

## Social Media Marketing and Customer Patronage: A Case Study of Nigeria Botting Company (Coca-Cola) in Lagos State

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### Abstract

This study investigates social media marketing and customer patronage in the non-alcoholic beverage sector in Lagos State, Nigeria. The research focused on three key social media marketing elements and examining how these factors influenced customer patronage. The aim of this study was to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between social media marketing and consumer patronage. Utilizing a quantitative research design, data were collected from 270 respondents in beverage companies in Lagos through structured self-administered web-based questionnaires. Descriptive tests were employed to examine the frequency distribution across all variables. The findings were documented and presented in frequencies, mean and percentages. Spearman's rank correlation test was used, in comparison of means of the ordinal variables. The findings revealed a weak but significant correlation between social media engagement and brand image. Findings further a positive weak relationship between electronic WoM communications and customer satisfaction and between social customer trust and service quality.

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## **Background to the Study**

In recent years, the internet has significantly advanced, introducing new avenues for businesses to connect with their target audience. Notably, the rise of social media platforms has played pivotal roles in reshaping communication and marketing strategies. This research explores the profound impact of social media marketing (SMM) on customer patronage, specifically focusing on Nigeria botting company in Lagos State, Nigeria. The availability of the internet has granted individuals access to various social media platforms, from email to Twitter and Facebook, enabling interaction without the constraints of physical meetings (Ukonu, 2022). Social media is defined as internet-based applications facilitating the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Shresth, Sharma & Singh., 2023), social media has become an integral part of contemporary society, influencing consumer behavior in multifaceted ways.

SMM, is a form of Internet marketing, leverages social media platforms to achieve marketing communication and branding goals. Beyond its branding objectives, social media provides consumers with a platform to compare products and services, considering factors such as price, quality, features, services, and usability (Shresth, Sharma & Singh., 2023). This ability to make informed comparisons shapes consumer purchasing decisions. Consumer purchase behavior is intricately linked to brand knowledge and orientation. A strong brand image, coupled with awareness and loyalty, positively influences customer patronage (Nizar & Janathanan, 2018). In the modern era, technology, particularly the internet, plays a pivotal role in daily life, influencing various aspects (De Mooij, 2019; Sami & Irfan, 2018). The internet, as a crucial part of technology, provides a space for communication and advertising, allowing companies to reach a broad audience and increase their market share (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

The internet's influence extends to online purchasing, with consumers perceiving it as a safer and quicker alternative. Analysts predict a significant increase in online purchases as people feel secure and time-efficient when buying online (Umair & Farooq, 2020). Social media's evolution as a marketing tool presents opportunities for firms, offering two-way communication and low-cost marketing strategies to connect with clients (Kujur & Singh, 2017; Irfan & Iqbal, 2019). Consumer product advertising, particularly in the case of beverages, involves various stimuli aimed at creating awareness, stimulating purchase intent, and generating trial/retrial. A consumer is an individual who desires to acquire or utilize goods, products, or services primarily for personal, social, or similar requirements within their surroundings or society. Hence, consumers select brands based on the trust that has been built over a period of time, mostly to mitigate ambiguity and concerns regarding product quality (Anetoh, 2017). Advertisements are regarded as methods for delivering comprehensive sales presentations and achieving attitudinal and behavioural goals (Ugonna & Ogbu., 2017).

Customer patronage results from a company's outstanding service (Nkpurukwe, Briggs, & Chinedu, 2010). The level of support a brand receives is a major factor in how well they are evaluated. Banks exist primarily to serve customers' needs (Akani, Ehio & Onyegbule,

2023). Consumer brand selections are primarily influenced by trust, the desire to minimize uncertainty, and concerns about quality (Anetoh, 2017).

### **Statement of Problem**

Social media has emerged as a significant information resource for customers, offering reassurance, efficiency, and trustworthiness (Shrestha, Sharma & Singh., 2023). Research has demonstrated that social media is a proficient medium for acquiring knowledge and guidance (Umair Manzoor & Farooq., 2020, Gilchrist, 2016) and for fulfilling specific consumer requirements (Alves, Fernandes, & Raposo, 2016). Social media has been discovered to exert a substantial influence on customer patronage through enhanced product quality and the provision of social and viral functionalities.

Nevertheless, the majority of previous studies examining the influence of social media on customer patronage have been carried out in developed nations. Consequently, there is a scarcity of studies on this subject in developing countries such as Nigeria. Ugonna & Ogbu. (2017) explored the effects of media advertising on consumers' purchase intent, focusing on Hero Beer in Awka, Anambra State. While this study provided insights into advertising's impact, it does not specifically expound social media marketing, making it essential to explore the distinctive influence of social media platforms on consumer behaviour.

### **Research Objectives**

This study aims to examine the effect of social media marketing on customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria. Specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. Investigate the effect of social media engagement on customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the influence of electronic word-of-mouth communications on customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria.
- iii. Evaluate the effect of social customer trust on customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria

### **Research Questions**

- i. What is the effect of social media engagement and customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria?
- ii. To what extent has electronic word-of-mouth communications influenced customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria?
- iii. How has the effect of social customer trust affected customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses are formulated for the study

- i. H0<sub>1</sub>. Social media engagement has no significant effect on customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria
- ii. H0<sub>2</sub>. Electronic word-of-mouth communications has no significant effect on

- customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria
- iii. H0<sub>3</sub>: Social customer trust has no significant effect on customer patronage of Nigeria botting company in Lagos state, Nigeria

## **Literature Review**

### **Social Media Marketing**

Social media refers to software applications created to facilitate the quick, easy, and efficient sharing of content between within and outside the environment. With the help of this web-based communication tool, users may interact with the public and effectively distribute content. a software or digital platform that enables users to efficiently produce and distribute content to a larger audience, encompassing a range of websites and applications (Borgatti, 2014). In today's global culture, which embraces both urban and rural areas, the phrase "social media" is widely accepted. People are generally aware of Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, X, and other comparable platforms, which they might utilize frequently based on where they live (Olutade, 2020).

Social media marketing is the practice of promoting and advertising a company's products through social media networks and platforms. According to Kenton (2018), organizations may successfully communicate their values, objectives, or atmosphere, target and engage future consumers accurately, and cultivate relationships with current ones. Social media marketing, sometimes referred to as "digital marketing" or "e-marketing," uses tools for specialized data analytics to help marketers assess the effectiveness of their efforts. Social media platforms provide a wide array of tactics for content promotion and user interaction to marketers. Due to the fact that a lot of social networks allow members to share a great deal of personal, demographic, and geographic data, marketers are able to customize their messaging according to what customers are most likely to find appealing (Inhinmoyan, 2022). Although Internet consumers may be categorized more accurately than traditional marketing strategies, businesses can direct their resources in the direction of the target audience.

### **Social Media Engagement**

In today's technological landscape, 'Consumer Engagement' typically refers to the ways in which consumers connect with products through online channels, including the brand's website, blogs, social media platforms, and videos. Engagement is characterized as a psychological state of pleasure that manifests in the demonstration of interest or interaction with a particular action or object (Arora & Sharma 2021). Consultancy signifies a dedication fostered by regular communications, involving the customer openly, rationally, or physically with a product (Mollen & Wilson, 2010). Favourable cognitive and emotional assessments of consumption outcomes result in satisfaction. Content and satisfied customers typically display the enthusiasm and pleasure associated with robust customer engagement. This expression of satisfaction and trust becomes evident in customer engagement, contributing to the promotion of firms, particularly in the context of social media. Consequently, we anticipate that satisfaction has a positive impact on customer engagement (de Oliveira & Moraes 2020). From a

corporate perspective, engaging with customers on social media has evolved into a crucial strategy, leveraging the diverse range of social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Additionally, it taps into the wealth of discussion forums and online communities, aiming to attract a growing customer base and enhance the visibility of company brands. Customer engagement in this context is a psychological state manifested through active involvement (Van Doorn, Lemon, Mittal, Nass, Pick, Pirson & Verhoef 2010). Social customer engagement empowers companies to enhance the overall customer experience through cutting-edge technology. Consequently, social media emerges as a potent tool for engaging customers by enhancing their experience through the delivery of quality products, attractive deals, and user-generated content (Arora & sharma 2021).

### **Electronic Word-of-mouth Communication (E-WOM)**

In contemporary electronic marketing (e-marketing), electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM) holds significant importance as comments have the power to evoke emotions and influence behaviour. The underlying motivation for individuals to share information on the Internet stems from various needs, including a desire to be part of a group, to express individualism, to act altruistically, and to foster personal growth. This active generation and distribution of information, along with occasional misinformation, have the potential to elicit responses from other consumers or enterprises (Ho & Dempsey 2010). Word of mouth can take on both positive and negative forms. Satisfied customers are likely to continue purchasing a product and share positive experiences with others. Conversely, dissatisfied customers tend to focus on the drawbacks of a product, remembering and communicating these disadvantages to others (Zamil, 2011). Yet, when electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) is personalized with visual cues or numerical data, it gains greater trustworthiness. This is attributed to the relevance of consumer experiences. The acceptance of online reviews by users as reliable sees an increase, particularly when the comments are perceived as useful or when there is recognition of social ties with the person posting them (Aramendia 2017).

### **Social Customer Trust**

The appraisal of chance in exchanges inside a business-to-consumer organization underscores the fundamental significance of believe within the e-seller. Believe rises as a basic figure, essentially affecting the flow of the organization and serving as a principal component within the comprehensive assessment of potential dangers inborn in all exchanges (Umair & Farooq 2020). Believe plays a pivotal part within the domain of e-commerce (Kwortnik Jr & Han, 2011). Different representations of believe exist, each established in unmistakable measurements such as trustworthiness, capability, competence, and acknowledgment (Pirson & Turnbull, 2017). Despite this, the concepts and measurements of hazard and uncertainty hold on within the online world. This work particularly depends on the key measurements of believe, to be specific sympathy and judgment (Ceglarz & Pogorzelski, 2017). Credibility-based believe pivots on notoriety and expect that the other party in a exchange is dependable. On the other hand, generosity is related with the reliable connections between the vender and the buyer (Joshi &

Sharma, 2019). Inside online communities, believe serves to encourage intuitive among people and empowers them to put through with others inside their existing arrange. Besides, believe plays a significant part in forming both a consumer's deliberate to create a buy and their real conduct. (Umair & Farooq 2020).

### **The Concept of Customer Patronage**

Customer or consumer patronage mean a person or thing that eats or uses something or a person who buys goods and services for personal consumption or use. People patronize organizations products/services at one time or the other (Adiele, Grend, & Chinedu, 2015). The term "patronage" describes the act of buying a product (Khurram, Qadeer & Sheeraz, 2018). Customer loyalty occurs when clients repeatedly buy the company's goods (Akani, Ehio & Onyegbule, 2023). There is a strong relationship between patronage and loyalty. Patronage is burn out of a desire to be committed to an organization either based on its service quality or perceived service (Adiele, Grend, & Chinedu, 2015). Customer patronage results from a company's outstanding service (Akani, Ehio & Onyegbule, 2023). The level of support a brand receives is a major factor in how well they are evaluated. Customers might be individuals or other businesses that regularly buy from the core business (Nadube & Akahome 2017), customer loyalty may be conceptualized as the correlation between a company's sales volume and the amount its customers spend.

The Perceived value and benefits provided by a product is what ultimately influence a customer's decision to make a purchase. Customers are more willing to spend money with a company if they perceive that they would benefit from purchasing its goods and services (Nkpurukwe, Briggs, & Chinedu, 2020). In doing so, the company may increase its market share, profits, and competitive edge. Loyalty of a consumer to a company's products is referred to as patronage (Nwadigoha & Ahaiwe, 2021). Customer patronage has several proxies. Nwadigoha and Ahaiwe (2021) identified repeat purchase while Nkpurukwe, Briggs, & Chinedu, (2020) pointed out that buying intention and repeat purchase are adequate metrics of customer patronage. Repeat patronage is the tendency of customers to repeatedly purchase a product from the same supplier (Chao-Min, Dong-Her, Chun-Yao, & Lin, (2014). It is consumers' willingness to buy again (Eugine & Nkosivile, 2015). Consumers' propensity to buy again is influenced by their positive experiences with that product in the past. Eliciting repeat patronage behavior is crucial to firms because it enhances profitability (Akani,ehio & Onyegbule, 2023).

### **Theoretical Framework**

This section is informed by two frameworks which are Social Influence theory, Consumer Engagement theory

#### **Social Influence Theory**

Social Influence Theory, also known as Social Contagion proposes that individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are influenced by the actions and attitudes of others within their social environment (Hajli, 2014). The theory suggests that people conform to

the behaviours and opinions of others to fit in, gain approval, or avoid rejection. It encompasses various forms of social influence, including conformity, compliance, and obedience (Li, 2013).

Social Influence Theory was originally proposed by psychologist Kurt Lewin in the 1940s. Lewin conducted pioneering research on group dynamics and social behaviour, laying the groundwork for the theory. Social Influence Theory provides valuable insights into how consumers' purchasing decisions may be influenced by the actions and opinions of others on social media platforms (Peng, Sun, Guo, & Kwon, 2017). For example, if consumers observe their peers expressing positive sentiments towards a particular beverage brand on social media, they may be more inclined to purchase products from that brand themselves. Social media marketing efforts that effectively leverage social influence principles can amplify this effect by creating a sense of social proof and fostering consumer engagement. Despite its widespread acceptance and applicability, Social Influence Theory has faced several criticisms over the years. One criticism is that it tends to oversimplify the complexities of human behaviour by focusing primarily on external influences while neglecting individual differences and internal motivations (Borgatti, Everett, & Johnson, (2014).

### **Consumer Engagement Theory**

Consumer Engagement Theory emerged from research in marketing and customer patronage, with contributions from scholars such as Dominik Mahr and Stefan Wannennwetsch. They proposed that consumer engagement represents a continuum of behaviours, ranging from passive observation to active participation and that effective engagement strategies can drive desirable outcomes for both consumers and brands (Claffey & Brady, 2014). Consumer Engagement Theory posits that actively involving consumers in brand-related activities, such as marketing campaigns, product development, and customer service interactions, leads to higher levels of emotional connection, loyalty, and advocacy (Van Doorn, Jenny, Lemon, Katherine, Mittal, Vikas, Nass, Stijn, Pick, Daryl, Pirner, Peggy, & Verhoef, Peter. 2010). It emphasizes the importance of fostering meaningful interactions and relationships between brands and consumers, rather than relying solely on one-way communication channels.

### **Empirical Review**

Pham and Gammoh (2015) examined the effects of social media engagement on brand image in the context of luxury brands. The study indicates that active engagement on social media platforms enhances the perceived prestige and quality of luxury brands among consumers. The majority of respondents were affluent individuals with a high level of social media usage. The study shows that visual content, user-generated content, and brand interactions on social media positively affect brand image. The social media tools used mainly by respondents were Instagram, followed by Facebook and Pinterest. The multiple regression analysis results indicate that visual appeal, user endorsement, and frequency of brand interactions are the variables influencing brand image in the luxury brand sector.

Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, (2004) conducted a study on electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and its impact on customer satisfaction in the context of online consumer reviews. The study indicates that e-WOM significantly affects customers' decision-making processes and their overall satisfaction with products and services. The research showed that consumers rely heavily on online reviews to form opinions about products, with positive reviews enhancing satisfaction and negative reviews potentially diminishing it. The study also found that the credibility and trustworthiness of the review source play crucial roles in moderating the impact of e-WOM on customer satisfaction. The multiple regression results indicate that review quality, reviewer credibility, and review quantity are significant variables influencing the relationship between e-WOM and customer satisfaction.

Chiu, Hsieh, and Wang (2012) investigated the role of social customer trust in enhancing service quality and customer loyalty in the context of social media. The study found that social customer trust significantly impacts service quality, as trust in the brand's social media presence leads to higher perceptions of service reliability, responsiveness, and empathy. The authors concluded that effective management of social media interactions fosters trust, which in turn improves service quality and customer satisfaction. Kim, Park, and Jeong (2011) explored how social customer trust affects service quality in e-commerce settings. The study demonstrated that trust in online platforms leads to improved perceptions of service quality, particularly in terms of assurance, reliability, and responsiveness. Their findings emphasize that building trust through effective social media communication strategies can enhance service quality and customer satisfaction in online retail environments.

### **Gap in Literature**

Some studies have examined the impact of social media marketing on customer patronage, such as the study by Chang, Peng, and Berger (2018) focusing on YouTube, and the study by Istanbuluoglu (2017) analyzing Facebook and Twitter, there is a lack of comprehensive research that examines the effectiveness of various social media platforms collectively. Understanding how different platforms contribute to consumer engagement and purchasing decisions could provide valuable insights for beverage companies looking to optimize their social media marketing strategies.

Several studies, such as the one by Doa, Koa, and Woodside (2014), relied solely on subjective data collected from surveys or interviews, neglecting to obtain objective data from social media platforms. Incorporating objective metrics, such as engagement rates, reach, and conversion rates, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between social media marketing efforts and customer patronage. Many of the studies reviewed provided insights based on cross-sectional data or short-term analyses. Longitudinal studies that track the impact of social media marketing efforts over an extended period could provide more robust evidence of their effectiveness and uncover potential trends or patterns in consumer behaviour over time.



## **Material and Methods**

The study adopted a survey research design because of its unique benefits in fulfilling the study's objectives, assessing hypotheses, and addressing research inquiries effectively. This cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted within a selected company named Nigeria Bottling Company Ltd. (Coca-Cola). The study respondents or population were sourced from the selected workforce of Nigeria Bottling Company Ltd situated in Ikeja, Lagos State. The study exclusively targeted a beverage company that engaged in utilizing social media marketing for advertising, product sales, and customer feedback solicitation. Three hundred and eighty (380) individuals from Trinity University, both academic and non-academic staff, were used as the population sample. The study population comprised administrators tasked with overseeing their respective social media platforms due to their active engagement in media usage and utilization for customer feedback regarding product information.

The sample size of the participants was determined using Taro Yamane formula since the study has a definite population which is more appropriate when little or no information is known about population behaviour.

Sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula, Primary data were obtained through the administration of questionnaires. These questionnaires were utilized to collect data from respondents primarily comprising staff members and individuals that are like to be influenced by Nigeria botting company. Moreover, the preference for primary data in this research stems from its alignment with the investigation into the impact of social media marketing on customer patronage. Hence, the utilization of primary data facilitates respondents' expression of their knowledge in the most accurate manner possible.

To establish the reliability of the instrument, a test-retest method was used. Seckaran (2003) stated that Cronbach Alpha provides an estimate of the indicator inter correlations, an acceptable measure for Cronbach Alpha is 0.7 or higher, while below 0.7 connotes weak reliability. Using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient test to measure the measurement scale reliability, the internal consistency of the study variables was confirmed. The recommended coefficient value for Cronbach's Alpha test score is set at 0.7.

The collected data from completed questionnaires will be compiled and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25.0, a comprehensive and adaptable statistical analysis and data management tool. Variables was computed, and scores were assigned based on the rating scales for each variable. Descriptive statistics was employed to analyse respondents' responses in this study, encompassing descriptive measures such as frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. To assess the formulated hypotheses, linear regression analysis will be utilized. All analyses will be conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

## **Results and Discussion**

The study was carried out using 270 respondents who were surveyed using a web-based questionnaire. As portrayed in Table 4.1, out of the 270 surveyed respondents, 270 returned dully filled questionnaires for analysis. This represented a response rate of 100%. This was considered adequate for the study

### **Analysis of Demographic Information**

Demographic information was collected to enable the researcher to gain an understanding of the respondents' background. The main information sought included the age of the respondents, marital status, education, job experience.

#### **Age of Respondents**

Findings from revealed that 50.4% of the participants were below 30 years of age, 30.4% were between 31 to 40 years and 19.2 of the participants were above 40 years.

#### **Marital Status**

The study showed that 48.2% of the respondents are single and 45.9% are married.

#### **Education of Respondents**

Findings from the study revealed that 60% of the respondents are HND/BSC owners. 19.3% are OND/NCE owners and 14% of the respondents have master's degree.

#### **Job experience of Respondents**

The study revealed that 38.5% of the respondents have below 5 years' experience, 50.4% of the respondents have between 5-10 years' experience and 11.1% of the respondents have above 15 years' experience.

### **Analysis of Social Media Engagement.**

Findings from our study revealed that 90% of the respondents follow Coca-Cola on social media to stay updated on their new products and promotions. This suggests that Coca-Cola's social media presence is effective in keeping their audience informed and engaged. Moreso, (93.4%) of respondents actively engage with Coca-Cola's social media posts by liking, sharing, or commenting. This high level of interaction indicates strong customer engagement and interest in the brand's content. Most respondents (92.6%) find Coca-Cola's media engagement appealing. This reflects positively on the effectiveness of Coca-Cola's social media strategies in attracting and retaining customer interest, (90%) of respondents indicate that Coca-Cola's social media campaigns influence their purchasing decisions. This highlights the importance of social media marketing in driving sales and consumer behavior.

### **Analysis of E-WOM Communication**

Findings revealed that 91.5% of respondents often read reviews and comments about Coca-Cola on social media before making a purchase. This highlights the importance of maintaining a positive online presence, as many potential customers rely on these

reviews to inform their purchasing decisions. Moreover, 90.4% believe that positive comments about Coca-Cola on social media attract new customers. This suggests that positive e-WOM can significantly enhance Coca-Cola's ability to draw in new customers and grow its market base, 90.4% of respondents agree that negative comments about Coca-Cola products on social media could adversely affect their revenue. The majority of the respondents indicated that Coca-Cola actively monitors online conversations and addresses negative comments. Effective management of e-WOM can enhance brand perception, as 86.7% of respondents agree that addressing negative e-WOM comments usually improves their brand perception.

### **Analysis of Social Customer Trust**

The study also revealed a significant majority (95.6%) of respondent's trust Coca-Cola more because of their active engagement on social media. 90% of respondents agree that Coca-Cola's responsiveness to customer inquiries on social media increases their trust in the brand. 89.3% of respondents believe that Coca-Cola provides honest information on their social media platforms. 90.4% of respondents agree that seeing other customers' positive interactions with Coca-Cola on social media increases their trust in the brand.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The age distribution of respondents, with 50.4% below 30 years, 30.4% between 31-40 years, and 19.2% above 40 years, indicates that social media marketing in the Nigerian bottling company predominantly engages a younger demographic. This finding aligns with previous studies suggesting that younger consumers are more active on social media platforms and more responsive to digital marketing efforts (Duffett, 2017). These platforms are pivotal in influencing the customer patronage of younger age groups, who are more inclined to engage with brands online. The high educational level of respondents, with 60% holding HND/BSC degrees, 19.3% with OND/NCE, and 14% having a master's degree, suggests that educated individuals are more likely to engage with and be influenced by social media marketing. This is supported by the work of Alalwan et al. (2017), who found that higher education levels correlate with increased social media engagement and responsiveness to marketing content.

Respondents' job experience, with 50.4% having 5-10 years and 38.5% below 5 years, indicates a workforce familiar with social media trends and technologies. This experience likely contributes to effective social media strategies, as more experienced employees can leverage their understanding of market dynamics. This finding is in line with Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), who emphasized the importance of experienced personnel in executing successful social media campaigns. This supports the findings of Tiago and Verissimo (2014), who noted that newer businesses are more likely to adopt innovative marketing strategies, including social media, to gain competitive advantage.

The analysis revealed a weak but significant positive correlation ( $r=0.261$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) relationship between social media engagement and brand image in the Nigerian bottling company in Lagos State, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). This

indicates that as social media engagement increases, the brand image also tends to improve slightly. This finding is consistent with the research by Ho and Dempsey (2010), who suggested that higher engagement on social media platforms can enhance brand perception among consumers. The rejection of H01 implies that social media strategies aimed at increasing engagement could be beneficial for improving the brand image of the bottling company.

Furthermore, the study found a positive but weak relationship between electronic word-of-mouth (eWoM) communications and customer satisfaction ( $r=0.251$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This finding aligns with Zamil (2011), who emphasized the importance of positive e-WOM in enhancing customer satisfaction. The rejection of H02 indicates that e-WOM plays a crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction, suggesting that the company should encourage positive online reviews and testimonials to boost customer satisfaction levels. This indicates that while eWoM can influence how often customers patronize, the strength of this influence is weak.

The research also demonstrated that social customer trust significantly affects service quality. The correlation analysis revealed a weak but significant positive relationship ( $r=0.270$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) between social customer trust and service quality, rejecting the third null hypothesis. This result is in line with Aramendia (2017), who highlighted that trust in social media interactions can lead to perceptions of better service quality. The rejection of H03 suggests that fostering social customer trust is essential for enhancing the perceived service quality of the bottling company. Therefore, strategies that build and maintain trust in social media interactions are crucial for service quality improvement.

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