

Innovations

Virality Distribution Strategy and Customer Retention of Small and Medium Enterprises in North-Central Nigeria

**Ahungwa, Philip Aondona¹, Prof. Ogbo, Anastasia Ifechukwudebelu²,
Dr. Chinda, Collins Chimkamma³, Ajoh, Theresa Nguvan⁴
Dr. Ugbam, Ogechukwu Charles⁵, Dr. Adibe, Timothy Nnaemeka⁶**

^{1,2,3&5} Department of Management, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu Campus

⁴Department of Educational Foundations, Benue State University, Makurdi

⁶Department of Civil Engineering, Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu
²0000-0002-4569-9623

Correspondence author: **Dr. Ugbam Ogechukwu Charles**

Abstract: *This research aims to determine the effect of virality distribution strategy on customer retention among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in North-Central Nigeria. Social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat were considered indices of virality distribution strategies, while customer commitment and satisfaction were used as indicators of customer retention. The study employed a descriptive survey design, targeting 13,378 SME owners. Using Bill Goden's formula for sample size determination, 411 respondents were selected. Data was collected using a five-point Likert scale closed-ended questionnaire. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the hypotheses using SPSS Amos version 25. This study has shown that social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp significantly enhance customer commitment and satisfaction. The results indicate that these platforms are vital in improving business and customer relationships by offering interaction, engagement, and communication channels. By utilising these platforms' distinctive features and broad reach, businesses can build stronger emotional connections with their customers, increasing commitment and satisfaction. Given the findings, it is recommended that small and medium enterprises actively pull social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp to enhance their relationship with customers. By fully exploiting these platforms' exceptional features and widespread reach, businesses can create more chances for interfacing, commitment, and contact.*

This approach will help build stronger emotional connections with customers, increasing allegiance and satisfaction.

Keywords: Virality distribution, Customer retention, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), Social media platforms, Customer satisfaction, North-Central Nigeria

1.1 Background to the Study

Due to intense competition and rapidly evolving trends, businesses face significant challenges in maintaining competitiveness, growth, and sustainability. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) increasingly focus on swift distribution strategies to address these challenges. Efficient management of emerging technologies facilitates quick product or service delivery from producers to consumers. A well-organised distribution system is essential for business success, as ineffective strategies can lead to reduced profits and potential failure.

Virality distribution, which involves the rapid spread of content across social media, offers businesses a way to market their products more effectively by reaching a broader audience than traditional methods. This strategy can increase product visibility, market presence, customer commitment, and loyalty, ultimately driving business growth (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021; Canelli, 2023).

In Africa, particularly Nigeria, social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook play a crucial role in communication and content distribution. Leveraging these platforms can enhance product visibility and customer engagement. Offline strategies like community events and influencer partnerships can complement online efforts. Scholars note Nigeria's extensive social media user base and the rise of e-commerce platforms like Jumia and Konga further support the integration of virality distribution strategies (Bhanye, Shayamunda, & Tavirai, 2023; Ogbo, Ugwu, Enemu, & Ukpere, 2019). Successful implementation of virality distribution in Nigeria requires a combination of digital expertise, cultural sensitivity, and strategic localisation to engage customers effectively and ensure retention.

Businesses in North-Central Nigeria are leveraging digital platforms, cultural insights, and local networks to implement virality distribution strategies. They use popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, Snapchat, YouTube, and TikTok to share visually appealing content, customer testimonials, and promotional materials to capture attention and stimulate viral sharing. Collaborations with local influencers and opinion leaders enhance the reach and impact of these efforts. Localised content that resonates with cultural

values, language preferences, and regional trends further strengthens customer connections (Winny, 2024; Bhanye, Shayamunda, & Tavirai, 2023).

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) attract and retain customers to boost revenue and expansion. Technological advancements have revolutionised customer experiences and allow businesses to operate beyond physical boundaries, enhancing product specifications, reducing costs, and enabling faster product delivery. Social media is critical in the virality distribution strategy, relying on organic word-of-mouth and technological tools to reach broader audiences. Despite the prominence of virality distribution in Nigerian businesses, particularly SMEs, there is limited scholarly research on this topic, especially in North-Central Nigeria (Palmié et al., 2020; Polyviou et al., 2019).

In Nigeria, SMEs focus on retaining existing customers due to saturated markets and intense competition. Managing distribution strategies is critical for customer retention, as acquiring new customers is significantly more expensive than retaining current ones. Ensuring customer retention involves fulfilling customer expectations and maintaining long-term relationships. Satisfaction, defined as an emotional reaction to service quality, is crucial but does not guarantee repurchase. Price, discounts, personal selling, and customer relationships significantly impact retention (Azeez, 2024).

Research highlights that trust and commitment are essential for successful relationship marketing. The Commitment-Trust Theory suggests that strong relationships between businesses and customers foster efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness. Trust, influenced by service quality, leads to more profound commitment and ongoing investment in the customer relationship. Service quality and customer satisfaction are vital to retaining customers and driving business growth.

Therefore, it is pertinent for these enterprises to continue to consider even more creative and appropriate combinations of distribution strategies to achieve excellent customer retention. For this study, both proxies for independent and dependent variables were carefully selected and re-configured by the researcher to suit the current distribution trends and customer retention of SMEs in Nigeria; hence, for the independent variable, social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp as classified by (Greenwood and Gopal 2015; Dwivedi, Kapoor & Chen, 2015) were adopted. The dependent variable is Commitment and Satisfaction (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Ahmed, 2021; Danash, Nasah& Ling, 2012).

Distribution strategies have an immense impact on the achievement of the business. Hence, to survive and thrive in a highly competitive market, the business should ensure effective distribution strategies that can facilitate sharing its products or services to retain customers at any point in time. Based on this, this study finds its relevance, aimed at investigating the impact of virality distribution strategy and customer retention in Nigeria, emphasising small and medium enterprises. It is believed that its findings will facilitate policy options that will aid enterprises in serving customers better, retaining them, and continuing to increase profitability and market share.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Social media platforms are crucial in distribution strategies to enhance customer retention, business growth, and sustainability globally. Platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Snapchat, Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram enable businesses to connect with customers, ensure timely delivery, maintain product quality, and foster long-term relationships. However, SMEs in North Central Nigeria face challenges in effectively utilising these platforms due to limited understanding, inadequate resources, and lack of customised strategies. This leads to poor product delivery, inconsistent quality, and weak customer engagement, resulting in dissatisfaction and reduced retention rates. The disparity in social media utilisation among SMEs poses a severe threat to their profitability and sustainability, as they risk losing customers to better-equipped competitors. This issue highlights the need for urgent attention and propels research into how SMEs in the region can better leverage social media for distribution and customer retention.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the extent to which virality distribution strategy affects customer retention of small and medium enterprises in Nigeria. While the specific objectives are to:

- i. Ascertain the extent to which the use of Facebook by SMEs in North-central Nigeria affects customer Commitment.
- ii. Examine how the use of Facebook by SMEs in North-central Nigeria affects customer Satisfaction.
- iii. Determine the extent to which the use of WhatsApp by SMEs in North-central Nigeria affects customer Commitment.
- iv. Assess the extent to which the use of WhatsApp by SMEs in North-central Nigeria affects customer Satisfaction.

1.4 Research questions

Consequently, upon the statement of the problem and the objectives of the study, the following research questions will guide data acquisition and analysis:

- i. To what extent does Facebook affect customer commitment in North-central Nigeria?
- ii. To what extent does Facebook affect customer satisfaction in North-central Nigeria?
- iii. To what extent does WhatsApp affect customer commitment in North-central Nigeria?
- iv. To what extent does WhatsApp affect customer satisfaction in North-central Nigeria?

2.0 Review of Related Literature

2.1 Virality Distribution Strategy

Distribution emphasises the formulation and execution of various channel types and strategies to facilitate the accessibility of products to consumers for any given business. As stated by Mohsen et al. (2023), different distribution channels and strategies are employed by businesses, contingent upon their specific products and target customers. Scholars like Yusuf & Nurhilalia (2019), Poulakiand & Katson (2020), Kulinska et al. (2020) and Ramboscast et al. (2015), have emphasised that distribution plays a pivotal role in the seamless movement of products from the production point to their ultimate consumers. They also asserted that selecting an inappropriate distribution strategy can impede and lead to bottlenecks in the transmission process, hindering the flow of products from producers to consumers.

The rise of social media has become a significant trend in content distribution. As noted by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), social media consists of internet-based applications founded on the principles and technologies of Web 2.0, enabling users to create and share content. Web 2.0 is the foundation for social media platforms (Dutot & Bergeron, 2016; Ahmad, Ahmad, & Bakar, 2019). Social media platforms are essential for business activities in today's business landscape. Initially designed for personal communication, these platforms have become critical for SMEs aiming to expand their market reach and maintain customer engagement (Mitić, 2020). With nearly 4.57 billion users globally and 346 million new users in the past year alone (Hruska & Maresova, 2020), platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat are now vital to business strategies. Businesses use these platforms to enhance customer commitment and satisfaction, cultivating strong relationships and encouraging repeat purchases (Hanaysha, 2017).

Modern customers increasingly rely on social media for purchasing decisions and product information due to its convenience over traditional methods (Lenhart et al.,

2010). The rise of technology and changing circumstances, such as career demands and pandemics, have made face-to-face interactions less practical, positioning social media as the preferred medium for sales and information (Keegan & Rowley, 2017). The internet has enabled social media to engage consumers and transform customer acquisition and retention methods (Tajvidi & Karami, 2017).

Virality occurs when newly posted internet content rapidly attracts a vast global audience, gaining extensive views. This phenomenon is compared to virus spread due to its swift popularity, measurable by similar mathematical formulas used in viral transmission studies (Kagan, 2022; World Health Organization, 2014). Viral content, including videos, audio clips, applications, and written content, provides a cost-effective way to reach a broad audience using existing networks (Liu et al., 2012). Historically, this spread was driven by word-of-mouth, but the internet and mobile networks have amplified its reach. Virality distribution (VD) utilises mediums like video clips, images, texts, emails, and web pages to propagate messages.

However, this novel approach to distribution strategy faces significant criticism, notably due to the swift propagation of rumours. With a vast user base engaging with social media daily, consuming news, related posts, and diverse opinions, misinformation can swiftly circulate worldwide. Moreover, users grapple with privacy concerns, encompassing identity theft, and businesses aim to leverage customer data to advertise their offerings (Gao, 2020). Leonardi, Huysman, & Steinfield (2013) posit that social media has been famous as a medium for internal relationships and precision within business; it can also lead to the creation of disjointed in-groups and serve as a means of prejudice. Furthermore, it can potentially add to broad issues such as cyber bullying in the place of work (Oksanen et al. 2021; Snyman & Loh 2015).

2.2 Customer Retention

Customer retention has held considerable prominence in scholarly works since the mid-1990s, persisting as a subject of investigation even in recent years. Scholars have underscored its interactionist perspective, emphasising a longitudinal outlook on the endurance process (Bergamo, Giuliani, & Galli, 2011; Kumar, Pozza, & Ganesh, 2013). The capacity of a business to maintain its customer base over time, termed customer retention, is measured as a percentage reflecting the retained customer count at the end of a defined timeframe. Customer retention encompasses a business's ability to preserve its customers, influenced by the acquisition of new customers and the attrition of existing ones through subscription cancellations, non-returning purchases, or contract closures (Garcia et al., 2019; Johnson & Brown, 2018).

As the German economist Hirschman described, customer retention was meticulously examined for clarity and relevance. This definition boasted simplicity, a direct correlation to consumer behaviour, and applicability across diverse business models and entities (Hirschman, 1970). Hirschman clarified that the reverse of retention manifests when customers perceive degradation in a company's product or service quality. He coined this as the "exit option," wherein some customers discontinue patronising the company's offerings, and some employees depart (Hirschman, 1970). Consequently, there is a decline in profitability and a reduction in customers, and management is prompted to seek remedies to address the underlying causes of this exit (Hirschman, 1970).

Customer retention cultivates enduring and profitable relationships with existing customers by delivering high-quality services. Oliver (1997) defines it as a solid commitment to consistently choose a preferred product or service over time, even in the face of situational influences or marketing efforts that may tempt switching. Companies strive to satisfy customers, build long-term relationships, and encourage repeat purchases. Komalasari & Budiman (2018) describe customer retention as the set of actions and strategies to reduce customer defections. The primary goal of retention strategies is to establish a loyal customer base and deter them from turning to other providers for the same product or service. As noted by Singh and Imran (2012), retention programs seek to transform occasional customers into frequent ones more likely to advocate for the business among their social circles. This phase typically occurs when a customer makes a second purchase from the same provider.

Muhammad (2013) emphasises that a customer retention strategy hinges on customer satisfaction and loyalty. It thrives when companies meet customer expectations and maintain them in long-term relationships, influencing purchasing decisions. Customer retention involves the ongoing connection between the organisation and the customer (Ibojo & Asabi, 2015) and is vital for sustaining a profitable customer base and fostering loyalty (Al-Dmour, Alshuraideh, Salehih, 2017; Alshurideh, 2014; Preikschas, Cabanelas, Rüdiger, Lampón, 2017).

Authors have identified customer relationship management (CRM) as a critical variable with numerous business advantages. CRM is regarded as a solution that can be effectively utilised to navigate business complexities and promote customer retention (Al Dmour, Alshurideh, & Shishan, 2014; Obeidat, Sweis, Zyod, & Alshurideh, 2012; Al-dweeri, Obeidat, Al-dwiry, Alshurideh, & Alhorani, 2017). Customer Relationship Management (CRM) encompasses various benefits, such as enhancing customer loyalty, profitability, satisfaction, and overall organisational

performance (ElKordy, 2014). According to Navimipour and Soltani (2016), CRM systems focus on improving the execution of customer relationship processes, thereby optimising customer interactions. Alipour and Mohammadi (2011) highlight CRM as a pivotal competitive strategy that enhances customer engagement and satisfaction. Soliman (2011) discovered a direct and positive correlation between CRM implementation and marketing effectiveness. In the banking sector, Wachira & Were (2016) found that CRM significantly impacts the performance of banks. Kangu et al. (2017) also noted CRM's favourable effect on fostering customer loyalty.

2.3 Effect of Facebook on Customer Commitment

Facebook is pivotal for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) seeking to enhance customer commitment through social media. According to Almotairi (2021), SMEs utilise Facebook not only to distribute products and services but also to cultivate repeated purchases and strengthen social and marketing connections. Customer commitment, crucial for sustaining business amidst market dynamics, signifies a customer's steadfast loyalty despite external influences (Chiguvi, 2017). In another Almotairi (2021) highlights that Facebook facilitates personalised customer interactions, allowing SMEs to respond to individual comments promptly and provide timely information. This engagement fosters a sense of personal attention and builds trust and loyalty. Moreover, active participation on Facebook enables SMEs to address emerging issues directly, influencing customer decisions positively regarding future purchases (Mellroy & Barnett, 2000).

By leveraging Facebook, SMEs can effectively manage customer relationships, encourage repeat business, and harness word-of-mouth marketing through satisfied customers advocating for their products or services. This platform is more than just a promotional tool; it becomes a dynamic channel for dialogue, customer service enhancement, and community building, essential for sustained growth and competitiveness in today's market environment.

2.4 Effect of Facebook on Customer Satisfaction

Facebook has emerged as a popular e-commerce platform where customers can discover, browse, buy, and sell items. The growth of Facebook has expanded the customer base, allowing for a better assessment of their satisfaction with purchased items and services. Today, Facebook offers a convenient way for customers to purchase products by directly interacting with businesses, a feature that has become particularly valuable during the pandemic and work burden environment or era (Ramos, Arcilla, Coralde & Macatangay, 2023). With Facebook, small and medium business owners can design marketing campaigns and enhance product awareness. Facebook content distribution uses Content communities, Virtual worlds, social networks, Forums, profiles, and chats, which allows for targeted advertisements

based on users' demographic profiles, stated interests, likes, and dislikes, providing benefits over other advertising methods by giving customers much satisfaction (Ramos, Arcilla, Coralde & Macatangay, 2023; Hedayatpour, Manouchehri, & Soheili 2020).

However, as a viral distribution strategy, Facebook struggles to mitigate the effects of negative product experiences. Products on Facebook must ensure they respond promptly and thoroughly to fan inquiries, as meeting expectations leads to customer satisfaction. Engaging and interactive communication is essential, making it crucial to maintain an active and dynamic presence on the platform. Their expectations and subsequent post-purchase experience shape customer satisfaction (Tahir et al., 2013).

2.5 Effect of WhatsApp on Customer Commitment

The application of WhatsApp distribution strategies for customer retention is gaining traction among small and medium enterprises. By leveraging WhatsApp's communication, potential businesses can seamlessly engage with customers, fulfilling their needs and fostering enduring connections. WhatsApp serves as a potent tool for bolstering customer commitment in businesses. It facilitates real-time communication, enabling swift responses to customer queries and concerns and fostering trust and loyalty (Smith & Chaffey, 2005). This immediate interaction helps customers feel valued and attended to, enhancing their trust in the brand or business (Chatterjee, 2016).

Moreover, the platform allows businesses to send personalised messages, establishing a more intimate connection with customers. This personalised interaction can significantly elevate customer satisfaction and commitment (Mingione, 2018). Customer commitment, the extent of a customer's allegiance to a brand or business, is a pivotal factor in retention (Moorman et al., 1992). A strong commitment translates into a customer's willingness to continue purchases and recommend the brand to others (Gwinner et al., 1998). This commitment nurtures trust and loyalty between the business and its customers, influencing their decision to stay with the business (Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002).

Several strategies can be employed to ensure customer retention via WhatsApp for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Firstly, creating WhatsApp groups exclusively for customers fosters engagement and updates them on new offerings (Duarte & Costa, 2020). Secondly, offering exclusive deals and discounts to group members incentivises participation and ongoing engagement (Hemsley-Brown &

Oplatka, 2006). Lastly, sending notifications about new products and services through WhatsApp groups ensures that customers stay informed and engaged.

2.6 Effect of WhatsApp on Customer Satisfaction

WhatsApp is a cross-platform mobile messaging app that enables users to exchange messages without incurring SMS fees. This is possible because WhatsApp uses an internet data plan similar to those used for email and web browsing, allowing for free messaging and connectivity. WhatsApp revolutionised smart phone communication by capitalising on the growing desire for inexpensive connectivity, effectively eliminating the cost barrier. It is a chat application available on various smartphone platforms, allowing users to share pictures and messages. WhatsApp's advantages include minimal data usage for sending high-quality multimedia files, a simple user interface, robust privacy features, and automatic multimedia storage capabilities (Martati, Suminto, Kusrihandayani, & Wulansar, 2021). Customer satisfaction measures a business's products and services to meet or exceed customer expectations. It is quantified by the number or percentage of customers whose experiences with a firm's offerings surpass predefined satisfaction goals.

WhatsApp drastically enhances customer satisfaction by providing an accessible and dependable messaging platform, removing the SMS cost. Its lowest data usage for high-quality multimedia distribution and simple, easy-to-use interface make contact easy and resourceful. The app's robust privacy features ensure that user data is secluded, contributing to user trust. Mechanical multimedia storage advances expediency, making saving and accessing shared content easy. WhatsApp's seamless, cost-effective contact meets and often exceeds user prospects, leading to high customer satisfaction (Martati, Suminto, Kusrihandayani, & Wulansar, 2021).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of virality distribution strategy and customer retention in the context of this work is based on Technology Acceptance Model and Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory.

2.7.1 Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989).

Davis introduced the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in 1989, quickly becoming the cornerstone for understanding how users adopt new technologies. Rooted in the theory of reasoned action by Fishbein & Ajzen (1975), TAM aims to predict whether users will accept technology and identifies necessary adjustments for system suitability based on consumer behaviour. TAM remains the predominant

framework for this purpose, focusing on two key determinants: perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. Perceived ease of use refers to how straightforward users perceive the technology, while perceived usefulness gauges whether users believe it will enhance their productivity. These factors directly influence user satisfaction and adoption rates. In the context of social media platforms or technologies, TAM assesses users' intentions based on these convictions.

Their level of engagement influences user commitment to a specific action. TAM's application reveals that user' perceptions of how easy and beneficial a technology is directly impacting their willingness to adopt it. This understanding helps organisations tailor systems to meet user expectations, increasing adoption rates and optimising user satisfaction.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) predicts technology use based on perceived ease of use and usefulness. This model helps understand user acceptance of technology, where ease of use influences perceived usefulness, attitudes, and intentions toward using the technology (Davis, 1989; Davis, 1993). The model's constructs strongly correlate with actual use behaviour, aiding in evaluating user motivation to adopt new technologies (Hwang, 2005; Gefen, Karahanna & Straub, 2003; Araújo & Casais, 2020). This illustrates why TAM was deemed appropriate. The model focuses on essential elements for delivering superior service that enhances business decisions and fosters customer loyalty. When consumers make online purchases, they expect a certain level of service. If the service falls short of these expectations, it creates a gap that must be addressed. TAM helps businesses understand and meet these expectations, bridging the gap and ensuring customer satisfaction and retention.

In brief, TAM provides a structured approach to analysing user behaviour towards technology adoption, emphasising usability and perceived benefits as critical factors in determining user acceptance, commitment and satisfaction.

2.7.2 Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory

Customers' opinions on goods and services are shaped by their expectations, which form before purchase based on prior experiences (Elkhani and Bakri, 2012; Foot, 2019). The rise of online retailing has heightened these expectations, necessitating that social media distribution meets them to compete globally. Meeting customer expectations is crucial for satisfaction and repeat business, as these expectations are based on past experiences and vary by industry (Toor, 2022; Mladenov, 2023; Willott, 2020).

Customer expectations evolve, including exemplary service, fair pricing and proactive and personalised interactions across social media platforms (Bhasin, 2021;

Mocanu, 2022). Businesses often struggle to understand and fully meet these expectations, leading to potential dissatisfaction and reduced future purchases (Spacey, 2017; Rohtbart, 2022). The expectation-disconfirmation model explains how comparing expected and actual performance influences customer satisfaction. Positive disconfirmation (when actual performance exceeds expectations) leads to satisfaction, while negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction (Liu et al., 2012; Tsai, 2015). Online shoppers also use this model to rate products, affecting word-of-mouth communication (Ho, 2017; Hsieh, 2010).

2.7.3 Empirical Review

Through empirical examination, Shantharam, Balaji, & Jagadeesan (2019) examined the influence of customer commitment in social media marketing on purchase decisions. Employing a survey method for data collection, the researchers analysed the gathered data using PSPP version Software. Their findings revealed that only two factors emerged from the customer commitment variables, with information and experience being the primary dimensions for social media evaluation. Ultimately, the study concluded that both the Experience Factor and Information Factor significantly and positively impact purchase decisions. This suggests that more outstanding customer commitment in social media correlates with higher purchase decisions.

Polydorou (2023) examined the impact of social media on customer acquisition and retention using the Structural Equation Modelling of Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter platforms in Slovenia. The primary aim was to investigate the effectiveness of Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter in acquiring and retaining customers in the telecommunication industry. The study utilised a survey design, with 268 respondents obtained through an online questionnaire forming the sample. The proposed model of the study analysed social media platforms across four dimensions: frequency of use, ease of use, capacity to use, and availability of network for effective platform utilisation. The findings suggest that all these dimensions are interrelated and crucial for network providers' performance, particularly in acquisition and retention. Therefore, managers should prioritise the effective utilisation of these platforms.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted the Survey Research Design to examine the impact of virality distribution strategy and customer retention of SMEs in North-Central Nigeria. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to generate data for the study to achieve this objective. The qualitative and quantitative methods were used because

they were suitable for attracting primary data to elicit responses and for using secondary information from textbooks and academic and professional journals to extract information from previous research or works.

3.2 Population of the Study

The study will include 13,378 small and medium enterprise (SME) owners from Nigeria's North-central geopolitical region, based on data from SMEDAN (2021), the Federal Ministry of Industry (2022), and Trading View (2022). Below is the distribution table, detailing SME owners in the region.

Table 1: Population Distribution

S/N	Name of States	The population of SME
1	Benue	1,811
2	FCT, Abuja	2,825
3	Kogi	1,027
4	Kwara	1,416
5	Plateau	1,574
6	Nassarawa	2,604
7	Niger	2,121
Total		13,378

Source: SMEDEM website 2021

Sample Size Determination

The researcher utilised the Bill Goden (2004) formula to determine the sample size, as outlined below:

$$SS = \frac{Z^2 \times P(1 - P)}{M^2}$$

Where:

- SS = the sample size
- Z = 1.96 at 95% Confidence Level
- P = population proportion assumed to be 0.5 (50%)
- M = error margin (5%)
- N = Populations

Hence:

$$\begin{aligned}
 SS &= \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2} \\
 &= \frac{3.841 \times 0.25}{0.00250} \\
 &= \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.00250} \\
 &= \frac{0.9604}{0.00250} \\
 SS &= 384.16 \\
 &= 384
 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Sample} &= SS \div (1 + SS^{-1}) \div N \\
 &= 385 \div (1 + 385^{-1}) \div 13,378 \\
 &= 385 \div 1 + 384 \div 13,378 \\
 &= 385 \div 1 + 0.02870 \\
 &= 385 \div 1.02870 \\
 &= 374
 \end{aligned}$$

The current sample size is perceived as inadequate for a study of this scope. According to Unyimadu (2005), larger sample sizes are more representative of the population, thus yielding more reliable and valid results. Considering this principle, the researcher followed Israel's (1992) suggestion to increase the sample size by 10% (adding 37 participants) to accommodate potential non-responses and incomplete questionnaires, aligning with Unyimadu's perspective.

Initially set at 374 participants, the sample size was adjusted to 411 (10% of 374 added to the original 374) to mitigate non-response bias, as Miller and Smith (1983) recommended. This adjustment ensured that the study achieved the desired confidence, validity, and precision levels. By enlarging the sample size and accounting for potential data gaps, the research endeavours to enhance the robustness and representativeness of its findings within the study's context.

3.4 Determination of Individual States Sample Size

The formula derived by Bowley (1964) in Onwubiko, Ehikwe, and Onwuka (2013) will be used in determining the individual states sample of the seven (7) states within the north-central geopolitical region of Nigeria, as shown below:

$$nh = \frac{nNh}{N}$$

Where:

n = Sample size of the entire population.

nh = Size of the respondents required

Nh = Total number of business owners in each organisation

N = Total population size.

Table 2: Sample Size Distribution of Individual SMEs in each State

S/N	State		Sampled SMEs Owners
1	Benue	$\frac{411 \times 1,811}{13,378}$	55
2	Nasarawa	$\frac{411 \times 2,825}{13,378}$	89
3	Plateau	$\frac{411 \times 1,027}{13,378}$	31
4	Niger	$\frac{411 \times 1,416}{13,378}$	43
5	Kogi	$\frac{411 \times 1,574}{13,378}$	48
6	Kwara	$\frac{411 \times 2,604}{13,378}$	80
7	FCT, Abuja	$\frac{411 \times 2,121}{13,378}$	65
	Total		411

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2024.

3.5 Model Specification

The model for this study is conceptualised from various studies, and as such, the functional form of the model is stated below:

$$CC = f = (FB, W) - - - - - - - - - -1$$

$$CS = f = (FB, W) - - - - - - - - - -2$$

FDS = Facebook Distribution Strategy

WDS = WhatsApp Distribution Strategy

Equations 1 and 2 are the functional forms indicating that customer commitment is a function of Facebook and WhatsApp. On one hand, for equation 1, and on the other

hand, customer satisfaction is also a function of Facebook and WhatsApp. Thus, the stochastic form of equation 1 and 2 is specified as:

$$\begin{array}{rcccccc}
 CC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 FB + \beta_2 W + \mu_i & - & - & - & - & -3 \\
 CS + \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 FB + \alpha_2 W + \varepsilon_i & - & - & - & - & -4
 \end{array}$$

Where β_{1-2} and α_{1-2} are the parameters to be estimated while the μ_i and ε_i are the error terms.

3.6 Research Hypotheses

To meticulously guide this study and streamline data collection, the following hypotheses are

- i Facebook use by SMEs has a significant effect on customers' commitment in North-Central Nigeria
- ii Facebook use by SMEs has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in North-Central Nigeria
- iii WhatsApp use by SMEs has a significant effect on customers' commitment in North-Central Nigeria
- iv WhatsApp use by SMEs has a significant effect on customer satisfaction in North-Central Nigeria

4.0 Data presentation, analyses and discussion of findings

Table 3: Responses on Facebook

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My business uses our Timeline to showcase products and service update	374	1.00	5.00	3.4064	1.05381
My business is dependent on Friends to reach some of our customers	374	1.00	5.00	3.3957	1.09524

My business uses News Feeds to meet customer needs	374	1.00	5.00	3.5214	1.14771
Valid N (listwise)	374				

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The data collected from respondents regarding items 1, 2, and 3 were analysed using mean scores and standard deviation. As shown in Table 3, the respondents agreed with all statements, indicating that Facebook positively impacts customer retention for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in North-Central Nigeria. Mean scores ranged between 3.49 and 3.52, exceeding the 2.50 cutoff point. This suggests that Facebook significantly influences customer retention among SMEs in the region. The findings underscore the platform's role in enhancing customer loyalty and its perceived effectiveness in sustaining customer relationships, which is crucial for SMEs operating in the competitive market environment of North-Central Nigeria.

Table 4: Responses on WhatsApp

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviate
Content creators/ business owners Send Pulse chatbots to convert customers	374	1.00	5.00	3.7540	1.03991
Content creators/business owners use Away Messages to respond automatically to messages received outside business hours	374	1.00	5.00	3.5668	1.05331
Multimedia sharing enables businesses to reach customers on new products and services and how they function	374	1.00	5.00	3.4866	1.15249
Valid N (listwise)	374				

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The data gathered from respondents regarding items 4, 5, and 6 were analysed using mean scores and standard deviation. Table 4 illustrates that respondents agreed with all statements, indicating that WhatsApp positively impacts customer retention among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in North-Central Nigeria. Mean scores ranged from 3.48 to 3.75, all surpassing the 2.50 cutoff point. This suggests that WhatsApp has a notable influence on customer retention within the

SME sector of North-Central Nigeria. The findings highlight WhatsApp's effectiveness in facilitating communication, customer engagement, and service delivery, significantly enhancing customer loyalty and satisfaction. This platform plays a crucial role in SMEs' efforts to maintain and strengthen customer relationships, which is vital for their sustained growth and competitiveness in the regional market landscape.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.868a	.522	.513	2.49506	1.373
a. Predictors: (Constant), Facebook, WhatsApp.					
b. Dependent Variable: Customer Commitment					

Source: Filed Survey, 2024

The findings in Table 5 reveal that the coefficient of determination (R square) explains how much variation in the dependent variable can be attributed to changes in the independent variables. An R square value of 0.522 indicates that approximately 52.2% of the variation in customer commitment among SMEs in North-Central Nigeria can be explained by changes in the use of Facebook and WhatsApp at a 95% confidence level. Additionally, the correlation coefficient (R = 0.868) shown in Table5 signifies a strong relationship between the variables studied. This robust correlation underscores the significant influence of Facebook and WhatsApp on enhancing customer commitment within SMEs in the region, highlighting their pivotal role in fostering customer relationships and retention strategies.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

ANOVAa						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1089.276	5	217.855	34.995	.000b
	Residual	2290.917	368	6.225		
	Total	3380.193	373			
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Commitment						
b. Predictors: (Constant) Facebook, WhatsApp,						

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The findings underscore Facebook's notably more substantial impact than WhatsApp on customer commitment within North-Central Nigerian SMEs. This highlights the differential roles these platforms play in influencing customer relationships and retention strategies, emphasising the strategic importance of social media platforms in SME operations within this geographic context.

Table 8: Responses on Customers' Commitment

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
App store keeps customers returning again and again for purchase	374	1.00	5.00	3.9652	.99939
Treating customers with respect determines whether they will continue to stay with a particular business	374	1.00	5.00	3.9037	1.01798
Rewards keep customers returning again and again for business	374	1.00	5.00	3.8529	1.07732
Customers buy goods and services that have reasonable and affordable prices	374	1.00	5.00	3.8449	1.04459
Customers go for goods and services of high quality rather than the outlet and method of transmission	374	1.00	5.00	3.9439	1.02492
Brand image significantly influences customer buying decision	374	1.00	5.00	3.7861	1.07978
Customers are drawn to products with positive standing for consistency, honesty, and decent practices	374	1.00	5.00	3.8824	1.07222
Customers often seek products that offer a balance between cost and benefits	374	1.00	5.00	3.8904	1.01001
Valid N (listwise)	374				

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The data collected from respondents regarding items 7 to 14 were analysed using mean scores and standard deviation. As shown in Table 8, respondents agreed with all statements, indicating that commitment positively impacts customer retention among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in North-Central Nigeria. Mean scores ranged from 3.78 to 3.96, exceeding the 2.50 cutoff point. This suggests a significant influence of commitment on customer retention within SMEs in the region. The findings emphasise the critical role of commitment in fostering customer loyalty and

retention strategies. This aspect is crucial for SMEs operating in a competitive market environment, where maintaining long-term customer relationships can directly contribute to sustained business growth and profitability. Therefore, enhancing commitment among SMEs is pivotal for securing customer trust and ensuring continued patronage in North-Central Nigeria.

Table 9: Responses on Customers' Satisfaction

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Clear communication with customers is essential in providing information about products, services, and policies and promptly addressing customer inquiries.	374	2.00	5.00	3.9251	1.04060
Presenting outstanding support, both pre-and post-purchase, contributes much to customer pleasure	374	1.00	5.00	3.7380	1.15352
Stability in delivering products, services, and customer experiences enhances loyalty	374	1.00	5.00	3.7219	1.17284
Transparent communication about products, pricing, policies, and any potential issues fosters trust	374	1.00	5.00	3.9011	1.04502
Implementing strong security measures helps build confidence in the safety of personal information	374	1.00	5.00	3.8476	1.03597
Communication about products, pricing, policies, and any potential issues fosters trust	374	1.00	5.00	3.8155	1.08644
Products or services to individual preference add to their appeal	374	1.00	5.00	3.8930	1.06834
Overall user experience bolsters customer fulfilment	374	1.00	5.00	3.9037	1.06685
Valid N (listwise)	374				

Source: Filed Survey, 2024

The data collected from respondents regarding items 15 to 22 were analysed using mean scores and standard deviation. According to Table 9, respondents agreed with

all statements, indicating that satisfaction positively influences customer retention among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in North-Central Nigeria. Mean scores ranged from 3.72 to 3.92, all surpassing the 2.50 cutoff point. This suggests that satisfaction significantly impacts customer retention within SMEs in the region. These findings underscore the importance of ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction to foster loyalty and repeat business. Maintaining customer satisfaction is crucial for long-term success and profitability for SMEs operating in the competitive North-Central Nigerian market. By prioritising customer satisfaction initiatives, SMEs can strengthen their market position and enhance their reputation, attracting and retaining a loyal customer base.

Table 10: Model Summary

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.826a	.683	.678	2.03348	1.690
a. Predictors: (Constant), Facebook, WhatsApp.					
b. Dependent Variable: Customer satisfaction					

The findings from Table 10 indicate that the coefficient of determination (R square) elucidates how much variation in the dependent variable can be attributed to changes in the independent variables. An R square value of 0.683 suggests that approximately 68.3% of the variation in customer satisfaction among SMEs in North-Central Nigeria can be explained by changes in the use of Facebook and WhatsApp at a 95% confidence interval. Furthermore, the correlation coefficient (R = 0.826) presented in Table 10 signifies a robust relationship between the variables studied. This strong correlation underscores the significant impact of Facebook and WhatsApp on enhancing customer satisfaction within SMEs in the region, emphasising their crucial role in shaping customer retention strategies and business outcomes.

Table 11: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

ANOVAa						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3273.174	5	654.635	158.314	.000b
	Residual	1521.695	368	4.135		
	Total	4794.869	373			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer satisfaction
b. Predictors: (Constant), Facebook, WhatsApp

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The ANOVA results in Table 11 reveal that the processed data, representing population parameters, achieved a significant level of 0.000. This indicates that the data is highly suitable for concluding the population's parameters, as the significance value (p-value) is less than 5%. Therefore, it can be inferred that Facebook and WhatsApp significantly impact customer satisfaction among SMEs in North-Central Nigeria. The statistical significance of the model is underscored by a p-value less than 0.05 (F = 158.314, P = 0.000 < 0.05), suggesting that the influence of these platforms on customer satisfaction is not by random chance but reflects a meaningful relationship supported by the data. These findings highlight the crucial role of social media platforms in enhancing customer satisfaction strategies for SMEs in the region, which is crucial for their sustained growth and competitiveness.

Table 12: Regression Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	74.642	1.498		54.652	.000
	FACEBOOK	.702	.055	.065	8.852	.006
	WHATSAPP	.618	.054	.011	6.330	.007

a. Dependent Variable: Customer satisfaction

Source: Field Survey, 2024

From the data in Table 12, the established regression equation is presented thus:

$$CS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 FB + \beta_2 W + u_i \quad \text{-- -- -- -- -- (ii)}$$

Thus, the equation for customer satisfaction is derived as Customer satisfaction = 74.642 + 0.702(Facebook) + 0.618(WhatsApp). This regression equation indicates that, with all other factors held constant, Facebook and WhatsApp collectively influence customer satisfaction among SMEs in North-Central Nigeria by 74.6%. Specifically, a one-unit increase in Facebook usage is associated with a 70.2% increase in customer satisfaction, while a similar increase in WhatsApp usage

correlates with a 61.8% increase in customer satisfaction. The study further established that the p-values for Facebook and WhatsApp (.006 and .007, respectively) were less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant positive effect of each variable on customer satisfaction within SMEs in North-Central Nigeria. These findings underscore the pivotal role of social media platforms in shaping customer satisfaction strategies and fostering business success in the competitive SME sector of the region.

5.0 Discussion of Research Findings

The discussion of this study focused on the research questions stated in chapter one of the study. Research objectives answered the said research questions. Findings were based on the objectives of the study as follows:

5.1 Facebook Significantly Affects Customers' Commitment

Hypothesis one and research question one sought to examine the effect of Facebook on customers' commitment in North-Central Nigeria. The study aims to examine the relationship between Facebook and customers' commitment. This study tests that assertion and the analysis result is reported in Table 12. It was found that $t = 7.009$, $P = 0.003$. The alternate hypothesis is accepted, and we conclude that Facebook has a significant relationship with customers' commitment in North-Central Nigeria. We accept that the estimate β_1 is statistically significant at a 5% significance level. This implies that Facebook positively affects customers' satisfaction with SMEs in North-Central Nigeria, and the relationship is statistically significant ($P < 0.05$) and aligns with a priori expectations. This also means that a unit increase in the use of Facebook will result in a corresponding increase in customer satisfaction by 80.3%.

The findings of the first hypothesis align with research conducted by Mazzucchelli et al. (2021), who explored the effectiveness of Facebook as a tool for accessing foreign markets, particularly within the fashion industry. Their study highlighted those fostering conversations and building brand communities on Facebook positively influences international export performance. However, the effectiveness of direct advertising on Facebook yielded mixed results. Their comparison of firms with physical presence versus those without revealed that in-store advertising and promotions significantly enhanced the conversion rate of Facebook's buy button for the former. At the same time, the latter benefited more from outdoor, transit advertising, and digital marketing strategies to improve performance.

Similarly, Alraja, Khan, Khashab and Aldaas (2020) investigated the impact of Facebook commerce on SME performance in Oman. They found that ease of use, demographic targeting, interaction, and brand awareness collectively explained 20% of the variance in Facebook advertisement effectiveness. Moreover, Facebook

advertisements independently significantly influenced SME performance dimensions such as efficiency (explaining 44% of variance), flexibility (26% of variance), and responsiveness (55% of variance). These studies underscore the multifaceted impact of Facebook on business performance, emphasising its role in enhancing market access, customer engagement, and operational efficiency across different sectors and geographical contexts.

Furthermore, the result of the test of the first hypothesis is supported by Khalid et al. (2021), who found that the use of Facebook and Instagram has a significant impact on users' intentions. Furthermore, social identification mediates the relationship between social media activities and satisfaction, and satisfaction mediates the relationship between social media activities and users' intentions.

Finally, the result of the test of the first hypothesis is also consistent with Agus, Anwar and Fahmi (2023), who found out that Facebook marketing has a positive and significant effect on SMEs marketing performance, and viral marketing has a positive and significant effect on SMEs marketing performance.

By implication, when consumers firmly commit to specific brands, this leads to frequent engagement with the brand, its products, commercial locations, and more. This is why it is so essential for marketers to gauge consumer commitment when it comes to audience segmentation. Therefore, SMEs that have encouraged virality distribution strategy through Facebook in the business's distribution system will positively impact the organisation regarding access to the products, commitment, satisfaction, increased productivity, and growth of the SMEs.

5.2 Facebook significantly affects customers' satisfaction

The study examined the relationship between Facebook and customer satisfaction with SME products in North-Central Nigeria. Hypothesis one and its corresponding research question aimed to investigate this relationship showed that $t = 8.852$, $P = 0.006$. These results led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis, indicating that Facebook has a statistically significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction for SME products in North-Central Nigeria at the 5% significance level.

The findings align with previous research by Salsabila, Indriyanti, & Suryawardana (2022) in DKI Jakarta, emphasising the impact of trust in transactions on Facebook's marketplace platform on customer satisfaction. Similarly, Shantharam, Balaji, and Jagadeesan (2019) highlighted the influence of customer commitment in social media marketing, including Facebook, on purchase decisions. Polydorou (2023) also demonstrated the importance of platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter in customer acquisition and retention strategies.

The implications suggest that managers should prioritise effectively utilising social media platforms such as Facebook to enhance customer satisfaction. This is crucial

as high customer satisfaction correlates with more excellent customer retention, increased lifetime value, and a strengthened brand reputation, all contributing to business success in dynamic market environments.

5.3 WhatsApp significantly affects customers' commitment

The study investigated the relationship between WhatsApp usage and customers' commitment to SME products in North-Central Nigeria. Hypothesis two and its corresponding research question aimed to explore this relationship. As reported in Table 7, the analysis revealed significant findings with $t = 4.035$ and $P = 0.002$. These results led to the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis, indicating that WhatsApp has a statistically significant positive relationship with customers' commitment to SME products in North-Central Nigeria at the 5% significance level.

These findings are consistent with prior research by Ozioma (2023), which examined the impact of social media marketing on consumer patronage decision-making among small businesses in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The study highlighted that effective social media campaigns can significantly influence consumer patronage intentions and repeat purchases. Similarly, Igarashi et al. (2023) found that customer relationship management practices, including effective communication through WhatsApp, positively impact SMEs' performance in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Additionally, Shams Mukhtar et al. (2022) emphasised the relevance of social media in enhancing business strategies and customer preferences, affirming that incorporating digital platforms like WhatsApp can make businesses more appealing and accessible to consumers.

5.4 WhatsApp significantly affects customers' satisfaction

The study investigated the relationship between WhatsApp usage and customers' satisfaction with SME products in North-Central Nigeria, focusing on hypothesis three and research question seven. The analysis, reported in Table 12, indicated significant results with $t = 6.330$ and $p = 0.007$. Consequently, the alternate hypothesis was accepted, suggesting that WhatsApp has a statistically significant positive relationship with customers' satisfaction with SME products in North-Central Nigeria at the 5% significance level. This implies that an increase in the use of WhatsApp correlates with a corresponding increase in customer satisfaction by 61.8%.

These findings align with research conducted by Abdelhaya, Drazb, Tharwat, and Marie (2024), which explored the impact of incorporating WhatsApp into team communication on employee performance. Their study found a positive association between WhatsApp usage and leader-member exchange (LMX) and team-member exchange (TMX), highlighting the platform's effectiveness in enhancing communication dynamics.

Similarly, Rajeswari and Gowtham (2022) conducted a study in Coimbatore City focusing on customer satisfaction with the WhatsApp mobile application. They identified that reliability, usability, efficiency, and data integrity significantly influence consumer satisfaction with WhatsApp. This research underscores the importance of these usability aspects in contributing to overall user satisfaction with WhatsApp.

In conclusion, the study recommends that social media platforms, including WhatsApp, enhance their services to cater to various user preferences and needs. Customising services and ensuring reliability and security are crucial to fostering user satisfaction and trust. Additionally, businesses are advised to optimise their company profiles on social media platforms to provide comprehensive information that enhances customer engagement and satisfaction.

6.1 Conclusion

The study investigated virality distribution strategy and customer retention of small and medium-scale enterprises in North-central Nigeria. Virality distribution strategy disaggregated into social media platforms has significantly and positively impacted customer retention of SMEs in North-central Nigeria. The use of virality distribution strategies like Facebook, WhatsApp, and many others was found to be essential in enhancing the customer retention of SMEs in terms of commitment and satisfaction sustainably and strategically. As shown from the results, virality distribution strategies enhance customer retention; nevertheless, in most cases, business managers' readiness and acceptance of the use of technology and the administration of internal resources concerning customers play an essential role in enhancing or limiting the impact. As a result, the study corroborated that virality distribution strategies like Facebook and WhatsApp are an inextinguishable essential resource and a tactical instrument useful to please, serve and reach customers' needs. It is construed that the right appliance of virality distribution strategies can make customers habitually rely on social media platforms for purchase and repurchase intention, which will, in turn, enhance the performance of SMEs in north-central Nigeria.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

Small and medium-scale business owners should continue to develop a robust Facebook content strategy that includes engaging, relevant, and interactive content: regular updates, promotions, and informative posts to keep customers interested and committed.

Business owners should ensure prompt responses to customer inquiries and comments on Facebook and show customers that their feedback is valued by

implementing changes based on their suggestions. Communicating these changes on Facebook and having quick and helpful interactions can enhance customer satisfaction.

Owners of SMEs must send regular updates about products, services, promotions, and events to keep customers informed and engaged; again, implement 24/7 customer service via WhatsApp to promptly address customer inquiries and issues. It gives customers the opportunity for appreciation, attention, respect, and understanding.

Business owners should continue integrating WhatsApp into loyalty programs, sending rewards updates directly to customers, and personalised messages on special occasions like birthdays and anniversaries. This will help to build stronger relationships between the business and the customers.

References

1. Ahmad, S. Z., Abu Bakar, A. R., & Ahmad, N. (2019). *Social media adoption and its impact on firm performance: the case of the UAE. International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research, 25(1), 84-111.*
2. Ahmed, A. (2021). *The importance of supply chain management practices in increasing customer satisfaction and customer retention: Evidence from Saudi Arabia. International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM), 9(3), 2136-2151.*
3. Almotairi, M. (2021). *"Customer Patronage Intentions and Moderating Effect of Customer Mood on Retailscape Elements and Customer Joy: A Study of Grocery Retail Stores in Riyadh," International Review of Management and Marketing, 11(2), 39-46.*
4. Al-Dmour, Alshuraideh & Saleh, (2017). *Determining the main factors affecting consumers' acceptance of ethical advertising: A review of the Jordanian market, Journal of Marketing Communications, 23(6):1-20*
5. Alipour, M., & Mohammadi, M. H. (2011). *The Effect of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) on Achieving Competitive Advantage of Manufacturing Tractor. Global Journal of Management and Business Research, 11(5), 27-36.*
6. Alraja, M.N, Khan, S.F., Khashab, B.& Aldaas, R. (2020). *Does Facebook Commerce Enhance SMEs Performance? A Structural Equation Analysis of Omani SMEs, SAGE Open, January-March 2020: 1-14.*
7. Alshurideh, M. (2014) *A Qualitative Analysis of Customer Repeat Purchase Behaviour in the UK Mobile Phone Market. Journal of Management Research, 6, 109-125.*

8. Bergamo, F. V. de M., Giuliani, A. C. and Galli, L. C. Do L. A. (2011). *Students' loyalty and retention pattern for higher education institutions: a theoretical study based on the relationship marketing*, *Brazilian Business Review*, 8(2), 42–65.
9. Bhanye, J., Shayamunda, R. & Tavirai, R. C. (2023). *Social Media in the African Context: A Review Study on Benefits and Pitfalls*. www.researchgate.net
10. Canelli, P. (2023). *The Power of Viral Marketing: How to Boost Your Brand's Online Visibility*: Retrieved from: www.linkedin.com
11. Chiguvu, D. & Guruwo, P. T. (2017). *Impact of Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty in the Banking Sector*, *International Journal of Scientific Engineering and Research (IJSER)*, 5 (2), 55-63
12. Dutot, V. & Bergeron, F. (2016). *From strategic orientation to social media orientation: Improving SMEs' performance on social media*, *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 23(4), 1165-1190.
13. Dwivedi, Y. K., Kapoor, K. K., & Chen, H. (2015). *Social media marketing and advertising*. *The Marketing Review*, 15(3), 289–309.
14. Elkhani, N., Bakri, A., 2012. *Review on "Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory" (EDT) Model in B2C E-Commerce*. *Journal of Information Systems Research and Innovation*, 2(12), 95-102.
15. ElKordy, M. (2014). *The Impact of CRM Capability Dimensions on Organizational Performance*, *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 2, 128-146.
16. Foot, A., 2019, November 24. *Customer Expectations Are Rising: How Online Sellers Can Meet the Challenge*. *Business 2 Community*.
17. Gao, X. (2020). *Teachers' perceptions of effective strategies for developing intercultural competence*, *Global Chinese*, 6(2), 333-385.
18. Greenwood, B. N., & Gopal, A. (2015). *Research note—Tigerblood: Newspapers, blogs, and the founding of information technology firms*. *Information Systems Research*, 26(4), 812–828
19. Hanaysha, J. R. (2017). *Impact of Social Media Marketing, Price Promotion, and Corporate Social Responsibility on Customer Satisfaction*, *Jindal Journal of Business Research (JJBR)*, 6(2).
20. Hirschman, O. (1970). *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organisations, and States". The Oxford Handbook of Classics in Public Policy and Administration*.
21. Hedayatpour, P. Manouchehri, J. & Soheili, B. (2020). *The Impact of Facebook Marketing on Sport Products: A Customer Satisfaction View*. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Communication and Media*, 3(9), 177-157.
22. Hruska, J. & Maresova, P. (2020). *Use of Social Media Platforms among Adults in the United States—Behavior on Social Media*, *Societies*, 10(1), 27.
23. Ibojo, Bolanle Odunlami, ASABI, Oludele Matthew, (2015). *Impact of Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty: A Case Study of a Reputable Bank in Oyo, Oyo*

- State, Nigeria International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, 3(2): 59-69
24. Israel, G. D. (1992) *Determining Sample Size*. University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences, EDIS, Florida.
 25. Kangu, M., Wanjau, K., & Kosimbei, G. (2017). *Technology infrastructure: A customer relationship management dimension in maintaining customer loyalty*. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, V (5), 88-106
 26. Keegan, B. J. and Rowley, J. (2017), "Evaluation and decision making in social media marketing", *Management Decision*, 55(1), 15-31.
 27. Kaplan, A. & Haenlein, M. (2010). *Users of the World, Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media*, *Business Horizons*, 53(1):59-68.
 28. Komalasari, F. P. & Budiman, S. F. (2018). *Customer Retention Strategy through Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty: The Study on Traveloka Loyalty Program*, *TRJ Tourism Research Journal*, 2(1), 69.
 29. Kumar, V., Dalla Pozza, I., & Ganesh, J. (2013). *Revisiting the satisfaction–loyalty relationship: Empirical generalisations and directions for future research*. *Journal of Retailing*, 89(3), 246–262.
 30. Kulinska, E., Giera, J. & Smaga, K. (2020). *Analysis of risk factors in an indirect distribution channel*, *European Research Studies Journal*, 23(1), 176-185
 31. Lenhart, A., Purcell, K., Smith, A., & Zickuhr, K. (2010). *Social Media & Mobile Internet Use among Teens and Young Adults. Millennials*. *Creative Education*, 6 (13), Pew Internet & American Life Project.
 32. Leonardi, P. M., Huysman, M. & Steinfield, C. (2013). *Enterprise Social Media: Definition, History, and Prospects for the Study of Social Technologies in Organizations*, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 19(1), 1–19.
 33. Liu, H. W., Zhou, D. W., Tong, J. M., & Vaddella, V., (2012). *Influence of chestnut tannins on welfare, carcass characteristics, meat quality, and lipid oxidation in rabbits under high ambient temperature*. *Meat Sci.*, 90 (1): 164-169
 34. Miller, L.E. and Smith, K.L. (1983) *Handling Non-Response Issues*. *Journal of Extension*, 21, 45-50.
 35. Mohsen, A., Yousil, R.I, Yasser, I., and Wally, F., (2023). *The Effect of Distribution Channels' Strategies and Types on Consumers' Buying Behavior of Convenience Products*. *Msa-Management Science Journal*. 2(2), 102-125.
 36. Moorman, C., Zaltman, G. & Deshpande, R. (1992) *Relationship between Providers and Users of Market Research: The Dynamics of Trust within & Between Organisations*. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 29, 314-328.
 37. Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. (1994). *The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3):20-38.
 38. Muhammad, F. (2013) *Role of Performance Appraisal System on Employees Motivation*. *Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 8, 66-83.

39. Mukhtar, M. S, Vigneshwari, K. & Mohan, A. C. (2022). *Social Media Relevance for Business, Marketing and Preferences for Customers*, *The British Journal of Administrative Management* 58(157), 3000-3015: [Orcid.Org/0000-0003-3015-7984](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3015-7984).
40. Obeidat, B., Sweis, R., Zyod, D., Masa'deh, R. and Alshurideh, M. (2012). *The Effect of Perceived Service Quality on Customer Loyalty in Internet Service Providers in Jordan*. *Journal of Management Research*, 4, 224-242.
41. Ogbo, A. Ugwu, C. C., Enemu, J. and Ukpere, I. W, (2019). *E-Commerce as a Strategy for Sustainable Value Creation among Selected Traditional Open Market Retailers in Enugu State, Nigeria*. *Additional contact information. Sustainability*. 11(16), 1-18.
42. Oliver, R.L. (1997). *Satisfaction: A Behavioral Perspective on the Consumer*. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., New York.
43. Palmié, M., Wincent, J., Parida, V., & Caglar, U. (2020). *The evolution of the financial technology ecosystem: An introduction and agenda for future research on disruptive innovations in ecosystems*. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 151, 119779.
44. Polyviou, A., Velanas, P., & Soldatos, J. (2019). *Blockchain technology: financial sector applications beyond cryptocurrencies*. *Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute Proceedings*, 28(1), 7.
45. Preikschas, Michael W., Cabanelas, Pablo, Rüdiger, Klaus & Lampón, Jesús F., (2017). "Value Co-creation, Dynamic Capabilities and Customer Retention in Industrial Markets," MPRA Paper 65391, University Library of Munich, Germany.
46. Puriwat, W. and Tripopsakul, S. (2021). *The Role of Viral Marketing in Social Media on Brand Recognition and Preference*, *Emerging Science Journal*, 5(6), 855-867.
47. Ramos, A. A., Arcilla, I. J. A., Coralde, R. G. & Macatangay, C. J. C. (2023). *Factors Affecting Customer's Satisfaction on Facebook Marketplace as Purchasing Platform: Evidence from Laguna, Philippines*, *Journal of Third World Economics (Jtwe)* 1(1) (2023) 26-29
48. Shantharam, B. B, P. Balaji & P. Jagadeesan, (2019). *Impact of Customer Commitment in Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision – an Empirical Examination*, *Journal of Management*, 6 (2), 320-326.
49. Salsabila, A. R., Indriyanti, I. S. & Suryawardana, E. (2022). *Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction Facebook User in Dki Jakarta*, *Economics & Business Solutions Journal*, 6(1), 36-51.
50. Smith, P. R. & Chaffey, D. (2005). *E-Marketing Excellence: At the Heart of E-Business*. Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford, UK.
51. Snyman, R., & Loh, J. (M. I.). (2015). *Cyberbullying at work: The mediating role of optimism between cyber bullying and job outcomes*. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 53, 161–168.

52. Soliman, H. S. (2011). *Customer Relationship Management and Its Relationship to the Marketing Performance*. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2, 166-182.
53. Soltani, Z. & Navimipour, N. J. (2016). *Customer relationship management mechanisms: A systematic review of the state-of-the-art literature and recommendations for future research*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, 61, 667-688.
54. Tahir, H., Waggett, C. & Hoffman, A. (2013) *Antecedents of Customer Satisfaction: An E-CRM Framework*. *Journal of Business & Behavioral Sciences*, 25, 112-120.
55. Toor, M., (2022), November 29. *Customer Expectations: Seven Types of All Exceptional Researchers Must Understand*. Qualtrics.
56. Tsai, Y. C., Chang, H. C. & Ho, K. C. (2015). *A study of the relationship among brand experiences, self-concept congruence, customer satisfaction, and brand preference*. *Contemporary Management Research*, 11(2), 97-116.
57. Wachira, J. M. (2016). *Effect of Customer Relationship Management on Perceived Organisational Performance - A Case Study of Family Bank Limited*, *International Journal of Science and Research*, 216-423.
58. Willott, L., (2020), February 17. *Six Customer Expectations Management Tips*. *Customer Thermometer*.
59. Winny, M. (2024). *Best Social Media Platforms for Promoting an Online Business in Nigeria*. Available on: truehost.com.ng
60. Yusuf, M., Putra, A. H. P. K & Nurhilalia (2019). *The Impact of Product Quality, Price, and Distribution on Satisfaction and Loyalty*, *Journal of Distribution Science* 17(10), 17-26