

# E-Marketing and Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Bauchi Metropolis

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**Abstract:- Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a major role in the world economy accounting for humongous economic development and employment growth. On the other hand, the revolution in information technology (IT) and communications has changed the way people conduct business today. Thus, the reinvention of marketing requires a cursory examination of the role of e-marketing on the performance of SMEs is imperative. A cross-sectional survey was used to collect data from SMEs in Bauchi Metropolis, while the Linear Regression model was deployed to test hypotheses. The study found that e-marketing has a significant effect on competitive advantage, Sales volume, customer retention, and market share of SMEs in Bauchi Metropolis, Nigeria. <sup>86</sup>Beneficiaries of this research include Researchers, Entrepreneurs, Policy makers, and practitioners.**

**Keywords:- E-Marketing, SME Performance, Competitive Advantage, Sales Performance, Customer Retention.**<sup>62</sup>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a crucial role in the global economy and are recognized as significant contributors to the development of the economy and provision of jobs. The revolution in information technology (IT) and communications has transformed commercial transactions. In recent years, more enterprises have adopted electronic marketing giving it the opportunity to develop at a phenomenal scale. (AlBar & Hoque,2019).

Accordingly, the adoption of E-marketing by SMEs can change their Global shape and nature. (Pradhan & Nigam,2018). This is because the growing usage of the Internet and other electronic marketing tools in electronic transactions will not only generate numerous opportunities for SMEs, but also reduce many dangers from both the internal and external environments.

According to the World Bank, SMEs make up most of the world's businesses and responsible for a significant contribution to job creation and global economic growth. Globally, SMEs account for about 90% of businesses and more than 50% of employment, for instance in third world countries, 40% of GDP is generated by the SME sector. (Muriithi, 2017). Moreover, the high rate of publications in the field may suggest that EM can be used in any context, unfortunately, there is little empirical evidence to support this assumption. Some herald it as the new marketing paradigm. (Eid & El-Gohary, 2013).

Meanwhile, over the past three decades, SMEs were seen as the economic engine that fuels global economic development; they have captured considerable attention from scholars and entrepreneurs (Sawang & Kivits, 2021). SMEs are vital to national economic development, as a result, the performance of the SME sector is strongly linked to the nation's performance. They bear the greatest responsibility for private sector employment around the world. Therefore, the development of SMEs has been an important factor in the achievement of development goals including poverty alleviation, economic growth and the propagation of democracy. (Qashou & Yahya, 2018).

In Nigeria, greater emphasis has been placed on SME development and the role that entrepreneurs may play in reshaping the economy, particularly in the current global economic context. (Febriantoro, 2018). The deployment of internet-based business programs better known as e-commerce is a classic example of an effort towards enhancing the performance of SMEs (Permana, 2017; Febriantoro, 2018). The adoption of EM by multinational organizations has to a greater extent, changed the structure and roles of enterprises globally. (Iddris & Masud, 2018) The rapid spread of the Internet, communication technologies and social media has generated disruptive e- channels for marketing, and most businesses now consider an online presence to be important. (Liang, 1988).

Even though numerous studies have addressed E-marketing acceptance and adoption by SMEs in developing countries, only a hand full have been conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). (Kalu, 2017). Similarly, the question of how technological capabilities can strengthen relationships between e-marketing and SME performance remains unanswered. On average, studies tend to focus on the consumer perspective, such as determinants of online buying decisions (Cheung et al., 2009) and deciphering word-of-mouth in social media (Zhang et al.,2012; Rudansky-Kloppers 2017; Khanna & Gunjan, 2019, Dermawan et al., 2020). Based on these identified gaps, this study therefore will examine the role of e-marketing on SMEs performance in Bauchi Metropolis, Nigeria.

### ➤ Statement of Problems

SMEs in Northeastern Nigeria and Bauchi metropolis in particular lack the necessary competitive advantage required to fast-track the achievement of development objectives including Economic Development, Poverty Alleviation and Democratic societies.

A daunting challenge impeding the impact of e-marketing on sales performance is the high level of switching behavior exhibited by customers of SMEs.

The impact of e-marketing on customer retention and market share of SMEs in the northeast remains unclear.

Despite the enormous marketing opportunities offered by e-marketing, SMEs face a variety of challenges in an e-marketing environment including infrastructural challenges, governmental challenges, educational challenges etc.

SMEs are bedeviled by loss of prospective customers to other competing firms.

#### ➤ *Aim and Objectives of the Study*

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of e-marketing on the performance of SMEs in Bauchi metropolis. Other specific objectives are as follows:

- Determine the effect E- marketing on competitive advantage.
- Examine the effect of e-marketing on sales performance.
- Investigate the effect of E-marketing on customers retention.
- Determine the effect of E-marketing on the Market Share.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *The Concept of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs)*

The concept of small and medium scale enterprises is a discourse that continues to occupy the front burner in Nigeria today. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are defined and evaluated differently in different countries and by a wide range of sources that report SME data (Perera & Chand, 2015). The number of employees, total net assets, sales, and profits are some of the most used criteria. However, employment is the most used definitional basis, but there are others (Chen & Lien 2013).

The definition in Nigeria, as in other economies, is based on the size or amount of Asset investment, total annual revenue, and employee count are all factors to consider. Within this context, the classification of businesses as 'medium' or 'small' varies from one economy to the other, as well as from one epoch to the next. (El Gohary,2012). In Nigeria, the National Council of Industry, which reports to the Federal Ministry of Industries, revises the classification of SMEs on a regular basis. Other institutions, including the Central Bank of Nigeria and the Nigerian Association of Small-Scale Industries (NASSI), use classifications that differ from those used by the Federal Ministry of Industries. However, when it comes to defining SMEs in terms of asset value, there is more agreement than on any other basis. Because the impact on turnover and the number of people employed is greater than the impact on asset value in the event of an economic downturn ( Izediuno et al.,2018). The Committee for Economic Development of the United States of America defines a small business as one that has two or more of the following four characteristics: the owners are also

managers, the capital for running the business is supplied, and one individual or a small group holds ownership, the area of business operations is primarily local, and the business is small when compared to other businesses in the field (Haider et al., 2015). A greater percentage of Startups collapse during the first five years of operation. Only about five to ten percent of startups survive, prosper, and mature because a lower proportion disappears between the sixth and tenth year. Numerous variables have been noted as potential causes or contributors to their untimely demise. The most significant of these are: insufficient funding; lack of concentration; inadequate market research; excessive concentration on a small number of finished product markets; lack of succession planning; inexperience; improper bookkeeping; lack of proper records; absence of any records; inability to distinguish between business and family or personal finances; lack of business strategy; inability to differentiate between revenue and profit; and inability to engage or employ the right caliber staff, lack of planning, cut-throat competition, lack of official patronage of locally produced goods and services, dumping of foreign goods and over-concentration of decision making on one (key) person, usually the owner (Abdulsaleh & Worthington 2013).

### B. *Challenges of SMEs*

The SMEs sector is not without its fair share of challenges. Globally, SMEs face numerous problems from startup to maturity depending on which sector and economic development of the region or country it is located. While some problems are sector specific, others are universal in nature. None the less, literature is replete with myriad of challenges and reasons for possible failure of start-ups in the SME sector. Chief among the problems identified are lack of planning, unfriendly Government regulations, poor marketing, lack of technical expertise, and primordial sentiments (Babandi,2017). "Numerous other problems bedevil SMEs such as poor infrastructure, bureaucracy, deficit of ideas, high cost of processing and a skewed competition occasioned by import tariffs" (Mohammed 2016).

### C. *Overview of Electronic Marketing*

Globally, advances in information technology have transformed marketing operations. Quite a number of enterprises have deployed ICT to undertake marketing operations. Consequently, electronic marketing has been embraced by enterprises for good. E-marketing is a contemporary business technique that involves the promotion of goods, services, information, and ideas over the Internet and other electronic channels (El-Gohary, 2010). Strauss and Frost (2001) opined that "E-marketing is the use of electronic data and applications for planning and executing the conception, distribution, promotion, and pricing of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals". The use of digital media is evolving to manage marketing operations including the management of digital customer data and electronic customer relationship management systems (Smith & Chaffey, 2005).

E-marketing is one of the fastest-growing forms of digital marketing in both developed and developing countries (Kalu et al., 2017). It provides opportunities for business enterprises to attract new customers and reach the existing ones more effectively (Taiminen & Karjaluoto, 2015). Various scholars have defined e-marketing, for instance, e-marketing is described as the integration of electronic communication technology and traditional marketing media to acquire and deliver services to customers, (Iddris & Ibrahim, 2015). The term e-marketing includes, but is not limited to: digital marketing, internet marketing, online marketing, and social media marketing (Shaltoni et al., 2018). Chong & Kim, (2018) report that e-marketing appears to be one of the most significant aspects for achieving competitive advantage through business efficiency and marketing improvement. Studies indicate that in third world countries, especially Africa, SMEs constitute 200% of the businesses and employ about 60% of the workforce' population (The International Trade Centre, 2019). Despite the importance of e-marketing to SMEs, the number of SMEs that have adopted e-marketing is still low leading to limited application of the technology (Eze et al., 2017).

#### D. E-Marketing and Competitive Advantage

Marketing, which progressed from the productive perception to the selling and then marketing perception to the social perception, found its applications on the Internet within the context of what has been labeled as "Electronic Marketing", besides, this international network has opened companies with widespread prospects and great prospects to reach consumers across the world (Scharf, 2007; Aljawarneh et al., 2020). Therefore, the growth in online marketing has led to a reciprocal growth of application fields, particularly in the marketing sector (Al-Jarrah et al., 2014).

Though, Raoofi (2012) counters this assertion by arguing that e-marketing offers massive potential benefits to customers worldwide by providing them with a broader variety of commodities at discounted and competitive prices, while seizing opportunities to access a variety of new and existing products, besides product groups such as Jewelry and vacation packages for consumers who are far from the world's traditional trade hubs. Companies are vying in this period to reach the greatest number of their clients in order to boost their earnings and propagate their products, as a large number of these companies' shoulder increasing marketing mediums through deployment of online platforms (Gregurec & Grd, 2012). Thus, it is essential to provide suitable and environment friendly e-marketing mediums for the customer as this will facilitate ease of access and use. Nonetheless, we should take cognizance of the fact that competitive advantage is a relational concept and it is also context-specific, it may pan out that competitive advantage does not lead to improved efficiency of SMEs in a digital marketing environment. (Ma 2000; Rose, 2010). Following the review, the study hypothesized that:

- H1: E-marketing has no significant effect on the competitive advantage of SMEs in Bauchi Metropolis.

#### E. E-Marketing and Sales Performance

Previous studies agree that digital marketing enhances achievement of sales objectives and goals. (Behrman & Perreault 1982, 1984; Hunter & Perreault 2007). Johnston & Marshall (2006) defined sales performance as any behavior that can be assessed in terms of its contribution to the achievement of the organization's goals. This study recognizes performance measures as important aspect of evaluating productivity and are presented as competitive advantage, sales performance, customer retention, and Market share. Relationships formed through social media networks can expand the array of potential prospects while also improving interactions with current customers, perhaps leading to higher customer retention (Rodriguez et al. 2012). Firms that use social media can engage clients that are comfortable searching for information about products or services that meet their business needs on social media. Using social media to distribute value-added material or provide more effective communication may help organizations better serve current clientele. Social media should have an impact on outcome-based sales success measurements as well. A recent survey of 668 SMEs in New Zealand found that if an online presence generated up to 20% or more of their revenues, firms with social media platforms outperformed their contemporaries yet to deploy social media ("Domainz eBiz Review" 2010). A survey of financial advisors revealed that firms who used social media enjoyed a 19 % gain in income and a 21 % increase in client base (Mitchell 2010). On the other hand, several studies contradict the previous findings. For instance, Sufian, (2020) found that content sharing has no direct influence on sales performance, likewise, there is a paucity of well-established systems to assess the efficiency of e-marketing, thus, it is hard to measure sales derived specifically through technology (Gilmore et al., 2007). In view of the preceding discussion, it can be deduced that e-marketing has a relationship with sales performance. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

- H2: E-marketing has no significant effect on the sales performance of SMEs in Bauchi Metropolis

#### F. E-Marketing and Customer Retention

Online Marketing and indeed E-marketing have been shown to have a positive effect on customer retention. According to Asbari (2021); Indra (2020) the internet is increasingly becoming a medium suitable for connecting long distances. The internet's technological triumph has created a new world order, known as globalization. Various benefits are apparent from the effectiveness of getting the internet extensively embraced by business people for their commercial purposes. Organizations must consider electronic marketing prospects; thus, organizations must understand how to design an appealing website in order to retain their clients.

The facts demonstrate that internet users have increased over the last 15 years and are expected to continue to expand, causing firms, particularly those in the e-marketing sector, to focus greater attention to the opportunities in the e-marketing ecosystem and the world wide web in general. This validates e-marketing and its ability to retain customers (Novitasari,

2021; Setiabakti, 2020; Suwandi, 2020). A website can help businesses attract potential clients and manage customer relationships. This will undoubtedly function well when the number of visitors to the corporate website grows. The quick development of cyberspace (digital) or online today makes it very worthwhile for a firm to consider building relationships with clients. In the electronic realm, consumer loyalty is also known as e-loyalty and is synonymous with customer retention (Suwandi, 2020; Indra, 2020; SetiaBakti, 2020 Maryani, 2020; Fahmi, 2021; Novitasari, 2021). Loyal clients are intimately tied to the company's continuity and future growth. Nonetheless, some studies have found a negative relationship between E-marketing and client retention attributing the success of E-marketing primarily to the support and improvements of traditional marketing techniques and integration with other marketing practices. (Brodie, 2007) In a related study, Kassim & Asiah (2010) found that trust does not influence directly purchase decisions and authors have not found any link between trust and loyalty in an e-marketing setting. Consequently, this study presents the following hypothesis for testing:

- H3: E-marketing has no significant effect on customer retention of SMEs in North-East Nigeria.

*G. E-Marketing and Market Share*

Many construction companies are faced with declining profits as firms slash margins in order to compete. This has a significant effect on SMEs struggling to grow and maintain market share against their more established counterparts in the industry (Malesev & Cherry, 2021). Ab initio, the housing construction industry has always been a laggard in adopting

➤ *Conceptual Model*

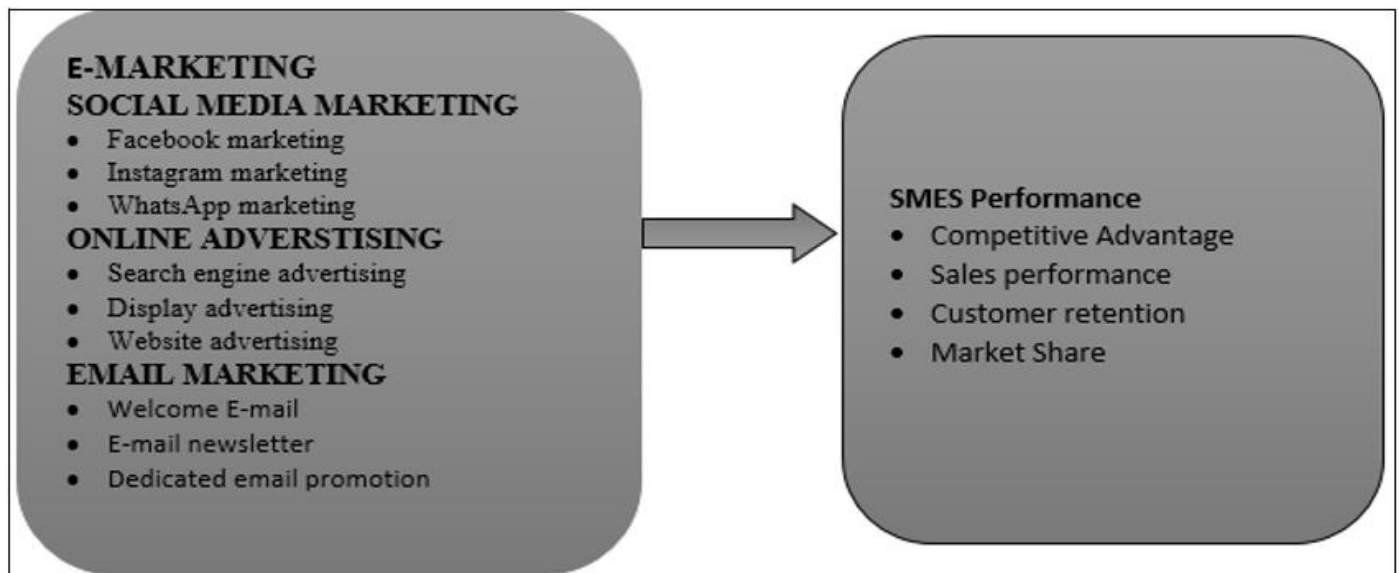


Fig.1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

internet marketing and social media marketing in particular. Non the less authors such as Stewart and Pavlou (2002), Parveen, Jaafar, and Ainin (2016), and Quinn, et al. (2016) Aver that e-marketing has the potential to increase awareness of brands and fast-track the achievement of business goals. Digital marketing techniques and social media offer benefits across all market segments and industries, but they would appear to offer a significant multiplier effect for SMEs in particular, including those in the construction sector. The most pronounced gain of the internet and social media lies in its cost efficiency, by augmenting media expenditure through a versatile but more specific focus on target- audience (Paswan, 2018). On the other hand, several studies suggest that e-marketing efforts do not positively affect market share. For instance, Thurman (2018) reports that “the British National Readership Survey found that 88.5 percent of the time spent with 11 UK national newspaper still comes via their print editions, only 7.49 percent via mobile phones, and a meagre 4 percent via PCs. This indicates that Market share of UK national newspaper brands is less evenly distributed than previously believed. And that a single brand—The Mail—has close to a 30 percent market share.” E-marketing had not positively affected market share in this case. Similarly, Jiang et al., (2016) developed a model to predict the market share of online brands. However, despite the success recorded, the model was criticized for its limitations arising from data-fit bias that impact the model. Another takeaway here is that e-marketing efforts are relational and do not always result in soaring market share. Aligning with the literature and the aim of this study, the following Hypothesis is formulated. H4: E-marketing has no significant effect on the market share of SMEs in Bauchi Metropolis Nigeria

➤ *Source:-*

- Independent Variable Measures: E-marketing measures adapted from Onyango (2016); Akyuz and Ibrahim (2020)

- Dependent variable measures: SME Performance adapted from Anne (2020); and Hidayatullah et al. (2019).



### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design because of its strength in recognizing and encapsulating major issues, as well as allowing for more extensive and richer decryption of the study's components (ElKordy, 2014). A quantitative cum-cross-sectional survey was used because the data was

collected from a large number of respondents across the study population within a short period.

#### B. Population of the study

The population of the study was derived from the SMEDAN/NBS survey of 2021 which states that there are 34,685 registered SMEs in Bauchi, Nigeria. Below is a tabulation of the population.

Table 1 Breakdown of the Population

S/N0	State	Number of Businesses	Percentages (%)
1	Bauchi	34685	100 %

Source: SMEDAN/ NBS Survey 2021

- The Population of the study comprises the 34,685 SMEs in Bauchi State.

#### C. Sample and Sampling Techniques

The Krejcie and Morgan sampling technique was deployed to arrive at the sample size for the study and the

table determined a sample size of 388 SMEs. Finally, the sample was selected through simple random sampling method (Asikhia & Naidoo 2020).

Table 2 Determination of Sample Size using Krejcie and Morgan Table

S/no	Population	Sample Size
1	34,685	382

Source: Krejcie and Morgan 1970

#### D. Research Instrument Description

The questionnaire was adapted from the work of Hatem Al-Gohary, an authority in E-Marketing. The questionnaire comprises of two items namely: E-marketing and Sales performance.

the study adopted the Cronbach alpha to test the reliability of the instrument employed. From the table below, the Cronbach alpha values are 0.915 and 0.887 for E-marketing and SMEs performance respectively. All the values measured exceeded the established threshold value of 0.70 required for acceptable reliability. Therefore, we conclude that our instrument is reliable.

#### E. Reliability Test

Reliability is a test of the consistency of items when using multiple measurements of variables (Hair et al., 2010)

Table 3 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	
E-marketing	E-marketing
SMEs Performance	SMEs Performance

Source: Researcher's Computation

#### F. Method of Administration of Instruments

The study-data was collected through the deployment of structured questionnaires. For clarity and a high rate of return of the instrument, self-administration was utilized. While the study employed other secondary sources to compare the research findings with existing findings from previous studies.

#### G. Data Analysis

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS. The choice of statistical analysis was based on previous literature in articles from reputable Journals which were conducted in comparable scenarios. Thus, linear regression was adopted to draw inferences from the analysis.

### IV. RESULTS

#### ➤ Result

Table 4 Hypothesis 1: E-Marketing has No Significant Effect on the Competitive Advantage of Smes in Bauchi Metropolis.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
1 (Constant)	2.227	108		20.632	.000
Using E-Marketing improves my job performance.	043	038	-.058	-1.140	.255

➤ *Dependent Variable:*

Competitive advantage. From Figure 1 above, when E-marketing was incorporated into the equation, the results indicated that there was a positive correlation coefficient ( $\beta = -0.058$   $p < 0.05$ ), between e-marketing and competitive advantage. Hence, the study rejected the null hypothesis and accepted a significant relationship between e-marketing and

competitive advantage. The results indicated that E-marketing is significant in determining competitive advantage which is consistent with findings from similar previous studies (Iberia et al., 1998; Kannabiran & Dharmalingam, 2012; Hashim,2007; Chuang et al., 2009; Wainwright et al., 2005; Tan et al., 2009; Melumad et al., 2019)

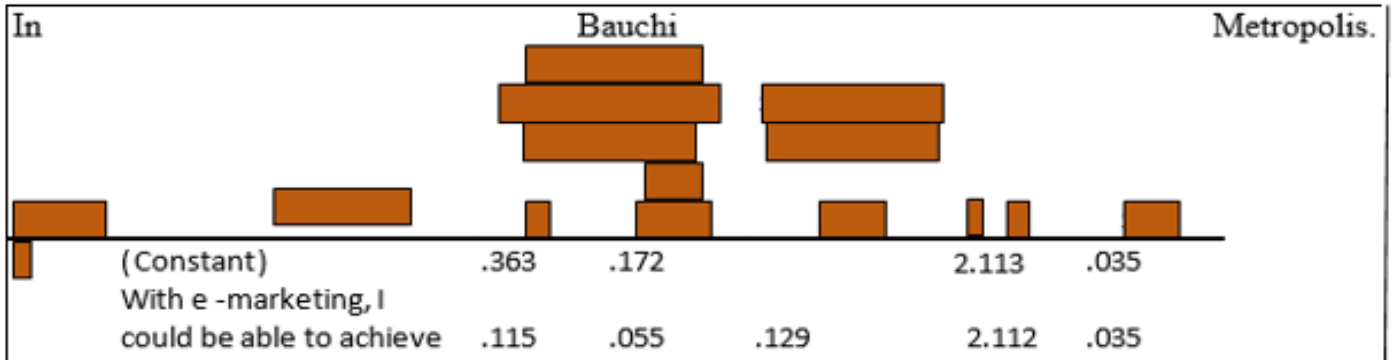


Fig 1 Hypothesis 1: E-Marketing has no Significant Effect on the Sales Performance of Smes in Bauchi Metropolis

My sales target our customers do not like to make.396 .046 .393` 8.612 .000 transactions through the Internet. E-marketing Contributes to my gross .591 .059 .631 9.930 .000 margin

- Our customers do not trust E-Marketing tools (e.g., the .153 .045 .160 3.400.001 Internet, E-Mail, and Mobile).
- Customers usually trust E-Marketing tools (e.g. the 65.317 .045 .336 7.044 .000 Internet, E-Mail, and Mobile) because of security issues.

➤ *Dependent Variable:*

Sales performance.The analysis indicates that E-marketing has a significant positive relationship with Sales performance ( $\beta = 0.631$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), thus, the study rejected the Null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis that E-marketing plays a significant role in Sales performance. This result agrees with previous research findings of Wang'anya T., (2018) which found that social media marketing and online advertising had significant positive effects and correlations with the sales performance of SMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria.

➤ *Dependent Variable:*

Customer retention. Figure 2 indicates that there was a significant negative correlation coefficient ( $\beta = 0.336$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) therefore, the H3 was rejected that E-marketing has no significant effect on Customer retention. Although the results revealed that E-marketing influences customer retention, this is not consistent with other similar studies (Adegbuyi et al., 2017).

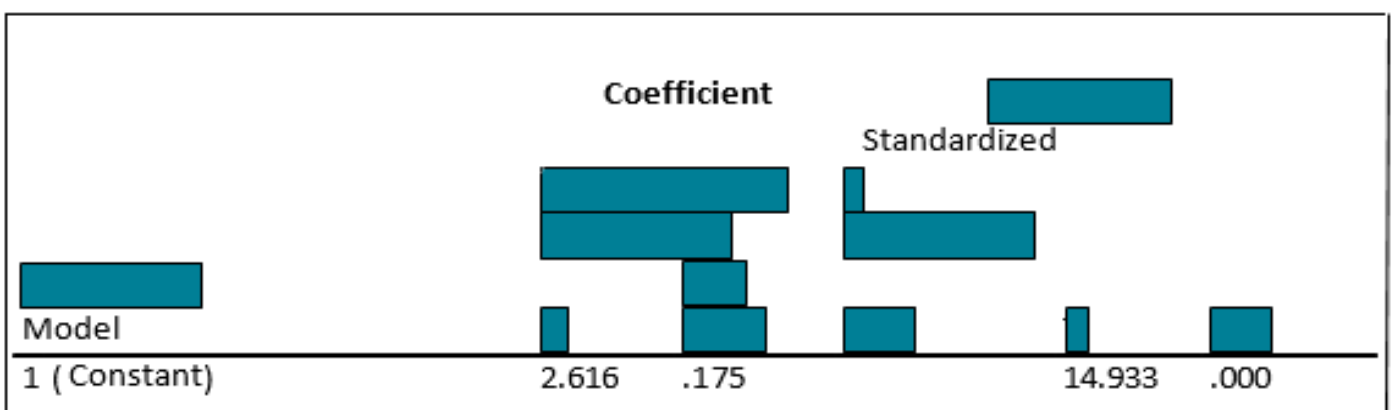


Fig 2 Hypothesis 2: E-Marketing has no Significant Effect on Customer Retention of Smes in Bauchi Metropolis

Table 5 Hypothesis 4: E-Marketing has no Significant Effect on the Market Share of smes in Bauchi Metropolis

Model B Std. Error Beta T Sig. 1	Unstandardized	Standardized	Coefficients	Coefficients
(Constant)	1.949	149	13.081	000
We use E-marketing resources to conduct commercial.				
Transactions	221	.049	.224	4.429 .000
Selling products and accepting payment via web site).				

➤ *Dependent Variable:*

Market Share Table 5 indicates that there was a significant positive correlation coefficient ( $\beta = 0.224$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) therefore, the H4 was rejected. E-marketing does not play a significant role in the market share. A study by (Kheng, 2018; Adegbuyi et al., 2015) found that social media marketing had a strong correlation with performance. Similarly, El-Gohary (2012) found that website marketing, social media, email marketing, digital marketing, and viral marketing had substantial beneficial effects and relationship with market share.

## V. GENERAL DISCUSSION

Even though the study provides a comparative discussion of the findings under each of the Hypothesis results. Nonetheless, it is necessary to provide a summarized general discussion. E-marketing exhibited a positive link to the four SME Performance dimensions, and Also, noteworthy is that though H3: E-marketing has no significant effect on Customer retention of SMEs Bauchi Metropolis was also rejected, the findings contrasted previous similar studies. The demographic data suggests that the low literacy level in the Northeastern region has hindered many businesses from deploying e-marketing tools, thus mitigating the positive effects of e-marketing on SME performance in the study area. Perhaps, the procrastination and lagging attitude of numerous entrepreneurs may account for the delay in the adoption of e-marketing in the study area.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study attempted to place empirical evidence upon the Hypotheses suggesting that e-marketing enhances small business performance in terms of competitive advantage, sales performance, customer retention, and market share. Based on the findings arising from the results, it can be concluded that e-marketing has a significant effect on competitive advantage, Sales volume, customer retention, and market share. Consequently, SME performance in Bauchi Metropolis can be improved through effective deployment of E-marketing.

➤ *Notions for Future Researchers and Limitations*

There is still a need for further research on E-marketing and the SMEs performance occasioned by inconsistency of results in comparison to previous studies. This study deployed a cross-sectional approach, which may limit the interpretation of the results and mitigate the conclusions of this investigation. There is a need for further studies using a longitudinal approach. Also, this study focuses on the Enterprise perspective, future researchers should explore the customer's perspective. Cross-sectional survey did not provide proof of causality, unlike the longitudinal research design. Finally, future researchers should contrast this study's findings with data from customer's perspective.

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