

**THE PERCEIVED IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM MARKETING ON THE
PERFORMANCE OF SMALL BUSINESSES IN AKURE, ONDO STATE, NIGERIA.**

BY

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Candidate Declaration

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I hereby certify that this dissertation titled “The Perceived Impact of Instagram Marketing on the Performance of Small Businesses in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria” which I now submit for the award of MA in Journalism and Media Communications is my work based on my research and I have acknowledged all sources cited in its preparation. I also certify that this work has not being plagiarised in part or in whole.

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Dedication

I dedicate this project to God for keeping me and family members who have been a pillar of support for me throughout this journey. I am most especially thankful for my Mother who clocks 50 a day after the submission due date for this project.

Acknowledgement

I would like to appreciate my supervisor Dr. Alessandra Vecchi whose consistent guidance and feedback has made this dissertation achievable. I am also eternally grateful to the entire Faculty of Journalism and Media communications. Our lecturers have invested so much time, effort, and knowledge into ensuring that we receive the best quality of education ever. Thank you!

The Perceived Impact of Instagram Marketing on the Performance of Small Businesses in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria.

Abstract

This dissertation explores the perceived impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. In recent years, social media platforms, especially Instagram, have gained prominence as effective marketing channels for businesses. However, limited research has been conducted to understand how Instagram marketing specifically influences the performance of small businesses in the Nigerian context. To address this gap, the study employs qualitative interviews as the primary data collection method to gain insights from small business owners and marketers.

The study involved in-depth interviews with a sample size of 5 small business owners who actively engage in Instagram marketing. The data collected from these interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis to uncover recurring themes, patterns, and insights regarding the perceived impact of Instagram marketing on small business performance.

The findings of the research demonstrate the significant positive impact of Instagram marketing on various aspects of small business performance. The study highlights the role of Instagram in enhancing brand visibility, customer engagement, and ultimately contributing to increased sales and customer loyalty. Additionally, the research identifies challenges faced by SMEs in utilizing Instagram marketing, such as resource constraints, and algorithm changes. To address these challenges, the dissertation presents practical recommendations for SMEs to optimize their Instagram marketing strategies. Furthermore, the study contributes to the existing literature on

social media marketing in the context of developing economies, offering directions for future research on digital marketing practices in Nigeria and other similar settings.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Candidate Declaration..... | i |
| Dedication..... | ii |
| Acknowledgement | iii |
| Abstract..... | iv |
| List of Figures..... | ix |
| List of Tables | x |
| 1 Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 Overview | 1 |
| 1.2 Research Purpose | 3 |
| 1.3 Significance of the Study | 4 |
| 1.4 Research Aim and Objectives | 5 |
| 1.5 Methodology | 6 |
| 1.6 Structure of the Study..... | 8 |
| 2 Literature Review | 9 |
| 2.1 Overview | 9 |
| 2.2 The Framework of Social Media..... | 9 |
| 2.2.1 Evolution of Social Media | 12 |
| 2.2.2 Adoption of Social Media and SMEs' performance | 19 |
| 2.3 Instagram..... | 20 |
| 2.3.1 Framework of Instagram..... | 20 |
| 2.3.2 Benefits of instagram to small businesses | 22 |
| 2.3.3 Relevant Instagram Tools for Small Businesses..... | 24 |
| 2.4 Small Business | 26 |
| 2.4.1 Importance of small scale businesses in Nigeria | 28 |
| 2.4.2 Influence of Social Media..... | 30 |
| 2.4.3 Advantages of Using Social Media in Small Businesses..... | 30 |
| 2.4.4 Impact of Instagram adoption on SMEs performance in Akure | 33 |
| 2.4.5 Social Media and Small Business | 35 |
| 2.5 Conceptual Framework | 36 |
| 2.6 Conclusion..... | 41 |
| 3 Methodology and Research Design..... | 42 |
| 3.1 Overview | 42 |

| | | |
|-------|--|----|
| 3.2 | Research Philosophy and Approach..... | 45 |
| 3.3 | Research Strategy..... | 46 |
| 3.4 | Collection Primary Data..... | 47 |
| 3.5 | Access and Ethical Issues..... | 52 |
| 3.6 | Approach to Data Analysis | 53 |
| 3.7 | Conclusion..... | 54 |
| 4 | Presentation and Discussion of the Findings..... | 55 |
| 4.1 | Overview | 55 |
| 4.2 | Findings..... | 56 |
| 4.2.1 | Usage and adoption of Instagram as a marketing tool among Nigerian SMES..... | 56 |
| 4.2.2 | Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian SMES | 58 |
| 4.2.3 | Benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian SMES..... | 60 |
| 4.2.4 | The perception of selected SMES in Nigeria about the usage of Instagram | 62 |
| 4.3 | Discussion | 63 |
| 4.3.1 | Current usage and adoption of Instagram as a marketing tool among Nigerian SMES. | 64 |
| 4.3.2 | Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian SMES. | 65 |
| 4.3.3 | Benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian SMES..... | 66 |
| 4.3.4 | The perception of selected SMES in Nigeria about the usage of Instagram | 67 |
| 4.4 | Conclusion..... | 68 |
| 5 | Concluding Thoughts on the Contribution of this Research, its Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research | 69 |
| 5.1 | Implications of Findings for the Research Questions | 69 |
| 5.2 | Contributions of the Research | 69 |
| 5.3 | Limitations of the Research..... | 71 |
| 5.4 | Recommendations for Practice..... | 71 |
| 5.5 | Recommendations for Future Research | 72 |
| 5.6 | Final Conclusion and Reflections | 72 |
| | Reference List | 73 |
| | Appendix A- Interview Protocol..... | A |
| | Appendix B- Interview transcript I..... | D |
| | Appendix C- Interview transcript II..... | K |
| | Appendix D- Interview transcript III | Q |

Appendix E- Interview transcript IVW
Appendix F- Interview transcript V..... EE

List of Figures

Figure 1: Adapted from AIDA Model (Jiang, Chiu & Chan, 2023)

Figure 2: Adapted from “Conceptual Model for Examining Social Media Marketing Effects on Brand Awareness and Leverage” (Cheung et al, 2019)

Figure 3: Adapted from “Research Onion” (Saunders et al, 2009)

List of Tables

Table 1: Adapted from: One size doesn't fit all: a uses and gratifications analysis of social media platforms. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* (Pelletier, et al., 2020).

Table 2: Interview questions

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The growth and development of economies around the world, and in Nigeria in particular, depend critically on the success of their respective entrepreneurial communities. In addition to being the most effective method of rescuing the country's economy from its current state as a mono-economy, it is also essential for fighting poverty and creating new jobs. Despite its long history, which can be traced back to the 17th and 18th centuries with the popular work of Richard Cantillon and Adam Smith, the theory of entrepreneurship was largely ignored until the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the empirical study of entrepreneurship was largely ignored until its recent resurgence in business and economics over the past 40 years (Ebbena and Johnson, 2006; Shane, 2003).

The modern definition of a small firm has evolved to account for the wide variety of business structures that exist in terms of ownership, resources, management, and control. Meanwhile, evidence from many emerging economies, including Nigeria, indicates that SMEs can make a significant contribution to achieving national economic goals (Brammer et al., 2020). Expanding output, creating jobs, redistributing income, encouraging indigenous entrepreneurship, and advancing technology are all examples of development goals that could be accomplished with the help of small enterprises (Schröder et al., 2020).

A small business may reach a huge and ultimately worldwide customer base through social media in a short amount of time with minimal effort. As a result, small businesses now have more opportunities than ever to raise brand recognition and build customer loyalty through the spread of positive word-of-mouth about their products and services (Cartwright et al., 2021). The rise of

social media might be seen as a revolution. In a single swift motion, it facilitates extremely comprehensive interpersonal and intrapersonal interactions and communication from the personal to the commercial (Crary, 2022).

Unlike traditional media channels, which only offer a one-way experience, social media is based on the idea of a two-way communication channel between customers and the business. The study's new term, "Social Consumer," refers to individuals who engage in "social commerce," "social shopping," and "social consultation" (Al-Quran, 2022). Customers nowadays do their homework before making a purchase decision, and this includes interacting with businesses and brands on social media in order to find deals, coupons, and reviews.

Al-Quran (2022) argues that consumers are open to interacting with businesses via social media because it benefits them and because it gives them the opportunity to evaluate if social media is the most appropriate channel for delivering the value they seek and for building trust in the brand. Some examples of such value include coupons and useful information. Consumers may get an emotional and intangible benefit from interacting with a brand through social media, but the desire for closeness is not the primary motivation for doing so. Most users' primary social media objectives do not involve communicating with brands but rather with friends and family, as well as gaining access to news and entertainment. Companies are betting that client loyalty will rise as a result of social media interactions. Medium and small businesses are increasingly incorporating social media into their marketing plans as a way to reach a large number of potential customers in an informal, conversational setting (Aydin, 2020).

Whereas conventionally, all of a marketer's efforts have gone into securing a top spot in the market, The biggest chance for micro and small enterprises may lie in social media sites, since individuals may come to view them as their primary source of information over time (Schou et al., 2022).

Marketing via social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube has grown in popularity. Marketing efforts that make use of social media and related websites are known as "social media marketing" (Troise & Camilleri, 2021). While most businesses and organisations now have web pages of their own, reaching customers who aren't already familiar with them might be challenging.

Hence, many businesses have found it beneficial to establish a profile on social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Social media marketing allows firms to connect with a sizable audience without breaking the bank (Maria et al., 2019). Businesses and organisations can increase their visibility by establishing an effective online presence on social networking platforms, which already host sizable online communities. By inviting individuals to join their social media networks as friends or followers, businesses may create their own communities online. Many businesses successfully draw in new customers by constantly updating their social media profiles with news and exclusive deals (Al-Quran, 2022).

Likewise, social media has opened up a world of possibilities for small businesses, which can now reach a wider audience for less money than they would have spent on more conventional marketing communications channels (Ayodeji & Kumar, 2019). As we have seen, the advent of social media has presented both new obstacles and new opportunities for today's small businesses. In addition, small businesses need to master the art of social media marketing in order to reap its full benefits. Therefore, "The Perception of Nigerian Small Businesses on the Usage of Instagram" was the focus of this research.

1.2 Research Purpose

Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) coexisting with big businesses in Nigeria is indicative of the country's size, which has its advantages. However, various factors have had a negative

impact on the expansion of small firms or SME sub-sectors as a whole, but the situation is exacerbated considerably more for small organisations due to their vulnerable defence mechanisms. One of the biggest challenges that small businesses face is a lack of marketing expertise and the know-how to use modern technology to reach out to their target audience.

The poor position of their retail outlets and the multifaceted nature of today's markets further limit their capacity to identify and respond to shifts in consumer preferences. Some smaller businesses just lack the resources necessary to compete successfully. What it takes to implement new technologies, compete with larger companies for talent, and adapt to the challenges brought on by technological advancements and innovations like social media platforms are all factors that small businesses must consider.

They may have been unable to secure financial backing because of the low rate of innovation uptake. Inadequate infrastructure facilities impede the industrial development of Nigeria's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). What potential do emerging technologies hold for improving Nigeria's SME sectors? Is there much to gain if they adapt to the new ways of communicating made possible by social media? What would happen to small-scale businesses and their proprietors if they started using prominent social media platforms? There is an obvious void in the current literature on the outlook of Nigerian small businesses on Instagram usage, which prevents these questions and others from being answered. This further emphasises the importance of a study like this one, which attempts to investigate "the perception of Nigerian small businesses on the use of Instagram" by focusing on a subset of small-scale businesses in Ondo State.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The results of this research will be extremely helpful to various groups working to hasten the growth of the entrepreneurial sector in Ondo State and throughout Nigeria. To begin, it would

serve as a catalyst for the SMEs and other interested parties in Ondo State, particularly in the areas of improving company processes and marketing practices. Furthermore, it would increase the proportion of firms using social media to advance from where they are now.

Furthermore, the study's findings would open up the perceptions of online enterprise owners and service providers, as well as business students broadly, to the opportunities afforded by the widespread use of social media in the business world. The study's findings will also aid technologists, entrepreneurs, and small-business owners in gaining the required educational experiences in the field of social media for the purpose of advancing the professional development of the former and the enhancement of the latter's business performance.

Finally, the study would be deficient without highlighting the significant contribution it makes to the existing body of research and academic libraries on the topic throughout the entire nation, as it will satiate the desire for information as well as the needs of any enthusiastic readers, lecturers, and future researchers by giving them some helpful information into which they can build their own research projects.

1.4 Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of this project is to find out the Perceived impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small businesses in Nigeria. Social commerce is one of the reasons why people use social media. Social commerce is a type of Internet-based social media in which people may market, sell, compare, and buy products and services in online markets and communities Stephen and Toubia (2010). The reason for choosing Instagram over other social media platforms is because it is a social network that is heavily dependent on visual communication. Instagram has proven to be an effective communication and marketing tool for showing products with visual descriptions. As a result, this has quickly evolved into a useful social networking tool for

individuals as well as businesses (Ting et al, 2015). Instagram can increase brand exposure, sales, and engagement among customers. It's a great strategy for reaching customers where they already spend time. Since Instagram boosts connections, it additionally offers businesses useful audience analytics to use with all of their advertising campaigns (Väkelä, 2022). Some small-scale businesses may use it as a social networking platform to keep up with clients, particularly beyond Nigeria, and to follow celebrities or influencers.

This research is motivated by the paucity in knowledge in regards to Nigerian small businesses and how they utilise Instagram marketing.

Specific objectives of the study therefore includes:

1. To Access the current usage and adoption of Instagram as a marketing tool among Nigerian small businesses.
2. To examine the various Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian small businesses.
3. To investigate the perceived benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian small businesses.
4. To develop a framework that can be used to measure key business performance indicators such as sales revenue, customer acquisition, brand awareness and customer engagement.
5. To develop a set of recommendations for small businesses on how to differentiate themselves from competitors through their Instagram marketing strategies

1.5 Methodology

The aim of this dissertation is to study the perceived impact of Instagram marketing on the performance of Small business enterprises in Ondo State, Nigeria. This study is exploratory in

nature and will follow a qualitative research method. Given that this is a relatively new subject, a qualitative approach will allow for a more in-depth understanding of the topic. This technique will also result in the gathering of new insights that may be significant for future studies on the use of social media by small businesses.

The study will be conducted through semi structured interviews. According to De Fina and Perrino (2011), Interviews are the most widely used cross-disciplinary research instruments because they are frequently utilised by researchers in diverse fields, where they serve as vital research methods alone or in combination with other techniques such as participant observation. This study sticks to the mono method of utilising Interviews as the research instrument. It would entail the researcher asking participants questions in order to acquire information about their experiences, thoughts, and viewpoints on the research topic.

This study involves the collection of participants' opinions and perspectives on a specific issue in a specific location (Ondo State, Nigeria) so this necessitates the use of convenience and purposive sampling techniques to determine the sample population and size. The participants will be asked to partake in a 30-40 minutes interview online via zoom. The outcomes will be subjected to a systematic analysis technique, thereby providing the research inquiries with their corresponding solutions (Saunders et al., 2007). Instead of data generalizability, which is typically used in quantitative research to extrapolate findings, the concept of saturation through data replication will be the driving factor in data collection and analysis for this study (Ting et al., 2015). The third chapter of this dissertation provides detailed information regarding the methodology employed in the research.

1.6 Structure of the Study

There are five chapters in the dissertation. A thorough literature review follows the introduction. The literature review focuses on pertinent material that can help explain the research challenge and also acknowledges the contributions made by academics that have previously made significant contributions to work of a similar nature. The technique and research design are then thoroughly explained. Following is a list of the research design, primary data collection methods, and data analysis strategy. The key findings from interviews and questionnaires are then presented in the fourth chapter. The last chapter concludes by discussing the findings' limitations, contributions, and recommendations for further investigation and study by future researchers.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Overview

This chapter is an attempt to delve more deeply into the study and fill in the gaps that have been identified. Firstly, 2.2 will focus on social media by giving the meaning and some types of social media; also in this chapter, 2.2.1 will discuss the evolution of social media; meanwhile, 2.3 will give the researcher the opportunity to discuss what small business is all about, what makes up the component of SMEs in Nigeria, etc.

Furthermore, 2.3.1 of the literature review will look into Social Media And Small Business, the literature review will also discuss about influence of social media, positive influence of social media on small business, negative influence of social media on business, advantages of using social media in small businesses, and 2.4 of the work will discuss the impact of Instagram adoption on SMES performance in Akure, meanwhile, the conceptual framework will be included in section 2.5. The conceptual framework will combine all variables to look at the relationships that will be engaged during this study. Finally, this chapter will be concluded in Section 2.6.

2.2 The Framework of Social Media

The phrase "social media" refers to a collection of online resources or applications that let people create and join online groups and exchange information including news, pictures, and videos (Vinayagam et al., 2023). Social media allows users to access social media services, while downloadable apps for smartphones and tablets allow users to take their social media experience on the go. According to Ike et al. (2023), one individual may speak with a huge group of people and receive rapid feedback. Citizens and customers now have a big audience for their thoughts, as opposed to having a tiny and relatively muted voice in the past. In addition, new technologies have increased the number of possibilities for media consumption. People may now discover

information from a number of sources, as opposed to merely having access to a few news channels, and communicate with others via message boards regarding the information presented. According to Abellan (2019), in using these services, users can build highly interactive platforms for sharing, co-creating, discussing, and modifying content created by users or pre-made content shared via the internet by themselves, their communities, or their organizations. They alter the ways in which people, companies, and groups talk to one another in significant and pervasive ways (Ike et al., 2023).

Two repeating characteristics may be used to describe social media. The first is that involvement is possible on social media sites. Social media is never fully passive, even on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and others where passive viewing of other people's posts is occasionally permitted (Arab et al., 2019). The bare minimum need is usually to build a profile that enables the beginning of prospective contact. Social media is distinctive from conventional media since it frequently lacks personal profiles, which sets it apart from the former. Second, due to the participatory aspect of social media, it promotes engagement (Pila et al., 2021). Pila et al. (2021) claim that social media has embedded itself into many people's everyday life and has developed into a forum where users may freely exchange and debate a variety of subjects and information. By 2025, it is anticipated that more than 4.41 billion individuals will have used social networks, up from the current 3.6 billion (Clement, 2021). In 2025, there will be around 8,184,437,460 individuals in the world, and 54% of them will use social networking sites regularly (Unnerstall, 2022).

By comparing the expected user base of social networking sites to the general population, we may establish this share. In contrast to conventional mass media like television, newspapers, and radio, content consumers on certain social networks like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have

developed into co-creators of communication (Chhtrapati et al., 2023). On social networks, there are daily sends and receives of roughly 60 billion direct messages. These individuals are in charge of more than 500 million tweets, 95 million Instagram photographs, 1.8 billion comments, and over 480 million Facebook photos per day (Smith, 2019). Due to the abundance of data produced by user interactions, the study of social media analysis is expanding (Belcastro et al., 2021). Both the number of social media users and the size of people's online profiles can be increased in this field of research (Pila et al., 2021).

Just a few examples of the many different forms of social media include social networks, media sharing networks, discussion forums, content curation or bookmarking networks, consumer review networks, blogging and publishing networks, social shopping networks, and internet-based networks (Martín-Rojas et al., 2020). Furthermore, Imran and Jian (2018) asserted that social networks are used to connect with individuals (and companies) online. They assist your business through lead generation, conversion, relationship development, brand recognition, and social awareness. These networks could act as a conduit for other social media initiatives that will aid companies in reaching a larger audience (Ikedionu, 2018). Utilise social media platforms that offer media sharing to locate and exchange online pictures, live video, videos, and other sorts of media. They will also assist with lead generation, targeting, and other tasks like brand development. They provide people and companies a place to find and exchange material in order to target and convert target audiences in the most persuasive and result-driven manner imaginable (Igwe et al., 2018). Customer review networks will make it easier to find, share, and analyse information about a wide range of products, services, and brands. Because these networks serve as social proof, when a business has good reviews on them, it gives its claims more weight (Abellan, 2019). Today's

businesses need to have good reviews on these sites if they want their social media marketing efforts to work. Alshaalan (2019) also thinks that if a business wants to be successful and make money, it needs to deal with all of the customer complaints that are made on these review sites. Body image, on the other hand, is how a person thinks and feels about their body, whether those ideas and feelings are good or bad or both. Social media has made a big difference in how people see, feel, think, and act about their bodies (Ikedionu, 2018).

2.2.1 Evolution of Social Media

Boyd and Ellison (2007) say that the modern history of social media started in 1997 with the launch of SixDegrees.com. Since then, big sites like Facebook, Instagram, and others have come out. Alarcón et al. (2018) say that the spread of mobile devices and the launch of 3G networks in 2007 are both linked to the fast growth of social media. The original idea behind social media was to create a way for people to talk to each other. Alarcón et al. (2018) say that one way to describe social media is as online outlets for instant contact where people can share their thoughts and talk about them as a group. The most important things about social media are instant information in real-time (Mangold & Faulds, 2009), the ability to express opinions, choose and publish content on your own, help change (improve, personalise) content, and work together (Jess et al., 2016) to spread certain types of behaviour, information, opinions, etc. Christakis and Fowler (2013) say that these impacts can spread to friends, friends of friends, and even friends of friends of friends. Eun (2011) also says that the word "Web 2.0" was made up to describe a new wave of Internet innovations that let people post and share information online. This new idea made it possible for social media to grow and change. The term "social media" refers to a wide range of online forums, such as weblogs, microblogs (like Twitter), social networking sites (like Facebook), sites for sharing creative work (like YouTube), business networking sites (like LinkedIn), collaborative

websites (like Wikipedia), and virtual worlds (like Second Life). Online groups like these are examples of social media.

A study by Dong et al. (2017) shows that social media can be used to get people involved in politics on the internet and can help nationalist and conservative ideas grow. Also, social media have become active players in politics, getting people interested in politics, making sure they have a positive view of the situation and lawmakers, and giving them faith in what they think (Lee, 2020). So, social media can be used for political purposes, which can be good or bad for the security of country economies. Igbinidu (2011) says that then-Senator Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign was the first to use social media to its fullest potential, especially to spread a candidate's message, gain support, and get people involved. The Obama team used 15 social media sites to reach out to 5 million people. In November 2008, Obama had about 2.3 million "likes" on Facebook, 115,000 "followers" on Twitter, and 50 million YouTube views. Facebook is a place where people can meet new friends, family members, and coworkers, or find and make friends with people who like the same things they do. Facebook was started in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Austin Maskovitz, and Chris Hughes, who were all computer science students at Harvard University in the United States (Nnaane, 2011). At first, only students at Harvard University were able to join Facebook. Later, students at other Boston-area schools and Stanford University in the United States were able to join as well.

Grizane and Jurgelane-Kaldava (2017) maintained that users can talk to each other in different ways, such as through private messages and wall posts. Users can also change their private settings so that only friends, friends of friends, or the general public can see certain parts of their page. Notes posted by a person will be visible to all of their friends. Users can comment on or "like"

other users' posts, and many people have conversations in the comment parts (Eyre, De Luca, & Simini, 2020). Businesses, groups, public figures, celebrities, workers of all kinds, and individual users can all make Facebook pages to spread the word about themselves to the Facebook community. Facebook Pages are a great way to connect with customers or "fans," as they are called on Facebook. Every day, 3.5 million more people become fans of Facebook pages.

Social media is becoming a business tool, and firms are actively putting it to use in their business plans. This is because customers are becoming more involved in creating value, interacting with each other, and promoting their businesses (Szolnoki et al., 2018). We can talk about the business side of how social media have grown. Since communication and marketing are very similar in how they work, marketing and promoting goods and businesses was one of the first ways that social media was used to make money. Social media gives companies the ability to listen to and talk to their customers about their goods (Grizane & Jurgelane-Kaldava, 2017), it also aids them to promote their goods and services (Voorveld et al., 2018), they learn about their customers' preferences, and come up with new ideas for their brands. As a result, companies have good apparatuses to control brand and customer trust and loyalty, and customers can show who they are (Alarcón et al., 2018), meet their social needs, and talk about their experiences buying goods and services.

According to Kateri (2021) small medium enterprises, consultants, and personalities can all profit from establishing a Facebook page. This is despite the fact that there are huge followings for well-known consumer brands. If Facebook were a country, he says, it would have the sixth-largest population in the world. This is because facebook has almost 3 billion people. With this, it has more users than any other website in the world (Samuel-Azran&Yarchi, 2023). According to Bratton (2022), the number of users has steadily increased. 25 More than 80 million hours per day

are spent on Facebook, and about 15 million images, wall postings, links, news, notes, etc. are shared every day, as reported by Bozkurt et al. (2021). It is estimated that by 2027, about six billion individuals will be using social media around the world.

Ofose (2010) estimates that 39.6% of all African Internet traffic originates in Nigeria, where 29.8% of the population has access to the World Wide Web. There were 30 million Nigerians using Facebook in 2009. There were 67% males and 33% females in this total. Since then, these numbers have shifted. About 12.7 percent of Nigeria's population, or 28 million people, were active on Facebook as of December 2022 (Amable, 2022), although there were more than 7.8 million Nigerian Instagram users as of December 2022. Approximately 38% of users were between the ages of 25 and 34, while 31% were between the ages of 18 and 24 (Olaitan, 2021). As Pelletier et al. (2020) point out, "such a large population inevitably offers an adequate foundation for the adoption of the channels for advertising purposes (Sedalo et al., 2022)". This points to the significance of the aforementioned Businesses can recover real-time feedback on their brand, products, and services by engaging buyers and other consumers on platforms they are familiar with and using Facebook and Instagram as part of a specific outreach initiative.

Twitter, created in 2006 by Dorsey Jack, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams, is a free microblogging social network where users can publish brief messages (or "tweets") that are then accessible to other subscribers (also known as "followers") who have signed up to receive these updates (Farhi, 2009). Desktop computers and mobile devices can all send and receive tweets which have a 140-character limit. Nnaane (2011) posits that Twitter has 200 million users, processes over 800,000 search queries per day, and generates 65 million tweets each day. Compared to lengthy e-mail marketing communications, the concise nature of microblog posts is seen as a benefit, allowing readers to quickly sift through a huge number of updates (Zhao and Rosson, 2009). Amable (2022)

enumerated different social media platforms being used in recent times, below are a list of these social media platforms.

| The major Types of Social media platforms | Purpose |
|--|---|
| Instagram | <p>Meta Platforms, an American firm, is the owner of Instagram, a social networking service for sharing photographs and videos. The software allows users to post media that may be edited with filters and sorted by hashtags and geographical labelling. Posts can be shared publicly or with preapproved followers.</p> <p>TikTok and Instagram have quickly become widely used platforms for creative expression, while LinkedIn has established itself as the preeminent destination for professional networking. A summary of the various networking sites that are available</p> <p>Instagram is a social network where product-based businesses, influencers, and coaches can thrive. Profitability has improved after the introduction of shoppable posts in 2018.</p> |
| Twitter | <p>Twitter is a digital platform for social media and social networking that is currently under the ownership and operation of X Corp., an American enterprise that has succeeded Twitter, Inc. in a legal capacity.</p> |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| | <p>Twitter can be utilised to disseminate company updates, mention companies or customers in posts, amplify affirmative customer tweets through retweets, and address customer inquiries.</p> |
| <p>Facebook</p> | <p>Meta Platforms, Inc., previously known as Facebook, Inc., is a multinational technology conglomerate headquartered in Menlo Park, California, United States. The corporation possesses a portfolio of products and services, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Meta is a highly esteemed global enterprise and ranks among the top ten largest publicly traded corporations in the United States in terms of value. The company is regarded as one of the prominent American information technology firms, commonly known as the Big Five, which also includes Alphabet (Google), Amazon, Apple, and Microsoft.</p> <p>For small enterprises such as restaurants, Facebook can serve as an ideal platform to initiate their social media strategy.</p> |
| <p>Pinterest</p> | <p>Pinterest is an American image sharing and social media website that was developed to enable users to save and discover content on the internet using photos, and to a</p> |

| | |
|----------|--|
| | <p>lesser extent, animated GIFs and videos, in the form of pinboards. Pinterest was launched in 2010.</p> |
| TikTok | <p>ByteDance is the owner of the short-form video hosting site known as TikTok, which also has a counterpart in China known as Douyin. It hosts user-posted videos that can be anywhere from three seconds to ten minutes long. TikTok and Douyin have both seen tremendous growth in user popularity since their respective beginnings.</p> |
| LinkedIn | <p>The social networking platform LinkedIn is geared towards professional connections and employment opportunities, and it may be accessed via websites as well as mobile apps. On May 5, 2003, it went into operation. Microsoft is the new owner of the company. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are generally referred to as "networking" platforms because they allow user accounts to communicate with each other in a variety of different ways, and this feature is what gives these platforms their common name.</p> <p>Due to the fact that LinkedIn is a social media site with a narrow focus, it offers an unbounded opportunity for establishing connections with an exclusive group.</p> |
| YouTube | <p>YouTube is a website that allows users to upload, share, and view videos online. Its headquarters are located in San Bruno, California, in the United States. On February 14,</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>2005, Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim were the ones who first made it available to users all around the world. Google owns it, and it is the second-most frequently visited website in the entire world, after Google Search.</p> <p>Vimeo's smaller platform is extremely community-oriented, in contrast to YouTube, which has a larger user base and superior search engine optimisation skills.</p> <p>YouTube, the site that pioneered video sharing on social media, continues to have a dominant position in this sector. With 2.2 billion monthly users, it is presently the second-most used platform.</p> |
|--|---|

Table 1: Adapted from: One size doesn't fit all: a uses and gratifications analysis of social media platforms. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* (Pelletier, et al., 2020).

2.2.2 Adoption of Social Media and SMEs' performance

The adoption of social media has changed the way companies run their businesses, following the rise to new business models leading to increased global awareness of products and services, higher Return on Investment (ROI), rise in customer support, rate of conversion and lead generation. Business owners and managers can exchange ideas, information, and activities with their associates and customers by using social media (Schaffer, 2013). According to Amable (2022), the term "performance of SMEs" refers to the actual benefits that SMEs experience as a result of using social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp, both financially and non-financially. SMEs' non-financial performance, such as increased connectivity, improved customer clientele, improved brand awareness and reputation, and increased competitive

advantage, are increased by the use of social media in marketing, as opposed to just their financial performance, which includes increased sales and revenue, increased profit, reduced communication and promotion costs, and improved customer clientele. Utilizing social media also gives adopting small business organisations a competitive advantage. Social media use enables business executives to connect and work with clients, distributors, suppliers, and consultants. SMEs are better positioned to build efficient strategies to acquire competitive advantages in a global market environment that is always evolving and competitive by utilizing an interactive social network platform (Peltier & Naidu, 2012).

2.3 Instagram

2.3.1 Framework of Instagram

Instagram is a popular social media site where users of the can share videos and photographs with their followers. It was introduced in October 2010 after being developed by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. Instagram was purchased by Facebook in April 2012, and since then it has developed into one of the most popular social networking platforms. Users on Instagram can set up a profile, follow other users, and receive followers. Their feed, which is visible on their personal page and in the feeds of their followers, allows them to publish pictures and videos. In addition, users can add location data, tags, and captions to their posts.

Instagram has a number of features in addition to the main feed, including Stories, IGTV (Instagram TV), and Reels. When compared to IGTV, which enables users to publish longer videos, Stories are transient images and videos that vanish after 24 hours. Reels are brief, engaging videos like those on TikTok and other social media. According to Systrom (2018), Instagram was a free media-sharing platform where users could follow one another and share pictures taken with their phones. The application had 30 million users when it was released in October 2010 for iOS

and subsequently in April 2012 for Android. Facebook purchased Instagram in the same month for about \$1 billion in stock and cash (Kateri, 2021). Although it was a sizable sum for a startup that was barely breaking even, it ended up being one of the finest transactions 16 ever. Facebook's actions can be explained by its goal to control the market and eliminate a rival that is expanding quickly and becoming more visually appealing (Grizane & Jurgelane-Kaldava, 2017).

Instagram is one of the most well-liked and appealing social media platforms because of its utility, simplicity, novelty, and visual nature (DeMers, 2017). It is also fiercely competitive and has a sizable user base. "Instagram has become the home for visual storytelling for everyone from celebrities, newsrooms and brands, to teens, musicians and anyone with a creative passion," (Tajudeen, 2018). People started following their favorite companies in addition to their friends and celebrities there. Additionally, brands started opening accounts on the platform after realizing the numerous commercial potential it offered. Due to the introduction of a unique business profile, interest in the app has grown since May 2016. Changing personal accounts to business ones which offers more features for companies, including action buttons, a native analytics tool accessible immediately in the account, and target advertising (Perez, 2016).

Brands interact with their target consumers and advertise their products via Instagram advertisements (Bressler & Zampella, 2020). It has recently grown in popularity as an enjoyable means for companies to showcase their cultures, find new staff, communicate with clients, and present their products in new ways. Everyone who registers for an Instagram account has a profile and newsfeed, much as on Facebook and Twitter (Watanabe, Kim, & Park, 2021). By following, being followed, sending private messages, and leaving comments on or like videos or photographs,

users can communicate with one another. This type of advertising is crucial for raising consumer awareness of products and brands. In order to boost sales and brand exposure, the majority of companies extensively invest in and rely on Instagram marketing. The goal of the study is to comprehend the impact of advertising on consumer brand awareness (Zhang et al., 2020).

Because it was the first app to provide in-app editing to this degree, Instagram's in-app filters and editing tools set it apart from other apps (Watanabe, Kim & Park, 2021). Users of Instagram have the opportunity to add pictures and videos to their profiles and modify them using a variety of tools. Users may apply dozens of distinctive effects to their images on Instagram (Zhang, Leng, & Liu, 2020). These preset filters apply a number of different adjustments to images, such as adding light, giving the image a warm or cold tone, adjusting saturation, and more. Users also have the option of modifying photographs on the platform rather than utilizing a third-party photo editor (Walker et al., 2019).

2.3.2 Benefits of instagram to small businesses

Instagram can offer several benefits to small businesses. Delivering a brand message through images and videos is remarkable and successful, and attracting customers by offering premium, unique visual material. On Instagram, marketers and users can find inspiration from other accounts, research their rivals' use of the site, and learn useful information. The application also regularly adds new features and evolves, so it is always getting better. Users may find this to be a challenge, but on the other hand, Instagram is made to be very useful and intriguing to investigate because of this aspect. Here are list of top benefits of Instagram to Small businesses (Pavlova, 2018).

1. **Increased brand visibility and brand awareness:** Instagram offers a sizable and engaged user base, giving small companies the chance to contact more people. Businesses can boost their exposure and spread awareness of their goods or services by producing interesting

content and making use of pertinent hashtags. Businesses can display their service and product options as well as promote their brand on Instagram. According to Facebook, 60% of Instagram users use the application to discover new goods (Newberry 2018).

2. **Engagement and interaction:** Through comments, likes, and direct messages, Instagram offers direct contact with customers and potential customers. Businesses can address customer concerns, offer assistance, and develop connections, building a sense of belonging and loyalty. Businesses place a strong emphasis on meaningful, sincere interactions and trustworthy relationships in order to develop a foundation of devoted customers and a thriving community. Instagram is a useful tool in this situation.
3. **Targeted advertising:** Instagram provides robust advertising tools that allow businesses to target specific audiences based on demographics, interests, and behaviors. This targeted advertising helps small businesses reach the right people and increase the chances of converting them into customers. The app has the same advanced social media advertising platform as Facebook and offers great targeting capabilities and segmentation tools. This kind of advertisement is considered to be more effective and inexpensive compared to other advertising channels (Pavlova, 2018).
4. **Increases traffic to website:** An excellent technique to grab users' attention and increase website traffic is to include clickable links to the Instagram bio at the top of a profile. Instagram was created primarily for mobile devices, and 52% of all web traffic, according to Statista, comes from mobile phones. Instagram should be used to increase inbound traffic and, as a result, improve website conversions and create leads because so many people use it every day (Sharma, 2018).

5. **Competitor analysis:** Through Instagram application, brands can easily learn how their rivals operate and strengthen their own competitive advantage. Instagram can serve as an inspiration source, this can help the business to find out areas of improvement and competitive advantage (Newberry, 2018).
6. **Influencer partnerships:** Instagram is well-known for its influencer culture, in which users who have a sizable following advertise goods or services. Small businesses can reach their audience and expand their consumer base by collaborating with relevant influencers. Instagram is also considered to be one of the best social media platforms to reach and engage customers that is, obviously, crucial for small businesses.

2.3.3 Relevant Instagram Tools for Small Businesses

Instagram has variety of tools that can help businesses to reach their audience at a wider range.

Here are a handful of them as posited by (Pavlova, 2018).

1. Hashtags

Jones (2017) asserts that a key component of social media communication is the hash-tagging mechanism. Brands should really consider creating their own hashtags and using them wisely. Thus, a hashtag establishes brand recognition, is connected to the company, and brings like-minded individuals together. As more people begin to use it, brand awareness grows. (Baccarella et al., 2018). A feature that Instagram added in 2018 allowed users to begin following hashtags. If followers can see hashtags in news feeds directly, businesses' organic reach will increase (Jones, 2018).

2. Instagram Ads:

SMEs can develop targeted advertisements on Instagram's advertising platform to reach their target market. It provides different ad forms, including carousel, photo, video, and Stories

advertisements. Businesses can use the ad manager to track the effectiveness of their ads and define their target audience based on demographics, interests, and behaviours.

3. Instagram Insights:

For business accounts, this Instagram insights offers insightful statistics and performance indicators. SMEs have access to information on follower growth, engagement, impressions, reach, and more. Businesses may better understand their audience's preferences, gauge the effectiveness of their content, and adjust their Instagram strategy by analysing these information. Another benefit of utilising an Instagram business account is that the platform has a built-in analytics tool called "Insights" that lets users view various metrics, graphs, and data about their account's success. Arab et al. (2019) maintained that three categories—Activity, Content, and Audience—are used to group the information. "Activity" lets you keep tabs on a profile's interactions and discoverability throughout the course of the current week and compares it to the prior one.

4. Instagram Stories:

Stories are a popular feature on Instagram that allows SMEs to share temporary content that disappears after 24 hours. SMEs can use Stories to share behind-the-scenes content, product launches, limited-time offers, or exclusive discounts. They can also leverage interactive features like polls, questions, and swipe-up links to engage with their audience. They were a huge innovation that came out in 2016. Stories indicate the sharing of images and movies in the form of slide shows that vanish after 24 hours. They can also be enhanced with hashtags and geolocations to make them more discoverable, as well as poll stickers to engage followers in discussion. Furthermore, since Instagram stories are much more prominent in the app than regular posts are, they assist to increase engagement (Chacon, 2018).

5. Call-to-Action Buttons

Call, Text, Directions, and Email are just a few of the buttons Instagram provides business accounts to enable various activities. The author advises focusing just on the first key buttons indicated since there are other Book, Buy Tickets, Start Order, and Reserve buttons, but these are only compatible with third-party programmes. They make it easier for individuals to contact businesses by phone, text, or email and to find out how to go to their physical location. The function enhances consumer and brand connection and communication (Herman, 2018).

6. Clickable links

Brands may include links to their Instagram bios in sponsored promotional posts as well as at the top of user profiles. Only verified accounts and accounts with a significant following of more than 10,000 followers will be able to contribute links to Stories, which is incredibly handy and efficient. However, third-party programmes can get around this obstacle. The inability to include clickable links in standard articles on Instagram has long been a concern, forcing marketers to either explicitly state that their link is in the bio or pay for advertising. Utilising the platform can still lead to more traffic, conversion rates, and revenues (Decker, 2018).

2.4 Small Business

A privately held, independently owned, managed, and operated firm is referred to as a small business. Depending on the nation, sector, and context, there are several definitions of small businesses. Small firms are often distinguished by their relatively modest size in terms of revenue, assets, and staff count, but there are other common characteristics as well. Depending on the industry and the nation, different countries may have different standards for what qualifies as a small firm. For instance, the SBA of the United States uses industry-specific size guidelines to designate small enterprises. Small businesses are typically operated by lone proprietors, families, or a few partners. The decision-making process is frequently greatly influenced by the owners,

who are also heavily involved in the day-to-day management of the company. Many small firms target a niche market or a particular geographic location. They frequently have a close relationship with their neighbourhood and may rely on local clients to support their business.

Small businesses are defined as privately held companies with less than 500 workers and/or annual sales below \$1 billion (Turner et al., 2023). According to government tax benefits and subsidies, whether or not a firm qualifies as "small" depends on the nation and industry (Twesige & Gasheja, 2019). The Australian Fair Work Act 2009 defines a "small business" as having between 15 and 49 workers, in contrast to the U.S. Small Business Administration's definition of "small business," which is any organisation with less than 500 employees. The number of workers is one of the methods used most frequently to categorise small businesses, along with yearly revenues, shipments, sales, assets, gross or net revenue, or net profits (Gaglio et al., 2022).

Small businesses are widespread in many nations and include convenience stores, mini-marts, bakeries, delicatessens, barbershops, motels, photographic studios, small manufacturers (such furniture makers), and computer and web development companies. Although physicians, dentists, accountants, and attorneys can all work for big businesses or organisations, many of these specialists prefer to run their own practises (Ukwueze et al., 2022). Nappi and Vora (1981) recommended a standardised set of criteria, including staff count and income, to be utilised by the federal government as a whole to define small firms after discovering that the definition of small businesses differed from state to state. This made it possible to examine the definition in more detail.

Looking at small businesses in Nigeria, there is little question that Nigeria has one of the largest economies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite the fact that her economy depends mostly on oil, it is

also backed by small pockets of corporate entities that span practically all domestic industries (Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2018). These corporate entities, which are mostly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), vary from international organisations with offices in the nation to local businesses. Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are businesses or organisations that aren't subsidiaries and have fewer employees than their bigger counterparts (Laaksonen & Peltoniemi, 2018). The precise number varies from country to country. Businesses are classified as micro, small, and medium-sized companies (SMEs) by the European Union (EU) if they employ fewer than 250 people and generate less than 50 million euros in annual sales. Less than 50 employees work for micro- and small-sized businesses (Durst & Gerstlberger, 2020). In its monetary policy circular No. 22 of 1988, the Central Bank of Nigeria classified small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria as companies with annual revenues that do not exceed five hundred thousand naira (N500, 000). The National Policy on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) has offered a separate classification of firms based on their levels of employment and assets in the aim of transparency. Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are companies that are best described by their level of capital, the size and cost of the projects they embark on, their yearly revenue, their financial stability, and the number of workers they have (Ikedionu, 2018).

2.4.1 Importance of small scale businesses in Nigeria

Small businesses are crucial to the growth of any country, including Nigeria, (Omosho 2023; Ajah 2023). Employment, economic growth, and the distribution of goods and services are just a few of the ways in which small businesses have aided Nigeria's progress.

1. Food Security:

There has been a significant amount of progress made in ensuring the safety of the food supply by agricultural enterprises operating on a smaller scale. The majority of Nigeria's agricultural

producers are considered to be on a modest scale. Despite the fact that the majority of them are located in the countryside, which is known for its long-standing tradition of crop farming cooperation, these businesses are privately owned and operated. Many of them have implemented a method of employing workers who are mostly paid on a daily basis. Animal farmers are also typically proprietors of small-scale enterprises because they typically run their poultry farms and cattle ranches on a modest scale. The majority of these operations employ less than ten people (Omotosho, 2023). These are the businesses that are accountable for the large bulk of the food, poultry, and meat that is serves citizens. They are responsible for supplying the country with these products.

2. Manufacturing of Daily Need Commodities

Small enterprises play a crucial role in reducing the need for international trade by consuming agricultural products and by-products and transforming them into valuable commodities (Ajah, 2023). Products that are fundamental to the needs of the people are produced locally using resources that are sourced from the area. These products include soap, which is made with palm kernel oil, and footwear, which is made with rubber and leather and is also produced locally.

3. Employment Creation

Many people in this city have jobs due to the proliferation of small businesses. This is not just the case in Nigeria, but across the board for both established and emerging markets. It's self-evident that the government can't possibly provide jobs for everyone (Omotosho, 2023). The majority of the workforce in the United States is employed by small businesses.

4. Youth Engagement and Development

Although small businesses may not pay as well as the government or huge corporations, they serve a crucial role in the life of the country by offering the country's youth something to do in addition

to earning a living (Ajah ,2023). Getting young people involved in small businesses is one way to keep them off the streets, out of trouble, and out of the hands of gangs and prostitutes. Also, small businesses give young people their first taste of the working world, where they can learn invaluable skills that will serve them throughout their lives, such as teamwork, goal-setting, product promotion, and more.

2.4.2 Influence of Social Media

The influence of social media on businesses, both good and bad, has been substantial. These days, news, entertainment, and advertising can all be found in one place (Ziyadin et al., 2019). These days, though, it's common practice to store and distribute media digitally, whether it's text, video, or audio, across large and small computers, as well as smartphones and tablets. The widespread availability of media in digital form via the internet has had a profound effect on interpersonal, educational, and professional communication across all social and economic strata (Igbashangev, 2021). Nevertheless, digital media has had nothing but a positive effect on the corporate world.

2.4.3 Advantages of Using Social Media in Small Businesses

Infante and Mardikaningsih (2022) and Borah et al. (2022) offer the following significant impacts on utilising social media in small business, in addition to both the positive and negative implications of social media marketing:

1. Customer Relationship Management

The primary benefit of a social media initiative, as stated by Infante and Mardikaningsih (2022) and Borah et al. (2022), "Reaching Online Community with Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and etc." is the chance to develop the relationship between the firm and its customers. By interacting with current and potential buyers online in real time, a business may spread the

word about its product or service. In turn, the corporation might reap the rewards of virally spreading favourable feedback over social media. Further, Infante and Mardikaningsih (2022) and Borah et al. (2022) explain that the stronger the bonds become and the higher the influence of the connections on sales, client happiness, and product image, the more frequent and intense the involvement.

2. Customer Retention

Instagram and Twitter users who follow a particular company are more inclined to purchase the brand's items, according to studies cited by Infante and Mardikaningsih (2022) and Borah et al. (2022). The business's utilisation of online platforms to spread positive brand sentiment, generate new business, and strengthen ties with existing customers undoubtedly played a role in these record-breaking sales. These aid in the company's quest to create loyal customers.

3. Expansion of Customer Base

Based on research by Infante and Mardikaningsih (2022) and Borah et al. (2022), businesses can expand their customer base by using social media to disseminate their corporate message, encouraging existing customers to spread the word about the company, and encouraging potential customers to make a purchase after hearing positive feedback about the company's message and products. Promotional methods like print and television commercials benefit from the addition of third-party endorsements that are disseminated online.

4. Market Research

According to Infante and Mardikaningsih (2022) and Borah et al. (2022), social media is a trustworthy way to investigate the values, beliefs, and practises that shape customer choices. The social media landscape can help you learn more about your target demographic so you can better

reach them with your marketing and advertising efforts. Companies might also learn about potential threats to present market possibilities through social media conversations. Promotion of a Product Using social media, businesses can reach their target audience directly. Such advertising bolsters the impact of other forms of product promotion, such as online ads and press releases. Obtaining a Position of Strength in the Market When a corporation is able to hear what its competitors are saying, it can create plans and methods to counteract those efforts. Because of this, the company is able to obtain an edge in the market. When deciding where to open new Burger King franchises, for instance, a major factor is the information sent by McDonald's on potential site locations. Because of this, Burger King can save money on market analysis.

5. Cost Control Initiatives

The dependence of a company on free or inexpensive social media channels to reach millions of customers supports its efforts to keep sales, marketing, and customer service costs low. A business can get the most value for its money by, say, using social media to reach some clients instead of more expensive television commercials.

6. Public Relations

Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn can be used to instantly disseminate company updates to a wide audience. Funk argues that the success of efforts to contain negative news that has the potential to "go viral" or spread rapidly to a large number of social media users is contingent on the department's use of multiple social media channels to increase audience engagement. According to studies by Infante and Mardikaningsih (2022) and Borah et al. (2022), adding social media features to company websites has increased sales. Customers can rate products, and there are "fan" and "email friend" buttons to encourage interaction. Improved

product sales are a direct result of the resulting enthusiasm from both customers and the business at large.

7. Recruiting

According to Susan Sweeney, author of "Social Media for Business: 101 Ways to Grow Your Business without Wasting Your Time," the social media platform is a cheap way to directly engage potential employees because 80% of online Americans use some type of social media at least once a month. By collecting data on how interested candidates feel about the firm and the roles they're interested in, such a programme can also help businesses gauge the success of their recruitment efforts.

2.4.4 Impact of Instagram adoption on SMEs performance in Akure

1. Amplified Customer Clientele

Businesses can reach a wider customer base based online by using Instagram; utilising this channel will broaden a business's clientele and enhance the likelihood that customers will look for it online (Chu & Kim, 2011; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). The usage of user-generated content, where users of the Instagram platform can post, comment, like, and share information with one another, aids in increasing awareness of a company's existence and, as a result, draws in more new clients (Ahmad et al., 2018).

2. Augmented company Awareness, Reputation Loyalty, and Equity

Making a company more well-known so that people can connect with it is one of the finest ways to create brand equity, reputation, and loyalty. Businesses may target a larger audience of consumers more quickly and affordably by using Instagram advertising. The salience, strength, loyalty, and equity of a brand are all improved by its aesthetics, and the consequence is an increase in market share and profitability, two trustworthy measures of brand performance (Keller, 2016).

According to Agnihotri, et al., (2016b), leveraging Instagram platforms can assist firms in obtaining essential consumer and market data on a product or service. As a result, it is seen as a tremendous asset for the company in terms of expanding awareness and increasing loyalty. Schivinski & Dabrowski (2016) explained that the power of Instagram to connect SMEs with billions of potential customers has also been proven to improve the efficacy of marketing campaigns and brand recognition for many firms because Instagram, through active discourse, also allows direct contact between businesses and customers.

A customer can get in touch with a business at any moment of the day, which enables them to develop close relationships with the company. This allows for two-way communication as opposed to traditional communication, which only permits one-way communication (Agnihotri et al., 2016b). Also, regular and prompt communication between the business and its customers helps foster loyalty and trust. Loyal clients promote the business through recommendations and online evaluations, which increase traffic to the brand on Instagram (Mills & Plangger, 2015).

3. Competitive Advantage

Positive brand experiences improve market share and, ultimately, revenue and profitability for businesses by converting consumers into brand evangelists, cultivating brand loyalty, and motivating referrals because they help brands be seen as real, honest, and transparent, online reviews posted by customers on Instagram are particularly helpful in developing a favourable brand image (Agnihotri, Dingus, Hu, & Krush, 2016a). A competitive advantage is yet another important advantage that SMEs get from utilising Instagram in their marketing. Businesses may quickly gather user profiles and opinions on rival companies by using Instagram as a marketing tool. This knowledge aids businesses in formulating plans to acquire a competitive edge (Mayeh et al. 2012). SMEs can use market trends noticed on Instagram to generate new products and

services to match the changing expectations of their clients. They can also foresee market trends to gain a competitive advantage.

2.4.5 Social Media and Small Business

According to Kirtis and Karahan (2017), using social media as a marketing tool is a marketing approach that may save corporate expenses since it allows for the rapid and easy dissemination of information to millions of customers. According to Nyambu (2013), social media marketing helped an organisation flourish since it provides a platform for promoting at a lower cost than other available forms of marketing. The study found that special promotional campaigns improved the performance of telecommunications companies in Kenya by increasing sales and revenue past the point of initial development. According to Srinivasan, Bajaj, and Bhanot (2016), social media engagement has a significant impact on brand trust, which in turn influences customer acquisition and retention.

Asking customers for their thoughts is a great way to conduct free market research and build trust with the company's audience. Customers are likely to rise after witnessing their ideas come to fruition. Keeping tabs on the competition is made easier with the use of social media (Hruska & Maresova, 2020). Companies are adjusting their advertising campaigns based on data they glean from their rivals' social media feeds. Marketing strategies might be informed by a thorough analysis of competitors' strengths and weaknesses. Using the data collected, you can make adjustments to your social media strategy, contests, giveaways, and content to see what your followers respond to best (Madan, 2021). Transparency in the marketplace is facilitated by social media. Due to increased consumer knowledge, the time it takes to convert a lead into a customer has lengthened. Customers are more likely to make purchases from reputable businesses that present themselves honestly in their marketing. Public media followers will develop a positive

impression of your company if you communicate with them in a kind, open, and helpful manner (Olaitan, 2021). Advice, ideas, and even just answering inquiries about the sector are all easy ways to position a company as a helpful resource.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The dissertation's overarching conceptual framework can be found here. Existing variables from the literature review and the means by which they accomplish the study's goals are taken into account. The AIDA model, which stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action, was first put out by E. St. Elmo Lewis in 1898. This hypothesis, which outlines the four (4) cognitive processes a person goes through when they encounter a new concept or a new product they have acquired, was established based on a study of the life insurance business (Michaelson & Stacks, 2011). According to Santo and Gonçalves (2021) before making a purchase, customers often do research and think about what they want, and thereafter they make decisions about what they want to buy and how to pay for it. At the same time, according to Sharma et al. (2022), the post-purchase phase involves interaction with the brand after the product or service has been used. When customers have a positive attitude towards a company after making a purchase, it increases the possibility that they will continue to be loyal and interact with the business in the future, restarting the model. The AIDA model is a tool used by corporations to determine the optimal means of communicating with consumers during various stages of the purchasing journey. According to the values provided by the respondents to the AIDA model-based phases in the purchase process, the study by Wong et al. (2015) discovered that internet marketing's ability to capture users' attention is only somewhat successful. When consciously perusing the Internet, as happens in traditional marketing, it is unlikely that prospective consumers will go to a business'

website. However, this issue may be solved by banner advertising on well-known websites or by information and links from any pertinent portal. One of the most effective aspects of web marketing is piqueing consumer interest. A lot of information may be sent to website visitors who are potential consumers in an engaging and interactive way to pique their interest in the goods and services being offered. In order to attract return visits, website material may also be periodically updated.

Online marketing offers several options to explain the items or services utilising interactive ways in order to pique the interest of customers to make a purchase (Arlena & Rasyid, 2023). Online marketing provides features that make it simple for users to make purchases (including payments) through the integrated card system integration and other means during the action-taking process (i.e., the final phase). According to Hoek and Gendall (2003), advertising may arouse consumer awareness or attention as well as interest and want before motivating attitudes to take action. The AIDA model may be applied to sponsorship activities thanks to the focus on it and its variants on advertising content. The AIDA model has been continuously asserted to have been widely used in marketing efforts, whether they involved traditional or internet advertising. It has also been said that there aren't enough research that examine the AIDA model's relevance to social media marketing.

Effectively utilising content marketing is a viable approach to attracting individuals to peruse your Instagram feed. By providing pertinent and beneficial content, a corporation can effectively entice and maintain its customer base. An effectively implemented strategy can facilitate the accessibility of a company's content through social media and other distribution channels for its intended audience.

Enhancing a company's visibility is considered one of the most effective strategies to augment its brand equity, reputation, and loyalty by fostering greater identification among a larger audience. The use of Instagram advertising enables businesses to expand their outreach to a larger consumer base within a shorter period of time and at a reduced expense. According to Keller (2016), enhancements in a brand's visual appeal lead to increases in market share and profitability, which are considered reliable measures of brand efficacy. The Instagram marketing has a significant impact on all points of contact, thereby modifying the customer experience and the overall profitability of small businesses that utilise this approach.

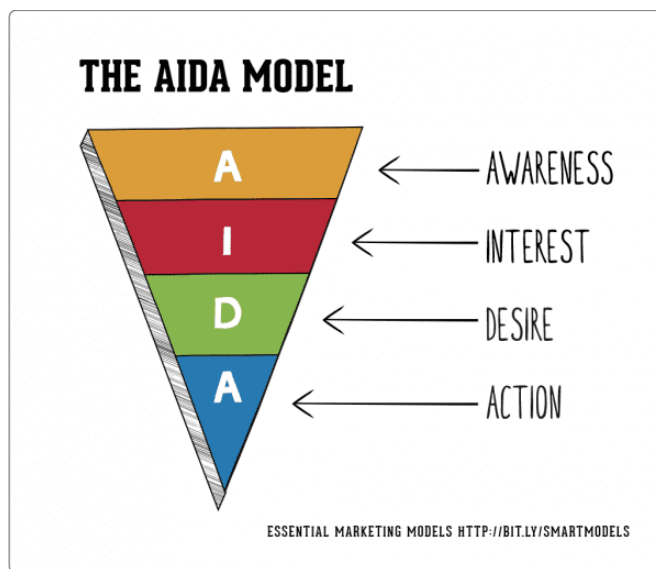


Fig. 1, Adapted from AIDA Model (Jiang, Chiu, & Chan, 2023)

The fundamental procedure of the AIDA model continues to be used in contemporary times. Employing an advertisement that is unconventional or visually striking may serve to capture the interest of a prospective consumer, thereby directing their attention towards a given enterprise or merchandise. Santoso et al. (2020) posit that the manipulation of a prospective consumer's interest, desire, and action can potentially impact their perception of a brand. Generating interest can facilitate customer engagement with the product's advantages and suitability for their needs. The

effective utilisation of social media in Nigerian SMEs' business operations, such as promotion, consumer relationships, and information browsing, may lead to several favourable outcomes, including cost savings, enhanced customer relations, and improved knowledge accessibility.

In the framework of Cheung et al. (2019), the researcher posited that 5 SMM dimensions which are E-Word of mouth, Ads, Interaction, trendiness and customer engagement are capable of shaping brand awareness and performance. These two variables- Brand awareness and performance are core to a brand's knowledge and serves as a yardstick for understanding the level of brand equity a business possesses. Apart from these independent variables which are the SMM strategies and the dependent variables which are Brand awareness and Image, Cheung et al's model also introduces the product involvement level which moderates the influence of the independent variables on brand awareness and image.

Product involvement is widely recognized as one of the important factors that influences consumer behavior, it refers to a consumer's perception of a product based on their fundamental needs, values and interests (Cheung et al, 2019).

Products are classified as either high involvement or low-involvement. High involvement products are evaluated by quality while low involvement products are more easily driven by affection. According to the researchers, consumers that are interested in high involvement products will go the extra mile to find information related to the product. Based on the model of Cheung et al (2019), Understanding the impact of SMM aspects on brand awareness and image can assist marketers in a variety of ways when planning their marketing activities. First, determining which SMM dimension influences awareness and leads to better performance can help Marketers direct scarce resources.

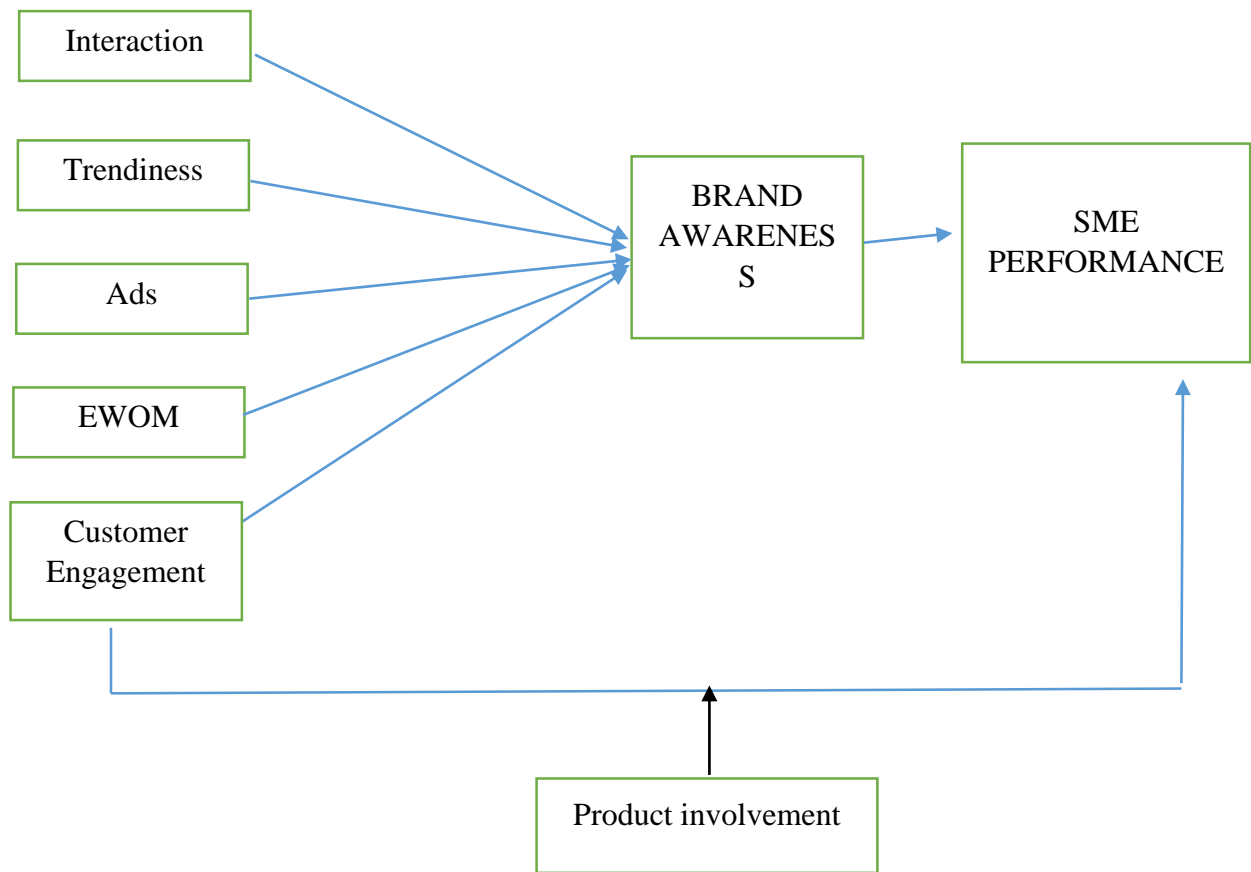


Fig.2, Adapted from ‘Conceptual model for examining social media marketing effects on Brand Awareness and Image’ (Cheung et al, 2019).

Secondly, by indicating if product engagement level has a moderating effect on the brand-building process in a social-media context, marketing strategies can be fine-tuned based on the nature of the involvement level connected with a certain brand and subsequently leads to performance.

This study intends to take this model (see Fig.3) a step further by investigating the perceived impact on small businesses in terms of key business indicator gained from SMM dimensions and in addition find out the benefits and challenges associated with of these strategies from a socio cultural point of view.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has been able to commemorate the literature that has been written about the subject under inquiry while also paying tribute to the academics who have made notable contributions to the field. The chapter finds that social media is changing traditional forms of presence. In addition to more traditional media like newspapers and television, lead generation and Internet advertising were also used. Social media profiles (such as those on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube) are now seen as independent places to build a presence. By using social media, businesses may now access the collective wisdom of their customers.

Moreover, Instagram allows businesses to connect with a larger online population; adopting this platform can expand a company's clientele and increase the possibility that clients will search for it via the internet.

3 Methodology and Research Design

3.1 Overview

This section of the dissertation is where the methodology will be explained and defended. As such, the research uses the "Research Onion" model to guide this work. This model of investigation stands as the best way to conduct the study. M. Saunders, P. Lewis, and A. Thornhill wrote the model's code. The authors presented the framework so that future researchers might use it as a blueprint for developing reliable methods for their own investigations. Research philosophy, research strategy, research tactics, research choices, time horizon, and data collection methods are only a few of the stages listed by Saunders et al. (2009) that serve as a framework for research design.

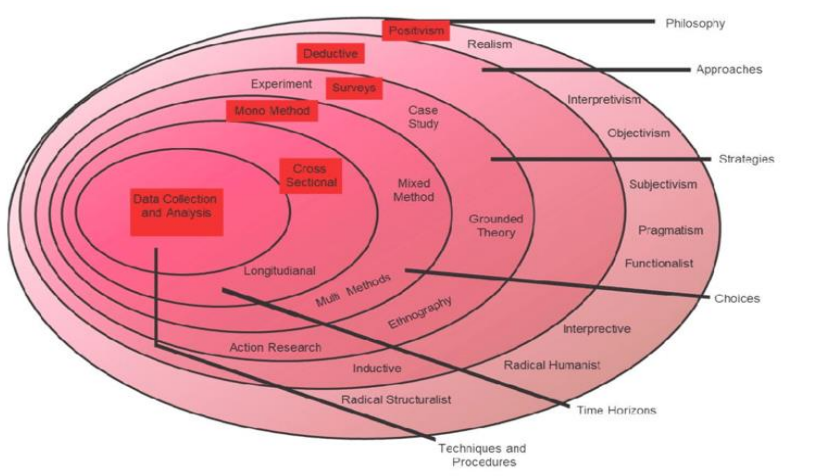


Fig. 3, Adapted from 'Research Onion' (Saunders et al., 2009).

The diagram presented in Figure 3 illustrates the research process as an onion, where the outermost layer symbolises the selected research philosophy. The research philosophy of researchers serves as a guiding principle for their methods of knowledge creation and analysis, as stated by Saunders et al. (2009). The philosophical stance adopted by researchers is often reflected in their worldviews and the type of information they prioritise, as noted by Saunders et al. (2009). The authors emphasised the concepts of positive research, realism, interpretivism, and pragmatism. Chapter 3 will provide a comprehensive discussion of the interpretivist research philosophy that serves as the fundamental basis of this dissertation. The second layer of the onion comprises the techniques employed by researchers in utilising the theory as a basis for their approach, as stated by Saunders et al. (2009). The authors have identified deduction, induction, and abduction as the three primary methods.

The researcher uses the deductive approach to develop a hypothesis or theory at the beginning of the study and then repeatedly test it throughout the course of the investigation. The inductive approach involves the development of a theory through the examination of available evidence by researchers. Abductive research is frequently utilised to produce a feasible collection of hypotheses (Philipsen, 2018).

Subsequently, the determination of a strategy constitutes a pivotal step among the triad of measures in study design. According to Saunders et al. (2009), there are three distinct types of research: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. The use of exploratory studies by researchers to delve further into the matter at hand is likely to yield fruitful results. Saunders et al. (2009) assert that in a descriptive study, it is imperative to possess a lucid understanding of the phenomena to be investigated prior to data collection. According to Yilmaz (2013), the objective of descriptive research is to depict a precise representation of individuals, occurrences, or circumstances.

Saunders et al. (2009) noted that the main focus of a descriptive study is to clarify the correlations and interrelationships among different variables. Moreover, a specific layer of the onion facilitates the researcher in determining the appropriate instruments to tackle the research topic. Various research methodologies can be utilised, such as experimental research, archival research, survey research, or case study research. Likewise, the research investigation may employ diverse methodologies for data collection. The monomethod, which is also referred to as single data collection, encompasses qualitative or quantitative methodologies. Conversely, the amalgamation of diverse methodologies entails the utilisation of assorted qualitative or quantitative techniques or a hybrid approach that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methods, as stated by Saunders et al. (2009). Furthermore, it is crucial for researchers to ascertain the temporal extent of their research topic.

According to Saunders et al. (2009), a crucial determination must be made concerning whether to concentrate on a particular point in time or the events that unfold during a specified period. Thompson and Panacek (2007) define a cross-sectional study as an investigation of particular phenomena during a specified timeframe, typically involving the administration of surveys. The implementation of a longitudinal study methodology facilitates the advancement and development of research over a prolonged period. The methodologies and protocols utilised in research are contingent upon the acquisition and scrutiny of data. Academic researchers may choose to conduct interviews that demonstrate a range of categorizations as put forth by different scholars. The interview process has been classified into two distinct types, namely standardised and non-standardised interviews, by Beatty (1995) and Hopf (2004). The utilisation of structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews is proposed by Saunders et al. (2009). The forthcoming Section 3.2 will discuss the process of selecting the framework. The following section will include

the justification and explanation of the chosen methodological research approach for the purpose of this dissertation.

3.2 Research Philosophy and Approach

The central objective of this dissertation is to find out the Perceived impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small businesses in Nigeria. The manner in which businesses employ Instagram as a promotional tool exhibits variability in structure owing to its distinctive characteristics.

Moreover, the research encompasses small businesses that use Instagram as a promotional tool to market their enterprises. The expected observations are likely to be subjective, as companies and their perspectives often have distinct expertise, viewpoints, and perceptions of Instagram. The objective of this study is to collect data from vendors utilising Instagram as a medium to engage with their customers and investigate their unique perspectives in relation to the research objectives. This methodology is anticipated to produce a comprehensive viewpoint. Hence, the interpretivism philosophy has a significant impact on the research paper. Interpretivism, by its very nature, asserts the lack of concrete knowledge where data is subjective and information possesses a significant degree of validity (Saunders et al., 2009).

The study was subsequently devised to utilise a deductive approach, which is a defining feature of interpretive inquiry. The main objective of adopting the deductive approach is aid the explanation of the causal relationships between concepts and variables in relation to "The Perceived impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small businesses in Nigeria." The study will adopt a monomethod approach, which involves the use of a solitary data collection technique.

Saunders et al. (2009) propose an approach that involves the application of qualitative research methods, specifically interviews, without the requirement of quantitative data. Antwi and Hamza (2015) argue that qualitative research, situated within the interpretivist paradigm, prioritises data that captures the richness and intricacy of the observations gathered. Therefore, active involvement with topics and careful attention to linguistic choices are fundamental elements of the observational approach.

3.3 Research Strategy

The literature review reveals a dearth of prior research that elucidates the perception of Nigerian small enterprises regarding the utilisation of Instagram. Several studies have been conducted on the perceptions of Nigerian small businesses regarding the use of social media. However, the field of research requires a sufficient amount of data to effectively address the research questions at hand. Consequently, the descriptive approach has been chosen to condense the current observations into a unified framework regarding the perception of Nigerian small enterprises regarding the utilisation of Instagram. The chosen methodology aims to establish and elucidate particular observations rather than proposing novel theories or hypotheses (Fossey et al., 2002). As previously indicated, the research methodology will entail the use of a qualitative methodology. In this study, a monomethod approach will be employed, utilising interviews as the primary means of data collection. The selection procedure for conducting interviews will encompass approximately 5 to 6 small enterprises that are active on the social media platform Instagram. The ability to conduct individual interviews would yield a comprehensive pool of data on Nigerian small enterprises' perceptions regarding the utilisation of Instagram. In accordance with this reasoning, small scale enterprises active on Instagram, irrespective of their specific size and financial performance, will be subjected to interviews in order to obtain comprehensive insights.

Furthermore, the researcher will leverage her pre-existing expertise and competencies in the advertising and marketing industry to facilitate efficacious communication, formulate appropriate questions, and rigorously evaluate the calibre of the input during the interview phase. Saunders et al. (2009) assert that the descriptive approach entails pre-planned, organised interviews that are sequentially executed during the interview process.

3.4 Collection Primary Data

This section will provide a comprehensive discussion on the acquisition of primary data through the use of qualitative research methodology. Sources the study will incorporate primary data using a mono-methodological qualitative approach. The primary focus of the research will be to gather data through virtual interviews conducted online. The interviews will be conducted in digital format. As a result of geographical constraints, all interviews will be executed via Zoom, WhatsApp, Instagram call, or telephone communication. The primary emphasis will be placed on enterprises that use Instagram on a regular basis for commercial purposes. To attain the required saturation, the sample size will comprise a minimum of five participants, as suggested by Saunders et al. (2009).

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|---|--|
| Interview Questions ; | Literature Review: |
| <p>Topic 1: Current usage and adoption of Instagram as a marketing tool among Nigerian small businesses</p> <p>1) How long have you been using Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business?</p> | <p>Saunders et al. (2009) emphasise the significance of basing research inquiries on the tangible realities of respondents instead of relying on intangible ideas.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>2) What motivated you to start using Instagram for marketing purposes?</p> <p>3) Have you observed any trends or changes in the way small businesses in Nigeria are using Instagram for marketing purposes?</p> <p>4) How do you allocate your resources (time, budget, personnel) to manage your Instagram marketing activities?</p> | |
| <p>Topic 2: various Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian small businesses.</p> <p>5) How do you utilize Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business?</p> <p>6) What specific goals or objectives do you aim to achieve through your Instagram marketing efforts?</p> | <p>Schivinski & Dabrowski (2016) explained that the power of Instagram to connect SMEs with billions of potential customers has also been proven to improve the efficacy of marketing campaigns and brand recognition for many firms because Instagram, through active discourse, also allows direct contact between businesses and customers.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>7) How do you measure the success of your Instagram marketing campaigns? Are there any specific metrics you track or evaluate?</p> | |
| <p>Topic 3: benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian small businesses.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <p>8) What are the primary benefits you have experienced from using Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business?</p> <p>9) Have you observed any growth in customer engagement or interactions as a result of your Instagram marketing efforts?</p> <p>10) Have you seen an increase in sales or conversions directly attributed to your Instagram marketing activities?</p> | <p>According to Agnihotri, et al., (2016b), leveraging Instagram platforms can assist firms in obtaining essential consumer and market data on a product or service. As a result, it is seen as a tremendous asset for the company in terms of expanding awareness and increasing loyalty.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>11) Can you provide any specific success stories or examples where Instagram played a significant role in achieving your business goals?</p> <p>Challenges:</p> <p>12) What are some of the challenges or difficulties you have encountered while using Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business? If yes, how have you addressed those challenges?</p> <p>13) How do you manage the time and resources required to create and maintain a consistent presence on Instagram?</p> <p>14) Have you faced any issues related to measuring the effectiveness of your Instagram marketing campaigns or tracking return on investment?</p> <p>15) Have you encountered any negative feedback or backlash on Instagram, and how do you handle such situations?</p> | |
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| <p>Topic 4: The perception of selected small businesses in Nigeria about the usage of Instagram</p> <p>16) How do you perceive the importance and relevance of Instagram for small businesses in Nigeria?</p> <p>17) How would you summarize your overall experience with Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business?</p> <p>18) Based on your experience, what recommendations or advice would you give to other small businesses in Nigeria considering using Instagram for marketing purposes?</p> | <p>Ahmad et al. (2018), Chu & Kim (2011), Schivinski & Dabrowski (2016)</p> <p>Businesses can reach a wider customer base based online by using Instagram; utilising this channel will broaden a business's clientele and enhance the likelihood that customers will look for it online. The usage of user-generated content, where users of the Instagram platform can post, comment, like, and share information with one another, aids in increasing awareness of a company's existence and, as a result, draws in more new clients.</p> |

Table 2: Interview questions

The questions that will be posed during the interviews are listed in Table 2, along with the citations from the literature study that will be used to offer the explanation behind the questions that will be requested. In the event that it is asked, each participant will be given access to the questions in advance.

3.5 Access and Ethical Issues

Primary sources of information have a significant impact on research outcomes. For this reason, it is crucial to consult reliable and authoritative sources. Eligible and accessible people within the researcher's contact list who have consented to participate in personal interviews will be contacted via WhatsApp or any form of online communication. This research relies heavily on primary data, so it's important to obtain such data ethically.

Allmark et al. (2009) state that secrecy, privacy, and permission are all ethical concerns when conducting in-depth interviews. However, the authors note that it is difficult to keep tabs on where those considerations should be made while actually conducting interviews. As a result, we'll be taking precautions throughout the entire data collection process. In the preliminary phase of the interview procedure, candidates' profiles will be thoroughly analysed so that they can be prepared to answer questions about their areas of competence. The researchable topic, questions, objectives, expectations, and time frame will then be outlined in a paper that will be distributed to participants before the interviews take place. In addition, it is crucial to make sure that interviewees are comfortable sharing their information. If they don't want their information made public, they can choose to keep it private.

The interviewees will be asked for their consent to record the session at some point throughout the interview. Once approval has been granted, the data collection procedure will begin with a thorough explanation of the reason for the interview and the expected results. The interview will proceed according to the following established format: Engaging with professionals will be conducted in a professional, respectful, and pleasant manner to ensure compliance with ethical considerations. Participants have the right to reveal any responses they like, regardless of their sensitivity. The timetable that was established at the outset will be used to measure progress. When

a predetermined time limit is reached, however, attendees will be questioned if they wish to keep the meeting going. Following the interview, the data will be analysed in a way that eliminates the possibility of subjective interpretation.

3.6 Approach to Data Analysis

In qualitative research reports, a codebook is used as a tool for the categorization of primary data. According to Saunders et al. (2009), the coding technique serves the purpose of arranging the text based on its recurring structures, associations, and overarching ideas. Employ this methodology to ascertain the correlation between the data obtained from interviews and the objectives of your research. The initial phase of constructing a literature review involves categorising the themes that have arisen from the aforementioned process. Upon completion of data collection, the data will be systematically categorised based on relevant topics and subjected to a comprehensive analysis aimed at identifying patterns of similarity and dissimilarity.

Subsequently, we will deduce inferences regarding the results and establish links between the classified patterns and correlations with the theoretical framework. The conceptual framework plays a crucial role in the formulation of initial anchor codes, as both inductive and deductive strategies consider fundamental set-theoretic contexts, as stated by Zimmermann (2019). The study on the utilisation of Instagram by small businesses in Nigeria aims to provide novel perspectives by analysing the data obtained from interviews.

DeHart's (2021) centres on examining the essence of participant realities, which presents ontological research challenges. In order to respond to these inquiries, it is necessary to employ suitable codes for the interpretation of data. This encompasses attribute, affect, in-vivo, and narrative coding. This study will employ anchor codes and in-vivo coding as methodological approaches. Before proceeding with data analysis, it is necessary to develop anchor codes. The

primary objective of the study is to establish a standardised coding system based on the relevant research questions. Consequently, the in vivo codes will be categorised into their corresponding anchor categories, as stated by DeHart (2021). To accomplish this task, one may seek to identify latent significance within codes, monitor the prevalence of codes, or uncover connections among codes. This research project employs categorization as a means of identifying correlations between the codes. A thematic analysis will be conducted to accomplish the objective.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter delineated the research approach utilising the Research Onion framework developed by Saunders et al. (2009). The researcher ultimately opted for interpretivism as their principal theoretical paradigm. This research will adopt an inductive methodology to synthesise existing knowledge into a more structured framework. Consequently, a descriptive investigation will be carried out with the aim of identifying and characterising previous discoveries (Kim et al., 2017). A mono-methodological approach was selected in order to address the research inquiries. The data source for this study will consist of interviews conducted with Instagram users who operate small businesses. The forthcoming investigation will employ theme analysis as a methodological approach to ascertain the perceptions of Nigerian small enterprises regarding Instagram. The achievement of this objective can be facilitated through the implementation of two distinct procedures, namely coding and categorization. The subsequent chapter will comprise a presentation and discussion of the outcomes derived from the analysis of the data.

4 Presentation and Discussion of the Findings

4.1 Overview

Chapter will dwell on the presentation, discussion and conclusion of finding acquired from the data analysis which will include four sections.

The objective of this research is to identify the perceived impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small businesses in Nigeria. This is pertinent knowing that social commerce is one of the reasons why people use social media. Social commerce is a type of Internet-based social media in which people may market, sell, compare, and buy products and services in online markets and communities Stephen and Toubia (2010). The reason for choosing Instagram over other social media platforms is because it is a social network that is heavily dependent on visual communication. Instagram has proven to be an effective communication and marketing tool for showing products with visual descriptions.

Hence, to meet the research questions and objectives, the data analysis will take on the thematic analysis to bring out relevant themes that will support the impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance. In addition, the purpose of the given analysis is to find relationships and patterns to comprise the model. This was carried out by interviewing experts and Small Scale Business owners. Thus, the following sections describe, interpret and discuss the findings from the participants' interviews.

Section 4.2 presents the description of the main findings as collected during the process of interview. This section will be divided into subsections including themes as well as codes that are pertinent in the context of the objectives, and questions of this study. Each subsection will be made up of the main findings and quotations that are extracted from participants' answers. Following

that, section 4.3 will be made up of discussions where findings are interpreted accordingly to answer to provide meaningful insights. The table will consist of the main themes that have already appeared during the literature review chapter and will conclude the discussion part of the findings.

4.2 Findings

4.2.1 Usage and adoption of Instagram as a marketing tool among Nigerian SMES.

The first question was asked to find out how long respondents have been using Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business. According to the respondents, Instagram has become one of their major social media handles. The first two respondents stated that they have been using Instagram for the past three years; one of the respondents has used Instagram a period of eight months. Only one respondent acknowledged that Instagram has been in use in their company for the past 10 years. Also the respondents affirmed that their motivation for using Instagram is because it gives them wider range of audience and customer base. The respondents also agreed that Instagram enables them to share the pictures of their product by so doing more customers are reached and that can trickle down to sales. One of the respondents (P4) stated that *“using Instagram is a kind of way that I can reach a lot of people without leaving where I am, I just need to post and then people that I don't even know will get to see what I do”*. According to the findings, the respondents unanimously agreed that they have observed changes in the way small businesses in Nigeria are using Instagram for marketing purposes. For instance the presence of Instagram makes it possible for small businesses to be seen on the internet which enhanced their visibility and range of reach. One of the respondents (P1) affirmed that *“if you go to Instagram right now before you go through one post, three post next thing you will see is sponsored Ad. Sponsored Ads keep popping up and there is no how you will see one or two things that you will not like, hence you will want to see the page and even buy the product”* this supports the idea that Instagram brought

a lot of changes in the traditional business pattern to a digital way of doing business which seem to be more easy and efficient. Also the other respondents (P4) specifically put it that *“you don't need to rent a store or anything like that, you just need your phone and Internet connection. So most of the business owners, as soon as they launched their business, they're moving online straight up”*.

The respondents were also asked how they allocate their resources (time, budget, personnel) to manage their Instagram marketing activities. All participants indicated that Instagram requires time, budget and most times personnel for it to work effectively. *“The way Instagram consumes data in this side of the world is on the high side. Like you can spend an hour on Instagram and the next thing 4 Gig is gone”* (P1). Another respondents stated that time is involved to learn the market especially to understand when they are online. *“It's a bit of a challenge because you realise that sometimes the time zone differs and you just have to find a way to just work by it, it's a lot of challenge when you just have to post and you already scheduled that this time is when you are going to create content, post it and all of that then your audience are probably at work, they are sleeping, they are one thing or the other”* (P2). Also one of the respondents stated that due to the cost of using Instagram *“Once I'm in school, I'll post whatever I need to post for the day”* (P4). This shows that Wi-Fi is been used to augment the data involved in making use of Instagram, hence some SME's in Nigeria fine the use of Instagram expensive to use. According to the findings, one of the respondents stated that *“It is a lot of work, it is time consuming, but you know what is called dedication, that's the push really”* (P3) this respondents also affirmed that he does not need any personnel to run his business on Instagram, he does it himself.

4.2.2 Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian SMES

Subsequently, the respondents were asked to explain how they utilize Instagram as a marketing tool for their small business. The participants stated that they post pictures, videos and reels on Instagram to sell their products. They also uses sponsored ads to reach new audience, *“I run Ads, paid sponsorships with Influencers on Instagram. On Instagram you can actually run your ads either you do it yourself with the tools or you use paid sponsored by influencers. Then you can make your sponsored Ad location specific, for example, I will be running an Ad next week and I want to get more customers from locations like Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt, if you want to run an Ad now, I will select any location that I want people in this particular location”*(P1). In other words, participants see Instagram ads as a veritable tool in marketing their products. On the other hand, *“setting up Instagram was more like a portfolio, and catalog for people to be able to refer to, get referred to, to see our job and see what we can deliver, so for us we are not just about getting the full likes and all of that, for now, basically, we’ve been trying to get people to kind of find somewhere they can have a view of what we can do, what we do, what we stand for and some of that, so until we are able to get a representative that will always interface”* (P2). The participant reiterated that they use Instagram to showcases their services as well as their products. The participants also agreed that Instagram is useful to their business and they make good use of it to advertise and reach new market, *“for instance I sell sweatshirts you can’t expect me to sell sweatshirts to people who are sixty years old. Compared to interactions with people who are 20-25 years old. Instagram will give you the opportunity to select the people that you want to see your post. On the larger side, Instagram has made advertisement and how to promote business very easy”* (P1).

Furthermore, the respondents were asked to mention specific goals or objectives do they aim to achieve through their Instagram marketing efforts. All the respondents asserted that their goal includes to reach a wider audience, makes sales, get known by customers as well as be seen on the global space. One of the participants stated that *“it is not just to reach a wider audience, not necessarily people in Nigeria Only, I wish to reach the whole world actually, like, everyone can be seeing my work, that okay there is a lady, somewhere in Nigeria that does this, that does that, so that's that is my major goal, majorly for people to see what I do”* (P5). Also the respondents mentioned brand visibility as one of their goals for using Instagram *“People have to know my brand if I want to be good, then to promote my brand too”*(P1). This entails that the participants intents to use Instagram to promote their brands and make it to be known. Among other goals pointed out by the participants includes making sales, *“Sales too matters, because it's like trying to convert my audience into getting paid. They are actually buying from me, so making excellent sales is one, larger audience and then promoting the business”* (P5).

To further buttress the understanding on the Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian SMES, the respondents were asked on *“How do you measure the success of your Instagram marketing campaigns? Are there any specific metrics you track or evaluate”?*, the participants stated that there are different ways to measure the success of their Instagram marketing campaign like receiving likes, comments, shares etc. These makes the business owners know that their post is doing well, *“definitely you'll have lots of likes, you have lots of comments do you understand? And most times people will share”* (P3). The respondents also stated that there are other ways to know the success of their campaigns on Instagram which is by using the analytics option to view your performance. One of the respondents stated that *“Instagram has been good enough to pop up which of your post did a good job in the last month, so when it pops up you can just go through it,*

check the activities see how far the post has gone and all of that, and if you can make more of such post yeah you can go ahead but for me as a person how I know that post is going so well is the number of likes that I get on it, even without them commenting, it means that they have interest so to say, it intrigued someone at a point in time, so the likes coming in and you're like okay my IG post is doing well" (P2). One more participants echoed that "when you have more engagement on the post, definitely it feels like I am successful with that post" (P3). Also another respondents affirmed that "I also checked the activity bar, I go there to check to see how many people engaged to see how many people watched the video, to see who, the people who have watched the video are or the post to see, the number of people that like the post and reposted and all those type of things. So that's how I measure" (P5).

4.2.3 Benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian SMES

Participants shared their benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian SMES. In the opinion of the respondents, the primary benefits associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian SME's are sales, ability to reach wide audience, business visibility, ease of operation as well as being cheap. More specifically, one of the benefits of using Instagram is that it does not consider who you are or where you are before sales are being made, *"like if a stranger wants to refer me to another person, they don't even have to contact me first before seeing my job, so definitely my job is out already. Do you get, my pictures are out, and my videos are out portraying my job. So I think that's like the main thing, you're getting more strangers as customers". (P3). Similarly, another respondent affirmed that "I can basically do everything by myself. And then in the comfort of my house, I can reach a lot of people as well. So those are the main benefits" (P4). One of the most resounding benefits among the respondents is in the area of ability to reach a wide range of audience just in the palm of your hands. Another benefit that was common among*

respondents is the fact that *“it is way cheaper than using or that means imagine if I had a physical store I’d be paying rent, pay for electricity probably pay someone that would also manage the store for me”* (P4). The respondents agree that the digital nature of Instagram App makes it easy for them to store contents and access them any time they want them. From the findings also, the respondents agree that one of the benefits of using Instagram is that it leads to increase in sales.

In addition, the respondents were asked to mention the challenges and in their opinion, the respondents listed the following as part of their major challenge with Instagram marketing; time consumption, cost of ads, making payment in Dollars, visibility of post, video quality, and followership is difficult and also Instagram can be hacked. One of the respondents stated that *“Instagram taking a lot of time before they approve your sponsored Ad is also an issue because you’d probably, Imagine if you want to run an Ad for 6 days and Instagram is taking 20 hours before they approve you and your money is already reading. If they can make it in a way that if you want to run an Ad and it is when they actually approve it that the money starts to count yes, but once you’ve already uploaded for the review your money has started to read so that is an issue and challenge that I experience on Instagram”*. Another recurring challenge was difficulty in making payments. The findings reveals that the respondents found it hard to make payment with Nigeria ATM card. This made it difficult to make payment for sponsored ads and other services in Instagram. The respondents unanimously agreed that it gets frustrating when you already have a master card you’re expecting to make use of and then it just declines at the point of making payment.

In addition, one of the respondents also mentioned that poor electrical situation in Nigeria is a major challenge. This challenge affect their video production, as well as affect their mobile gadget due to low battery. In her statement, the respondents reported that *“light has also affected us*

because in Nigeria light is not constant and I cannot make videos in the dark, so I have to get money, get petrol and all of that” (P5).

4.2.4 The perception of selected SMES in Nigeria about the usage of Instagram

The respondents were asked to state their perceived importance and relevance of Instagram for small businesses in Nigeria. All the respondents reiterated that Instagram is very relevant to any business especially in helping them gain visibility, cover wider range of audience as well as make reasonable profit. In the words of (P2) *“I actually feel it is important because like I said from the beginning, everybody wants to be able to access a large range of information at a go and Instagram is one good channel to get that, why not join the train, so every small business no matter how small the business is get on with the train you just don’t know who you are opening that account for so you can imagine”*. Furthermore, (P2 and P3) shared similar opinion regarding their perceived importance of Instagram towards small businesses in Nigeria. The respondents opined that using Instagram exposes the business to getting referrals, and getting more patronage, hence it is really relevant.

To the respondents, Instagram is fun, interesting, *“I’ll say awesome because it has actually helped me a lot, by getting to know more people, sales, a great profile for people to check to connect with other bakers all over the world, you get to see work, like you get to know about more tutorials, getting likes, being more advanced, I got so many classes through Instagram, so I’ve really learnt and gained a lot. It is a huge advantage for me and the brand” (p5)*. Similarly, *“It helps you to up your game and get better, Instagram has been able to help me see and learn from people” (p2)*.

The respondents also noted that the use of Instagram has pushed them beyond where they were prior to the time they joined the platform, *“I’ll say it’s a very nice experience, with time and*

consistency, I'll definitely get to where I'm going to because it all depends on how well and how much you push out for people to see your page, they will definitely follow" (p1).

In addition, the participants recommended that SME owners should make use of Instagram to promote their business, they should also be consistent in posting their products online. One of the respondents also recommended that SME's *"should set up their Instagram page well, use a valid email, use a strong Facebook account so that you cannot be scammed. Post quality pictures, keep on posting, everything is packaging, and you have to package yourself well. You must also learn how to engage with your audience to turn them into customer/potential clients"* (P1). The respondents echoed that SME owners should be dedicated, committed and should not easily give in to discouragement, *"I know it takes a lot of energy. It takes a lot of dedication. You have to be committed. Really. Moreover, I'd just advice sometimes when you see people who don't engage on your post, you might be discouraged"* (P3). Furthermore, one of the respondents recommended SME's to make 'quality' their watch word, *"everything that you want to put outside your content should be of good quality because if it is low quality, people would just look and pass. Once they see that the equality of your video or they just visit your page and everything is like, scattered. You would just, like, press the back button and move on to the next because don't really have that time to be looking at what is not all that attractive. So just try to, um, put in all the work and everything before you start"* (P4).

4.3 Discussion

As stated earlier, the main objective of this dissertation is to find out the Perceived impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small businesses in Nigeria. The objective was achieved through the results represented in section 4.2. The findings section aided the presentation of the relevant and essentials elements that were outlined by participants in qualitative

data analysis. This further assisted in the discussion of the findings and interpretations of data to provide a wide-ranged conclusion that emerged from key findings.

The research findings allowed us to present the Perceived impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small businesses in Nigeria. This section will analyze and interpret the meaning and importance of the major findings. It follows the structure of the thematic analysis that was presented in section 4.2. The thematic analysis that was outlined during the data analysis includes current usage and adoption of Instagram as a marketing tool among Nigerian SME's, Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian SMES, Benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian SMES, The perception of selected SMES in Nigeria about the usage of Instagram. The key findings will be accordingly linked and backed up with previous studies that were carried out in chapter 2.

4.3.1 Current usage and adoption of Instagram as a marketing tool among Nigerian SMES.

The findings of the study reveals that SME's in Nigeria uses Instagram as a marketing tool. This finding is consistent with previous literature that has evaluated the usage of Instagram among businesses. According to literature, Instagram had become a popular and effective platform for businesses of all sizes to promote their products and services, connect with their target audience, and build brand awareness. The respondents sighted cost-effectiveness, targeted advertising, wide range of coverage, ease of use, and storytelling. These findings is in line with the findings of Infante and Mardikaningsih (2022) who asserted that Instagram provided a cost-effective way for SMEs to reach a large audience without the need for significant advertising budgets. The study also aligned with the findings of Borah et al. (2022) who maintained that With Instagram's advertising tools, small and medium-sized businesses could target particular demographics, hobbies, and behaviours to make sure their ads were seen by the correct people. The respondents

equally affirmed that the presence on SME's on in the internet has changed many things about how business were done among SME's in Nigeria. Now businesses are online, reaching new audiences and making wider engagements (Borah et al., 2022). In line with the findings of, Majeed et al. (2022) suggested that Instagram's interactive features, such as likes, comments, and direct messages, enabled SMEs to engage directly with their customers, respond to inquiries, and build a loyal customer base. The study also maintained that On Instagram, several SMEs partnered with influencers to take advantage of their enormous followings and reach out to new audiences. The business tools available on Instagram gave SMEs insightful statistics that improved their understanding of their target market (Majeed et al., 2022). The findings of the study equally reveals that the usage of Instagram requires time, budget as well as resources like personnel. This result supports the assertion of Igbashangev (2021) that high-quality and compelling products, such as pictures, videos, stories, and captions, are essential for running an effective Instagram marketing strategy. It takes time and creativity to create intriguing content. Small businesses may find it difficult to continuously provide content those appeals to their audience if they have less time, finance and other resources.

4.3.2 Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian SMES.

The result of the findings shows that respondents in this study employed various marketing strategies like visual storytelling, sponsored ads. This result is in line with previous studies in this area of study. For instance, Rashid (2018) argued that Nigerian SMEs frequently take advantage of Instagram's visual capabilities to create engrossing tales about their company, goods, or services. They exhibit their products and emotionally connect their customers by combining photos and videos. The result also shows that some of the respondents utilized Instagram ads, some were through influencer marketing. This is consistent with the submission of Turner et al., (2023), who

stated that influencer marketing is common in Nigeria, where SMEs work with regional influencers that have sizable Instagram followings. These influencers market the SME's goods or services to their audience, which aids in raising recognition of the brand and boosting sales. Nigerian SMEs urge their clients to produce and distribute content showcasing their goods or services. UGC is useful because it establishes social proof, fosters trust, and enables the company to exhibit its products through the eyes of its clients (Ahmad et al., 2018). According to Agnihotri, et al., (2016b), leveraging Instagram platforms can assist firms in obtaining essential consumer and market data on a product or service. As a result, it is seen as a tremendous asset for the company in terms of expanding awareness and increasing loyalty.

4.3.3 Benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian SMES

Numerous benefits were found in the course of this study. According to the respondents, Instagram marketing gives room for more sales, ability to reach wide audience, business visibility, customer engagement, ease of operation as well as being cheap. Instagram is a great tool for reaching a broad audience because of its sizable and varied user base. SMEs have the opportunity to engage with clients and customers from a variety of demographics and places because to the platform's more than 1 billion active monthly users exist (Mayeh et al., 2012). Furthermore, these findings are consistent with the research done by Imran and Jian (2018) and Ikedionu (2018) which reveals that Instagram is a very visually appealing site, which benefits SMEs. The studies maintained that high-quality pictures and videos may present goods and services in a more convincing and interesting way, drawing in new clients. Also, Igwe et al. (2018) asserted that SMEs may improve and develop their brand identities through Instagram. A memorable brand image may be developed via consistent and engaging content, which can also help SME's stand out in a crowded marketplace. According to Alshaalan (2019), SMEs may target local, national, and worldwide

audiences because of Instagram's extensive global reach. SME's now have the ability to contact customers outside of their current geographical location. In addition, free Instagram business accounts can have tremendous organic reach if their material appeals to their target market. Instagram's targeting tools allow SMEs more effectively reach their target demographic, even when using paid advertising (Ikedionu, 2018).

Furthermore, the challenges acknowledged by the participants in the study include cost of data, time consumption, cost of ads, making payment in Dollars, visibility of post, video quality, and followership is difficult and also Instagram can be hacked. In support to this findings, Schivinski & Dabrowski (2016) mentioned that one of the major challenges of using Instagram marketing is in it cost involvement. The author argued that for your business to reach a reasonable audience it requires ads and ads are not cheap especially when you want to reach out to a large sized audience. This entails that some SME's may lack that funding to pay for such services. Furthermore, Ahmad et al. (2018) maintained that Instagram requires time and consistency. However, most SME's lack the time and patients to take the task of handling their Instagram pages.

4.3.4 The perception of selected SMES in Nigeria about the usage of Instagram

The study findings reveals that Instagram is very relevant to any business especially in helping them gain visibility, cover wider range of audience as well as make a reasonable profit. This is consistent with the findings of Agnihotri, et al. (2016b) who believes that leveraging Instagram platforms can assist firms in obtaining essential consumer and market data on a product or service. The findings also shows that using Instagram exposes the SME's to getting referrals, and getting more patronage. The platform's popularity and unique features make it an attractive and effective marketing tool for businesses. This is a similar opinion with researchers such as Gaglio et al. (2022) and Majeed et al. (2022) who asserted that Many SMEs' target markets, who make up a sizeable

chunk of Instagram's user base, utilise it (Tajudeen, 2018). SMEs may boost their brand awareness and reach a larger audience by utilising the platform, even on a tight budget. Instagram gives small and medium-sized businesses the chance to visually represent their goods, services, and brand identity. Brand storytelling that is consistent and appealing may strengthen a company's visibility and increase customers' remember of the brand (Grizane & Jurgelane-Kaldava, 2017).

4.4 Conclusion

The findings and discussion chapter are were carried out through interview process of five SME's from Nigeria. The data analysis took a thematic approach from which the main themes and codes were derived and subsequently discussed in section 4.3. The main themes included current usage and adoption of Instagram as a marketing tool among Nigerian SME's, Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian SMES, Benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian SMES, The perception of selected SMES in Nigeria about the usage of Instagram. The themes were partially derived from the literature review that assisted in structuring thematic analysis to further analyse them properly. The findings of the study were compared to prior literatures where they were either supported, contradicted or added to the previous studies in the area of Instagram marketing and business performance of small businesses in Nigeria.

Following the findings, it was evident that Instagram marketing is essential to the growth and performance of SME's in Nigeria. The study also concluded that Instagram marketing enhances SME's visibility. It was also concluded that Instagram marketing gives room for wide range of customer base as well as helps to foster good customer engagement.

Conclusion of the thoughts on the contribution of the research, limitations and suggestions will be discussed in the following chapter.

5 Concluding Thoughts on the Contribution of this Research, its Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

5.1 Implications of Findings for the Research Questions

This section concludes the research study by bringing out the key research findings in relation to the research objectives and questions. This dissertation aimed to identify the Perceived impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small businesses in Nigeria. By analysing the key components and identifying their impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small businesses in Nigeria, the proposed study identified the key findings that are outlined below.

Extant literatures reviewed as well as results of this present study underlined the impact of Instagram marketing strategies as an important tool for SME's performance. Previous studies suggested different marketing strategies which can be used by SME's to increase their performance. These strategies include Instagram Ads, Instagram analytics tools, Call-to-Action Buttons, Instagram reels (Ikedionu, 2018). The results represented most of the strategies outlined in previous studies. Meanwhile, previous studies outlined the importance and relevance of Instagram marketing as a veritable tool to boost the performance of SME's in Nigeria.

5.2 Contributions of the Research

The proposed research study contributed to the understanding of the impact of Instagram marketing on the business performance of small businesses in Nigeria. Specifically, the study highlighted the need for SME's to utilize Instagram in promoting their business. It also emphasized the ways and strategies by which SME's can reach their potential clients and convert them to sales and profit. Furthermore, the study aimed to access the current usage and adoption of Instagram as

a marketing tool among Nigerian small businesses. The study contributed by identifying the motivation behind the usage of Instagram among respondents. The study further suggested better ways to maximize the benefits of Instagram marketing by SME's.

Also the study aimed at examining the various Instagram marketing strategies employed by Nigerian small businesses. Previous studies highlighted various strategies that SME's can employ in their marketing activities. However, the study helped to expand the understanding on these strategies and how they can be applied. The study noted that adequate acknowledgement of the characteristics of the customers helps SME's to target the customers properly so as to place content that will reach and make meaningful impact to them.

The study also investigated the perceived benefits and challenges associated with Instagram marketing for Nigerian small businesses. Previous studies agreed that various benefits accrue from Instagram marketing. Businesses place a strong emphasis on meaningful, sincere interactions and trustworthy relationships in order to develop a foundation of devoted customers and a thriving community. Instagram is a useful tool in this situation (Pavlova, 2018). The result of the study revealed that many of the participants Instagram is beneficial to business in the sense that it is easy to use, it has the ability to reach a wide range of audience just in the palm of once hand. Therefore, SME's can explore these benefits and make reasonable additions to their business.

This study further contributed to research by developing framework that can be used to measure key business performance indicators such as sales revenue, customer acquisition, brand awareness and customer engagement. The framework helped to demystify the vague on how SME's can make effective utilization of social media in Nigerian their business operations, such as promotion, consumer relationships, and information browsing, may lead to several favourable

outcomes, including cost savings, enhanced customer relations, and improved knowledge accessibility

Finally, the study arrived at set of recommendations for small businesses on how to differentiate themselves from competitors through their Instagram marketing strategies. These recommendations included consistency, dedication and commitment as well as making use of sponsored ads to reach wider audience. Hence, if these recommendations are employed by SME's, there will be significant improvement in their business performance.

5.3 Limitations of the Research

The research population chosen for this study consisted of various SME's of different sizes, nature of business, product-based and service-based. Due to time constraints, the author is not able to increase the number of participants above five participants; this may hinder the result of this finding from being generalized.

5.4 Recommendations for Practice

Following the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made

1. SME's should make use of Instagram Marketing in their business as it has been proven to be a veritable tool to enhance business performance of small businesses.
2. Instagram should make available a payment option that enables payment for sponsored Ads in local currencies
3. Instagram algorithm should be improved so that the content created by SMEs gets the chance to reach a wide range of audience without heavy reliance on sponsored Ads.
4. SMEs should put in place strategies such as Content batching, Content calendar creation and scheduling to promote active and consistent use of Instagram

5. SMEs should consistently post high quality content (Photos, Reels, etc.) on Instagram in order to maintain a cohesive aesthetic that attracts potential customers and accurately represent the brand.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Following the limitations of this study, further researches can examine more SME's comprising of different Geo-political zones of Nigeria. The project was also limited by region – Akure, thus, the research findings could not be applied to other areas of Nigeria. The author assumes that there must be interesting differences in the way Instagram marketing is implemented in the central regions and more remote parts of the country. Hence, future research can be aimed at comparing different areas to reveal the differences in the results achieved.

5.6 Final Conclusion and Reflections

This dissertation and the methodological approach aided the researcher to take a close look at the various impact of Instagram Marketing on SME's performance. The study disclosed that Instagram marketing is essential for every small scale business. These implies that if SMEs manage their Instagram account strategically, it can bring such results as increased brand awareness, trustful relationships with consumers and customer loyalty. It will lead to positive impact on revenue stream, customer satisfaction, brand image and reputation. Therefore, Instagram marketing strategy should be integrated into organization's overall marketing campaign and aligned with its business goals.

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Appendix A- Interview Protocol

1. Introduction

Hello (Name), Thank you so much for granting me this interview. The aim of this interview is to get your insights on how you use Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business. I reached out to you to be a participant on this study because I believe your expertise and experience offers so much value.

Before we begin the interview I want you to keep in mind that nothing confidential you say will be used in the dissertation, I will be the only one who has access to this data and will keep it completely confidential until it is permanently deleted. The interview should last 30-40 minutes. If you want to stop participation in this interview or not answer certain questions for whatever reason, please let me know at any moment throughout the conversation. With your permission I'm going to start recording the meeting now so that I can transcribe later. Please kindly let me know if you want me to stop the recording or have any question. Once you are comfortable to start the interview I'll begin with the first question.

2.) The aim of this research is to study the perceived impact of Small business enterprises in Ondo State Nigeria.

3.) Opening Questions

Interviewee:

Name:

How long have you been using Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business?

Key Questions

1. Have you observed any trends or changes in the way small businesses in Nigeria are using Instagram for marketing purposes?
2. How do you allocate your resources (time, budget, personnel) to manage your Instagram
3. How do you utilize Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business?
4. What specific goals or objectives do you aim to achieve through your Instagram marketing efforts?
5. How do you measure the success of your Instagram marketing campaigns? Are there any specific metrics you track or evaluate?
6. What are the primary benefits you have experienced from using Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business?
7. Have you observed any growth in customer engagement or interactions as a result of your Instagram marketing efforts?
8. Have you seen an increase in sales or conversions directly attributed to your Instagram marketing activities?
9. What are some of the challenges or difficulties you have encountered while using Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business? If yes, how have you addressed those challenges?
10. How do you manage the time and resources required to create and maintain a consistent presence on Instagram?
11. Have you faced any issues related to measuring the effectiveness of your Instagram marketing campaigns or tracking return on investment?

12. How do you perceive the importance and relevance of Instagram for small businesses in Nigeria?
13. How would you summarize your overall experience with Instagram as a marketing tool for your small business?
14. Based on your experience, what recommendations or advice would you give to other small businesses in Nigeria considering using Instagram for marketing purposes

Appendix B- Interview transcript I

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Interview Number | 1 |
| Venue | Zoom |
| Interviewee | Oluwamuyiwa Idowu Small Business Owner Bishop's Clothing |
| Interviewer | Oluwaseun Olubukola Odofn |

Me: How long have you been using Instagram to Market your business?

Bishop: Since let me say three months, it's over 3 months now.

Me: What motivated you to start using Instagram?

Bishop: Because the thing is this, Instagram has a larger sale interface, to likw grow unlike saying you just market your business to people around you and your whatsapp status, how many contact do you want to even have? Even if you have over 2000 contacts how many people do you want to text. And you cannot move all around Akure that you want to sell but with Instagram you can link up and reach out to thousands of potential customers. So Instagram has a larger market space compared to other social network.

Me: Have you observed any trend in the way Nigerian businesses us Instagram?

B: Yes many people are now using Instagram these days, the world is evolving now, people can get information on their phone, even when you are at work, people are using their phone to check what is going on twitter and all. Do you understand? Everybody is on instagram. So if you

definitely want to get people to buy your stuff, you have to use Instagram, everybody is using it. If you go to Instagram right now before you go through one post, three post next thing you will see is sponsored Ad. Sponsored Ads keep popping up and there is no how you will see one or two things that you will like, that you will want to see the page and even buy.

Me: So how do you allocate your resources to manage your Instagram marketing

B: For example, the way Instagram consumes data in this side of the world is on the high side. Like you can spend an hour on Instagram and the next thing 4 Gig is gone. Like the consumption rate of data is quite much. Yes, another thing, before they review and allow your sponsored post to go viral it takes time longer here, it's somehow challenging, I don't blame them because I feel probably they think there is a lot of scammers that are using Instagram, they will always want to review the product, page and the person posting it so that the business is not actually the platform to scam people, so it takes a longer time over there. For example if you want to run an Ad for a day it is kind of like you are wasting your time because they could use 6-12 hours to review your Ad, when the Ad is just for 24 hours, so people run their Ads for like 7 days, 6 days which is now not cost effective. It is more expensive and it is more on the higher side in this part of the world than in other places.

Me: How do you use IG for your business?

B: I post, I run Ads, paid sponsorships with Influencers on Instagram. On Instagram you can actually run your ads either you do it yourself with the tools or you use paid sponsored by influencers. Then you can make your sponsored Ad location specific, for example, I will be running an Ad next week and I want to get more customers from locations like Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt, if you want to run an Ad now, I will select any location that I want people in this

particular location. You know everybody on Instagram has interests for example on some people's Instagram all you will be seeing is football based on the fact that that is what they have been searching is football and that is their interest, it is different things for different people. I will take that into consideration, if I want to do my post now, I will not pick people that their interest is football in my category for my advertisement. It's just as if I am wasting my money and my time. You can select the age as well. For instance I sell sweatshirts you can't expect me to sell sweatshirts to people who are sixty years old. Compared to interactions with people who are 20-25 years old. Instagram will give you the opportunity to select the people that you want to see your post. On the larger side, Instagram has made advertisement and how to promote business very easy.

Me: What specific goal do you want to achieve?

B: I have 2 goals first of all, create and awareness of my brand, because there are a lot of people too in this space that are wntering, I am entering into the space too as a competitor, no 1. People have to know my brand if I want to be good, then to promote my brand too, people need to see my post, visit my page, visiting my page is kind of feedback but the main goal for every person that is using Instagram is to make sales and profit.

Me: How do you measure the success of your Instagram marketing campaign?

B: I measure it by erhm, okay, for example if I want to run an Ad and in that Ad I am expecting close to 20,000 people now that means I am expecting 20,000 people to interact, to actually see the post, and one thing about Instagram is this, you have to make your post catchy. So if I make my post catchy and actually catching out 5,000 people out of my estimated 20,000 people that I had budgeted for, out of that 3,000 people, how many people are going to buy. One thing is making profit and sales is not immediately and it is about meeting potential customers even though they

don't buy now, they will like your post, follow your page, next one you might post, they will definitely want to buy. So you might post and they will definitely want to buy. So making potential customers and also then the post itself you are definitely going to make sales and profit depending on how you post your goods, how you promote it. So that's one thing about insagram Ad, it's very easy and interesting and it has actually made business good.

Me: Some people complain about sponsored Ad.

B: Yes, yes, yes, one thing about Instagram Ad is that it is now managed by Meta so there are some steps that you have to take and you have to follow before you can actually pay for this Ad, you can actually use your Instagram account to pay for it but in Nigeria now, you cannot use your ATM card you have to use dollar card which is also a challenge but some people are using Kippa or Payday for Instagram. They will just give you a virtual MasterCard that you can actually pay with using dollars but if you want to use Nigerian mastercard to pay for your Instagram you have to link your Instagram account to your facebook so that from there you open what is called Facebook manager app, that is where you're going to actually be able to pay with your card. It is always an issue for some people because if you don't know how to link your page with Facebook, and Facebook is so sensitive that if it finds any irregularities it might block the page, and if it blocks the page you have to now start again from the beginning or they will not even allow you again and you might have to open a new Facebook.

Me: What are the primary benefits that you have experienced from using Instagram?

B: Yes, because one thing about Instagram is that you have to put effort, you have to just be consistent, if you are not consistent with your posting before you know it, there are many people

out there too that are selling stuff on Instagram, so if you are not consistent other people will take your potential customers. Consistency is key to growth on Instagram.

Me: can you provide any success story you have with IG?

B: Yes, there was a time I did a paid sponsored ad with an influencer and there was a lot of growth, number one, I had lots of followers, potential customers and people actually bought from me so I made profit. I made more money online than selling physically so Instagram is very good for business in this season.

Me: So what are some of the challenges you've encountered while using Instagram?

B: Like I said, data is number 1, then Instagram taking a lot of time before they approve your sponsored Ad is also an issue because you'd probably... Imagine if you want to run an Ad for 6 days and Instagram is taking 20 hours before they approve you and your money is already reading. If they can make it in a way that if you want to run an Ad and it is when they actually approve it that the money starts to count yes, but once you've already uploaded for the review your money has started to read so that is an issue and challenge that I experience on Instagram.

Me: So on IG now when they are taking their time to review your Ad, your money is counting already.

B: Exactly, it is counting already.

Me: Is it expensive to run a sponsored Ad?

B: The cost is relative depending on your targeted locations and number of people to be reached and age bracket.

Me: If someone encounters negative feedback on IG how would you advise them to handle it?

B: One thing about sponsored Ad is Instagram will make your audience to see what you're doing, now the first thing the person will check is your page, is this person real, the page of the person should entice you, okay you are posting blurry pictures, it's not catchy, the video you are posting is somehow, even though the person saw the page it will send the person back, something about instagram is this, you must build your page, make it stand out and catchy because if it's not catchy people will just go off that's how Instagram is. Make posts that if they will not be able to resist the offer of what you have posted. Your page must look real so that they will know this is not a scammer, post pictures of yourself, post videos of your deliveries, post reviews and let people see it.

Me: If someone leaves a negative comment under a post how will you advise the person to handle that kind of situation?

B: the person can delete the post, because there will also be people who will comment, but it's always rare except if the person has messed up to deliver poor quality cloth.

Me: How do you perceive the importance of Instagram for small businesses?

B: it's a way to actually push your business not to make people see your business and see what you actually do, I know someone that sells novels and the person uses Instagram in Lagos and has gone far, irrespective of the amount you put on your product people are still going to buy it.

Me: What's your overall experience with Instagram?

B: I'll say it's a very nice experience, with time and consistence I'll definitely get to where I'm going to because it all depends on how well and how much you push out for people to see your page, they wil definitely follow. It gives room for customers that want to buy right now and potential customers.

Me: What Recommendation will you give?

B: One, they should set up their page well, use a valid email, use a strong Facebook account so that you cannot be scammed. Post quality pictures, keep on posting, everything is packaging, you have to package yourself well. You must also learn how to engage with your audience to turn them into customer/potential clients.

Appendix C- Interview transcript II

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Interview Number | 2 |
| Venue | Zoom |
| Interviewee | Damilola Peters Small Business Owner DOWYT Interiors |
| Interviewer | Oluwaseun Olubukola Odofn |

Me: when did you start using IG?

Dami: Erhm that will be going back to June 2021, initially businesses were about socializing one on one getting to know information around you and all of that but then again social media is fast growing and we just have to be there, we have to go with the trend.

Me: so what motivated you to start using IG?

Dami: I mean like I said earlier, it is something everyone is getting familiar with day by day and you will realise it's not just about the Gen Z anymore, it has gone way beyond that, it's a platform whereby almost every good business is though it has its pros and cons anyway, everyone wants to be able to access their needs from the comfort of their home. Everybody wants to be able to get vast information. So Instagram is a platform that is willing to give them something as such, they will want to be on that platform, so erhm definitely every business owner as well will be wise enough to join the trend in order to reach the audience as much as the need for the business to grow. I mean there are a lot of cases where by people then go to check your authenticity, erhm authenticity as a yardstick, the authenticity will be measured by you being on social media platforms, that's the only way they can guarantee that you are legit and that you are not just a fraud.

So your presence online is a testimony, the testimony does not have to come from those who are around you, it has to come from other people. Instagram is platform whereby it's global therefore if you have two people from each jurisdiction coming to testify on your page or on your post, they are commenting on your page your post, it gives them this assurance that you probably will be legit.

Me: How do you allocate your time effort and resources?

Dami: when we got on Instagram earlier, there is a free flow of whatever you post gets to reach the audience you want and you don't have to stress about it, because the point is for people to see you. So as people scroll by they get to see you and anytime the post is good you don't have to labour so much to get people to see that I posted something at this time, the algorithm has changed quite a bit.

Now you have to like learn your audience, you have to get to know what time is okay for them, when they get to be online most of the time, erhm, what content you upload get their attention and what appeals them, what is it that you post at what time that gets them to interfere with you to get interactive with you and all of that, so it's better to go along with not just posting, going to algorithm board to check out your audience, look out for when they are always mostly online that way you can schedule a time around posting.

It's a bit of a challenge because you realise that sometimes the time zone differs and you just have to find a way to just work by it, it's a lot of challenge when you just have to post and you already scheduled that this time is when you are going to create content, post it and all of that then your audience are probably at work, they are sleeping, they are one thing or the other. For those of us

that are not much of a social person it is a lot of challenge to work around Instagram and marketing a business.

Me: For your business in particular how do you use IG, what are some of the things you do for your business?

Dami: okay for me as a person, setting up Instagram was more like a portfolio, and catalog for people to be able to refer to, get referred to, to see our job and see what we can deliver, so for us we are not just about getting the full likes and all of that, for now, basically, we've been trying to get people to kind of find somewhere they can have a view of what we can do, what we do, what we stand for and some of that, so until we are able to get a representative that will always interface... it doesn't mean that we don't respond to DMs when we get some, we do, but it's quite different for us we are not 24/7 on Instagram. We are still making use of the old channel of networking with people around us and referrals.

Me: What are your goals for using IG

Dami: Through my IG page I would have preferred if Instagram is able to you know not make use of algorithm strictly as it is because I realized that sponsored ad is what will give most of that attention you are looking for to reach a larger audience and all of that, it usually wasn't so when we first started newly with Instagram. So I would really really have appreciated if Instagram never went that far but I mean business is business for people you know so if that's what makes them who they are fine, for me personally, I'll really really be excited if Instagram can just make our post go viral and meet our geographical area, I mean on Instagram there is a place where you will include your location and there is a way it covers where you are posting from, you know, so if the

audience around that area can easily get the post you make on Instagram without it necessarily being a sponsored ad it will meet all your audience. So do you get what I'm saying?

Me: How do you measure the effectiveness of your Instagram marketing efforts?

Dami: like I said early there is algorithm, there is a part of your page that channels you to seeing how much you have been able to interact with your audience. Instagram has been good enough to pop up which of your post did a good job in the last month, so when it pops up you can just go through it, check the activities see how far the post has gone and all of that, and if you can make more of such post yeah you can go ahead but for me as a person how I know that post is going so well is the number of likes that I get on it, even without them commenting, it means that they have interest so to say, it intrigued someone at a point in time, so the likes coming in and you're like okay my IG post is doing well.

Me: What are the primary benefits you have experienced from using IG?

Dami: The only benefit I have gotten from it is organisation, the fact that it helps me organize my job done, yeah basically putting my work in a much organised way and you are able to write captions under each post, hashtags to whatever you want it to be for and all that. Yeah that's the benefit I've gotten from it, and the reels, when it comes to reels, when it comes to reels, using reels and the fact that I can use sound, save sound for later use, then when you correlate it to the content I want to post, I have it there unlike the others like twitter, Facebook and the likes, I feel like Instagram is a much more organised place.

Me: have you experienced any growth in customer Engagement or Interaction as a result of your IG marketing efforts?

Dami: Judging the fact that my marketing effort hasn't been so excellent I would say fair enough, on a percentage of 1-10, I'll choose 4.

Me: Can you tell me a success story of when you used IG

Dami: I don't have a testimony for that yet.

Me: so challenges apart from algorithm because I know you algorithm what are some of challenges of using IG

Dami: yeah, marketing, sponsored ad, the fact the fact that you have to pay in dollars erhm it usually wasn't so until recently our card doesn't just work, you have to use a specific dollar channel, a paypal, a payday, all these things to make payment for you and it gets frustrating when you already have a card you're expecting to make use of and then it just declines.

Me: Have you encountered negative feedback or backlash on IG?

Dami: no not at all.

Me: The network is breaking up I think this could be one of the challenges as well.

Dami: The reason why I didn't mention it is because it differs from country to country and it can't be generalized

Me: well the study is about Nigeria so it can be generalized.

Dami: oh okay, yeah for us in Nigeria we have a terrible network, yeah so if we are speaking about Nigeria, in context, yeah we have a terrible network when it comes to marketing on Instagram, probably every social media channel, it's a problem generally.

Me: How do you perceive the Importance of IG?

Dami: Yes I actually feel it is important because like I said from the beginning everybody wants to be able to access a large range of information at a go and Instagram is one good channel to get that, why not join the train, so every small business no matter how small the business is get on with the train you just don't know who you are opening that account for so you can imagine. For instance, I am an interior designer here and I make excellent furniture I would be depriving someone on information if I don't get on board with social media. For me it's advisable, not everybody can come down from other parts of Nigeria to look for me because I can render that service. But, if I am online on my Instagram whereby I can reach a large audience we get to see what I can do, we make consultations, we schedule, payment is made and it's shipped down to them.

Me: How would you summarise your experience on IG?

Dami: Fun, it is interesting and fun to be on Instagram, it's productive, erhm, it gives you a reason to get better at your skills. You get better at what you do because there is a lot of healthy competition to see what other people in your niche are doing. It helps you to up your game and get better, Instagram has been able to help me see and learn from people.

Me: What are your Recommendations for small businesses?

Dami: I'll say they should come on board even if it is just one item you get to sell on Instagram, that means Instagram gets to pay you for the effort of being there, so just get on board, get organised with Instagram, follow the guidelines, it's a safe place to be, and there are channels on Instagram that you get to report any thing that doesn't comply so it's safe to be there.

Appendix D- Interview transcript III

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Interview Number | 3 |
| Venue | Zoom |
| Interviewee | Olamide Kolawole Small Business Owner Flawless Avalon Makeovers |
| Interviewer | Oluwaseun Olubukola Odofo |

You: My first question is, how long have you been using Instagram for your Business?

Flawless: Wow, since erhm 2014, it's that's been, nine years that nine nine years, right? So I've been on Instagram for nine years

You: Okay, so motivated you to start using Instagram for your business?

Flawless: Okay, so I think what motivated me was the fact that most of my customers were asking for pictures of my previous jobs. You you gets. And it used to be Facebook So I usually send pictures, but, you know, how many pictures do you want to send to your clients?

Like... but I usually post my best on social media, so definitely, I want to give my best on Instagram too. So I think that was what really prompted me for my customers to be able to access my my my jobs, like, directly even before contacting me. So that was what really prompted me

You: Okay, so have you noticed any changes in the way that businesses use in Instagram to market this?

Flawless: Yeah, positively, really positively

Flawless: I can I can say for a fact that his year alone, most of the jobs that I've gotten, I got them from... not all, most of it , I got them from social media, Instagram to be precise, you understand? And because you can do whatever you like, how you like it, how you want to portray your business. You can put it in videos, pictures. It's just like you putting yourself out there, do you understand. So I can say that it has affected a lot of people positively. Is that the question?

You: yeah, that's the question. That leads me to my second question because I know it can be a lot work, so how do you allocate like time to managing Instagram and even resources sometimes,

Flawless: It is a lot of work, it is time consuming, but you know, you know what is called dedication, that's the push really. And because you know that say for instance, I have not. I have not posted since the 14th of June and a customer of mine called me to you know, ask me "haha have you not been doing recent jobs of which I have lots of jobs in my gallery, but trust me, I've not had time okay, so how I plan the allocation, once I have chance, I definitely do it. And because we have Social media managers but for somebody like me. And because of my job, I feel like I want to be the one to portray what I want to see, like, to be able to push out what I want to say, you understand?

Flawless: So if somebody is not in my shoe you may not be able to do what I want exactly, so, it's just the dedication that will make me create time to do it. Does that answer your question?

You: yeah, the next one is how do you use Instagram because there's so many ways you can use a Instagram, how do you use it for your business, your strategies.

Flawless: do you mean, like, how do I connect with my customers?

You: Yes, like how do you connect? Yes

Flawless: Okay so once I posts I tag a lot of people, that's number one, then I go to my whatsapp to drop the link on my whatsapp for anybody that wants too... in fact most times, I just say please click, you know, to view. So I'll just copy the link from my Instagram back to my Whatsapp status. Then I connected my Facebook. My Facebook is connected to my Instagram, so once I post on my Instagram, it is linked to my Facebook. Then I copy the link to my Whatsapp because I have a lot of customers on my Whatsapp and most people you know, they have my number, I have the numbers. So from there, that is how I connect with my customers, like I make sure they know that I have uploaded. Then I tag a lot of people. I use hashtags too.

You: Okay...So is there any like, strategic goal, like, any objective you want to achieve with your page?

Flawless: Yes, I have, I want to be very verified so and I know that being verified is not an easy thing, so definitely, I think I'll just post more, tag the verified pages more, then maybe one of these days I'll be verified.

You: Umm, very soon, So how do you measure this? If you've made a post on Instagram, how do you know that it has been successful?

Flawless: Instagram will definitely notify you is that what you're saying?

You: How will you know the post was successful, like maybe achieved what you wanted it to achieve

Flawless: Oh, okay, definitely you'll have lots of likes, you have lots of comments do you understand? And most times people will share, there is space on each post where you can view your insights on Instagram. If you are aware of that you can check your audience, how many people shared it, the interactions going on it, you will definitely know that erhm oh this is a good

post. So when you have more engagement on the post, definitely it feels like I am successful with that post

You: So another question that I have is what are the primary benefits that you've experienced from using Instagram for your business?

Flawless: Okay, just like I said, more referrals, that's number one. Like if a stranger wants to refer me to another person, they don't even have to contact me first before seeing my job, so definitely my job is out already. Do you get, my pictures are out, and my videos are out portraying my job. So I think that's like the main thing, you're getting more strangers as customers. Do you understand, you don't have to walk into the studio, it's like I am bringing my studio to the limelight.

You: So do you ever do paid sponsorship, paid Ad?

Flawless: I have done it a couple of times, and I didn't really get what I wanted, you understand? So I wasn't encouraged, I wasn't really encouraged into doing it, have not been doing it like recently but I know I tried it a couple of times, I didn't get what I wanted

You: When you wanted to do it was it like easy, was it easy to set it up?

Flawless: No it wasn't, I don't know about now, but doing it as at then, it was not, in fact I think one of the challenges I had was trying to figure out... I think there was a space that I have to fill how many days, then I think gender, age, do you understand, like I don't even know who to target the sponsored Ad to, I just want to get my page out there, clients coming to my page and then patronising me. I think one of the challenges I had was trying to choose I think maybe location or agegroup. So I just clicked what I wasn't sure of so it wasn't easy, for me it wasn't easy.

You: Okay, apart from that, yeah, what are the challenges that you think you've encountered when you are using Instagram to market your business?

Flawless: Challenges? I think Instagram is just as easy as ABC. I don't think there I any for me, none. Except, sometimes your followers don't get to see your posts. Sometimes, A lot of times, like, a lot.

You: I think that has to do with the Algorithm.

Flawless: Exactly, I think they said, there is a restriction on Instagram you know, posting videos or pictures there are not challenges whatsoever but how far it goes is the problem, I think there is a restriction on my posts especially, most of my viewers, most of my followers don't get to see my post.

You: Okay, so what about, like, network? Is there anything that's like network related?

Flawless: It's MTN, MTN is fast and we have data.

You: Thank you. Um, okay, I'll leave for another question. So how to perceive the usage of Instagram in general for businesses, what is its relevance?

Flawless: it is really relevant, it is really, like I said, you know, I said it helps push the business, like, out. You don't have to be there, like you're pushing your business online. You're getting referrals, you're getting more patronage. I think that's the major thing, so it's really, really relevant.

You: Okay, so based on your experience, yeah, what advice would you give to, like, a Nigerian business that's considered using Instagram for their business?

Flawless: Do we have anybody that is doing business that is not using Instagram.

You: Okay, let's say they are there already but, they just need advice.

Flawless: really, I know it takes a lot of energy. It takes a lot of dedication. You have to be committed. Really. And and, um, I'd just advice sometimes when you see people who don't engage on your post, you might be discouraged. It is discouraging Seun when you see where your page and you don't have likes you don't have views. That is why I really like the fact that you Instagram disabled, that you can actually disable that like and you know button, I really love it. So it doesn't restrict you from posting. You don't get discourage from because I know how a lot of customers then base their patronage on views and likes. I know. Do you understand? So it is it is actually encouraging to see that I don't have to get a lot of likes. I don't have to get a lot of views. So it's just you don't get discouraged just keep doing it really one day it's to pay off.

Appendix E- Interview transcript IV

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|------------------|---|
| Interview Number | 4 |
| Venue | Zoom |
| Interviewee | Oluwajomiloju Alogba Small Business Owner Tiwalade's Empire |
| Interviewer | Oluwaseun Olubukola Odofn |

ME: Oh okay that's good welcome. Thank you, Jomi, so much. I'm going to start the interview, so I don't take too much of your time.

T: Okay.

Me: Okay, yeah, so the first question Jomi is, how long have you been using Instagram as a marketing tool for your business?

T: So I've been using it since November. I think that's eight months now

T: Last year in November.

Me: All right, so what motivated you to start using Instagram for marketing your business?

T: Okay. It's using Instagram is a kind of way that I can reach a lot of people without living where I am, I just need to post and then people that I don't even know will get to see what I do.

Me: So do you feel like have you observed any changes in the way small businesses are now using Instagram?

T: Yes, yes, yes, a lot of business owners recently. Now they've moved on their business online because really that fact that it's cheaper online, you don't need to rent a store or anything like that, you just need your phone and Internet connection. So most of the business owners, as soon as they launched their business, they're moving online straight up

ME: Yeah, yeah, thank you. So my next question is this year, you know how, instagram marketing can take a lot of time, budget and even like efforts. So for your own business, how do you manage your resources?

T: Okay. So by that other students have access to wifi connection. So sometimes that I'll just use the opportunity. Once I'm in school, I'll post whatever I need to post for the day and then there are affordable data plans. That's someone can run. Yes. So you just go with the ones there you can afford and it's going to do the job.

ME: All right, thank you very much. So we'll move to the part 2 now.

T: Okay,

ME: the part, the first question for Part 2 is how do you utilize instagram for your business

T: Okay so I create so I create products photographs and I post them, then also make use of the reels, I post videos too, I make reels sometimes, basically use all the tools on Instagram, I've not done a sponsored ad, that's the only thing I've not done because I'm still working on it. I'm learning some things before. I use the tool as well, so that's the only thing that I've not tried out.

ME: so why have you now been able to use the sponsored ad?

T: I'm still like gathering information on how to use the whole thing, so that it works because I've heard some people complain that they did sponsored ad and it didn't convert so I'm try not to be

in that kind of situation I'm still like learning and getting to know how it really works and all of that.

ME: Yeah. Okay. So what specific goals or objectives do you want to achieve your marketing efforts on Instagram?

T: Basically, it is just to reach a wider audience, not necessarily people in Nigeria Only I wish I wished to reach the whole world actually, like, everyone can be seeing my work, that okay there is a lady, somewhere in Nigeria that does this, that does that, so that's that is my major goal, majorly for people to see what I do

ME: Yeah, yeah. So how do you measure the success of your Instagram markets and campaigns like where you post things, how do you know it has been successful?

T: Okay?

So I know by the kind of comments that people drop. And then I also checked the activity bar, I go there to check to see how many people engaged to see how many people watched the video, to see who, the people who have watched the video are or the post to see, the number of people that like the post and reposted and all those type of things. So that's how I measure.

ME: That's very insightful, thank you. So we are going to the third part now. We are flying by really fast and I like that. So, um, for the benefits. Yeah. What are the primary benefits that you feel you've experienced from using Instagram?

T: Okay. So one major benefit, the first one on my lists, it serves as a means of me storing my work and tracking my growth because recently my my storage crashed and I lost the pictures and videos of everything that I had but then because I was posting on Instagram. So I wasn't really sad

because I know I can still recover those pictures and videos from Instagram. And then the second benefit is that it is cheap is way cheaper than using or that means imagine if I had a physical store I'd be paying rent, pay for electricity probably pay someone that would also manage the store for me. But with this one, I can basically do everything by myself. And then in the comfort of my house, I can reach a lot of people as well. So those are the main benefits.

ME: So have you observed any growth in cost of my engagements?

T: Yes, I have. But challenge that I have with that is the distance some of them would be like. Okay. What I want to buy is not so much expensive but the delivery, the cost of delivery is actually more than the products that they want to get. So I'll I'll even be want to advise them that I don't think it's it's wise unless you, like, unless you want to buy something that is very, um, much. So that's what's that's the only barrier

ME: Okay. So can you provide like any success story from using Instagram, like a time that you really benefited from it?

T: Let me think. Okay, so there's a competition that they do in Nigeria, so I got to know about it through Instagram, and I'm hoping to put in for that competition in this year. I was so. I was so pained when I saw this competition. It was right after it was concluded that I got to know about it on Instagram. And I said I must do this thing this year, that I should not miss it. Also, I've been, like, following and monitoring that page to know when it's going to happen

ME: Okay, that's really good. So now we're moving on to the challenges. So what are some of the challenges or difficulties that you have encountered while using a Instagram?

T: Okay, the the major thing, the major challenge is the video quality that you have to post Instagram will tell you should not post quality that is too low or too high. I didn't even know that

there are such a thing as your video quality is too high or something like that. Till I tried uploading a particular, um, video that I recorded and edited. And Instagram said, this video cannot be posted because the quality is too high this, this, this, this and that. So that's, like, one challenge for me. And then before. Before now I feel like it's actually easy to to gain more followers on Instagram than now because now you're like put in all the work and everything. Once you go off for a little while people just start unfollowing and all. Then another challenge, what else...it can be hacked. That's another challenge that is there in using Instagram to advertise and to market.

ME: So that's so insightful. So is there any like, financial constraints or anyone that's particular to Nigeria apart from the ones you've mentioned? Can you think of any more.

T: No, I think that's basically all.

ME: Yeah, okay. All right, so have you encountered any negative feedback or backlash on Instagram.

T: No, no, no, not at all

ME: But then if someone else has encountered the negative situation. How would you advise them to handle that situation?

T: Okay. So I would just if it's if it is from a follower or something like that I would just advise that she stay off she stay off Instagram for a while and let the atmosphere come down. Come back after your situation as has gone down. Then probably give a public speech or something like that. Maybe like a post or something to like, just address the whole thing in a mature way, of course.

ME: Yeah, yeah,

T: And from from then, best should try to take precautions so that it will not happen again the next time. So that's what I can just say

ME: Thank you, thank you. So we're not going to the final part here. How do perceive the importance and relevance of Instagram.

T: I feel like it's very, very relevant so far. Your small business is like you have goals for your small business. You don't wish to remain small forever. It is very relevant. And then we see daily we see people, that Instagram has really helped just like overnight, it just became popular like that because they actually market their small business online. So I feel like it's very relevant and it's very useful to small business owners because the fact that it's free to join. You don't need to pay to join Instagram. It's free of charge. Everything is free. Just create your page and continue whatever you want to do.

ME: So how would you summarize your overall experience with Instagram?

T: Okay?

So. Well, I feel like It's been good though, Sometimes I imagine that my page should have, like, grown more than it is now, but I realize that the reason why it has not, like, really grown to my expectations or even beyond my expectation is because I've been inconsistent. I was, there was a period of time that I stopped posting for like, three weeks at a go. So in that period of time, I was losing customers and followers as well, but. So I just feel like main thing is to put in the work for you for you to see the growth in your Instagram marketing

ME: Yeah, that's really good. So. And finally, based on your experience, what recommendation or advice would you give a business owner that is considering using Instagram for marketing?

T: Okay. So the first thing I would say is the person I should get a good, um, gets good quality calendar (Note from Seun: I guess she means a plan on what to post regularly). And your posts, everything that you want to be putting outside your content should be of good quality because if it is low quality, people would just look and pass. They would not even like, wait till the end to see what they are trying to say. Once they see that the equality of your video or they just visit your page and everything is like, scattered. You would just, like, press the back button and move on to the next because don't really have that time to be looking at what is not all that attractive. So just try to, um, put put in all the work and everything before you start. It's not just by opening Instagram page. You have to, like, be. What is this word?

You have to be intentional. Yes, you have to be intentional about it. It's not just that, okay?

Everybody's opening Instagram let me open too so you have to like have a plan before you do that.

ME: Thank you. I love that. One or two follow. I know. As I said, that's the last way. Two more follow up questions. So, um, is there any particular Instagram feature or two that you think is the most effective

T: I feel like the he most effective for me is the repost, um, tool there because you can literally share anything that you wants with anybody. So I feel like that's the most important to one. And then being able to also block people because there are some people that they will just follow you or will I say hackers or all those kind of accounts. So being able to, like block them and then you can even block any other accounts that they create. So that's the highlight for me.

ME: And so how do you engage with your audiences on Instagram?

How do you engage with them?

T: Okay. So sometimes some of them will send the message and then will communicate via that route. And then some comments on my posts I try as much as possible to respond to comments on my posts. And when they also like, repost and things like that, I also try to like respond to whatever it is that they are doing on my page as well.

ME: Yeah, yeah, thank you, thank you very much. We've actually come to the end for real now let me stop recording

T: Okay. Recording stopped.

ME: Um, thank you Jomi

T: You're welcome.

Appendix F- Interview transcript V

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| Interview Number | 5 |
| Venue | Zoom |
| Interviewee | Jumoke Omotosho Small Business Owner Peakspastries Hub |
| Interviewer | Oluwaseun Olubukola Odofn |

Me: Um, thank you. Okay, okay, I'm going to start now um okay, Jummy can you still see me

Jummy: Yes

Me: Okay so my first question is how long have you been using Instagram as a marketing tool for your business?

Jummy: it's been very two years. Okay, I think three years now, this is like the third year.

Me: So what motivated you to start using Instagram.

Jummy: Erhm, because to use it as a means of people getting to know me, as a platform for people to get to see my work, the work I've done. So it's not just like I'm trying to send pictures to them. They have a profile to go to and check all the images, all the work I've done in the past.

Me: So do you think there's been like any changes in the way Nigerian small businesses use Instagram?

Jummy: Yes, they have they have been changes.

Me: And so how do you allocate like your time, your resource? How do you manage using, like, Instagram for your marketing activities?

Jummy: Sorry, I'm I'm I forgot to tell you about that question, because I was finding, like, it's kind of hard to like get it, what do you mean it's break it down?

Me: Oh, okay, so what I mean is that. Like, you know, Instagram marketing takes a lot of, like, time it takes a lot of effort sometimes some people even outsource it to someone else. But as for you, like for your business, how do you manage to make sure you're actually involved in using instagram?

Jummy: Oh, okay. By creating a time, like, a specific time to to update things on my page, it's not like all the time I'm on it and all that. Yeah, like, I try to like create time for me to udate it. I've had like many people come to me like, oh, can I manage your account for you? I'm like, no, because I feel like it's something that I can actually do myself. And from there you get people to know the more and then to meet larger audience.

Me: Thank you very much. So yeah, my next question, we are moving to the second part now of the interview. And the first question in the second part is that how do you use Instagram for your business? Like what are the things that How do you use it for your business?

Jummy: By creating erhm... do you mean like what I do? Okay. Posting pictures, creating videos like tutorials for people to like see, for people to learn from. And through Reel, IGTV, and also promoting the posts, the videos that I already did to meet larger audience. The main focus is just like to meet larger audience for people to get to know me better.

Me: Okay, so you like paid promotions. Yeah. And so my next question is what specific goals or objective do you aim to achieve through Instagram marketing, like is there any particular thing you want to achieve with your IG page

Jummy: Yes. Larger audience. Sales too matters, because it's like trying to convert my audience into getting paid. They are actually buying from me, so making excellent sales is one, larger audience and then promoting the business. Not just in my home country but outside the country for people to get to know about Peaks Pastries.

Me: Yeah, so from like using your IG, you can even get clients that are outside Nigeria to patronize your business.

Jummy: And it has actually worked out because people get to patronize me from another country and I get to deliver to people in Nigeria.

Me: And so how do you now measure, like, the success of your IG your efforts, you know, you're putting in efforts in this thing. How do you now measure the success? Like how do you know you are actually achieving results?

Jummy: Hmm, from the sales that I've been making one, from like the people that I already met because instagram has opened like a broad way for me to know people, even not just people around me, do you get, outside businesss, I get to know people and people get to know me. And even from there I get invitations like to get interviews just like this, a lot of things have actually happened from having an instagram page.

Me: So yeah, we are moving to different part. Yeah, yeah, the third part has the bulk of the questions. So the third part, the first question is what are the primary benefits that you have experienced from using IG as your marketing tool? the primary benefits?

Jummy: Yes, Sales, still more sales and your profile for people to look up to, to check, it just like an advertisement, then the audience too.

Me: it's like building a brand that people can go to to look at and be like okay this is what peaks pastries stands for, this is what they've done in the past, tis is what their work looks like. Have you experience any growth in customer engagement and interactions as a result of your interactions?

Jummy: yes definitely

Me: and you said you have seen increase in sales. Yes, yes. So can you provide any like specific success story or examples of where Instagram played a significant role in achieving your business goal?

Jummy: Yes, there was one post like that I actually made like that reel and it had like over 25,000 views and from there people got to like follow me more, I had more followers and I had people that actually come that are like "oh this cake, I actually want it, like even even eople from outside the country so it has really helped. I was excited that yes my effort actually worked.

Me: Moving on to the challenges what are some of the challenges you have encountered while using IG as a marketing tool in Nigeria.

Jummy: Erhm the timing because there are times that I don't just want to post but I have to, so that's a major challenge and also trying to actually create something nice that actually suits my customers, like the that are viewing this post hope they will like it and all of that, trying to make a very nice video for them to be able to view so that is also one of it, and also light issues. Light has also affected us because in Nigeria when the light is not being constant and I cannot make videos in the dark, so I have to get money, get petrol and all of that. So these are like the major challenges trying to get a nice quality video and the time to post.

Me: so you will say one, paid promotion, cost of mobile data, cost of fuel, when there is no electricity. Are there any particular issues you face in relation to how you measure the effectiveness of your IG marketing efforts?

Jummy: No I don't think there has been issues. It's just that it takes time, like I have to be consistent, it takes time for people to know your page, do you get what I'm saying it's not that when you post video then you are expecting it to go viral like that, no, it takes time so I feel like someday with me being consistent people will eventually get to know me more and the brand.

Me: How do you manage the time and resources required to create and maintain a consistent presence on Instagram?

Jummy: That's hard I don't know, it's hard to be honest I don't have the answer yet.

Me: Have you encountered any negative backlash on IG and how did you manage the situation.

Jummy: from one time like that there was a video I posted and it also went viral and people were like this cake looks dry and actually, I wasn't the one who baked the cake and she wanted me to decorate it, so trying to decorate the cake was really hard but I did and the comments were kind of nasty, and I had to explain like this is what happened which never happen any longer because I actually regretted having to take the job so that's like the only thing. And there was a time I did a giveaway like trying to train students and some people did not get chosen were like, they were bitter about it and they started saying negative things. I just feel like they were just pained that they were not selected.

Me: So what you are saying is how you handled that kind of negative situation is to communicate even more clearly so that they can see your own point of view. Final part, how do you perceive the importance and relevance of IG for small business?

Jummy: It is a way for people to get to know their brand like for them to see their previous work that has been done and advertisement, promotion for their work, when people see their work they get more sales. Yeah and it is also like a database for people to view your past work and even your present work, so they get to see how far you've come and how long you've been in the business for and all of that, so that way you get to like gain trust it's not just like oh okay I'm actually doing this, so it's like you get to build trust for your customers like yes they see your work when you post reviews they will see that you are not a scam and all of that, it is a very good app for people to know you better

Me: So what you're saying is that it is important for small businesses to be on IG because people will get to see you, potential customers will get to see you and they will be able to trust your brand because they actually see you being consistent so how would you summarise your overall experience with using IG as a marketing tool for your business.

Jummy: Blissful, it's good, it's actually good, I'll say awesome because it has actually helped me a lot, by getting to know more people, sales, a great profile for people to check to connect with other bakers all over the world, you get to see work, like you get to know about more tutorials, getting like, being more advanced, I got so many classes through Instagram, so I've really learnt and gained a lot. It is a huge advantage for me and the brand.

Me: So based on your experience what recommendation and advise will you give other small businesses in Nigeria that are considering using IG for marketing purposes.

Jummy: They should be more consistent, and they should understand that it takes time, take great pictures, great videos, have a clean profile because it is what you put out there that people will see

and that way they will like somehow get to know your worth. So like get a good phone to like take nice videos, nice pictures and yes that's it basically.

Me: thank you, we are done, just a few more follow up questions, do you engage with your audience through IG stories.

Jummy: Yeah I do, by like posting questions, like information retrievers, post questions too "what do you want us to do, which of our pastries do you like best and all of that will mean engage with them. Yeah that's it.

Me: Do you ever collaborate with influencers

Jummy: Nah, actually no, I've not done any yet, maybe soon enough but not yet. Reels are the most effective, it reaches people that are not even your followers so I feel like reels are really more effective.