

Digital Marketing and Sales Growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria

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Abstract: The study examined the effect of Digital marketing on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria. The study specifically examined the effect of Email Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Digital Display Adverts and Mobile Marketing on Sales Growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria. The Dissertation is anchored on Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by David Fred in 1986. A Survey Research design was used for the study. The study's population is made up of 243 Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria. Two respondents; general managers and marketing managers were selected from each of the MEs studied. This has therefore, brought the study population to 486. The study adopted Census sampling technique, as a result 486 was returned as sample size for the study. Data for the study were collected through structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as tables and simple percentages. In addition, multiple regressions were used for further analysis and test of hypotheses. The findings from this study indicated that there is significant effect between different dimensions of Digital marketing and Sales Growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria. The study revealed that Digital Marketing have significant effect on sales growth of MEs in North Central-Nigeria, particularly, Email Marketing has a $\beta = 0.239$, $t = 2.651$, $p = .016$, Search Engine Marketing has $\beta = 0.202$, $t = 2.028$, $p = .028$, Digital Display Adverts has $\beta = 0.192$, $t = 3.220$, $p = .001$ and Mobile Marketing has $\beta = 0.227$, $t = 3.993$, $p = .000$. Based on research findings, the study concluded that the usage of Digital Marketing through Email Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Digital Display Adverts and Mobile Marketing have improved sales growth of MEs in North Central Nigeria and it is recommended among others that Managers of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria should always improve on implementation of email marketing because it increases access to new markets, brand recognition, customer engagement, customer awareness, complaint resolution, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, among others, so as to enhance their sales growth.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, email marketing, search engine, digital display adverts, mobile banking, sales growth

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The business world and the functioning of markets are progressively digitalized, which is upsetting the development strategies of organizations and the rules of competition. Digitalization also extends to the services and products offered by companies, and it also changes the relationship between suppliers and customers. Digitalization offers companies the agility and flexibility they need to optimize their production and respond effectively to the demands of customers who, in turn, have become informed and connected. It also enables them to adapt quickly to market fluctuations and to preserve and/or acquire their competitive position. Digitalization now affects all functions of the company (Kelai, 2020). Consequently, the marketing and sales department is not an exception. Therefore, the advent of digital marketing, which in turn allows optimizing the actions deployed by companies, deliver the right information and offer the right products at the right time. Nowadays, digital marketing offers many opportunities for all types of companies that want to tackle the risks of competition. Digital marketing is seen as a constantly evolving device and provides effective and tailor-made answers to new consumer's requirements. In addition, optimizing efficiency and performance is one of the major challenges that companies must face by seizing all the advantages offered by digital marketing (Is-haq, 2019).

According to Ryan (2014), consumers are getting increasingly involved in the creation of the product and services which they consume, which has shifted the power from producer to consumer. People are spending more and more time online. Online users are actively increasing due to easy access to Mobile phones which however consumes much of their time. Digital marketing has now become an integral part for success of every business. Especially, for the small businesses since they are cost-effective, can be optimized for efficient results and resourceful. It has no boundaries and provides a vast domain to market their products (Yasmin *et al.*, 2015). Marketers can create strategies that effectively target the right set of prospects using relevant content and through effective channels. When using digital marketing strategies, companies are also able to save their marketing costs since digital marketing is significantly cheaper than traditional marketing channels such as billboards, TV advertisements and Newspaper Advertisements; this makes it significant and instrumental to Medium Enterprises (MEs) since most of them are cash strapped and therefore cannot afford traditional marketing. Nonetheless, while digital marketing strategies are cheaper, have continuous application of services, have online and real time application and have a wider reach, companies face new challenges of creating online content and managing these sites and online interactions with their clients; this requires them to gain new skills and competences so to take full advantage of digital marketing (Kithinji, 2014).

Businesses can utilize these digital marketing channels to promote their products digitally to a wider audience and increase their competitive edge; digital marketing strategies also allow businesses to target specific customers with specific marketing strategies depending on their age, social status, preferences and financial capabilities. A brand without an effective digital marketing strategy is like a car without tires (Robertson, 2020). Digital marketing is at the forefront of every marketing campaign in every business. Digital marketing activities enable businesses and marketers to make use of the intensive internet boost when developing new marketing strategies and methodologies. The range of activities involved in online marketing is wide and flexible, from

banner advertising and sponsorship for content which are widely adopted around the web to other personal method such as emails and managing social media communities. Regardless, Gopal *et al.* (2005) commented, the fact that email marketing is a low-cost approach, immediate and could especially work for certain restricted market sectors makes it one of the best performing service sector and an excellent tool for online marketing.

An effective digital marketing, when properly implemented at the right time in the right proportion under appropriate conditions with the right sales people can lead to increase in sales (also referred to as sales growth) in any organization. Sales growth is the amount a company derives from sales compared to a previous, corresponding period of time in which the latter sales exceed the former. The concept of business growth can be viewed as the process of improving a business performance measure. Dobbs and Hamilton (2007) defined growth as a change in size over a defined time period. Brush *et al.* (2009) on the other hand defined growth as the geographical expansion, increase in the number of new branches, inclusion of new markets and clients, increase in the number of products and services, mergers and acquisitions. The growth of a company comes as a result of increase in demands for goods or services, of which initial results will be seen in sales growth and consequently in investments in additional factors of production to enable it meet to new demands (Janssen, 2009).

Sales growth involves the increase in amount of revenue by a firm over a defined period. This could be as a result of increase in product prices, selling of more products or both. Sales growth as a result of price increase could be as a result of inflation adjustment and therefore not due to real sales growth but if costs remain low then it contributes to growth of sales. Increase in the number of products sold also represents sales growth which could be as a result of geographical expansion, growth in new branches, or increase in the number of products and services.

Globally, it has been confirmed by several studies in different countries that digital marketing strategies have positive effect on sales growth. In UK, Tajvidi and Karami (2021), results from the data analysis demonstrate the positive and significant relationship between social media use and firm performance; In Pakistan, Ahmed, Streimikiene, Berchtold *et al.* (2019), found that all of the channels of digital media advertising have a positive and significant influence on the effectiveness of online digital media that creates brand sustainability for fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) and services sectors of Pakistan; Bayer *et al.* (2020) in Germany, found online display advertising and paid search advertising are positively related to firm performance and firm value. Continentally, Kalei (2020), in Kenya, found that digital marketing strategies had a significant influence on the marketing performance of SMEs. Kazungu, *et al* (2017), in Moshi-Tanzania found that social media helps business firms in understanding the consumers' behaviour from pre-purchase behaviors and contribute to the sellers with information and feedback. Back home in Nigeria, Aliu and Agbetokun (2018), found that the various measures of internet marketing such as Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing, Search Engine marketing have a significant effect on customer loyalty; Is-haq (2019), also found that the adoptions of digital marketing tools such as e-mails, search engine optimization, pay per click and online advertising would significantly improve sales of SMEs. Negedu (2020), study showed that social media advertisements not only has a positive impact on business growth in Nigeria but has the potential to improve ease of doing business in Nigeria. Based on the reviews, there are limited studies linking digital marketing

strategies on sales growth and domiciling them in food processing industry, which the present study wish to eliminate.

Medium Enterprises (MEs) play a key role in economic growth and industrial development of a country. They make vital contributions in improving economic and social sectors of a country through stimulating large scale employment, investment, development of indigenous skill and technology, promotion of entrepreneurship and innovativeness, enhancing exports, and also building an industrial base at different scales. For MEs, the need to put in place appropriate digital marketing strategies at the right time in the right proportion is said to guarantee organisational performance by the way of growth, market share, customer satisfaction, among others (Atirah *et al.*, 2020). There is a drastic need for MEs to apply social networks, online advertising campaigns and different virtual approaches to boost their companies' developmental growth, which is in cognizance with adapting to new and innovative ways to improve and adapt to a rapid transformational growth (Mohsen *et al.*, 2020). Achieving a desired sales growth is a function of so many factors including the nature, approaches/strategy of marketing practice in place, the nature of sales force in place, the nature of management, nature of competition, the nature of consumers and their income, among others. An objective digital marketing has all its takes to achieve desired sales growth in any organization. It is against this background that their marketing practices and growth potentials should be empirically investigated and unveiled to reposition it better for improved benefits. This study is set out to examine the effect of digital marketing strategies on sales growth of Medium Enterprises (MEs) in North Central-Nigeria.

It is obvious that growth of medium enterprises appears to be retarded or is no longer on the fast growth lane, owing to inadequate marketing strategies. Marketing is an important strategy for ensuring business growth. However, the present business environment has transcended beyond mere traditional marketing practices (Tajvidi and Karam, 2021). Challenges in today's business world can better be tackled if marketing is driven by digital practices (Mingione and Abratt, 2021). The problem in today's world lies in part on the inability of businesses to employ digital marketing practices in the right proportion to ensure business growth, this problem has compare this study to empirically investigate the effect of digital marketing on sales growth of medium enterprises in North Central, Nigeria. Though a lot of such studies among them Aliu and Agbetokum (2018), have been done in the past, all of the studies have failed to arrive at a similar conclusion, for example, Is-haq (2019) concludes that adoptions of digital marketing tools such as e-mails, search engine optimization, pay per click and online advertising would significantly improve sales of SMEs; Hachimi *et al.* (2021), found that digital marketing has a positive impact on the performance of companies in the northern region of Morocco; and Achieng' (2016) established that Tembea Kenya Safaris used online advertising to promote their travel packages to potential clients. Since the conclusions are not uniform, there is a need for this study to be carried out to establish the effect of digital marketing on sales growth in North Central-Nigeria. Since diverging conclusions are arrived at by different researchers, this study is set to unveil the true position of the effect of digital marketing on MEs, using central Nigeria as a case.

Most studies on digital marketing and sales growth were carried out outside the study area, for instance, Minama (2016), carryout his study in Nairobi, Kenya; Nga'nga' (2015), also carried out his study in Kenya; Chepkemai *et al.* (2018), situated their study in small enterprises in Nakuru

Central Business District- Kenya. Hachimi *et al.* (2021), located his study in Northern Region of Morocco. So, there is need to carry out this study in the present study area which is North Central- Nigeria. No similar previous studies employ similar dimensions to investigate the effect of digital marketing on medium businesses as used in the present study. For example, Chepkemoi *et al.* (2018), their study sought to determine effects of face-book as one of social media marketing tools for enhancing sale performance in small enterprises in Nakuru Central Business District- Kenya and Is-haq (2019), studied digital marketing tools such as e-mails, search engine optimization, pay per click and online advertising. However, this study used email marketing, social media marketing, search engine marketing, display advertising and mobile marketing as dimensions of digital marketing strategies and market growth and market share as measures of sales growth. This study combines multiple dimensions as a deliberate attempt or effort to get robust findings. It is based on the above identified gaps and many other ones that this study is conceived and put in place to investigate the effect of digital marketing (DM) on sales Growth (SG) in MEs in North Central- Nigeria.

The aim of this study is to determine the effect of Digital Marketing on Sales growth of Medium Enterprises (MEs) in North Central- Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study include to:

- i. determine the effect of email marketing on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central- Nigeria
- ii. determine the effect of search engine marketing has effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central- Nigeria?
- iii. determine the effect of digital display advertising has effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central- Nigeria?
- iv. determine the effect of mobile marketing has effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central- Nigeria?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents a review of related literature that shows the effect of digital marketing on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central- Nigeria. This section discusses theoretical framework, conceptual framework, review of related empirical studies and summary of the literature reviewed.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

There are many good theories but this dissertation is anchored on Technology acceptance model

2.1.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was proposed by David Fred in 1986, this model helps in the explanation and prediction of the behavior of the users of new technology; this model is an addition of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and explains how external variables such attitude, beliefs and intention of use influence the behavior of users of technology (Dai and Kauffman, 2001). As one of the frequently used theories to underpin internet usage, the major thrust of TAM is that the users' beliefs in perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of the internet can be used to explain their acceptance of internet (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2017). Thus, the

extent to which the user believes that technology is useful for the cause and the extent to which he feels that he can easily use technology are critical to his/her willingness to use it. Recent modifications and refinement to TAM have culminated in the extension of its use to enable a better understanding of users' intention to use internet technology. The theory posits that what determines usage of a new technology system is affected either directly or indirectly by the user's attitude, intentions and the user's perception of the usefulness of the system and its ease of use (Davila *et al.*, 2003). Over time, TAM has evolved and the original model has been extended into TAM2 to include aspects of social influence such as image, subjective norms and voluntariness into the explanation of perceived usefulness; cognitive instrumental processes such as result demonstrability, job relevance and output quality are also included in the TAM2 model (Davila *et al.*, 2003).

This theory is suitable to this study since digital marketing is a fairly new phenomenon worldwide, these strategies are mostly simple and easy to use by those who are technologically savvy (Minama, 2016). However, TAM asserts that the adoption of a technology, in this case digital marketing, is determined by the perception that the user has on its usefulness and ease of usage (Davis and Venkantesh, 2000). Therefore, the ease of usage of digital marketing strategies and the perceptions that Manufacturing SMEs have on their usefulness determines their adoption and effectiveness as opposed to the continued usage of traditional marketing strategies (Minama, 2016). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) can assist in the comprehension about what determines user acceptance of M-marketing. Therefore, this model is highlighted as below: Davis (1986) created the well-known technology acceptance model (TAM). This model relates to technology acceptance and use. TAM is a theoretical model that contributes to the explanation and foretelling of user behavior of information technology (Legris *et al.*, 2003).

2.2 Conceptual Framework

This covers a review of literature on concepts of Digital marketing and Sales Growth including their corresponding dimensions and relationships.

2.2.1 Concept of Digital Marketing (DM)

Digital Marketing (DM), is the component of marketing that uses internet and online based digital technologies such as desktop computers, mobile phones and other digital platforms to promote and sale goods and services. DM is a form of direct marketing which links consumers with sellers electronically using interactive technologies like emails, websites, online forums and new groups, interactive television, mobile communication, among others (Kotler and Armstrong, 2009). It facilitates many-to-many communications due to its high level of connectivity and is usually executed to promote products of services in a timely, relevant, personal and cost-effective manner. Laurent (2012), in his book "Measuring the effectiveness of digital marketing" has defined the term as follows: "Digital marketing brings together all the interactive digital tools to promote products and services in the context of personalized and direct relations with consumers. It concerns all digital contact points: Internet, Smartphones, tablets... Its development is driven by changing uses: multiscreen and multi-tasking; media consumption is also multiplying. Bressolles *et al.* (2016), defined "Digital marketing as the process of planning and implementing the development, pricing, communication, and distribution of an idea, product, or

service to create exchanges, in whole or in part using digital technologies, that are inconsistent with individual and organizational objectives. The implementation of digital marketing techniques is aimed at acquiring new customers or improving the management of the relationship with existing customers. Digital marketing is of course integrated with traditional marketing tools in a multi-channel/cross-channel marketing strategy.

2.2.2 Dimensions of Digital Marketing (DM)

Digital marketing is an integrated marketing services used to attract, engage and convert customers online. It brings together all forms of marketing, operating through electronic devices. Digital marketing is facilitated by several channels, a marketer's core objective is to find channels which result in maximum communication and an improved sales growth for company (Krishnaprabha and Tarunika, 2020). With reference to Matosas-Lopez (2021), Kelai (2020), Is-haq (2019), Aliu and Agbetokun (2018), the study have conceptualize digital marketing to include Email Marketing (EM), Social Media Marketing (SMM), Search Engine Marketing (SEM), Digital Display Advertising (DDA) and Mobile Marketing (MM). These measures are selected because they are mostly common digital marketing used by companies and customers within the study area.

i. Email Marketing (EM) refers to sending email messages for the purpose of enhancing a merchant's relationship with current or previous customers, encouraging customer loyalty and repeat business, acquiring new customers to purpose something immediately and sharing third-party adverts. It is a type of direct marketing which means the company communicates with the consumer without the help of intermediary. EM is the act of sending commercial message, typically to a specific individual or group of people using electronic mails (Stokes, 2011). According to Kendra (2017), e-mail marketing is 40 times more effective than social media marketing. Another research emphasized that e-mails were still the most efficient way of digital marketing compared to other social media mediums in term of acquiring customers (Aufreiter *et al.*, 2014). The Email Statistics Report 2018-2022 of The Radicati Group (2018) reported that in 2018, the number of email users of the entire world will top 3.8 billion, which mean more than half of the global population has at least one email account. In the same report, 281.1 billion mails are sent every day and is expected to increase 4.4% to 293.6 billion in 2019 (The Radicati Group, 2018). Email marketing while features valuable and actionable content, on the other hand, is argued as a means of increasing sales (Kennedy, 2015).

ii. Search Engine Marketing (SEM), been defined in different ways by authors to capture the dynamic nature of this concept. Search engine marketing, according to Sen (2015), is a strategy used in business marketing by using paid adverts that display on search engine results pages, with its main components of measurements being keywords, meta-tags, backlinks and content. Search Engine Marketing (SEM) main aim is to enhance brand visibility in search engines by bidding on keywords in Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising or by increasing organic visitors through Search Engine Optimization by defining a website's meta-tags and quality backlinks and content marketing. Jansen *et al.* (2017), observe that search engine marketing is the process of increasing the prominence of a company on search engines at an event whereby users are looking for related information about the company. Companies that use search engine marketing for the purpose of generating unique leads, product sale, brand awareness, do change traffic from their competitors

hence concentrate on putting additional traffic to the segments of their website they are targeting so as to learn more knowledge in using the search engine marketing. As a result, SEM is a feasible digital marketing technique that provides a company with a lot of freedom.

iii. Digital Display Advertising (DDA), is defined as a mode of online advertising where marketers use banner ads along with other visual ad formats to advertise their product on websites, apps, or social media. With the technological advancement taking place and internet being accessible easily, online advertising is such a tool of marketing which is most current and real. Since Internet has become a communication platform, the frequent use of Internet advertising emerges naturally. Online advertising, which is based on Internet advertising, is a new medium with “the use of Internet and related digital technologies to achieve marketing objectives” (Chaffey *et al.*, 2006). The biggest benefit of online advertising as confirmed by Ambuli and Surendhen, (2019) is the quick promotion of product information to the potential customer without geographical boundary limits.

iv. Mobile Marketing: Targeting consumers through mobile devices such as SMS, MMS, WhatsApp/messages, Mobile applications, etc. (Marketo.com, 2017). According to the Mobile Marketing Association (MMA), “Mobile marketing is a set of practices that enables organizations to communicate and engage with their audience in an interactive and relevant manner through any mobile device or network.” Mobile marketing comprises any exchange of or engagement with marketing communications that occur between or among marketers and end customers via customers’ wirelessly connected mobile devices. By the term “wirelessly connected,” we mean all the various means of transmitting voice, text messages, Internet traffic (data) and GPS over a wide area and also the proximate ways that mobile devices can exchange information within and with their immediate environments—e.g., scanning, swiping, tapping, bumping, etc. By the word “exchange,” we mean not merely the one-way broadcasting of messages from marketers to end users or customers, but also end-user communications to marketers, whether they are responses to such messages or messages sent on a consumer’s own initiative; we also include “word of mouth” marketing communications that may be created by mobile consumers about a third-party product, service or company or mobile-shared with peers, such as when a consumer snaps a picture of a product in a store with their smartphone and forwards it to a friend or family member with a recommendation that they buy it.

2.2.3 Concept of Sales Growth (SG)

Sales growth is defined as the positive change in sales per year. Juniarti (2014), also states that sales growth (growth of sales) is an increase in the number of sales from year to year or from time to time. Sales growth is an indicator of the demand and competitiveness of companies in an industry. If sales growth is high, it will reflect increased income so that dividend payments tend to increase. Companies that have increased profits have a larger amount of retained earnings. An increase in company profits increases the amount of own capital that comes from retained earnings. Sales are relatively stable and always increase in a company, making it easier for the company to obtain external funds or debt flows to improve its operations. Companies with relatively stable sales levels can be safer to obtain more loans and bear higher fixed costs compared to companies with unstable sales (Rakasiwi, 2017). The higher the sales of a company, the more profit earned also increases. Companies that have relatively stable sales have relatively

stable cash flows, so they can use more debt than companies with unstable sales. Sales growth is the total change in sales change. This ratio also describes the percentage growth of company posts from year to year.

Formula: Sales Growth = $\frac{\text{this year's sales} - \text{last year's sales}}{\text{Last year's sales}}$

2.2.4 Measures of Sales Growth

To attain sales growth, the company might have achieved market growth and its market share increased. Sales growth in this study is measured by market growth and market share. These dimensions were supported by studies from Kithinji (2014), Akwasi, (2014), and Theofilou and Hornbarger (2018); they are explained below:

i. Market Growth: Market growth refers to the percentage change in market size over a given period. It is marked by the rise and fall of total sales by all companies in the market. Therefore, growth is an important factor to consider in designing marketing plans and strategies. Growth also affects the competition intensity in the market. For example, when the market grows more slowly or even declines, the competition becomes fiercer. Existing players have to fight over the smaller market pie. They must be able to seize customers from competitors to grow positively and increase market share. Conversely, a growing market means more cakes up for grabs, leading to less intense competition. As a result, companies can grow revenue without having to divert competitors' customers.

ii. Market Share: Market share growth refers to the percentage increase in the volume that the company can acquire from the market or the commercial field in which it operates. The growth in market share is calculated over a specific period, usually annually, but the company can adjust this period according to the nature and effectiveness of the market. Increasing market share is one of most important objective of business. Market share is the percentage of a market accounted for by an entity. It may be defined as the percentages of an industry or market's total sale that is earned by a particular company over a specified time period. Market share is calculated by taking the company's sales over the period and dividing it by the total sales of the industry over the same period. This metric is used to give a general idea of the size of a company to its market and its competitors (Schulz, 2012). Akwasi (2014) opined that market share is a performance indicator as it describes the firms' portion, or percentage of the total market or total industry sales. Great market increases a firms' market power, which enables it to extract more favourable channel arrangements (price, and distribution arrangement with suppliers) and in turn, to maintain higher margins.

2.2.5 Relationship between Digital Marketing Strategies and Sales Growth

Several studies and literature have indicated a relation between digital marketing and sales growth. Digital marketing is able to reach new customers and provide personalize communications to the customers, hence increasing awareness and sales (Khraim (2015); Jalango (2015); Ahmed *et al.* (2019); Is-haq, 2019; Kalei (2020); Hachimi, *et al.* (2021)).

MEs could be able to use digital media such as email marketing, search engine marketing, digital display adverts and mobile marketing which are known to be relatively cheap compared traditional marketing tools like radio, television, bill boards, posters, magazines, etc. to access potential customers to create product awareness, maintain relationship with existing customers to encourage repeat sales and consequently increase their sales growth.

Marketing and sales differ greatly, but have the same goal. Marketing improves the selling environment and plays a very important role in sales. If the marketing department generates a list of potential customers, that can benefit sales. A marketing department in an organization has the goal of increasing the number of interactions between potential customers and the organization. Achieving this goal may involve the sales team using promotional techniques such as advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relations, creating new sales channels or creating new products (new product development), among other things. It can also include bringing the potential customer to visit the organization's website (s) for more information or to contact the organization for more information or to interact with the organization via social media such as twitter, facebook and blogs. E marketing in this case is a tool of marketing and serves to drive up sales growth.

2.3 Review of Related Empirical Studies

This section presents empirical works carried out on the digital marketing phenomenon with an emphasis on studies that focus on the effect of digital marketing strategies on sales growth and are presented below:

Ndung'u and Mutinda (2022), investigated the effects of search engine marketing on performance of top 100 medium sized companies in Nairobi City, Kenya. Descriptive research design was employed. The population consisted of marketing managers of these medium size enterprises within Nairobi City County, Kenya as observed by an annual survey done by KPMG together with the nation media group year 2020. The respondents were sampled using stratified method on the basis of the company category. The respondents were purposively selected. The collection of data was done using questionnaires that was in a structured form. Content validity was used since it has the capability of measuring the level at which a collection of a number of items is representative of what the instrument is intended to achieve. The study assessed the instruments reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Analysis of the qualitative data was done using content analysis method. Analyses of quantitative was done descriptively by using mean and standard deviation. The determination of the level at which variables link to one another was achieved through inferential analysis involving correlation and regression analysis. Search engine marketing, was found to have a significant effect on the performance of Kenya's top 100 medium-sized companies. The study focused only on search engine marketing whereas the present study includes many other dimensions of digital marketing.

Jeza and Lekhanya (2022), investigated the influence of digital technologies on South African business sectors. The sample includes SMEs (SMEs) in the KwaZulu-Natal province. Being qualitative by design, the study used semi-structured interviews for data collection, with eight interviews in the Durban area. SME managers were purposefully selected as participants based on their management positions in the business/company and that they oversee the business operation and understand the influence of digital transformation in the business. The interviews were then transcribed after data collection to determine any recurring themes. In the effectiveness of digital transformation, the study identified themes such as "gaining exposure" and "gaining effective sales figures" as a result of implementing digital transformation, which was indicated by six of eight participants. The findings showed that digital transformation significantly affects building customer relationships and ensuring easy accessibility of the business. The results

further indicate online selling and digital marketing as the leading digital platforms successfully implemented by most South African SMEs. The study did not highlight the dimensions of digital marketing as it is done in this present study.

Hachimi *et al.* (2021), researched on the relationship between digital marketing and the business performance of companies in the northern region of Morocco. They conducted a quantitative survey carried out among 120 companies in the northern region of Morocco using the PLS path modeling, a method particularly suited for academic development and predictive applications. According to our empirical study, we found that digital marketing has a positive impact on the performance of companies in the northern region of Morocco. This study is carried out outside the present study area and does not conceptualized digital marketing dimensions as in the present study.

Oyeniya and Ayanleke (2021), examined the impact of internet marketing on SMEs' performance amid COVID-19. The simple random sampling technique was used to select 138 respondents from a total of 1021 SMEs registered with SMEDAN. Data were sourced with the aid of structured and semi-structured questionnaires. Both descriptive and inferential statistics, such as frequency, percentage, mean, chi-square, factor analysis, and regression analysis were adopted for data analysis. The result reveals that internet marketing devices (Direct mail, Website, Bulk SMS, Networking, Virtual magazine, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Blog, and Instagram) have a positive relationship with SMEs' performance. Even though this study was done in Nigeria but not in the same study area and the variables considered in the present study are different.

Tajvidi and Karami (2021), study provides a new perspective on the effect of social media use in SMEs. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the influence of social media on firm performance with mediating role of marketing capabilities in the UK, hotel industry. In this research, a structural equation modeling method has been employed for data analysis. The survey data has been collected by mail survey from a sample of 384 hotels in the UK. Results from the data analysis demonstrate the positive and significant relationship between social media use and firm performance. However, the findings highlighted that marketing capabilities, namely branding and innovation, positively and significantly mediate the association between social media use and firm performance. This study dwelt only on social media and did not consider other dimensions as used in this present study.

Matosas-Lopez (2021), provided an overview of the digital marketing strategies (SEO, SEM, Content production technique and emailing technique) in social network services (SNSs) used in America and Europe. The research takes a sample of forty organizations, twenty American and twenty European. The author applies a descriptive examination followed by a parametric analysis using the t-test procedure over a total of 158,208 publications on Twitter. The findings show significant differences in the management approaches applied in these two continents. This study was a comparison of America and Europe whereas; the present study is based in Africa and also the study has two variables that the present study is also investigating.

Atirah *et al.* (2020), research discusses the factors impacting the use of social media marketing on sales of the online small businesses in Malacca. The primary data was collected by using explanatory survey. The sample consists of 150 respondents who are online small business

owners and who had experiences or non-experiences by implementing the social media marketing on their business in Malacca. The requirement analysis tests used are pilot test, Reliability Analysis, Validity Analysis, Descriptive Statistic Analysis, Pearson's Correlation Analysis, Multiple Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Test Analysis. The data analysis technique is used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25.0 software. There are four independent variables such as customers' feedbacks, communication, content sharing and customers' relationships will be measured to examine their influence on sales performance of the online small businesses. The research results show that customers' feedbacks has no direct influence on sales performance, communication has directly influence on sales performance, content sharing has no direct influence on sales performance and customers' relationships has directly influence on sales performance of online small businesses in Malacca. The study was focus only on social media marketing whereas, the present study considers other dimensions of digital marketing.

Bayer *et al.* (2020), research examines the impact of online display advertising and paid search advertising relative to offline advertising on firm performance and firm value in Germany. Using proprietary data on annualized advertising expenditures for 1651 firms spanning seven years, we document that both display advertising and paid search advertising exhibit positive effects on firm performance (measured by sales) and firm value (measured by Tobin's q). Paid search advertising has a more positive effect on sales than offline advertising, consistent with paid search being closest to the actual purchase decision and having enhanced targeting abilities. Display advertising exhibits a relatively more positive effect on Tobin's q than offline advertising, consistent with its long-term effects. The findings suggest heterogeneous economic benefits across different types of advertising, with direct implications for managers in analyzing advertising effectiveness and external stakeholders in assessing firm performance. This study was done outside the present study area and it is only based on one variable (digital display advertising) as used in this present study.

Negedu (2020), examined the importance of WhatsApp and Facebook advertisement on small business startups in Nigeria. SMEs (SMEs) are widely believed to be an essential ingredient for economic growth, the performances of current policies are identified and proposals are offered to address the impediments. This paper uses the Abuja Municipal Area Council as a case study. Appropriate literature has adequately reviewed; some citations and data were referenced to, Data was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software, survey data was distributed to 438 respondents. The survey was carried out to get responses on the contributions and impact of Social Media Advertisements on Businesses in Abuja Municipal Area Council of Nigeria. The result of the survey analysis came out in the form of frequency tables, bar charts and histogram, and a detailed summary was carefully explained by researcher afterwards. The study showed that social media advertisements not only has a positive impact on business growth in Nigeria but has the potential to improve ease of doing business in Nigeria if research recommendations are followed and adequate improvements are made. The study was focus only on social media marketing whereas, the present study considers other dimensions of digital marketing.

Kalei (2020), investigated digital marketing strategies and the marketing performance of Top 100 SMEs in Kenya. The study employed a regression design. The researcher developed a set of

questionnaire for data collection from Top 100 SMEs and 100 SMEs constituted the target population for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to thirty (30) Top 100 SMEs in the Commercial and Trade, Service, Construction and Technology sectors. The study was limited to the SMEs that were in the Top 100 list in 2016. The researcher issued questionnaires to the sampled SMEs and data was collected using the drop and pick method. Quantitative data was collected and analyzed by use of regression analysis to establish the significance of correlation coefficient on the association between the variables. The study found that digital marketing strategies had a significant influence on the marketing performance of SMEs. The study considers some dimensions as used in this present study but this study has more proxies.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study used survey research design to collect data from two states where the study was conducted. The geographical area covered by the study was the totality of MEs in North Central Nigeria. The North Central part of Nigeria comprise of six (6) states (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau) and Federal Capital Territory. There are 243 MEs in North Central Nigeria from a total of 1,793 MEs in Nigeria (NBS/SMEDAN, 2017). The study was therefore limited to MEs operating in North Central Nigeria. The population of the study is consisted of the entire 243 medium enterprises that exist and operate on the full time from different sectors in North-Central Nigeria that make use of digital marketing strategies. To ensure comprehensive and more embracing findings, this study employed a census sampling technique to empirically investigate the effect of digital marketing on sales growth of medium enterprises in North Central Nigeria. Under the above arrangement the entire study population of 486 was used for the study. The structured self-administered questionnaire is the main research instrument that was used in collecting the appropriate data that were needed to achieve the objectives of the study. The study reported a validity index of .756 and reliability index of .834 respectively. The primary data collect method explores the originality of data through gathering information relevant to the study. A multiple regression model was used in this study to determine whether a set of independent variables-that is, email marketing (EM), social media marketing (SMM), search engine marketing (SEM), digital display advertising (DDA) and mobile marketing (MM) together will predict the dependent variable that is, sales growth of MEs. In line with the research objectives, research questions and hypotheses, the model that was used in this research is stated using both implicit and explicit functions.

The explicit form of the model is stated as follows:

Sales Growth=f(Email Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Digital Display Advertizing and Mobile Marketing)

The implicit form of the model is stated as follows:

SG = f (EM, SEM, DDA, MM) ----- (i)

Where: SG= Sales Growth

EM=Email Marketing

SEM = Search Engine Marketing

DDA = Digital Display Advertising

MM = Mobile Marketing

Thus,

$$SG = b_0 + b_1EM + b_2SEM + b_3DDA + b_4MM + e \text{ ----- (ii)}$$

Where: b_0 =Constant or intercept

b_1-4 = Parameter estimates or regression coefficients

E = error components.

A priori expectations of the research model

The following apriori expectation was relevant for the multiple regression models:

$$b_1 > 0, b_2 > 0, b_3 > 0 \text{ and } b_4 > 0$$

It was expected that the estimated coefficients of the four (4) independent variables was greater than zero. That is, it is expected that email marketing (x_1), search engine marketing (x_2), digital display advertising (x_3) and mobile marketing (x_4) will have significant positive relationship with the dependent variable (sale growth). The study used descriptive statistics and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 23) for data presentation and analysis. The descriptive measures used in the study include the mean, standard deviation, and tests of skewness and kurtosis. Inferential Statistics -The relationship between the variables was analyzed using correlation while the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable was tested using multiple regression. The following decision rule was adopted for accepting or rejecting hypothesis in this study: If the P-value (sig.) is the greater than 0.05 ($P > 0.05$), we accept the null hypothesis (H_0). However, if the P-value (sig.) is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_a).

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of data collected from the respondents. It is specifically discussed under data presentation and analysis, test of hypotheses and discussion of findings.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1 shows the response rate from the distribution of the copies of questionnaire. A total of 486 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the sample population, 392(80.66%) were successfully completed and returned by the respondents hence usable while 94(19.34%) were not used for study. This was due to the nature of respondents work and tight schedule, which denied them the time to complete the questionnaire. Thus, 392 valid copies of the questionnaire were used for the analysis and findings are reported in this study, hence, the returned copies of the questionnaire were considered adequate and appropriate for this study and valid for generalizations.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
EM	333	1.00	5.00	4.4603	.87328
SEM	333	1.00	5.00	4.6440	.68275
DDA	333	1.00	5.00	4.6304	.68216
MM	333	1.00	5.00	4.3492	.76310
SG	333	1.00	5.00	4.6417	.63852
Valid N (listwise)	333				

EM=Email marketing; SEM= Search engine marketing; DDA= Digital display advertising; MM=Mobile marketing; SG=Sales growth

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics highlighting the means, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation of the data. Regarding email marketing, it reveals that the majority of the respondents generally agreed as depicted by the mean score of 4.46 (representing 89.2%). This implies that a greater percentage of the respondents agreed that email marketing is an integral part of digital marketing among Medium Enterprises in North Central-Nigeria. Similarly, digital display advertising has a mean score of 4.63 (representing 92.6% of the respondents). This suggests that the vast majority of the respondents agreed that digital display advertising helps to improve the sales growth of MEs. More, the mean score of mobile marketing is 4.35 (representing 87% of the participants). Thus, this suggests that the vast majority of the respondents agreed that mobile marketing has the potential of enhancing the effective marketing of company products and services. Lastly, the mean score of sales growth is 4.64 (representing 92.8% of the respondents) agreed that sales growth is very relevant as it is needed to increase the market share of a company's product. Meanwhile, the minimum and maximum values are consistently 1 and 5 for all the variables considered in this study. It also shows very low dispersion among the responses as shown in the low standard deviations of all the variables under consideration. This supports the agreement of the respondents in giving responses to all the questions raised in this research work.

Table 3: Skewness and Kurtosis Result

	N	Skewness Statistic	Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic	Std. Error
EM	333	-1.212	.116	4.468	.232
SEM	333	-2.683	.116	4.419	.232
DDA	333	-2.745	.116	1.306	.232
MM	333	-1.948	.116	2.176	.232
SG	333	-2.621	.116	1.094	.232
Valid N (listwise)	333				

EM=Email marketing; SEM= Search engine marketing; DDA= Digital display advertising; MM=Mobile marketing; SG=Sales growth

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

Before carrying out a regression test, certain assumptions must be met to ensure that the results are not spurious. To test for the normality of data, skewness, and kurtosis were used. From Table 3, the data values are assumed to be almost normal since skewness values almost lay within ± 2 and kurtosis values lie within ± 5 . Skewness and kurtosis values within these ranges are considered as showing uniformity of the data. The result in Table 3 indicates that all the variables (email marketing, social media marketing, search engine marketing, digital display advertising, mobile marketing and sales growth) showed uniformity hence considered relevant.

Table 4: Test for Multicollinearity

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
EM	.573	1.743
SEM	.595	1.682
DDA	.573	1.861
MM	.239	1.594

EM=Email marketing; SEM= Search engine marketing; DDA= Digital display advertising; MM=Mobile marketing; SG=Sales growth

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

A correlation matrix and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) were used to test for multicollinearity among the independent variables used in the study. Table 4 shows the result of the VIF which confirms the result of the correlation matrix that there are no problems of multicollinearity amongst the independent variables used in the models because the values are less than 5.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
EM (1)	1				
SEM (2)	.668**	1			
DDA (3)	.646**	.694**	1		
MM (4)	.628**	.519**	.629**	1	
SG (5)	.714**	.643**	.593**	.743**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

EM=Email marketing; SEM= Search engine marketing; DDA= Digital display advertising; MM=Mobile marketing; SG=Sales growth

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

Correlation analysis was conducted to test relationship between the variables. The study sought to establish whether there existed a relationship between the dimensions of digital marketing (email marketing, search engine marketing, digital display advertising and mobile marketing) and sales growth. The result in Table 5 indicated a high correlation between email marketing and sales growth ($r=.714$; $p<.01$) and a high correlation between Search engine marketing and sales growth ($r=.643$; $p<.01$). Digital display advertising was found to be moderately correlated with sales growth ($r=.593$; $p<.01$). There was a high positive correlation between mobile marketing and sales growth ($r=.743$; $p<.01$). The above result implies that the independent variables have no issue of collinearity among them hence; there is significant relationship between the variables.

Table 6: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin Watson
1	.830	.685	.673	1.17694	1.560

d. Predictors: (Constant), MM, SEM, DDA, EM

e. Dependent Variable: SG

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

The result in Table 6 indicates the model summary. From the findings, R was 0.830, R square was 0.685 and adjusted R squared was 0.673. R square is the coefficient of determination which illustrates the variation in the dependent variable is due to changes in the independent variable. An R square of 0.685 implies that 68.5 % of changes in sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central-Nigeria are explained by the independent variables of the study (email marketing, search engine marketing, digital display advertising and mobile marketing). There are however other factors that sales growth of MEs that are not included in the model which account for 31.5 %. An R of 0.830 on the other hand signifies strong positive correlation between the variables of the study. Durbin-Watson Test is used to test for autocorrelation and the value of Durbin-Watson (1.560) shows the absence of autocorrelation.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	102.851	5	20.570	14.850	.000
Residual	452.957	327	1.385		
Total	555.808	332			

b. Dependent Variable: SG

c. Predictors: (Constant), MM, SEM, DDA, EM

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

From the ANOVA statistics, the processed data, which is the population parameters, had a significance level of 0.000 which shows that the data is ideal for making conclusions on the population's parameter as the value of significance (p-value) is less than 5%. The significance value was less than 0.05, an indication that the model was statistically significant. From Table 7 above, the value of F calculated is 14.850 indicating that the overall regression model was significant and therefore a reliable indicator of the study findings.

Table 8: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.316	.345		3.810	.000
EM	.229	.059	.239	2.651	.016
SEM	.202	.069	.202	2.028	.028
DDA	.239	.062	.192	3.220	.001
MM	.251	.063	.227	3.993	.000

a. Dependent Variable: SG

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

The regression coefficient as presented in Table 8 indicates changes in the predictor variables namely email marketing, social media marketing, search engine marketing, digital display advertising and mobile marketing affect the dependent variable (sales growth). The result shows that a unit change in email marketing (EM) would affect sales growth by 22.9 %, a unit change in search engine marketing (SEM) would affect sales growth by 20.2 %. The result further shows that a change in digital display advertising (DDA) would result to 23.9 % change in sales growth and a unit change in mobile marketing (MM) would lead to 25.1 % variation in sales growth of MEs in North Central- Nigeria. The result clearly demonstrated that mobile marketing has more significant effect on sales growth of MEs in North Central- Nigeria. Also, at 5% level of significance and 95% confidence level, email marketing, search engine marketing, digital display advertising and mobile marketing had a 0.016, 0.028, 0.001 and 0.000p values respectively.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

Five hypotheses formulated in the study were tested at 0.05 level of significance as follows:

4.2.1 Test of hypothesis one

H0₁: Email Marketing has no significant effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central- Nigeria.

Hypothesis One (H0₁) stated that email marketing has no significant effect on sales growth of MEs in North Central- Nigeria. The critical value of t-statistics is ± 1.96 at 95% and the result shows that $\beta = 0.239$, $t = 2.651$, $p = .016 < .05$, indicating that a positive and significant effect on email marketing on sales growth. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0₁) was rejected and thus concluded

that email marketing has a significant effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central-Nigeria.

4.2.2 Test of hypothesis two

H₀₂: Search Engine Marketing has no significant effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central-Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three (H₀₂) stated that search engine marketing has no significant effect on sales growth of MEs in North Central- Nigeria. The critical value of t-statistics is ± 1.96 at 95% and the result shows that $\beta = 0.202$, $t = 2.028$, $p = .028 < .05$, indicating that a positive and significant effect on search engine marketing on sales growth. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀₂) was rejected. We are compelled to conclude that search engine marketing has a positive and significant effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central-Nigeria.

4.2.3 Test of hypothesis three

H₀₃: Digital Display Advertising has no significant effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central-Nigeria.

Hypothesis Four (H₀₃) stated that digital display advertising has no significant effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central-Nigeria. The critical value of t-statistics is ± 1.96 at 95% and the result shows that $\beta = 0.192$, $t = 3.220$, $p = .001 < .05$, indicating that a positive and significant effect on digital display advertising on sales growth. The null hypothesis (H₀₃) was thus rejected. This implies that digital display advertising has a positive and significant effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central-Nigeria.

4.2.4 Test of hypothesis four

H₀₄: Mobile Marketing has no significant effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central-Nigeria.

For test of Hypothesis Five (H₀₄) state that mobile marketing has no significance effect on sales growth of MEs in North Central Nigeria. The critical value of t-statistics is ± 1.96 at 95% and the result revealed that $\beta = 0.227$, $t = 3.993$, $p = .000 < .05$, implying that there is a positive and significant effect of mobile marketing on sales growth. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀₄) which states that mobile marketing has no significant effect on sales growth of MEs in North Central-Nigeria was rejected and we therefore have no option but to conclude that mobile marketing has a positive and significant effect on sales growth of MEs in North Central- Nigeria.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study were discussed based on the objectives of the study.

4.3.1 Effect of Email Marketing on Sales Growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria

The findings of the study revealed that email marketing has significant effect on sale growth of MEs in North Central-Nigeria. Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and the p-value (0.016) was lower than the significant level. This is statistically given as $p = .016 < .05$. This is supported by studies from; Oyeniyi and Ayanleke (2021), found that direct mail has positive relationship with SMEs' performance. Is-haq (2019), also found email marketing

has positive and significant effect on sale improvement of SMEs in Nigeria; Aliu and Agbetokun (2018), also found email marketing to have significant effect on customer loyalty; Jalongo (2015), established that email marketing has positive effect on performance; Nga'nga (2015), also found that email marketing has significant effect on overall performance of the companies. The implication of the finding is that email marketing has aid in fostering good company and customer relationship, complaint resolution, product awareness and increased speed of ordering for goods; which will in turn leads to improved sales growth of MEs.

4.3.2 Effect of Search Engine Marketing on Sales Growth of MEs in North Central Nigeria

The findings of the study established that search engine marketing has significant effect on sale growth of MEs in North Central-Nigeria. Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and the p-value (0.028) was lower than the significant level. This is statistically given as $p\text{-value} = .028 < .05$. This is in line with the findings from Oyeniyi and Ayanleke (2021), who found that website and blogg (which are aspects of search engine marketing) have positive relationship with SMEs' performance. Is-haq (2019), also found search engine marketing has positive and significant effect on sale improvement of SMEs in Nigeria; Aliu and Agbetokun (2018) also found search engine marketing to have significant effect on customer loyalty; Jalongo (2015), also established that websites has positive effect on performance; Nga'nga (2015) also found that websites has significant effect on overall performance of the companies. The implication of the finding is that customers are more informed about MEs offerings on their websites and blogs and so come to make prompt purchases that lead to sales growth.

4.3.3 Effect of Digital Display Advertising on Sales Growth of Manufacturing SMEs in North Central Nigeria

The findings of the study revealed that email marketing has significant effect on sale growth of MEs in North Central-Nigeria. Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and the p-value (0.001) was lower than the significant level. This is statistically given as $p = .001 < .05$. This is in conformity with findings from; Bayer *et al.* (2020), who found that online display advertising and paid search advertising have positive effect on firm performance measured by sales; Is-haq (2019), also found online display advertising has positive and significant effect on sale improvement of SMEs in Nigeria; Jalongo (2015), also established that display adverts has positive effect on performance; Nga'nga (2015), also found that digital adverts has significant effect on overall performance of the companies. The finding implies that a lot of customers are attracted visitors to websites, blogs and social media pages through display adverts to enough information about MEs and their products; this has enhanced their triability and subsequent repurchases which amount to improve growth of sales over a reasonable period.

4.3.4 Effect of Mobile Marketing on Sales Growth of MEs in North Central Nigeria

The findings of the study also established that mobile marketing has significant effect on sale growth of MEs in North Central-Nigeria. Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and the p-value (0.000) was lower than the significant level. This is statistically given as $p\text{-value} = .000 < .05$. This is confirmed by the following studies; Oyeniyi and Ayanleke (2021), found that bulk SMS (which is an aspect of Mobile marketing) has positive relationship

with SMEs' performance; Jalongo (2015), also established that mobile applications has positive effect on performance; Nga'nga (2015), also found that mobile applications has significant effect on overall performance of the companies. The implication of this finding is that mobile marketing tools offer a lot of convenience for customers to call or message their orders or complaints anytime and anywhere, this enhanced satisfaction of their customers and this leads to repeat purchases which invariably increased sales of the MEs in the study area.

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Responsiveness to customer needs and changing market conditions has become more important for the success of firms and this calls for the introduction of digital marketing strategies by every organization in order to achieve sales growth. Based on the results from data analysis and findings of this study, it can be concluded that the use of email marketing, social media marketing, search engine marketing, digital display advertising and mobile marketing have positive and significant effect on sales growth of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Managers of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria should always improve on implementation of email marketing because email marketing increase customer engagement, customer awareness, complaint resolution, customer satisfaction, market share, among others, so as to enhance their sales growth.
- ii. Managers of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria should always improve on implementation of search engine marketing because it enhanced website visibility, number of visitors social media pages customer engagement, customer awareness, market share, among others, so as to enhance their sales growth.
- iii. Managers of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria should always improve on implementation of digital display advertising because DDA increase number of visitors to our sites, access to new market, customer awareness, brand recognition sales volume, among others, so as to enhance their sales growth.
- iv. Managers of Medium Enterprises in North Central Nigeria should always improve on implementation of mobile marketing because mobile marketing increase ease of purchase, customer engagement, customer awareness, complaint resolution, customer satisfaction, market share, among others, so as to enhance their sales growth.

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