMEs in North East Nigeria

s/no	State	Number of Businesses	Percentages (%)
1	Adamawa	24940	15.85
2	Bauchi	34685	22.04
3	Borno	26479	16.83
4	Gombe	29930	19.02
5	Taraba	18855	11.98
6	Yobe	22425	14.25
	Total	157,314	

Source: SMEDAN/ NBS Survey 2021

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Sample size is the proportion of entire population the researcher uses for the study⁶. This study adopted the stratified, and random sampling methods. Using stratified sampling, the population was first divided into many states-based strata. Secondly, the proportional sampling approach was employed to ascertain the number of SMEs that should be included in each stratum relative to the total population. Lastly, a random sampling procedure was used to choose the sample size, taking into account the proportion of each stratum in the population. Since every member of the population has an equal chance of being picked, these probability sampling techniques offer the benefit of minimizing selection bias. 7,8 Population and the corresponding sample size determination is presented below.

Sample Size determination

Below is the Krejci and Morgan Table, which was used to calculate the sample size.

Figure 3.1



Table 3.1
Table for Determining Sample Size of a Known Population

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	346
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	354
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	283	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	191	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	170	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	180	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	190	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	200	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	370
65	56	210	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	220	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	230	144	550	226	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	240	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	250	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	260	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	254	2600	335	100000	384

Note: N is Population Size; S is Sample Size
Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970.

Figure 3.1 Source: Master in Education Management Website

Lead City University

Table 3.2. Proportionate sample size distribution by states and sample using Krejci & Morgan, 1970

S/N	STATES	SME POPULATION	PROPORTION	sample size
1	Adamawa	24940	15.8	60
2	Bauchi	34685	22.04	86
3	Borno	26479	16.83	64
4	Gombe	29930	19.02	73
5	Taraba	18855	11.98	46
6	Yobe	22425	14.25	54
Total		157,314		384

Source: Researcher's computational result from SMEDAN and NBS Collaborative Survey, 2021.

3.4 Description of Research Instruments

The instrument for the study: Electronic-Marketing, Customer Relationship Management, and Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in North-East Nigeria was a Questionnaire adapted from the studies of^{10,11,12, 13}. Measurements from previous studies that are pertinent to a current research can be adopted or adapted by researchers¹⁴.

The study instrument had Three (3) constructs: E-marketing (4 items), SME performance (5 items), and (2) Customer Relationship Management. On a five-point rating scale, the respondents were asked to respond to each question (Appendix I). A scale without a midpoint may increase the measurement's inaccuracy, and scales with five to seven points are more dependable than those with more or fewer points¹⁵. Simply put, better results are achievable with a five or seven scale¹⁶. Based on existing literature appendix I

presented the adapted survey items that captured the study variables. The five-point Likert scale used in this study is as follows: Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (D) = 2, Undecided (UD) = 3, Agree (A) = 4, and Strongly Agree (SA) = 5.

3.5 Pilot Testing

The purpose of the pilot study was to determine if a larger-scale survey on e-marketing, CRM, and SME performance in northeastern Nigeria could be accomplished. The aim of this study was to test the questionnaire, identify any potential issues and make necessary adjustments before administering it in the main study area. A total of 40 questionnaires were administered outside of the study area in the North Central city of Jos, Plateau state as part of this pilot study. The decision to use 40 Participants was arrived based on findings from previous investigations^{17,18}. These questionnaires were distributed among small business owners who had experience in using e-marketing tools or services for their businesses. All participants provided informed consent prior to completing the questionnaire. The results from the pilot study showed that there were no major issues with either the content or structure of the questionnaire, indicating that it could be used successfully in the larger scale survey without further modification being required.

3.6 Validation of the research Instrument

The study employed both content and constructs types of validation. For the Content validation, Copies of questionnaire were presented to experts in the field of research study to ensure the relevance of items in the research instrument. While, for the Construct Validity, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was adopted to verify the factor structure

or loading of a set of observed variables. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to determine convergent validity

3.7 Reliability of Research Instrument

The reliability of the instrument could be regarded as level of consistency in the measurement of a construct. A measurement is considered reliable if it produces the same outcome when repeated¹⁹. Employing the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, the instrument's reliability was assessed. The coefficient characteristics span a range of 0 to 1. A coefficient value close to 1 indicates a high level of reliability for the instrument, whereas a value close to 0 indicates either no reliability at all or very little reliability. A summary of the reliability report is presented below

Table 2.3: Summary of Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Report

Constructs	Number of Items	A	Remark
Social Media Marketing	4	.758	High Reliability
E-Mail Marketing	4	.712	High Reliability
Online Advertising	4	.810	High Reliability
Customer retention	4	.809	High Reliability
Market share	5	.760	High Reliability
Sales Performance	5	.750	High Reliability
Competitive Advantage	5	.794	High Reliability
Customer support	4	.788	High Reliability
Leadership	4	.814	High Reliability
Overall Constructs	39	.914	High Reliability

Table 3.3 presents the findings of the reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha for the different constructs in the pilot project. The table presents the number of items in each construct, the computed Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (α), and an assessment of the reliability of each construct. The dataset analyzed comprises a total of 39 items. The table shows that the alpha coefficients for the constructs vary from .712 to .814. The reliability assessment indicates that the "Social Media Marketing", "E-Mail Marketing," "Online Advertising," "Customer retention," "Market share," "Sales Performance," "Competitive Advantage," "Customer support" and "Leadership" constructs all demonstrate high reliability, as indicated by their respective Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. These constructs can be considered dependable for further analysis.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

Data required for this study will be collected through structured questionnaires deployed to the study area which is the North eastern states of Nigeria. While other secondary sources will be used to support or contrast the findings of the study. The questionnaire was designed in three categories taking cognizance of the study variables namely: E-marketing, SME Performance and Customer Relationship Management.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the participants will be analyzed using Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modelling PLS- SEM, because it provides a more in-depth analysis of causality and less contradictory results than regression analysis in terms of detecting mediating and moderating effects. Hence it is most suitable for a multivariate analysis such as this one.

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Chapter Four

Results and Discussion of Findings

4.1 Presentation of Data

This chapter presents the summary of data and findings of the study. The research results were analyzed in accordance with the research objectives, and hypotheses. The analysis was also conducted using SPSS and Smart PLS. The results are presented in the following order: demographic data, data analysis and interpretation, hypotheses testing, discussion of findings, and a summary table of findings.

4.2 Demographic Data Presentation

The demographic data of the respondents below provides an in-depth overview of the participants' characteristics. Table 4.0 provides a detailed breakdown of the respondents' demographic characteristics. The total number of respondents was 384. The gender distribution from the table shows that the majority of respondents were male 300 (78%), while females accounted for 84 (22%). In terms of age, the largest group of respondents fell within the 31-40 years bracket (38%), closely followed by those aged 21-30 years (36%). Respondents aged 41-50 years made up 18% of the sample, while those aged 51-60 years accounted for the smallest group (8%). In terms of years of doing business, the majority of respondents (42%) have been in business for 6-10 years. Those who have been in business for less than 5 years or between 11-15 years each make up 20% of the respondents, while those in business for 16 years and above represent 18%.

The educational qualification of the respondents shows that the vast majority (74%) have tertiary education. Those with secondary education make up 22%, while only a small percentage have primary education (3%) or no formal education (1%). Finally, the table shows the distribution of businesses across the six states in the study area. Based on the study's respondents, the highest number of businesses is located in Bauchi (22%), followed by Gombe (19%), Borno (17%) and Adamawa (16%). The lowest number of businesses is located in Taraba (12%) and Yobe (14%). This implies that the state where the businesses are located is fairly and evenly distributed among six states, with the highest percentage in Bauchi (22%) and the lowest in Taraba (12%).

Table 4.0: The Demographic Information of the Respondents

Demographic Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Respondents' Gender	Male	300	78
	Female	84	22
	Total	384	100
Respondents' Age bracket	21-30 years	140	36
	31-40 years	144	38
	41-50 years	69	18
	51-60 years	31	8
	Total	384	100
Years of doing business	Below 5 years	75	20
	6-10 years	162	42
	11-15 years	78	20
	16 years and above	69	18

	Total	384	100
Educational Qualification	No formal education	3	1
	Primary education	12	3
	Secondary education	84	22
	Tertiary education	285	74
	Total	384	100
State where business is located	Adamawa	61	16
	Bauchi	86	22
	Borno	64	17
	Gombe	73	19
	Taraba	46	12
	Yobe	54	14
	Total	384	100

4.2 Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.2.1 Correlational Matrix

A correlation matrix is a table that summarizes the strength and direction of the relationships between all variables in a study. In that regard, Table 4.1 presents the correlational matrix results, showing the Pearson correlation coefficients between different variables of the study, namely CAD, CRE, CSU, EMM, LEA, MSH, OAD, SPE, and SMM. The table further indicates that all the latent constructs have positive correlational values ranging from 0.192 to 0.944. the large majority of the interrelationship between the variables of the study are above 0.3. as evidence, scholars suggest that for correlational outputs are only deemed moderate if the majority of the

correlation matrix results exceeded 0.3¹. This suggests that, according to correlation matrix analysis, the latent constructs' interrelationship is normal and lies within an acceptable range.

Table 4.1: Correlational Matrix

	CAD	CRE	CSU	EMM	LEA	MSH	OAD	SPE	SMM
CAD									
CRE	0.386								
CSU	0.635	0.317							
EMM	0.197	0.192	0.759						
LEA	0.655	0.468	0.944	0.509					
MSH	0.560	0.771	0.347	0.322	0.495				
OAD	0.207	0.100	0.528	0.811	0.393	0.313			
SPE	0.781	0.782	0.614	0.244	0.552	0.541	0.296		
SMM	0.231	0.141	0.623	0.789	0.460	0.278	0.948	0.108	

Note: Competitive Advantage: CAD, Customer Retention: CRE, Customer Support: CSU, E-mail Marketing: EMM, Leadership: LEA, Market Share: MSH, Online Advertisement: OAD, Social Media Marketing: SMM and Sales Performance: SPE.

4.2.2 Measurement Model Assessment

A measurement model assessment includes analysis on factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) for different constructs. Information obtained as presented in Table 4.2 presents the results of the measurement model assessment for the study. The result of the Competitive Advantage (CAD) shows that the factor loadings range from 0.724 to 0.853, indicating that these items are good indicators

of the construct. The composite reliability is 0.845, showing outstanding internal consistency and above the prescribed minimum of 0.7. The AVE is 0.647, which is above the recommended threshold of 0.5. The second construct Customer Retention (CRE) has factor loadings ranging from 0.654 to 0.857, indicating that these items are good indicators of the construct. The composite reliability is 0.802, indicating good internal consistency. The AVE is 0.504, suggesting a strong variance in the construct.

The next result is for Customer Support (CSU) with factor loadings ranging between 0.652 to 0.917, indicating that these items are good indicators of the construct. It has a composite reliability of 0.770, which is above the recommended threshold of 0.7, indicating good internal consistency along with an AVE value 0.633. The variable E-mail Marketing (EMM) obtained factor loadings ranging between 0.820 to 0.924, indicating that these items are very good indicators of the construct. It also has a composite reliability of 0.936, indicating excellent internal consistency with an AVE value of 0.784. The next output is for the variable Leadership (LEA). Its factor loadings range from 0.684 to 0.796, indicating that these items are good indicators of the construct. The composite reliability is 0.793, indicating good internal consistency and an AVE value of 0.562.

Moreover, Market Share (MSH) reported factor loadings ranging from 0.680 to 0.836, indicating that these items are good indicators of the construct. The composite reliability is 0.847, indicating good internal consistency along with and AVE value of 0.581. Online Advertisement (OAD) has factor loadings ranging from 0.681 to 0.929, indicating that these items are very good indicators of the construct. its composite reliability is 0.884,

indicating excellent internal consistency with an AVE of 0.722. Similarly, Social Media Marketing (SMM) obtained factor loadings ranging between 0.895 and 0.913, indicating that these items are very good indicators of the construct, with a composite reliability of 0.900 and an AVE of 0.818. Finally, Sales Performance (SPE) reported factor loadings between 0.862 and 0.721, indicating that these items are good indicators of the construct. It also has a composite reliability value of 0.772, which is above the recommended threshold of 0.7, indicating good internal consistency. Its AVE is 0.631, which is above the recommended threshold of 0.5, suggesting that more than half of the variance in the items can be accounted for by the construct.

Generally, the overall factor loading values for all the nine constructs of the study range from 0.652 to 0.929, which signifies that all the items are related to their respective constructs. Their composite reliability values range between 0.770 to 0.936, indicating that the constructs are all reliable while their AVE values range from 0.504 to 0.818, indicating that all the constructs have good convergent validity. Therefore, this implies that the factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct are all within acceptable ranges. This shows that the constructs are measured reliably and validly.

Table 4.2: Measurement Model Assessment

Constructs	Items	Items Loading	Composite Reliability	Average Extracted	Variance
Competitive Advantage	CAD2	0.724	0.845	0.647	
	CAD3	0.829			
	CAD4	0.853			
Customer Retention	CRE1	0.654	0.802	0.504	
	CRE2	0.803			
	CRE3	0.857			
	CRE4	0.851			
Customer Support	CSU3	0.652	0.770	0.633	
	CSU4	0.917			
E-mail Marketing	EMM1	0.894	0.936	0.784	
	EMM2	0.924			
	EMM3	0.900			
	EMM4	0.820			
Leadership	LEA2	0.764	0.793	0.562	
	LEA3	0.796			
	LEA4	0.684			
Market Share	MSH1	0.680	0.847	0.581	
	MSH3	0.836			
	MSH4	0.782			
	MSH5	0.743			
Online Advertisement	OAD1	0.681	0.884	0.722	
	OAD3	0.929			
	OAD4	0.916			
Social Media Marketing	SMM3	0.895	0.900	0.818	
	SMM4	0.913			
Sales Performance	SPE1	0.862	0.772	0.631	
	SPE5	0.721			

4.2.3 Coefficient of Determination

Table 4.3 shows the coefficient of determination (R-square) and the adjusted R-square for different constructs. particularly, the R-square value for Competitive Advantage is 0.166, indicating that 16.6% of the variance in Competitive Advantage can be explained by E-

Marketing. The adjusted R-square, which takes into account the number of predictors in E-Marketing, is slightly lower at 0.164. For Customer Retention, both the R-square and adjusted R-square are 0.880, suggesting that 88% of the variance in Customer Retention can be explained by E-Marketing. The R-square for Customer Support is 0.531, indicating that 53.1% of the variance can be explained by E-Marketing. The adjusted R-square, which takes into account the number of predictors in E-Marketing, is slightly lower at 53.0%. The R-square for E-mail Marketing is 0.845, and the adjusted R-square is 0.844, indicating that approximately 84.5% of the variance in E-mail Marketing can be explained by E-Marketing.

Furthermore, the construct Leadership has an R-square and adjusted R-square of 0.889, indicating that 88.9% of the variance can be explained by E-Marketing. Market Share has an R-square of 0.707 and an adjusted R-square of 0.706, indicating that approximately 70.7% of the variance can be explained by E-Marketing. Online Advertisement has an R-square of 0.796 and an adjusted R-square of 0.795, indicating that approximately 79.6% of the variance can be explained by E-Marketing. SME Performance has an R-square of 0.134 and an adjusted R-square of 0.127, indicating that approximately 13.4% of the variance can be explained by E-Marketing. Sales Performance has an R-square of 0.208 and an adjusted R-square of 0.206, indicating that approximately 20.8% of the variance can be explained by E-Marketing. Lastly, Social Media Marketing has an R-square of 0.734 and an adjusted R-square of 0.733, indicating that approximately 73.4% of the variance can be explained by E-Marketing. These values provide a measure of how well E-Marketing fits the data for each construct.

Generally, the R-square values for Customer Retention, Leadership, E-mail Marketing, Market Share, Online Advertisement, and Social Media Marketing are all high and above 0.70, indicating that these constructs are strong predictors in relation to E-Marketing. The R-square values for Competitive Advantage, Customer Support, SME Performance, and Sales Performance are all low (below 0.50), indicating that these constructs are less strong predictors in relation to E-Marketing. However, the R-square adjusted values are all slightly lower than their corresponding R-square values, indicating that the adjustment for the number of independent variables was small. This suggests that the inclusion of additional independent variables would not have a significant impact on the R-square values. This implies that the R-square and adjusted R-square values in the table indicate the proportion of variance as explained by E-Marketing for each of the construct, with higher values signifying a better fit for E-Marketing based on the analysed data.

Table 4.3: Coefficient of Determination

Constructs	R-square	R-square Adjusted
Competitive Advantage	0.166	0.164
Customer Retention	0.880	0.880
Customer Support	0.531	0.530
E-mail Marketing	0.845	0.844
Leadership	0.889	0.889
Market Share	0.707	0.706
Online Advertisement	0.796	0.795
SME Performance	0.134	0.127
Sales Performance	0.208	0.206
Social Media Marketing	0.734	0.733

4.2.4 Test of Hypotheses

Five hypotheses of the study were analysed in relation to the specific objectives of the study. Four of the hypotheses were measured on the direct path coefficient while one and the last hypothesis was measured on the moderating path coefficient as presented in Figure 1, 2 and Table 4.4.

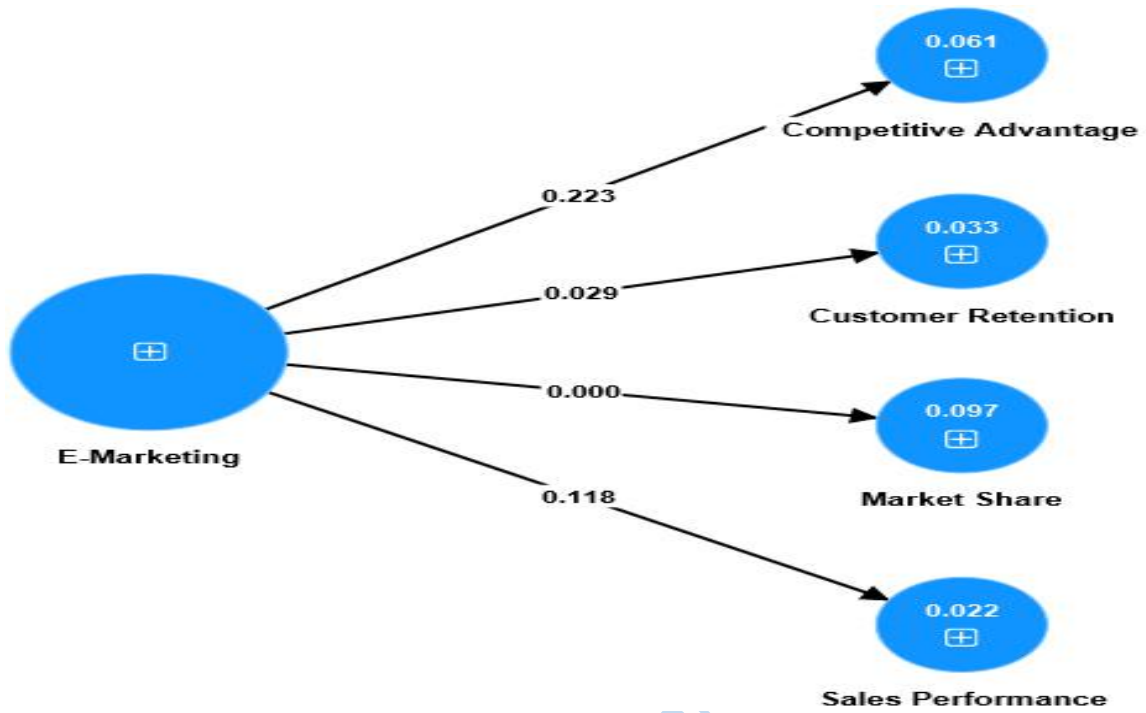


Figure 3: Structural Model: Direct Path Coefficient

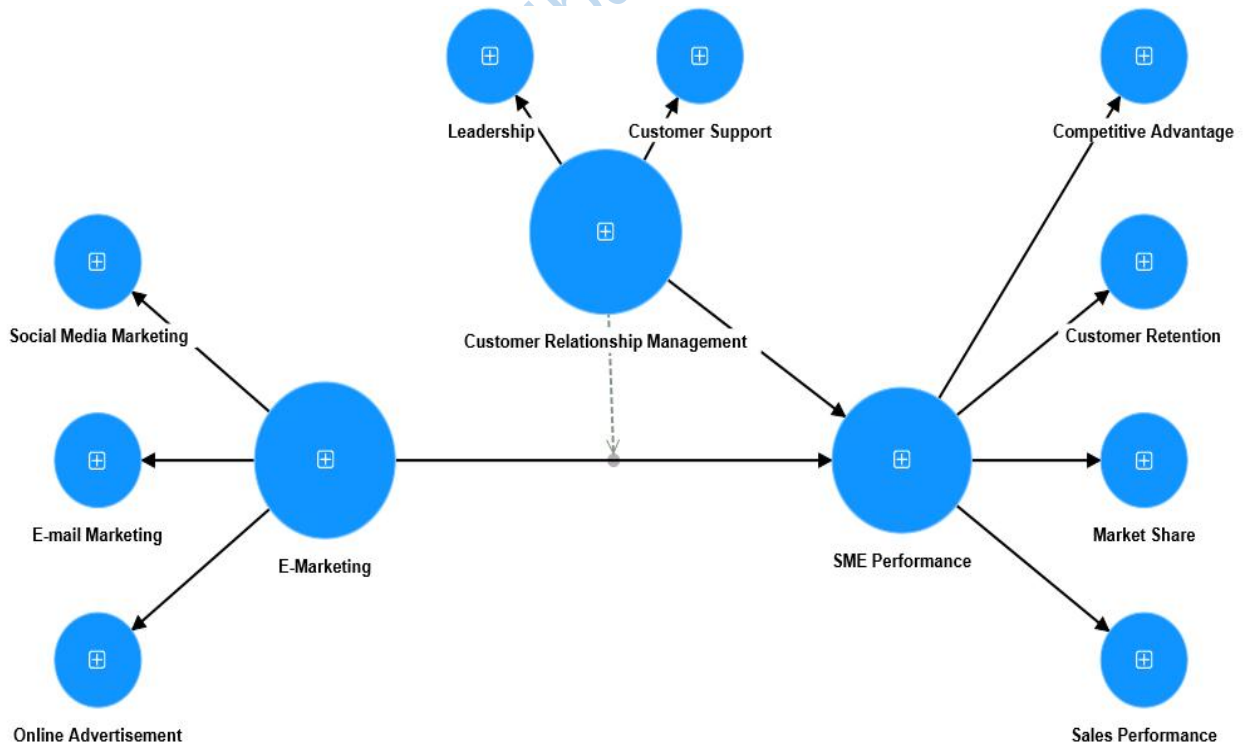


Figure 4: Structural Model: Moderating Path coefficient

4.2.4.1 The Direct Path Coefficient: E-Marketing and Competitive Advantage

H₀₁:E-Marketing will have no significant effect on Competitive Advantage of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

The first specific objective of this study was to determine the effect of E-Marketing on Competitive Advantage of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. The study examined the likelihood that E-Marketing will have no significant effect on competitive advantage of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. The result obtained from Table 4.4 and Figure 1 revealed that the path from e-marketing to competitive advantage has a coefficient (β) of 0.247, with a standard error of 0.203. The t-value was 1.218 and the p-value was 0.223. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was not rejected, rather was accepted. This indicates that there is no significant effect of e-marketing on competitive advantage. This implies that the lack of a significant relationship between e-marketing and competitive advantage suggests that e-marketing strategies may not directly contribute to gaining a competitive advantage. Thus, e-marketing has no significant effect on competitive advantage of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

4.2.4.2 The Direct Path Coefficient: E-Marketing and Customer Retention

H₀₂:E-Marketing will have no significant effect on Customer Retention of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

The second specific objective of this study was to determine the effect of E-Marketing on Customer Retention of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. The study examined the likelihood that e-marketing will have no significant effect on customer retention of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

The data analysis output as indicated in Table 4.4 and Figure 1 shows that the path from E-Marketing to Customer Retention has a coefficient (β) of 0.182, with a standard error of 0.083. The t-value was 2.185 and the p-value was 0.029. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected, indicating that there is a significant relationship and effect of e-marketing on customer retention. The significant relationship between E-Marketing and Customer Retention shows that effective e-marketing strategies can help in retaining customers. Hence, e-marketing has significant effect on customer retention of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

4.2.4.3 The Direct Path Coefficient: E-Marketing and Market Share

H₀₃:E-Marketing will have no significant effect on Market Share of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

The third specific objective of this study was to determine the effect of e-marketing on market share of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. The study examined the likelihood that e-marketing will have no significant effect on Market Share of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. Table 4.4 and Figure 1 depicted that the path from E-Marketing to Market Share has a coefficient (β) of 0.311, with a standard error of 0.035. Similarly, the t-value was 8.923 and the p-value was 0.000. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) was rejected, demonstrating that there is a significant effect of e-marketing on market share. The findings of the structural model analysis indicate that e-marketing has a significant positive effect on market share. This submits that SMEs that effectively implement e-marketing strategies can achieve a larger share of the market. Thus, e-marketing has significant effect on market share of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

4.2.4.4 The Direct Path Coefficient: E-Marketing and Sales Performance

H₀₄: E-Marketing will have no significant effect Sales Performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

The fourth specific objective of this study was to determine the effect of e-marketing on sales performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. The study examined the likelihood that e-marketing will have no significant effect on sales performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. However, the result obtained from Table 4.4 and Figure 1 revealed that the path from e-marketing to sales performance has a coefficient (β) of 0.147, with a standard error of 0.094. The t-value is 1.562 and the p-value is 0.118. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{04}) was not rejected, indicating that there is no significant effect of e-marketing on sales performance. Equally, the hypothesized direct relationship between e-marketing and sales performance was not supported, this implies that the lack of a significant relationship between e-marketing and sales performance suggests that e-marketing strategies may not directly impact sales performance. Thus, e-marketing has no significant effect on sales performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

4.2.4.5 The Direct Path Coefficient: E-Marketing and Sales Performance

H₀₅: There will be no moderating effect of Customer Relationship Management on the relationship between E-Marketing and the Performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

The fifth specific objective of this study was to determine the moderating effect of Customer Relationship Management on the relationship between e-marketing and the performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. The study examined the likelihood that

Customer Relationship Management will not have a moderating effect on the relationship between e-marketing and the performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. The result obtained from Table 4.4 and Figure 2 shows that the moderating effect of Customer Relationship Management on the relationship between e-marketing and the performance of SMEs has a coefficient (β) of 0.046, with a standard error of 0.099. The t-value was 0.459 and the p-value was 0.646. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{05}) was rejected, indicating that there is no significant moderating effect of customer relationship management on the relationship between e-marketing and the performance of SMEs. This implies that Customer Relationship Management does not moderate the positive effect of e-marketing on SME performance. The lack of significant moderating effect of Customer Relationship Management on the relationship between e-marketing and SMEs Performance suggests that the combined effect of customer relationship management and e-marketing may not significantly influence SME Performance. Thus, Customer Relationship Management does not have a moderating effect on the relationship between e-marketing and the performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.

Table 4.4: Structural Model: Direct and Moderating Path Coefficient evaluation

Hypotheses	Path Relationship	B	Std Error	T values	P values	Remark
H ₀₁	E-Marketing Competitive Advantage	-> 0.247	0.203	1.218	0.223	H ₀₁ Accepted
H ₀₂	E-Marketing Customer Retention	-> 0.182	0.083	2.185	0.029	H ₀₂ Rejected
H ₀₃	E-Marketing Market Share	-> 0.311	0.035	8.923	0.000	H ₀₃ Rejected
H ₀₄	E-Marketing Sales Performance	-> 0.147	0.094	1.562	0.118	H ₀₄ Accepted
H ₀₅	Customer Relationship Management X E- Marketing -> SME Performance	0.046	0.099	0.459	0.646	H ₀₅ Accepted

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The results of the study provide valuable insights into the relationship between e-marketing, CRM, and the performance of SMEs in North-east Nigeria. The study examined five specific hypotheses to assess the significance of these relationships thus, the discussions will follow the same pattern.

4.3.1 E-Marketing and Competitive Advantage

The first hypothesis (H01) proposed that e-marketing would have no significant effect on the competitive advantage of SMEs in North-east Nigeria. The findings indicate that the null hypothesis was not rejected, suggesting that there is no significant effect of e-marketing on competitive advantage². This aligns with the argument that e-marketing may not always directly contribute to competitive advantage³. In highly competitive markets like North-east Nigeria, other factors such as product quality and innovation may play a more crucial role⁴.

4.3.2 E-Marketing and Customer Retention

The second hypothesis (H02) proposed a relationship between e-marketing and customer retention. The results support this hypothesis, indicating that e-marketing has a significant positive effect on customer retention⁵. This finding is consistent with prior research emphasizing the role of e-marketing in building customer relationships and loyalty⁶. Effective e-marketing strategies, such as personalized content and targeted communication, can enhance customer retention rates.

4.3.3 E-Marketing and Market Share

Hypothesis 3 (H03) posited that e-marketing would have no significant effect on market share. The findings contradict this hypothesis, as they show a significant positive effect of e-marketing on market share⁷. This aligns with studies highlighting the potential of e-marketing to expand market reach and capture a larger share of the market⁸. The results

suggest that SMEs in Northeast Nigeria that effectively utilize e-marketing strategies can compete more effectively in the market.

4.3.4 E-Marketing and Sales Performance

The fourth hypothesis (H04) examined the relationship between e-marketing and sales performance. The results indicate that e-marketing does not have a significant effect on sales performance⁹. This result contradicts some previous research that has suggested a positive impact of e-marketing on sales¹⁰. However, it is essential to consider that the context of Northeast Nigeria may present unique challenges that impact the relationship between e-marketing and sales performance.

4.3.5 Moderating Effect of CRM

The fifth hypothesis (H05) assessed the moderating effect of CRM on the relationship between e-marketing and SME performance. The findings indicate that CRM does not significantly moderate this relationship¹¹. This contrasts with research that has highlighted the role of CRM in enhancing the effectiveness of e-marketing strategies¹². In the specific context of Northeast Nigeria, the lack of a significant moderating effect suggests that the combined use of e-marketing and CRM may not have a substantial impact on SME performance.

In conclusion, the study's results provide valuable insights into the role of e-marketing and CRM in SME performance in Northeast Nigeria. While e-marketing appears to positively influence customer retention and market share, its impact on competitive

advantage and sales performance is less evident in this context. The absence of a significant moderating effect of CRM highlights the need for further research to explore the dynamics of these relationships in specific regional and industry contexts.

4.4 Summary Table of Findings

The findings of the structural model analysis provide mixed evidence regarding the effectiveness of e-marketing in enhancing SME performance. While e-marketing has a significant positive effect on market share and customer retention, the hypothesized direct relationships with competitive advantage and sales performance were not having significant effect. Additionally, Customer Relationship Management does not appear to moderate the relationship between e-marketing and SME performance. The summaries of findings from the study is presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Hypotheses Results in Summary

Ha	Description of Hypotheses	Predicted	Obtained	Supported
Ho ₁	E-Marketing will have no significant effect on competitive advantage of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.	no effect	sig no sig effect	Yes
Ho ₂	E-Marketing will have no significant effect on customer retention of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.	no effect	sig sig effect	No
Ho ₃	E-Marketing will have no significant effect on Market Share of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.	no effect	sig sig effect	No
Ho ₄	E-Marketing will have no significant effect Sales Performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria	no effect	sig no sig effect	Yes
Ho ₅	There will be no moderating effect of Customer Relationship Management on the relationship between E-Marketing and the Performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria.	no sig effect	sig mod no sig mod effect	Yes

Note: Ho: Null Hypothesis, no sig effect: no significant effect, sig effect: significant effect, no sig mod effect: significant moderating effect.

Endnotes

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Chapter Five

Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study on “Electronic Marketing Customer Relationship Management and Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in North East Nigeria” examines the research on electronic marketing, customer relationship management (CRM) and performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in North East Nigeria.

Firstly, the study found that electronic marketing does not have a significant impact on the competitive advantage of small and medium enterprises in North East Nigeria. This suggests that other factors such as product quality and innovation can have a significant impact on the competitive market in this region.

Second, this study found that electronic marketing has a positive and significant impact on customer retention. This is consistent with previous research highlighting how personalized content and targeted communications in e-marketing improve customer engagement and retention.

Third, contrary to initial expectations, electronic marketing was found to have a significant positive effect on market share. The findings highlight the potential of e-marketing strategies to expand market reach and capture a larger market share, especially in the Northeastern part of Nigeria. Surprisingly, this study found that electronic marketing did not have a significant impact on sales performance. These findings

challenge previous studies that have suggested a positive relationship between e-marketing and sales, perhaps due to the unique challenges of the northeastern Nigerian context such as the prolonged insecurity and low literacy level bedeviling the study area.

Finally, this study did not find a significant moderating effect of CRM on the relationship between e-marketing and performance of SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. This suggests that in this particular regional context, the combination of e-marketing and CRM may not have a significant impact on the performance of SMEs.

In summary, these results provide valuable insights into the dynamics of e-marketing and CRM in the performance of SMEs in North East Nigeria. Although electronic marketing appears to have a positive impact on customer retention and market share, its impact on competitive advantage and sales performance is less pronounced in this particular regional context.

Furthermore, the lack of significant moderating effects of CRM highlights the need for further research to better understand these relationships and their impact on SMEs in Northeast Nigeria. These results provide guidance to business enterprises and policy makers considering deploying Electronic Marketing strategies in this peculiar economic environment.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study on “E-Marketing CRM and Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in North East Nigeria”, some important conclusions are drawn that

shed light on the complex dynamics of E-Marketing, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and performance of SMEs in the study area.

First, it is clear that the impact of e-marketing on the performance of SMEs in North East Nigeria is subtle. Although electronic marketing has been found to significantly increase customer retention and increase market share, it does not seem to have a direct impact on competitive advantage or sales performance. This suggests that SMEs operating in competitive markets like North East Nigeria need to consider a wide range of factors beyond e-marketing to gain a competitive advantage. Product quality, innovation and operational efficiency play equally important roles in building and maintaining a competitive position. The positive relationship between e-marketing and customer retention highlights the importance of building strong and lasting customer relationships through digital channels. A customized e-marketing strategy that delivers personalized content and targeted communications can effectively drive customer loyalty and repeat business. In the digital age, businesses need to recognize the importance of maintaining a strong online presence and engaging customers in a way that keeps them coming back.

Furthermore, the finding that electronic marketing contributes significantly to increasing market share highlights the potential of digital marketing strategies to reach a broader market. Small and medium-sized enterprises in Northeast Nigeria should consider various electronic marketing techniques to expand their customer base and capture a larger market share. This includes optimizing online presence, using social media platforms effectively, and running digital advertising campaigns tailored to specific target markets.

However, the unexpected finding that electronic marketing does not have a significant impact on sales performance in northeastern Nigeria suggests that there may be special challenges in this regional context. This finding may not be unconnected to the impact of the prolonged insecurity bedeviling the study area. For small businesses, it's important to dig deep into local market conditions, customer behavior, and the competitive environment to develop e-marketing strategies tailored to local challenges and opportunities.

Finally, the lack of a significant moderating effect of CRM on the relationship between electronic marketing and SME performance raises an important question. This means that, at least in this particular context, integrating CRM systems and e-marketing practices may not have a significant impact on SMEs' performance. There is a need to examine possible reasons for this finding and whether different approaches and adaptations of CRM systems in northeastern Nigeria may produce different results.

In summary, the findings of this study highlight the multiple impacts of electronic marketing on the performance of SMEs in North East Nigeria. E-marketing can be an effective tool to improve customer retention and increase market share, but the impact on other performance metrics may vary within this unique local context. To ensure sustainable growth and competitiveness, SMEs in North East Nigeria must consider a holistic approach to their business strategies and incorporate e-marketing among other key elements.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research on "E-marketing CRM and SME Performance in North East Nigeria," the study proffers the following recommendations:

- i. **Diversify Competitive Strategies:** Given that e-marketing alone does not significantly impact competitive advantage in Northeast Nigeria, SMEs should diversify their competitive strategies. Focus on areas such as product quality, innovation, and operational efficiency to gain a stronger foothold in highly competitive markets within the region.
- ii. **Emphasize Customer Relationship Building:** Capitalize on the positive relationship between e-marketing and customer retention by placing a strong emphasis on building lasting customer relationships through digital channels. Develop personalized content and targeted communication to foster customer loyalty and encourage repeat business.
- iii. **Leverage E-marketing for Market Expansion:** Recognize the potential of e-marketing strategies in expanding market share. SMEs in Northeast Nigeria should invest in optimizing their online presence, effectively utilizing social media platforms, and running targeted digital advertising campaigns to reach a broader customer base.
- iv. **Conduct Local Market Analysis:** Given the unexpected result regarding e-marketing's impact on sales performance, SMEs should conduct in-depth local market analysis. Understand the specific challenges, customer behaviors, and

competitive landscape within Northeast Nigeria to tailor e-marketing strategies to the region's unique context.

- v. Explore CRM Adaptations: Since CRM did not significantly moderate the relationship between e-marketing and SME performance in this context, SMEs may explore adaptations or different approaches to CRM systems. Investigate whether customized CRM solutions or modifications aligning with the regional characteristics of Northeast Nigeria can yield more significant impacts on performance.
- vi. Invest in Digital Skills: The findings of the study suggest a deficit of digital skills of entrepreneurs in the North Eastern region. SMEs should therefore the importance of digital skills in successfully implementing e-marketing strategies and invest in training and development programs to equip their workforce with the necessary digital competencies to navigate the evolving digital landscape effectively.
- vii. Collaborate with Government Initiatives: Collaborate with government initiatives aimed at improving digital infrastructure and providing resources for SMEs. Advocate for policies that promote a conducive regulatory environment for digital business operations in Northeast Nigeria.
- viii. Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation: Continuously monitor and adapt e-marketing strategies based on performance feedback. Regularly assess the effectiveness of customer retention and market share strategies to ensure they align with changing market dynamics.

- ix. Participate in Industry-specific Research: Engage in industry-specific research and networking to stay informed about evolving market trends and customer preferences. Being well-informed can help SMEs make data-driven decisions and stay competitive in Northeast Nigeria's dynamic business environment.
- x. Collaboration and knowledge Sharing: Promote collaboration and knowledge sharing among SMEs within Northeast Nigeria. Sharing insights and experiences can help SMEs collectively overcome challenges and identify opportunities for growth..
- xi. Deployment of an integrated E-marketing strategy: E-marketing strategies including Social Media Marketing, Online Advertising, and Email Marketing should be deployed in concert to improve SME Performance. Integration of these strategies can enhance brand visibility, targeted advertising, and direct communication with consumers. By aligning E-marketing efforts across platforms, businesses can create a seamless and engaging experience to maximize reach and conversion rates.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge:

In this section the study presents profound contributions that this Doctoral research has made to the intricate tapestry of scholarly discourse. Advancing the Boundaries of Scholarly Understanding under three subsections including conceptual contributions, Theoretical contributions, Empirical contributions and practical implications.

5.4.1 Conceptual Contribution:

This research provides significant conceptual contributions to the theoretical underpinnings of e-marketing, CRM, and SMEs. These contributions bring depth and sophistication to our understanding of these critical areas by expanding and refining current conceptual frameworks.

- i. **Regional Contextualization:** This research contributes considerably to the conceptual landscape by rigorously contextualizing the influence of e-marketing and CRM on SME performance in the unique environment of North Eastern Nigeria. Beyond broad generalizations, this regional emphasis gives a thorough lens through which to study the complexities of electronic marketing and customer relationship management. It understands that cultural, infrastructural, and market factors vary by location, necessitating specialized methods. This work enables academics to include regional characteristics into their theoretical models, so fostering a more comprehensive and contextually sensitive approach to e-marketing and CRM theory.
- ii. **A more nuanced understanding of the impact of e-marketing:** Our conceptual contribution goes beyond superficial evaluations providing an extensive re-imagining of how e-marketing affects SME performance. Rather than accepting basic, all-encompassing concepts of electronic marketing, we explore the granular

details, demonstrating that the effects of e-marketing are diverse and contingent upon particular indicators of performance and ecosystems in the region.

- iii. **Focus on customer retention:** This research clarifies the critical role that client retention plays in SMEs' performance, offering a crucial conceptual addition. We not only highlight the importance of this idea, but we also provide empirical evidence for its pivotal function in the setting of Northeastern Nigeria. This conceptual improvement reenergizes ideas about customer loyalty by highlighting the need for researchers to revisit and improve upon current conceptualizations as well as investigate novel angles that tackle the challenges of cultivating and preserving client connections in dynamic marketplaces.
- iv. **Increasing market share:** This conceptual contribution emphasizes how e-marketing tactics may be used to drive the increase of market share, which goes against traditional knowledge. It encourages debates on the theoretical underpinnings of market expansion within the context of SMEs in addition to acknowledging the theoretical relevance of market share a performance indicator. To strengthen the theoretical frameworks supporting market share increase in the context of e-marketing, researchers are urged to add to current theories by incorporating insights into competitor tactics, market dynamics, and industry-specific subtleties.
- v. **Challenges and Opportunities in the Regional Context:** This research outlines the many possibilities and constraints that influence e-marketing performance in North Eastern Nigeria by thoroughly examining the geographical environment.

This conceptualization calls into question the widely held belief that e-marketing is always effective in all settings and encourages researchers to take into account the significant influence of regional peculiarities in their theoretical frameworks in order to develop theories that take regional characteristic into account.

- vi. The moderating impact of CRM: By questioning long-held beliefs about the benefits of combining e-marketing with CRM, our research offers a provocative conceptual addition. The findings imply that this association is not always clear-cut and that local circumstances may have an impact. This conceptual subtlety stimulates researchers to reconsider and modify their theoretical frameworks, leading to conversations on how CRM theory ought to change to take into account the intricacies brought forth by regional dynamics.
- vii. All things considered, the conceptual advances made by our research strengthen the theoretical underpinnings of e-marketing, CRM, and SME success. Our research stimulates theoretical growth by highlighting the need for regionally sensitive theories, nuanced conceptualizations of e-marketing's impact, and a deeper comprehension of customer retention and market share expansion. This provides scholars with a more thorough and robust framework for investigating these important domains.

5.4.2 Contribution of Theory

The theoretical insights provided by this study are crucial in expanding our comprehension of the dynamics of CRM and e-marketing in the context of small and

medium Enterprises (SMEs). This study also highlights the crucial role of our findings in forming and strengthening current ideas and their relevance to theory development.

- i. **A deeper understanding of the impact of e-marketing:** Rejecting the oversimplified, generic viewpoints prevalent in the literature, this study explores the nuances of how e-marketing affects small business success. This deeper understanding stretches the boundaries of existing knowledge and advances theory development by motivating researchers to investigate the complex interactions between e-marketing and various performance indicators across multiple geographical locations. It inspires scholars to improve upon current models and create new theoretical frameworks that more fully represent the complexities of e-marketing dynamics.
- ii. **Focus on customer retention:** This study makes a significant contribution to the development of marketing and business management theories by underlining the critical role that customer retention plays in the success of SMEs. The study provides actual data that supports the theoretical underpinnings of relationship marketing and customer retention. This empirical evidence motivates researchers to reexamine and improve upon current ideas as well as create new conceptual frameworks that capture the complex interactions between e-marketing strategies and customer retention in a variety of settings.
- iii. **Increasing market share:** The focus of this investigation on e-marketing strategies' ability to boost market share broadens theoretical perspectives. It encourages scholars to investigate how marketing strategies might be adapted for use in other

sectors and local markets, which eventually leads to the creation of more context-specific theories.

- iv. **CRM's moderating effect:** The study suggests that there are often complex relationships between e-marketing and CRM, which calls into question long-held theoretical presumptions. This surprising discovery sparks debates about the theoretical foundations of the CRM and e-marketing interaction. Incorporating regional elements and complexity into theoretical frameworks enables scholars to reassess and develop them, so furthering the theoretical debate surrounding this vital juncture.

To put it simply, this study's theoretical contributions deepens and change the theoretical landscape of SME performance, CRM, and e-marketing, going beyond empirical findings. This research establishes the foundation for a more comprehensive understanding of these crucial ideas in modern business and marketing theory by promoting the creation of new theories and the improvement of already-existing ones.

5.4.3 Empirical contributions:

This study has yielded vital empirical findings that will aid us in our quest to understand the complexities of customer relationship management (CRM) and e-marketing within the regional environment. We probe the core of the geographical situation, carefully analyzing its potential and problems, and we rigorously question preconceived notions through empirical research.

- i. **Challenges and Opportunities in the Regional Context:** This study uncovers a fascinating narrative that goes beyond popular belief through a thorough analysis of the regional context. It audaciously states that sales success in the North-east is not significantly impacted by electronic marketing, even with its prevalence and strength. This empirical finding is a wake-up call that emphasizes how crucial it is to take into account the many factors that go into defining regional landscapes. It casts doubt on the conventional wisdom regarding the consistent efficacy of e-marketing and sparks a paradigm shift that recognizes the individuality of every setting and how it influences marketing results.
- ii. **The Moderating Effect of CRM:** The moderating effect of CRM: We also explore how CRM functions in the context of e-marketing in this empirical trip. This study reveals a startling reality: the link between CRM and e-marketing is complex and multifaceted, defying popular belief that these two ideas work in perfect harmony. Rather, it is susceptible to the complex effects of regional circumstances. Our empirical data adds a realistic perspective to current debates over the function of CRM systems, compelling scholars and practitioners to reconsider preconceived notions and take into account the dynamic interaction between these two crucial components of the e-marketing environment.

In simple terms, our empirical contributions go beyond the theoretical domain and anchor the conversation in the concrete realities of the North-east. We push for a more comprehensive understanding of e-marketing and CRM from stakeholders, challenging the status quo and invalidating preconceived notions. The findings obtained serve as a

springboard for well-informed decision-making, opening the door for approaches that recognize regional differences and use them to gain a competitive advantage.

5.4.4 Practical Implications

The recommendations derived from this study offer practical insights for small and medium-sized enterprises operating in North-east Nigeria. They provide valuable guidance for businesses seeking to optimize their e-marketing and CRM strategies in a challenging and dynamic regional environment. The study's recommendations provide small and medium-sized Enterprises in North-east Nigeria with useful information. Businesses looking to maximize their CRM and e-marketing efforts in a demanding and changing regional context will benefit greatly from their insightful advice.

In a nutshell, by providing a thorough examination of the effects of CRM and e-marketing on the performance of SMEs, particularly in the setting of North East Nigeria, this study substantially expands our understanding. Through regional contextualization, it enhances the body of current literature by attracting attention to the intricacies of electronic marketing and underscoring the importance of growing market share and retaining customers. The study's conclusions will form the basis for further research and provide stakeholders, corporations, and politicians with recommendations on how to advance the economy.

5.5 Suggested Areas for Further Research

The research "Electronic Marketing CRM and Small and Medium Enterprises Performance in North East Nigeria" offers insightful information on the dynamics of

customer relationship management and electronic marketing within the North east Nigeria.

To fill knowledge gaps and advance understanding, further research is necessary in a few areas.

Research is needed in the following areas:

- i. Long-term impact: Future studies ought to look at how CRM and e-marketing affect small and medium-sized businesses' performance over the long run in North-eastern Nigeria. Studies with a longitudinal design can shed light on the efficacy of these strategies and identify any drawbacks or benefits to their extended application.
- ii. Industry-Specific Analysis: Researching the various impacts of CRM and e-marketing in various North-east Nigerian industries may be invaluable. The features and consumer habits of many industries, including manufacturing, services, and agriculture, may have an impact on the efficacy of an e-marketing plan.
- iii. Strategies for e-marketing Diversity: The various e-marketing strategies employed by SMEs in North-east Nigeria might be investigated further through study. It is possible to give SMEs customized advice by investigating if particular techniques (social media marketing, email marketing, online advertising, etc.) work best for various sorts of SMEs.
- iv. Effect on export-oriented SMEs: North East Nigeria is experiencing a rise in the number of export-oriented SMEs. Examining how CRM and electronic

marketing boost these businesses' ability to compete globally may be quite interesting, particularly for non-oil industries like agriculture.

- v. **Development of Digital Infrastructure:** Further studies may evaluate the results and trajectory of government initiatives to enhance digital infrastructure in North-eastern Nigeria. It would be beneficial to assess how well these initiatives are working to encourage SMEs to use CRM and electronic marketing.
- vi. **Regional Comparative Study:** Disparities in the efficacy of CRM and e-marketing can be identified between North-eastern Nigeria and other regions of Nigeria by conducting a comparative study. These studies can identify characteristics that favour digital marketing methods in particular geographic areas.
- vii. **Technological Adaptation:** Take into account the modification and tailoring of CRM systems to the unique requirements and difficulties faced by SMEs in North-eastern Nigeria. Research is required to determine how technological advancements might improve CRM's efficacy in this particular geographic setting.
- viii. **Effect of Regulatory Environment:** Analyse how the regulatory framework affects e-marketing and CRM activities' adoption and efficacy in North-eastern Nigeria. Policy-makers can foster a more advantageous digital business environment by having a better understanding of the opportunities and difficulties presented by regulations.
- ix. **Comparative Regional Analysis:** Expand the research to include small and

medium-sized enterprises in several Nigerian regions, and contrast the effects of CRM and e-marketing strategies in various geographic settings. This method aids in identifying best practices and offers insightful information on regional variations.

In summary, these research directions will expand upon the results of the current study to provide a more thorough knowledge of the role that CRM and e-marketing play in the success of SMEs, particularly in the particular geographical context of Northeastern Nigeria.

Investigating these options can help researchers, policymakers, and SMEs who are trying to maximize the potential of technological approaches in developing markets.

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Appendix I
Research Questionnaire
Lead City University Ibadan
Departments of Management and Accounting

Dear Respondent,

As part of the requirements for a Doctoral Degree in Business Administration, I am carrying out a study on “**E-Marketing, Customer Relationship Management, and Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in North Eastern Nigeria**”. This study is mainly an academic exercise as all information provided would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. In any case, you feel uncomfortable to proceed; you may withdraw your consent at no cost. Below is the questionnaire that addressed the objective of this study. Please feel free to tick the option that best express your personal views.

Thank you.

Mohammed Lawal INUWA

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please carefully go through each item and tick (✓) as appropriate. The demographic choice options are provided in bolded numbers

1. Gender: Male **1** () Female **2** ()
2. What is your age bracket: **1** 21- 30 () **2** 31- 40() **3** 41-50 () **4** 51 – 60() **5** 61 - 65 ()
3. Years of doing business: **1**. Below 5yrs (), **2** 6-10yrs (), **3** 11-15yrs () **4** 16yrs + ()
4. Educational qualification: **1** No Formal Education () **2** Primary Education () **3** Secondary Education () **4** Tertiary Education

SECTION B: E-Marketing (Independent Variable)

The statements in this section concerns E-Marketing (social media marketing, Email marketing & online advertising) as observed by your business. Using the five-point Likert scale provided below, please tick the appropriate choice that indicates your opinion on these E-Marketing indicators.

Strongly Agree (SA) = 1, Agree (A) = 2, Undecided (UD) = 3, Disagree (D) = 4, and Strongly disagree (SD) = 5

S/N	Social Media Marketing	SA	A	UD	D	SD
I						
1	I take advantage of Facebook traffic	1	2	3	4	5
2	I take advantage of the WhatsApp groups on my phone	1	2	3	4	5
3	I stay up to date on Twitter to sell my products	1	2	3	4	5
4	I have Instagram account for my business	1	2	3	4	5
S/N	E-Mail Marketing	SA	A	UD	D	SD
II						
5	I have a designated email for my business	1	2	3	4	5
6	I send bulk mails to potential customer about products on sale	1	2	3	4	5
7	I send bulk mails to potential customer about new product arrivals	1	2	3	4	5
8	I take orders through my business E-mail	1	2	3	4	5
S/N	Online Advertising	SA	A	UD	D	SD
III						
9	I subscribe to Google pop-up advertisement to market my products	1	2	3	4	5
10	I consistently send broadcast advertisement on several WhatsApp groups	1	2	3	4	5
11	I personally advertise my products on Instagram	1	2	3	4	5

12	I have a gallery on Instagram where potential customers can see my products	1	2	3	4	5
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SECTION C: SMEs PERFORMANCE (Dependent Variable)

The statements in this section concerns SMEs performance (competitive advantage, sales performance, customer retention, & market share,) as observed by your business. Using the five-point Likert scale provided below, please tick the appropriate choice that indicates your opinion on these SMEs performance indicators.

Strongly Agree (SA) = 1, Agree (A) = 2, Undecided (UD) = 3, Disagree (D) = 4, and Strongly disagree (SD) = 5

S/N	Customer retention	SA	A	UD	D	SD
IV						
13	My organization continuously keeps track of the relationship between their customers	1	2	3	4	5
14	My organization`s resources and efforts are geared towards maintaining a long-term relationship with our consumers.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Through product quality improvement, my organization has managed to secure a good customer base	1	2	3	4	5
16	Customer satisfaction efforts by my organization have enhanced the firm`s reputation and customer long-term patronage.	1	2	3	4	5
S/N	Market share	SA	A	UD	D	SD
V						
17	My organization offers unique customer value through effective brand management	1	2	3	4	5

18	My organization opens new branches	1	2	3	4	5
19	The customer patronage level of my organization is high	1	2	3	4	5
20	My organization has experienced significant growth of market share in recent years	1	2	3	4	5
21	My organization adopts various strategies to ensure a value driven relationship with the customer and this help us to grow	1	2	3	4	5
S/N VI	Sales Performance	SA	A	UD	D	SD
22	My business acquires new customers	1	2	3	4	5
23	My business improves market share	1	2	3	4	5
24	My business sales revenue has grown	1	2	3	4	5
25	My business opens new branches to sell its product	1	2	3	4	5
26	My business is able to retain existing customers	1	2	3	4	5
S/N VII	Competitive Advantage:	SA	A	UD	D	SD
27	We produce better quality products to beat our competitors	1	2	3	4	5
28	We provide better handling of customer complaints of new products than our rivals.	1	2	3	4	5
29	My business has a crop of well-motivated and loyal workforce	1	2	3	4	5
30	My business has unique selling propositions	1	2	3	4	5
31	My products enjoy a good brand reputation	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: Customer Relationship Management (Moderating Variable)

The statements in this section concerns Customer Relationship Management indicators as applicable to your firm. Using the five-point Likert-type-scale provided, please indicate the extent to which each statement applies to your organization by selecting one of the options provided.

Strongly Agree (SA) = 1, Agree (A) = 2, Undecided (UD) = 3, Disagree (D) = 4, and Strongly disagree (SD) = 5

S/N	Customer Relationship Management:	SA	A	UD	D	SD
VIII						
32	Customer support Telephone has improved the competitive advantage of my business	1	2	3	4	5
33	Since implementation of self-service the sales volume of my business has increased	1	2	3	4	5
34	My business has recorded improvements in customer retention since the implementation of e-mail marketing	1	2	3	4	5
35	The use of social media has enhanced the market share of my business	1	2	3	4	5
S/N	Leadership	SA	A	UD	D	SD
IX						
36	I have observed a positive relationship between strong leadership in customer satisfaction and sales volume of my Business	1	2	3	4	5
37	There is a positive correlation between leadership in quality after sales service and customer retention in my Business	1	2	3	4	5

38	My strong leadership in customer follow-up has improved competitive advantage of my Business	1	2	3	4	5
39	The frequency and quality of Anniversary messages (Birthdays, wedding etc.) my business sends to customers has enhanced my sales performance	1	2	3	4	5

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EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED

Federal Polytechnic Staff School Bauchi
Federal Government College Kaduna
University of Maiduguri, Borno State
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ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS OBTAINED WITH DATES

Certificate of primary Education	-	1985
Senior Secondary School certificate	-	1991
Bachelor of Science Degree B.Sc. Bus Mgt	-	1998
Master's in Business Administration (Marketing)	-	2007
Post Graduate Diploma In Education (PGDE)	-	2007
MSc Bus Administration	-	2020
Ph.D Business Management	-	In-view

WORK EXPERIENCE

PRESENT LEVEL/POSITION: CHIEF LECTURER

- i. Lecturing at Federal Polytechnic Bauchi 2003-Date
- ii. Teaching at Vocational training Centre Bauchi 2001-2003
- iii. NYSC with Central Bank of Nigeria Maiduguri Branch. 1999-2000

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- i Institute of chartered Economist of Nigeria (ICEN) Member - 2006
- ii National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria (NIMN) Member - 2007

JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

1 "Overview of the implications of Delegation in Nigerian Local Government System."

Being a

Journal published in The Gubi Journal. Volume I, Number 5, August, 2010

2 "Challenges of training and development in public organisations:A study of News Agency of Nigeria(NAN)Bauchi zonal office."A paper published in Bida Journal of management and technology(BIJOMAT).Maiden ed July 2011

3 "Organisational Conflicts and its Effect on Organisational Performance in Nigeria.

"Being a paper published in the Journal of the school of Environmental Studies, The Federal Polytechnic, Bida. Volume 5, Number 1, September, 2010 Social Responsibility of Tertiary Institutions to Host Communities. A paper published in the journal of the School of Business and Management studies, The Federal Polytechnic, Kaura Namoda. January-June, 2011.

4. "The role of ATM in retention of bank customers in Nigeria "Being a paper accepted for publication in Ede journal of Business studies (2012) osun state.Nigeria.
5. "Marketing of hospitality products in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects." Being a paper published in the school of Business Journal (2012) of the Federal Polytechnic Bauchi. Nigeria.
- 6 "The role of Market niching in the Development of small Businesses." Being a paper published in the Business Journal (2012) of Federal Polytechnic Damaturu
- 7 "Marketing of Hospitality Products in Nigeria; Problems and Strategies. Being a paper published in the Journal of School of Business vol 1 Feb,2013.
- 8 "Relationship Marketing as a Marketing Strategy for commercial Banks in Nigeria" Being a paper published in the yankari Journal vol 10.Dec 2014.
- 9 "Effective Relationship Marketing as a tool for Customer satisfaction in the Insurance Industry" being a paper published in the Journal of Management Science and Entrepreneurship vol 3 (5) 2014.
- 10 " Impact Assessment Of Emotional Intelligence on Employees' Performance in Organizations.Being a Paper published in the Journal of Management Science January,2019.

CONFERENCE PAPERS PRESENTED

1. "Research Findings and Utilization for National Development. "Being a Paper presented at the 6th National Conference on Research Imperative, Findings and

Utilization for National Development Organized League of Nigeria researchers in Nigeria in collaboration with Federal University of Technology, Yola, 29 Nov 2004.

2. 'Effective Recruitment and Selection Procedure as a Mechanism for Efficient Human Management in Organizations.' Being a paper presented at the 1st National Conference of the School of Business and Management, the Federal Polytechnic Bida 8th March 2005.
3. Agricultural Marketing and National Development. Being a paper presented at the 1st National conference organized by the School of Business and Management. The Federal Polytechnic Bida 8th March 2005.
4. 'Resource Mobilization for Sustainability of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMES) Prospects and Challenges.' Being a paper presented at the Maiden National Conference of Adamawa state Polytechnic, Numan 9th August 2006.
5. 'The challenges of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in a Reformed Economy.' Being a paper presented at the 2nd National conference organized by the school of Business Studies Federal Polytechnic Bauchi, 10th July 2007.
6. 'Franchising as a Tool for Business Development in Business Organisations.' Being a paper presented at the 7th National Conference on Emerging from Global economic Crises, School of Management Studies The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro. October, 2011.

7. "An appraisal of the Application of Marketing Education in Employment Creation." Being a Paper presented at the 23rd Annual and 2nd International Conference of Association of Business Educators of Nigeria. (ABEN) Held at University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos. October 2011

8. "Internal customer satisfaction; a key to satisfying the external customer." Being a paper accepted for presented at the 3rd Kaduna state University (KASU) international conference held from 24th to 27th Feb, 2014.

9. "The role of sales force in achievement of organizational sales goals." Being a paper presented at the 12th A S U P National conference held from 15th to 17th, 2014 in Rivers state polytechnic, Bori.

10. "The Effectiveness of Personal Selling on Sales of Cosmetics" Being a paper presented at the fourth International Conference on Research and Sustainable Development. Held from 10th to 11th of Dec, 2014 at Nassarawa State University, Keffi.

11. "Improving Service Quality of Bank Products In Nigeria In the 21st Century" Being a paper presented at an Academic conference Organised by Hummingbird Publications and Research International. Held from 10th to 11th July, 2014. At the Federal Polytechnic Bauchi

12. "SMEs in Nigeria and the use of Relationship Marketing Strategy" Being a paper presented at the fourth International Conference Held at IRID conference hall Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Held from 28th to 29th January, 2014.

13. Influence Of Marketing Communication on The Performance Of Small Enterprises in Bauchi Metropolis Being a Paper Presented at the School Of Business Studies Conference held November,2018.

14 *Attitudes and Academic Performance of Part-Time Students in Federal Polytechnic Bauchi* Paper Presented at the International Conference on Research and Sustainable Development. Held from Aug 13th -14th,2019 at The Cross River University of Science and Technology, Calabar, Nigeria.

TEXT BOOKS

A Guide to Sales Management

Marketing of Financial services: an introductory text (In Press)

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