

**FACTORS AFFECTING DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING
AMONG FISH TRADERS IN KENYA. A CASE OF SINDO FISH
TRADERS IN HOMA BAY COUNTY**

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DECLARATION

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my late father, Joseph Ayanga who taught me that it's never too late to achieve your dreams.

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Before anything else, I want to give thanks to the Almighty God, who has been so good to me during my studies. Additionally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Angeline Wambugu, who served as my research supervisor and provided me with priceless advice and encouragement. My sincere appreciation also goes out to the Homa Bay County Sindo Fish Traders whose time and expertise were vital in the completion of this research.

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ABSTRACT

The primary goal of this research was to identify the elements that influence digital content marketing among Kenyan fish vendors. The Homa Bay County lawsuit involving Sindo Fish Traders. The objectives of this study were to ascertain the impact of digital literacy on digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders in Homa Bay County, to examine the impact of consumer behavior on digital content marketing in this same sector, to assess the impact of market competition on digital content marketing in this same sector, and to ascertain the impact of financial resources on digital content marketing in this same sector. The research team at Sindo Fish Traders aimed to collect data from 280 employees as part of their descriptive study. The study's principal data gathering tool was a questionnaire, and it used a census sample technique to pick 280 Sindo Fish Traders. Ethical principles such as informed permission, anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality were maintained throughout the investigation. The data was organized and sorted using SPSS version 26, descriptive statistics were used to examine the findings, and the results were presented in tables and figures. The results showed that even while a lot of traders know digital marketing is important, they don't really know how to use it. This is especially true when it comes to social media and analyzing the competition. Therefore, in order to increase traders' digital marketing abilities, the study suggests implementing focused training and support programs, better financial systems, and collaborative networks. In order to promote corporate growth and customer engagement in an increasingly digital environment, the study suggests that it is vital to foster digital literacy and allocate resources effectively for digital marketing in the fish trading industry.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CRM	Customer Relationship Management
DOI	Diffusion of Innovations
ITs	Information Technologies
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMM	Social media marketing
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
UMP	Unified Market Platform
USPs	Unique Selling Propositions
UTAUT	Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Customer behavior	encompasses the actions and decision-making processes of consumers when they search for, purchase, use, and evaluate products or services.
Digital literacy	means being able to use various digital tools to find what you need, assess it, and make something new.
Financial resources	are the funds available to a business for its operations and investments.
Market competition	refers to the dynamic interplay between businesses striving to attract the same customer base within a particular market.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction of the study

Included in this chapter are the study's rationale, problem statement, research aims, questions, importance, and limitations.

1.1 Background of the study

With the growth of the Web have come opportunities and threats for companies. According to Farooq and Raju (2019), consumers are now more equipped to make educated purchases because to the wealth of information available online. The web, on the other hand, has made the globe a smaller place and opened up new markets for businesses. Fast and easy online shopping has made it possible for businesses to reach customers all around the world (Farooq & Raju, 2019). In order to be competitive in today's global market, organizations have been forced to embrace technologically similar solutions, like digital marketing solutions, in order to provide customers with more information and attract consumers from all over the world.

With the rise of social media, businesses and customers are able to connect, buy, and discuss product details in a whole new way. To gain an advantage over competitors and impact the purchasing decisions of online customers, businesses are embracing SMM (Tajpour et al., 2022). When the Internet first came online in the 1990s, many companies' marketing efforts shifted from traditional media like television commercials to more modern forms of social media marketing. (Roser and Ortiz-Ospina, 2023). Internet and digital marketing, like SM, are attracting more and more businesses because of the personal touch, large user bases, and high efficacy (Jiang et al., 2023). Therefore, in order to optimize their impact on customers' purchasing choices, organizations should assess their SMMA.

Three billion individuals use social media every single day. Businesses may use the surge in social media traffic to influence consumers' online purchasing decisions (Chaffey &

Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). According to Mason et al. (2021), almost all US corporations use social media sites such as LinkedIn to encourage consumer-to-consumer interactions, build brand recognition, and solicit product evaluations. Companies have shown a rise in income via social media marketing (SMM) when compared to traditional marketing techniques.

The integration of social media with financial services has made it easier for customers in Asian nations like China to make purchases via their social networking accounts, which in turn boosts sales. This is shown by the social media platform WeChat. A win-win situation for Chinese consumers and businesses alike has resulted in consumer-centric product development thanks to the country's tight-knit community and the pervasiveness of social media in advertising. (Darling, 2019). Due to the high level of competition, the development of consumer-centered goods has been influenced by the integration of social media and marketing, which in turn has encouraged purchases.

Tourism sites in several African countries, including Festivals in Nigeria, are promoted using digital and social media marketing (Arasli et al., 2021). Numerous African governments rely on tourism as a source of revenue. However, with so much global competition for tourist spots, it is essential to have effective marketing strategies to influence tourists' selections. YouTube and Instagram, among others, provide a strong platform to influence both local and international travelers' decisions on where to go on vacation (Mkwizu, 2019). With the proliferation of smartphones and Internet connectivity, digital marketing has become an excellent tool for advertising events, consumer goods, and international tourism destinations.

According to Word Bank (2022), African nations have not made full use of their digital potential as yet. So far, SMM has not been a successful marketing technique for African firms. There are a number of obstacles that have slowed the expansion of digital marketing strategies like SMM. For example, in Ethiopia, where internet penetration is low and digital marketing is not yet widely used, there has been a slowdown in the expansion of SMM (Mkwizu, 2019). So, this is a great chance for Ethiopia and other nations to realize their full digital potential in areas like SMM and e-commerce. There is a need for more

investment from African governments to unlock the prospects in the digital marketing industry, since the adoption of SMM tactics and current solutions is still low.

According to the World Bank (2021), the highest concentration of internet users per capita is in East Africa, namely in Tanzania and Kenya. Increased internet connectivity is one result of improvements in the East African Region's telecommunications infrastructure spurred by digital marketing and social media. Countries like South Sudan, where only 7% of the population has access to the internet, provide a promising potential for investment in the growing field of digital connection and the widespread adoption of digital marketing tactics like social media marketing (SMM). While more and more people in East Africa have access to the internet and utilize social media, not all nations have caught up to the rest in terms of SMM adoption.

Businesses in Kenya who want to influence customers' purchasing choices now use social media marketing. With the proliferation of affordable smartphones and faster internet, the use of social media for advertising purposes has skyrocketed in the last decade. Also, companies in Kenya are getting into digital marketing, especially SMM, since the government is pushing for the country to embrace the digital economy (Wilson & Makau, 2018). Businesses in Kenya have been quick to jump on this bandwagon, with an increasing number of organizations using SM to market goods and services, engage with target audiences, and communicate with existing customers via various online channels. Businesses in Kenya are starting to employ social media ads; the most popular platforms are LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

High package prices, spotty infrastructure, and low levels of digital awareness are just a few of the reasons why SMM has not yet caught on nationwide in Kenya. Either an Ethernet or bundles acquired from phone courier service providers like Safaricom are required for businesses that want to utilize SMM for marketing purposes. Internet bundles and Wi-Fi connections are extra expenses that enterprises must bear. However, not all businesses have the financial means to invest in the necessary data bundles and qualified workers to adequately handle SMM. Also, not everyone has access to modern technology, such as cellphones and the Internet, or the necessary infrastructure to support them (Wilson &

Makau, 2018). Companies trying to promote their brands to clients in the nation have challenges due to a lack of infrastructure and capabilities in digital marketing, particularly social media marketing (SMM).

1.1.1 Digital Content Marketing

In the modern economy, information technologies (ITs) are widely regarded as essential tools in the pursuit for competitiveness, whether in the context of a country, a business or individual level. However, according to Hartmann, Nduru and Dannenberg (2021), IT effectiveness can only be realized when the technologies become widely spread and utilized. In the agricultural sector, ITs are not only useful as tools for information dissemination, they also increase knowledge by providing for newer, more effective ways to provide extension services (Adebayo, Olagunju, & Ogundipe, 2016); and according to Skare and Soriano (2021) are playing a key role in the integration of small-scale farmers into international markets. However, the uptake of information technologies in Africa has been slow. Wyche and Steinfield (2016) confirm these findings, asserting that farmers in rural Kenya rarely use cell phones to carry out simple tasks such as access market prices. Moreso, Hartmann, et al. (2021) aver that most arrangements between smallholders and exporters occur through analogue channels.

There is a significant body of literature study models and determinants of technology adoption, and one thing seems certain, the motivating factors for consumers vary significantly from those of firms (Forman, Goldfarb & Greenstein, 2018). Skare and Soriano (2021) note that for individuals, technology adoption is a complex social and developmental process that is influenced by a host of individual as well as external constructs. Miranda, Farias, de Araújo Schwartz and de Almeida (2016) add that technology adoption decision is highly influenced by diffusion factors such as channels of communication and other market pressures. In Greece, the lack of awareness of mobile agricultural apps was the reason for low adoption (Costopoulou, Ntaliani, & Karetsos, 2016). According to Straub (2009), understanding technology adoption requires one to address emotional, cognitive as well as contextual concerns.

In an assessment of regulatory environment, Fabregas, Kremer and Schilbach (2019) showed increased adoption of marketing applications after regulatory developments

surrounding user data sharing and security. Dhaygude and Chakraborty (2020) links mobile application adoption with access to smart phones, digital literacy levels, trust, peer and family influence, in addition to the platforms' accessibility features. Kumar, Engle and Tucker (2018) assert that an individuals' propensity to embrace and use new technologies can be condensed into technology, market, and economic factors while Gunathilaka (2017) revealed that the degree of government support, perceived benefits the user's computer literacy and technology infrastructure impact mobile technology adoption. Diaz et al. (2021) report that market factors (extension services, information awareness), technology factors (complexity, ease of access) as well as resource factors (financial, compatibility) all influence farmers' willingness to adopt a mobile app in the marketing of bamboo products. This study will rely on these metrics in examining the factors that influence uptake of online distribution platforms among horticultural farmers.

1.1.1.1 Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is a vital competency in today's increasingly digital economy, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) such as Sindo Fish Traders in Homa Bay County, Kenya. Digital content marketing involves the creation of digital materials to engage consumers, build brand awareness, and ultimately drive sales (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). As fish trading is a highly competitive market in Homa Bay, the ability for traders to effectively utilize digital tools can determine their success (Oduor & Lyaruu, 2020). The integration of technology in marketing strategies is essential for these traders to connect with their customers and differentiate themselves from competitors. The level of digital literacy determines how effectively they can engage with consumers through platforms such as social media, websites, and email marketing. Research has shown that higher digital literacy correlates with better marketing outcomes (Bawden & Robinson, 2021). Digitally savvy merchants may increase customer trust and engagement by showcasing their items in visually engaging material. However, many fish traders in rural regions face challenges such as limited access to training and resources, which impacts their ability to leverage digital marketing strategies effectively (Oinot & Otieno, 2021).

Moreover, the low penetration of smartphones and internet connectivity in Homa Bay County poses a significant barrier to effective digital marketing (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). A majority of small traders may lack the skills or tools necessary to create and distribute digital content. This challenge necessitates capacity-building initiatives aimed at equipping traders with essential skills in digital marketing (Mureithi et al., 2022). Without improving their digital literacy, many traders risk being left behind in a rapidly evolving marketplace. The implications of digital literacy extend beyond just the individual traders; they affect the overall competitiveness of the local economy. Research indicates that SMEs that invest in digital marketing strategies outperform their competitors (Morrison, 2020). As Traders seek to utilize digital content marketing for growth, enhancing their digital literacy is foundational for ensuring sustainable business practices in the fish trading industry (Chircu & Kauffman, 2021). The need for targeted training programs and resources is paramount to improving digital competencies within this community.

1.1.1.2 Customer Behavior

Digital content marketing in particular relies on a thorough understanding of consumer behavior. Consumers' preferences and purchasing behavior have shifted significantly due to the rise of digital platforms, where they seek not just products, but also authenticity, engagement, and a convenient shopping experience (Kotler & Keller, 2016). As fish traders leverage digital marketing, understanding these behavioral trends is essential for tailoring their content to meet consumer expectations and increase sales. Fish consumption is deeply rooted in local culture and dietary practices. Customers are increasingly seeking quality and freshness when purchasing fish, which has highlighted the importance of transparent communication through digital marketing (Kumar et al., 2018). Digital platforms allow traders to showcase product quality and origin through engaging content like videos and photos. Additionally, engaging customers through informative content about fishing practices and sustainability can influence their buying decisions positively (Heinberg, 2021).

Moreover, social media platforms have emerged as crucial channels for influencing customer behavior. Research indicates that positive interactions and reviews on social media can lead to higher levels of trust among consumers and encourage repeat purchases (Kim & Ko, 2012). For Traders, maintaining a strong presence on platforms like Facebook and Instagram not only builds brand awareness but also facilitates two-way communication with customers—a vital factor in driving customer loyalty (Kumar & Pansari, 2016). Understanding the demographics and psychographics of their customers is another fundamental aspect of tailoring digital content. Traders in Homa Bay must recognize the differences in preferences among various customer segments to create targeted marketing campaigns (Solomon et al., 2019). For instance, younger consumers may prefer interactive content, while older generations could look for information-rich communications that emphasize quality and safety. By leveraging data analytics, traders can better understand their audience and optimize their marketing strategies accordingly.

1.1.1.3 Market Competition

The competitive landscape of the fish trading market in Homa Bay County is intensifying, necessitating the need for effective digital content marketing strategies among players such as Sindo Fish Traders. In an environment where many traders offer similar products, standing out through innovative marketing becomes imperative (Porter, 1980). The emergence of digital marketing tools has leveled the playing field, allowing both large and small traders to reach a broader audience and create brand differentiation. As more fish traders in Homa Bay adopt digital content marketing, newcomers face the challenge of establishing unique selling propositions (USPs) in a saturated market. In addition to quality and price, brand storytelling and customer engagement are becoming pivotal in differentiating businesses (Kotler & Keller, 2016). For Sindo Fish Traders, developing a strong brand narrative that resonates with potential customers can foster loyalty and provide a competitive edge. This narrative can be reinforced through various digital content formats, such as blogs, videos, and social media posts that connect emotionally with the audience (Sweeney et al., 2019).

A major factor heightening the competitiveness is the proliferation of e-commerce platforms, which allow buyers to transact directly with suppliers both locally and internationally. E-commerce's convenience can significantly influence consumer choices, compelling local traders to enhance their digital marketing strategies to remain competitive (Adams et al., 2021). Traders must acknowledge this competitive threat by improving their online presence and ensuring that their digital marketing content is both engaging and informative to capture consumer interest effectively. Moreover, competition is not solely limited to the product but also extends to service quality and customer interaction. Businesses that excel in customer service and community engagement often win customer loyalty over those that do not prioritize these areas (Bennett & Rundle-Thiele, 2005). Sindo Fish Traders can leverage digital platforms to not only market their products but also create strong relationships with customers through regular engagement, personalized offers, and loyalty programs, setting themselves apart from their competitors.

1.1.1.4 Financial Resources

Sindo Fish Traders' capacity to participate in digital content marketing successfully is highly dependent on their financial resources. SMEs often face constraints in budget allocation, making it challenging to invest in high-quality content production, digital tools, and training for their teams (Fitchett et al., 2017). Given the importance of digital marketing in a competitive marketplace, a lack of sufficient financial resources can severely limit a trader's outreach and growth potential (Gilbert, 2019).

The allocation of finances for digital marketing is not only about creating content but also about understanding the channels that yield the highest return on investment (ROI). For instance, investments in social media advertising or search engine optimization can lead to increased visibility and customer engagement, but they require upfront costs that not all traders can afford (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). Traders need to strategize their financial expenditure on digital marketing to maximize the impact while minimizing costs.

Moreover, access to financial resources can also determine the level of technological adoption among traders. Businesses with limited funds may find it difficult to acquire the tools necessary for effective digital content marketing, such as content creation software,

customer relationship management (CRM) systems, and website hosting services (Kumar et al., 2015). This inability to leverage technology puts them at a disadvantage compared to competitors who can afford these necessary investments. Financial literacy, therefore, becomes a crucial factor for traders to make informed decisions about their marketing budgets.

Financial constraints also affect the ability of fish traders to participate in training programs designed to enhance their digital content marketing skills. Many funding opportunities exist for SMEs, but accessing these funds is often a challenge (Smallbone et al., 2016). Without adequate training, traders may struggle to understand how to create effective digital content, engage customers, and track their marketing performance. For Sindo Fish Traders, securing financial support for training and resources could significantly improve their marketing capabilities.

1.1.2 Sindo, Homa Bay County

Homa Bay County, located along the shores of Lake Victoria in Kenya, is renowned for its vibrant fish trading industry. The region's proximity to the lake provides a rich source of various fish species, including tilapia and Nile perch, which are highly sought after both locally and internationally. The fish trade plays a crucial role in the local economy, providing livelihoods for many families and contributing to food security in the area (Ochieng, 2020). The significance of fish trading in Homa Bay extends beyond economic benefits; it also fosters community cohesion and cultural identity among the residents.

The fish trading sector in Homa Bay is characterized by a diverse group of traders, ranging from small-scale vendors to larger commercial enterprises. Small-scale fish traders often operate in local markets, purchasing fish directly from fishermen and selling them to consumers. These traders play a vital role in the supply chain, ensuring that fresh fish reaches the local population (Omondi, 2019). In contrast, larger fish trading companies may engage in export activities, tapping into international markets and contributing to the region's economic growth. This dual structure of the fish trading industry allows for a dynamic market that can adapt to changing consumer demands.

Despite the economic opportunities presented by the fish trade, traders in Homa Bay face several challenges. One significant issue is the fluctuating fish prices, which can be influenced by factors such as seasonal variations in fish availability and competition from other regions (Achieng, 2021). Additionally, environmental concerns, such as overfishing and pollution in Lake Victoria, pose threats to fish stocks and, consequently, the livelihoods of traders. Addressing these challenges requires collaborative efforts among stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the traders themselves.

Moreover, the fish trading industry in Homa Bay is increasingly embracing technology to enhance efficiency and market reach. Many traders are utilizing social media platforms and mobile applications to connect with customers, manage orders, and streamline their operations (Ochieng, 2020). This change in technology not only makes fish trading more profitable, but it also gives traders more power by giving them access to more customers and more vital market information. The future of fish trade in the area is anticipated to be greatly influenced by technological advancements.

Fish traders in Homa Bay County are integral to the local economy and community. While they face various challenges, the resilience and adaptability of these traders, coupled with the integration of technology, present opportunities for growth and sustainability in the fish trading sector. Continued support from stakeholders and the implementation of sustainable fishing practices will be essential to ensure the long-term viability of this vital industry (Achieng, 2021).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

For small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) to stand out in today's digital marketplace, digital content marketing is a must-have tactic. Nevertheless, there is a notable lack of knowledge about the several elements that impact the efficacy of digital content marketing for fish dealers like Sindo Fish dealers in areas like Homa Bay County, where conventional fish trading methods predominate. Despite the potential benefits of digital marketing, many traders face challenges stemming from inadequate digital literacy, shifting customer behaviors, intense market competition, and limited financial resources. These challenges

hinder their ability to fully leverage digital marketing tools and strategies, ultimately affecting their business growth and sustainability.

One of the critical factors impacting digital content marketing is the level of digital literacy among Sindo Fish Traders. Limited digital skills can obstruct traders from creating compelling content or utilizing digital platforms for marketing purposes (Bawden & Robinson, 2021). Research indicates that digital literacy is essential for SMEs to engage effectively with customers and create meaningful online content (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). However, in Homa Bay, the gap in digital literacy remains largely unexplored, particularly in the context of fish trading. This gap in understanding needs to be examined to identify strategies that could enhance digital marketing practices within the fish trading sector. Studies have shown that targeted training programs can significantly improve digital skills among SMEs, leading to better marketing outcomes (Gilbert, 2019).

Additionally, customer behavior plays a pivotal role in shaping marketing strategies, including digital content marketing. As consumer preferences evolve towards a more online-oriented approach, traders must assess how their target demographics interact with digital content (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Research has demonstrated that understanding customer behavior is crucial for developing effective marketing strategies (Chaffey, 2019). Sindo Fish Traders face challenges in adapting their marketing strategies to align with changing consumer behaviors, which can result in missed opportunities and declining sales. But research on how people in Homa Bay County really buy seafood is scarce. Better marketing strategies that are based on the unique wants and requirements of each consumer may be developed by studying the ways in which consumer actions impact digital content marketing.

Market competition and financial resources also present considerable challenges in the digital marketing landscape. The presence of numerous competitors can make it increasingly difficult for Sindo Fish Traders to differentiate themselves and effectively promote their products in a crowded marketplace (Porter, 1980). Existing literature highlights that SMEs often struggle with competitive positioning due to limited resources

(Gilbert, 2019). Furthermore, the financial limitations experienced by many SMEs restrict their ability to invest in quality marketing solutions, training, and technology. This gap in understanding the competitive landscape and financial constraints specific to fish traders in Homa Bay County needs further exploration. In light of this, the study's overarching goal is to help Sindo Fish Traders overcome these obstacles by enhancing their market position and driving company development via the use of digital content marketing tools.

While digital content marketing presents significant opportunities for fish traders in Homa Bay County, several challenges hinder its effective implementation. Critical topics that require more research include digital literacy gaps, consumer behavior knowledge, and negotiating market rivalry and budgetary restrictions. This research intends to fill these gaps in our understanding of digital marketing for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with a focus on the fish trading industry. Finding cost-effective marketing methods, creating individualized training programs, and studying consumer behavior patterns are all areas that need more investigation to help fish merchants succeed in the online marketplace.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective of the study

The primary goal of this research is to identify the elements that influence digital content marketing among Kenyan fish vendors. Crimes in Homa Bay County Involving Sindo Fish Merchants.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- i. To establish the effect of digital literacy on digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County.
- ii. To analyze the effect of customer behavior on digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County.
- iii. To determine the effect of market competition on digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County.

- iv. To evaluate the effect of financial resources on digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County.

1.4 Research questions

- i. How does digital literacy affect digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County?
- ii. In what ways does customer behavior affect digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County.?
- iii. Does market competition affect digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County?
- iv. To what extent does financial resources affect digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County?

1.5 Significance of the study

Agricultural and telecoms regulators and policymakers will also find this study's findings useful. Better policies, guided by a solid regulatory framework, will boost farmers' confidence in using growing business-to-business technology, and the report will help management do just that. The study's findings will help the government and appropriate lawmakers create policies and laws that encourage small-scale farmers to utilize internet distribution channels to reach a wider audience. The best way to get more farmers involved with online distribution platforms is to have policies that support platform development and promotion.

Fish merchants in Kenya may use this study's results to their advantage by learning what aspects of their distribution platform management should focus on to boost platform adoption. Additionally, farmers will be able to use the data to learn about the several ways technology might enhance their operations. This research will also fill gaps in our understanding of what motivates farmers to use online distribution systems.

The variables that impact the adoption of online distribution platforms will be examined in this research. Because this variable has been understudied in the context of agriculture, it will contribute to the growing body of empirical study on the factors that influence farmers'

adoption of new goods. Additionally, it will add to theory by developing new parts of the TAM framework.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study's overarching goal is to discover what influences digital content marketing among Kenyan fish vendors. The Homa Bay County lawsuit involving Sindo Fish Traders. The theory of innovation dissemination provides the theoretical framework for the research. The research will use a quantitative approach and will use the Sindo Fish Traders in Homa Bay County as its population. The study will cover the period from April to September of 2024.

1.7 Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 provides an overview of supplier assessment; Chapter 2 states the issue; Chapter 3 lays out the study's aims and research questions; Chapter 4 discusses the study's relevance; and Chapter 5 concludes with the study's scope, population, and time frame. The purpose of this research was to identify the elements that influence digital content marketing among Kenyan fish vendors. Crimes in Homa Bay County Involving Sindo Fish Merchants.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter lays the groundwork for the study's conceptual framework by reviewing relevant theoretical and empirical literature.

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

2.1.1 Technology Acceptance Model

This study will be grounded on Davis (1989) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and complemented by components in Venkatesh and Davis (2000) to TAM 2 model. The model will test multiple constructs that fall under the umbrella of technology, resource, and market factors and their influence on the uptake of online distribution platforms. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was designed by Fred Davis (1989) to assess the adoption of new technology based on user attitudes. This theory was formulated to provide a way for innovators to predict whether or not targeted individuals would accept a new technology (Kabbiri et al. 2018). The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) was one of the first attempts to explain adoption behavior from a social psychology perspective; it identified attitude and social pressure as the primary drivers of behavioral intent, and it sought to analyze the drivers of technology uptake. Ajzen (1991) expanded the TRA in 1991 to the Theory of Planned Behavior to address the limitations of TRA which did not address situations in which individuals have no control over, adding perceived behavioral control as another determinant of actual behavior. Davis's (1986) TAM has explained technology adoption behavior across a variety of workplace situations, and its main constructs are perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use.

The TAM was extended in 2000 by Venkatesh and Davis (2000) to TAM 2 to expand the model's application to private users and for personal reasons such as entertainment, information access as well as digital commerce. TAM 2 included Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) TRA components, social influence processes and cognitive instrumental processes.

The purpose of this research is to use the components of these models to investigate the market, technological, and resource variables that influence the use of online distribution channels by Kenyan horticultural exporters and producers.

Davis (1989) defined perceived usefulness as the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance and perceived ease of use or use simplicity as the degree to which the potential user expects to control the system effortlessly. Accordingly, Davis (1989) asserts that individuals will be comfortable taking up new technologies that are easy to use and offer significant advantages over existing systems. The TAM incorporated psychological aspects to address the aspect of effectiveness of new technologies in meeting the needs from specific environments. Attitude and social factors were incorporated and they encompass individuals' perceptions towards new technologies based on social constructs and previous experience. New technology, according to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), may affect people's propensity to repeat an action based on how they perceive the views of others. When it comes to farming, the adoption of internet distribution channels is likely to be impacted by farmer organizations, friends, and the acts of government agencies.

Researchers Diaz, Sasaki, Tsusaka, and Szabo (2021) examined farmers' propensity to embrace the Bamboost app by combining aspects such as perceived utility, simplicity of use, accessibility of information, perceived danger, and perceived cost. According to Chuang, Wang, and Liou (2020), an expanded TAM model should include farmers' knowledge of current market items in addition to TAM components. Costopoulou et al. (2016) found that 95% of Greek farmers do not use mobile agricultural apps because they are not aware about their existence. According to Michels et al. (2020), farmers' socio-demographic factors such as age, education level and ownership of land and its size influence the decision to adopt new marketing channels. An empirical investigation on drivers of mobile applications adoption by farmers found a positive relationship between social influence, perceived usefulness, information awareness and perceived ease of use and mobile application adoption, while perceived risk and perceived cost had a negative impact on their adoption (Victor, Nic, & Xiaomeng, 2021). This study will use these

constructs in identifying the factors that influence the uptake of online distribution platforms.

2.1.2 Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) states that, via the mediating influence of behavioral intention, an individual's attitudes toward carrying out the targeted conduct may be used to forecast the behavior in issue. The important attitudes in this process are those that are specific to the specific behavior being studied, it is not sufficient to consider the individual's attitudes more generally (Ajzen 1988; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). The theory also postulates that a person's intentions about performing a behavior (which ultimately determine whether they will do so) are influenced by social pressures or "subjective norms", which arise from their individual's perceptions of what others will think about them performing the behavior in question (Vallerand, Deshaies, Cuerrier, Pelletier, & Mongeau, 1991).

Behavioral intentions are the most reliable indicator of future actions according to this theoretical paradigm. Attitudes and social or "normative" variables both have a direct impact on these intentions. All other factors in the external environment influence behavior only indirectly, through their influence on attitudes and subjective norms (Tsai, Chen, & Chien, 2012). The TRA is underpinned by the general assumption that individuals are rational and develop beliefs by systematically using the information that is available to them (Zhang & Ng, 2012).

It bases its analysis on the "expectancy value" theory of behavior, which states that people will consider the positive and bad consequences of their actions in relation to the probability of such consequences. People are more inclined to have a good attitude toward and the intention to carry out an action if they anticipate that it will lead to a desired or useful consequence, as opposed to someone who does not anticipate such outcomes. In the TRA, two categories of beliefs—"salient beliefs" and "normative beliefs"—are considered together to impact the decision-making process around the execution of an activity.

2.1.3 Theory of Planned Behavior

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) put forth by Ajzen (1991), an individual's actions are most reliably predicted by their intentions. Attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms (e.g., how important people think it is that one should or should not do the action), and the belief in one's own ability to control the behavior all play a role in shaping an individual's perceptions of these factors. Many diverse behaviors, from gambling to hormone replacement treatment usage, have been predicted using Ajzen's TPB.

Stone, Jawahar, and Kisamore (2010) conducted a study in Oklahoma which studied the Theory of Planned Behavior predicting academic misconduct intentions and behavior. One hundred forty-one students majoring in business were surveyed about their intentions and actions about cheating. They discovered that the TPB explained 36% of dishonest actions and 21% of dishonest intents. According to their results, the TPB model may help with academic dishonesty research and is a useful tool for predicting when students would cheat.

Robinson and Doverspike (2006) applied the Theory of Planned Behavior to individuals' intentions to enroll in either an online version or a traditional classroom version of an experimental psychology class. College students majoring in psychology, with ages ranging from eighteen to fifty-one, filled out a survey that contained a made-up account of an experimental psychology class they had taken. Every facet of Ajzen's idea was assessed by the survey. Intentions to enroll in an online course were predicted by general attitudes and subjective norms.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

The digital economy has led to the proliferation of e-commerce market places and online platforms which are considered multi-sided markets that enable interactions between users located on different sides of a given transaction (Abrams & Sackmann, 2014). These researchers asserts that digital platforms offer a wide range of advantages associated with cost, improved matching between possible business partners and reduced information accessing efforts. Online platforms represent a wide scope of online activities and services

ranging from internet websites, app stores, mobile applications or online advertising platforms (Akuku, Haaksma, & Derksen, 2019). Online platforms enable users to upload information, access information, request quotes, receive price, place orders, and receive market-related news. Bright (2019) avers that most of the services offered by digital platforms such as winner determination and declaration in auctions, as well as dissemination of price information are automated, improving market competition, price, transparency and farmers' income. Since online platforms serve as digital marketplaces, a higher number of players would see increased value generation to players in the agri-value chain (Dormido & Malicdem, 2019).

Agri-business platforms' use has exploded in recent years and multiple countries have launched digital trading platforms such as India's eNational Agriculture Market (eNAM) and the Unified Market Platform (UMP), Ethiopia's Lersha Digital Agriculture Platform and Uganda's E-Voucher (Levi, Rajan, Singhvi, & Zheng, 2020). Currently, Kenya is setting up a Big Data Infrastructure to spur growth in agricultural production as well as address existing challenges such as poor agri-IT awareness and competence, lack of access to finance and associated infrastructure such as internet and extension services among others (Akuku, Haaksma, & Derksen, 2019). However, despite these efforts, a World Bank Survey Report (2020) indicates that in addition to existing the platforms being unable to offer a wide range of products and services, they also lack effective mechanisms to track their users as well as address the demand for real-time and intelligent data.

Theoretically, new technologies will be widely accepted if they can demonstrate their usefulness and ease of use (Davis, 1989). According to Walter, et al. (2017), expansion of markets through globalization required smart farming through digital channels. In Portugal, Borges and Costa (2021) provided evidence that a platform's usability and experience significantly influence intentions to reuse. Eze et al. (2019) noted that responsive technologies are more likely to be adopted. Williams, Crespo and Abu (2020) are adamant that the availability of digital devices is key to the expansion of digitization in sub-Saharan Africa. Dijkstra (2018) on the other hand recognizes the role of the regulatory environment and extension services in facilitating digital services' uptake. The section below presents a more detailed review of the factors that influence digital products' uptake.

This section presented a review of previous researcher's findings on the research variables. This section presented the digital literacy, consumer behavior, market competition and financial resources or impediments to the successful adoption of digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County

2.2.1 Digital Literacy

Digital learning is defined simply as the activity of learning through computers or other information systems (IS) (Elkaseh, Wong, & Fung, 2015). Digital learning is the dissemination of education using electronic devices and digital media (Woodcock, Middleton, & Nortcliff, 2012). Digital literacy focuses on how ICT is integrated into the curriculum to enhance the delivery of learning materials (UNESCO, 2015). The Digital Literacy Program is a result of the Kenyan vision 2030, which aims to integrate each student into a digital education system (Tarus, Gichoya, & Muumbo, 2015). Smith (2016) notes that digital literacy programs have been beneficial to universities. Firstly, they have made human growth possible and closed the digital gap; as a result, today's pupils are well-prepared to work in a global market. Secondly, there is an equal and accessible supply of high-quality educational materials. The result has been an increase in the free flow of information. Thirdly, professors are more willing to put money into radical new approaches to education that vastly outperform the status quo. The ability to study from anywhere in the nation with an internet connection is the final and most striking feature. Students all throughout the globe should be required to demonstrate proficiency in digital literacy as part of their standard educational program. Studies highlight that there is a preference for technology use among children of 5 to 15 years old in the UK (Devaux, Bélanger, Grand-Clement, & Manville, 2017).

According to Andema (2014), digital literacy is only starting to make its way into African institutions. The method of incorporating the digital age into training is going through a period of change. A countrywide virtual technology strategy is already in place in the most of the countries assessed, and one of the new section's main skills is the attention governments are devoting to coverage improvement. Chris (2015), however, indicates that

there are several structural and internal factors within the institutions that are limiting the adoption of digital literacy programs within higher learning institutions.

Digital literacy is the implementation of programs designed for the preparation of students for the digital world through the provision of digital devices, capacity development for teachers, broadband connectivity, and provision of digital learning (Mahinda, 2019). According to the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (2016) study, integrating ICT into education is crucial for raising the bar for student engagement and preparing them for success in the modern world. While university enrollment has been on the rise, the feasibility of universal digital literacy is still up for debate (Kenya Education Network, 2017). According to the research, the majority of the country's institutions have struggled to implement digital learning programs because of issues with faculty and student digital literacy, internet connectivity, information and communication technology rules, and the creation of digital material.

Sutter and Kihara (2019) opined that increased utilization of new technologies within the country has resulted in digital solutions being introduced within the Kenyan education system. Important ways in which this has been achieved include the incorporation of ICT into educational programs and the provision of online learning solutions at various educational levels. Hennessy, Onguko, Harrison, Ang'ondi, Namalefe, Naseem and Wamakote (2010) noted that in Sub Saharan Africa, ICT integration within schools faces numerous challenges such as lack of adequate resources, lack of skilled personnel, poor IT expertise among teachers and regional conflicts across countries.

Laaria (2013) in a research paper indicated that effective implementation of ICT in the learning environment is key to fostering delivery of quality education and supporting research and development. The study found that when schools don't have the necessary infrastructure for information and communication technology, as well as bad leadership and a lack of dedication and support, it makes it harder to implement ICT programs. Stephen (2014) found out that ICT integration in Kenyan schools has not been successful due to lack of resources, poor support and training of teachers as well as attitude and resistance to change within the schools. Mingaine (2013) similarly indicated that digital

literacy in Kenya faces numerous systemic and intrinsic challenges that have led to problems in the implementation process and utilization within most of the Kenyan schools.

2.2.2 Customer Behavior

The rapid adoption of the internet has given rise to the concept and practice of electronic commerce (e-commerce), which has become big business in the world today (Gao, 2018). Ecommerce has made it easy, fast and convenient for consumers to shop for products online (Kautish, Paul & Sharma, 2021). As a result, there has been an explosion in the number of organizations that are selling goods and services online (Zinnbauer & Honer, 2017). Due to the increasing popularity of online shopping, there is a growing demand for understanding the motives and behaviour of online shoppers (Verhoef, 2020). Haridasan and Fernando (2018) refer to online shopping as purchasing items from internet retailers as opposed to a shop or store. Online advertising is an expression used to refer to advertising that involves computational networks (McStay, 2016). Web, mobile, tablet, social, locative, wearable, and other networked devices that might contribute to advertising experiences are all grouped together under the phrase "online advertising" for marketers. Online advertising, according to Durmaz (2011), incorporates the use of several forms of information and communication technology to transmit the advertising message. These forms include television, radio, and the internet. Consumers are exposed to the advertisements via various internet-enabled devices, including smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktop PCs. This occurs when they access applications or bloggings on these devices because advertisers pay for advertising space on bloggings and applications in order to display their messages (Durmaz, 2011).

According to Priyanka (2018), there are a variety of online advertising types and these include: Affiliate marketing where affiliates or publishers earn a commission for every person they refer to a blogging through special tracking links that identify the affiliate and connects to the product or service page. One kind of online marketing is known as "display advertising," and it entails companies promoting their goods and services by placing banner ads on other people's blogs. Another kind of online advertising is known as "search engine marketing." This is when companies like Google display ads on their search result page

based on the user's query. One kind of advertising is email advertising, in which companies use publisher-compiled email lists to send out advertisements to potential customers. Social media advertising is another form of advertising that is similar to display advertising but it's only used within social media platforms such as Facebook (McStay, 2016).

In this context, "consumer behavior" means the customer's choices and behaviors leading up to the purchase. To learn what makes customers tick and what they want to buy, businesses and marketers analyze consumer behavior (Oke, et al., 2016). Businesses are realizing the growing importance of studying current consumer behavior due to the fact that customers are becoming more influential, well-informed, and smart. Advertising to attract consumers, providing better environment, product, services and policies is important in improving today's consumer experience to support businesses in retaining customers (Shende, 2014). Zourikalatehsamad et al. (2015) in Malaysia showed that the predictors (cost saving factor, convenience factor and customized product or services) have a positive impact on intention to continue seeking online advertising. Yasmeen and Khalid (2016) in Pakistan indicated that online advertisement had a significant impact on consumer buying behavior and it was a large segment.

Okon, Efremfon, and Akaninyene (2016) in Nigeria revealed that internet surfing skill, ease of blogging access, advert content, location of advert on the web page, and the quality of advertised products are the major determinants of successful online advertisement. Instagram and WhatsApp are more popular in Kuwait than in Egypt, according to Alenez, Shaikhli, and Mahmood (2017), and this difference influences consumers' intentions to buy. In Tanzania, Mwakasege (2015) found that ads significantly impact consumers' propensity to buy by capturing their attention, stimulating their curiosity, and generating a desire to buy. Word of mouth, events, magazines, Facebook, DVDs, trade shows, t-shirts, and blogs are some of the ways Forever Living promotes itself.

First, consumers in Kenya sometimes received the social marketing messages via the different channels, according to Mwangi (2017). Finally, social marketing had little impact on consumers' propensity to buy and memory of the brand, but a moderate effect on consumers' opinions. For a company like Radio Africa, which depends on communication

to generate interest and brand recognition, internet advertising is crucial (Ogutu, Ogutu and Njanja, 2018). In addition, the marketing methods put in place led to more brand loyalty, which in turn affected how people bought the items and services on offer. Among the many Kenyan online marketplaces, you'll find Jumia.co.ke, kilimall.co.ke, olx Kenya, shopit.co.ke, checki.co.ke, mammaikes.co.ke, mimi.coke, and electric hub, among many more. With the increasing number of emerging online stores, customers have many options to choose from when in need of products in Kenya (Bachoo, 2019).

2.2.3 Market Competition

Competition intensity refers to the degree to which a firm faces rivalry within its industry as determined by Michael Porter's industry competitive forces (Wheelen and Hunger, 2005). The level of competition intensity is related to the activities of competing firms such as price and promotion competition (Cui et al, 2005). They go on to say that the rapid advancement of technology and the globalization of markets have made intense rivalry and the ever-changing nature of markets essential features of market competition. So, multinational corporations have to contend with a plethora of local rivals and, using a variety of strategic solutions, swiftly adapt to the ever-changing local market. The presence of several comparable items vying for the attention of consumers in a single market area is another indicator of intense competition.

According to our theory, the five criteria proposed by Waeyenberg (2006) characterize the level of competition in the Kenyan market. One way to characterize it is by looking at the amount of identical items sold in the same market. These rivals could be local or international businesses. As a second consideration, you should think about how aggressively your rivals in the same industry behave in terms of marketing and how quickly they supply their items. Thirdly, how intense the rivalry is between businesses selling items in that sector, measured by the percentage of the market that each controls. Lastly, we need to know whether our rivals in that industry often use tactics like customer loyalty programs and amazing deals to steal our consumers. Finally, the proximity of rival goods—that is, how simple it would be for MNC's consumers to acquire replacement products or other suppliers in the host country—is an important consideration.

Having extensive marketing knowledge allows a company to make its goods more competitive than its competitors. Before entering a market, a company would do well to familiarize itself with its consumers, rivals, suppliers, and distributors (Cui et al., 2005). A company's marketing prowess is shaped in part by its in-house expertise, which includes things like information and communication technology (ICT) and operational specialist skills. This is a crucial resource for any business, since it provides a foundational advantage over competitors. Improving a company's competitiveness requires early exposure to both internal and external market factors.

We take it from Bernard and Koerte that there are a number of ways in which marketing expertise gives host-country companies an advantage (2007). To start, have a look at the companies' product catalogs; if they had 30 different options, it would provide buyers a lot of diversity. Second, how many different wholesale and retail marketplaces are supplied by the industry's major players. If this is the case, they have a massive client base and a ton of market share because of how convenient their products are. Thirdly, we need to know whether the companies cater to a wide variety of clients, which would indicate that they are successful in meeting the needs of many different types of consumers. And lastly, does the industry's competition use ICT to boost operational efficacy and efficiency?

The results of the studies on manufacturing strategy, competitive strategy, and company performance (Amoako-Gyampah and Acquah, 2008) and strategy and small business performance (Gibcus and Kemp, 2003) were highly congruent. The results of these research showed that the tactics used by firms are positively correlated with the forces of industrial competitiveness. Similar to one another, they came to the conclusion that product pricing, marketing experience, and competition intensity are factors that impact an organization's strategy decision. However, the topic of competitiveness among Kenya's multinational firms was not covered in any of the studies.

A sample of international MNCs manufacturing in Kenya who are members of the Kenya Association of Manufacturers were the subjects of Dimba and K'Obonyo's (2009) research on the impact of strategic human resource strategies on MNCs. This kind of business

existed in the fifty in 2007. The research sample was obtained by randomly selecting senior managers and functional managers from each company to participate in the survey.

Mokaya et al (2012) conducted a study on market positioning and organizational performance in the airlines industry in Kenya which arrived to similar findings with a study on competitive strategies adopted by Multinational Banks in Kenya by Ogutu and Nyatichi (2012). Mokaya et al (2012) found that the choice of market positioning strategies by an organization was influenced industry competition and the strategies determine the organizational performance. The airline business was the primary subject of their analysis. According to Ogutu and Nyatichi (2012), industry competitiveness impacted the strategy decisions made by international banks. However, this research intends to examine other sectors, such as manufacturing and services, which were not considered by them.

An empirical study by Bernard and Koerte (2007) on 423 Multinational Corporations in USA and Germany and that conducted by Ogutu and Samuel (2011) on the strategies adopted by multinational corporations to cope with Competition in Kenya majored mainly on the strategies that adopt to cope with industry competition and they did not specifically research on how competition influences choice of strategic response by an organization. Kioko (2012) did a study on the analysis of competitive strategies and their effect on the market share of independent petroleum companies in Kenya. All three studies came to the same conclusion: to stay ahead of the competition, businesses use cost leadership and differentiation tactics.

From the foregoing of the critique of researches above, this researcher will deviate from the exploratory research as used by Boschman (2006) and London and Hart (2004) described above. Instead, primary data will be collected from the MNCs understudy for the analysis of descriptive statistics as done by Contiu (2010) and Dimba and K'Obonyo (2009). This study will also analyze inferential statistics as done by Bernard and Koerte (2007) in their study. Instead of researching only on multinational banks, airlines industry or petroleum companies only as done by Ogutu and Nyatichi (2012), Mokaya et al (2012) and Kioko (2012) respectively, this study will research on the Multinational corporations that operate in Kenya.

2.2.4 Financial Resources

Financial management deals with money circulation and control of money for all kinds of business operations. (Lasher, 2010). According to Meredith (1986) financial management practices are the central activities for the success of small business. SMEs financial profitability is the conceived result of financial management practices (Dess, et al 1997). Financial management transactions cover various objectives start with cost calculation, cost control, sales & profit maximization, attaining the market share and overall endurance of firm. (Jacobs, 2001). The arrangements and optimal utilization of financial resources for current and future opportunities provides to organization by financial management practices (Byoun, 2007). The feature of optimum capital structure practices as function of financial management practices provides efficient way and quick cost-effective decisions. (Temtime & Pansiri, 2007).

Emerging economies get the advantage of financial flexibility which helps in the various economic cycles (Graham & Harvey 2001; Bancel & Mittoo, 2004). Financial management practices cover all implications of finances to various activities includes, production, investment, personnel and marketing decision particular to calculate overall financial performance (Meredith 1986). Fundamental financial management methods include a wide range of strategies aimed at forecasting future financial performance, optimizing profit, and converting it into wealth, while generally enhancing the efficiency of financial resources.

McMahon (1993) defines “financial management based on mobilizing and using sources of funds: it is concerned with raising the funds needed to finance the enterprise’s assets and activities, the allocation of these scarce funds between competing uses, and with ensuring that the funds are used effectively and efficiently in achieving the enterprise’s goal”. SMEs are rare to effective use of risk management, liquidity, working capital, scientific inventory management, project valuation thorough capital budgeting techniques, financial reporting and financial analysis which are core functioning areas of financial management practices and this issue is the most critical aspect for obtaining the best financial results (Terpstra and Olson 1993).

Small business has been using the different set of financial management practices, core principals of financial management practices are not exercised, it run with short term financial management approach and run by the personal business goals of the owner (Jarvis, et al 1996), (Collis & Jarvis, 2002). Collis and Jarvis (2002) stated that at SMEs the function of financial management practices is concerned only with cash-based information, particular for effective use of financial resources and control of allocation of funds and generally for the same formal accounting system is not being in the practice, it goes with the expertise of external resources (Jarvis, et al 1996).

Collis and Jarvis (2002) revealed that to overcome the various constraints, hindrances of capacity utilization, small business must put consternation for computerized accounting for effective uses of financial management practices. Particularly in underdeveloped and emerging nations, it has a stellar reputation for advocating for fair development. It is a breeding ground for entrepreneurs, who, spurred on by their own imaginations and ideas, go on to make substantial contributions to the GDP via manufacturing production, exports, job creation, and overall national wealth. In addition to employment, leadership, exports, and innovation, small businesses also play an important role in a country's gross domestic product (GDP) through the risk-taking that occurs at the startup stage, which is crucial for the development of industries, especially in developing nations (Becheikh, et.al. 2006). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are unique in their potential to provide employment opportunities on a national scale, and the entrepreneurial spirit fostered by these establishments offers a fair distribution of the nation's wealth and resources. This is essential in order to prevent the centralization or inefficient use of resources, both of which are detrimental to the achievement of sustainable and equitable development. A large number of small businesses, sometimes referred to as "private players," operate in almost every global economy. Similar to how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Japan power the economy, formally recognized business models in South Africa are headed by SMEs.

More than 95% of businesses worldwide are small and medium-sized organizations, which provide jobs for around 60% of the population, according to estimates. (Abor and Quartey, 2010; Ayyagari et al., 2011). Even in India, a country with a rapidly developing economy,

small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) account for about 80% of the market (Ghatak 2010). In India, micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) account for 8% of GDP, 45% of manufacturing output, and 40% of exports. In addition to being essential in establishing a strong industrial foundation in India, they constitute more than 80% of Industrial Enterprises. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in India have made significant contributions to the country's economy, but they are at a disadvantage when it comes to competing on a national and international scale due to a lack of competitiveness in local markets. They should get the attention they deserve from financial institutions because of the enormous contribution they provide to the economy.

In most cases, problems with accounting and financial management are the biggest obstacles that SMEs encounter. While these are all valid concerns, the lack of sound financial judgment is mostly attributable to poor use of accounting data. In essence, they shun formal and standardized accounting processes, which lead to inaccurate financial reporting and impede the development of sound financial policies (Sarapaivanich, 2003). It is true that every company's financial performance may be better understood with the help of formal and correct accounting procedures. Given the high risk factors associated with limited financial resources (i.e., no efficient capital market for SMEs, and banks being the main general source of financing), this regulation is crucial for small businesses to comply. SMEs failure or difficulties to face the less profitability comes as a result of irrational financial decision in various ways and simply it happens due to inaccurate accounting information which lead inefficient financial management information (Miller and Rojas, 2004). Financial reporting system provide the way to value effective utilization of financial resources and essentially for SMEs the skills of analysis of financial performance are required to overcome from various issues (McMahon 1999). Management accounting information provides a basis of analysis of financial performance, and simply for small business it depends on the accounting practices what have been in exercise (Holmes and Nicholls 1989).

2.3 Research Gaps

For small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) to stand out in today's digital marketplace, digital content marketing is a must-have tactic. Nevertheless, there is a notable lack of knowledge about the several elements that impact the efficacy of digital content marketing for fish dealers like Sindo Fish dealers in areas like Homa Bay County, where conventional fish trading methods predominate. Despite the potential benefits of digital marketing, many traders face challenges stemming from inadequate digital literacy, shifting customer behaviors, intense market competition, and limited financial resources. These challenges hinder their ability to fully leverage digital marketing tools and strategies, ultimately affecting their business growth and sustainability.

One of the critical factors impacting digital content marketing is the level of digital literacy among Sindo Fish Traders. Limited digital skills can obstruct traders from creating compelling content or utilizing digital platforms for marketing purposes (Bawden & Robinson, 2021). Research indicates that digital literacy is essential for SMEs to engage effectively with customers and create meaningful online content (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). However, in Homa Bay, the gap in digital literacy remains largely unexplored, particularly in the context of fish trading. This gap in understanding needs to be examined to identify strategies that could enhance digital marketing practices within the fish trading sector. Studies have shown that targeted training programs can significantly improve digital skills among SMEs, leading to better marketing outcomes (Gilbert, 2019).

Additionally, customer behavior plays a pivotal role in shaping marketing strategies, including digital content marketing. As consumer preferences evolve towards a more online-oriented approach, traders must assess how their target demographics interact with digital content (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Research has demonstrated that understanding customer behavior is crucial for developing effective marketing strategies (Chaffey, 2019). Sindo Fish Traders face challenges in adapting their marketing strategies to align with changing consumer behaviors, which can result in missed opportunities and declining sales. But research on how people in Homa Bay County really buy seafood is scarce. Critical insights may be gained to inspire improved marketing techniques adapted to their

consumers' individual demands and preferences by examining the impacts of customer behavior on digital content marketing.

Market competition and financial resources also present considerable challenges in the digital marketing landscape. The presence of numerous competitors can make it increasingly difficult for Sindo Fish Traders to differentiate themselves and effectively promote their products in a crowded marketplace (Porter, 1980). Existing literature highlights that SMEs often struggle with competitive positioning due to limited resources (Gilbert, 2019). Furthermore, the financial limitations experienced by many SMEs restrict their ability to invest in quality marketing solutions, training, and technology. This gap in understanding the competitive landscape and financial constraints specific to fish traders in Homa Bay County needs further exploration. Therefore, this study will not only focus on understanding these challenges but also aim to provide actionable recommendations that can assist Sindo Fish Traders in leveraging digital content marketing tools to enhance their market position and drive business growth.

While digital content marketing presents significant opportunities for fish traders in Homa Bay County, several challenges hinder its effective implementation. The gaps in digital literacy, understanding customer behavior, and navigating market competition and financial constraints are critical areas that require further investigation. This research intends to fill these gaps in our understanding of digital marketing for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with a focus on the fish trading industry. Finding cost-effective marketing methods, creating individualized training programs, and studying consumer behavior patterns are all areas that need more investigation to help fish merchants succeed in the online marketplace.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

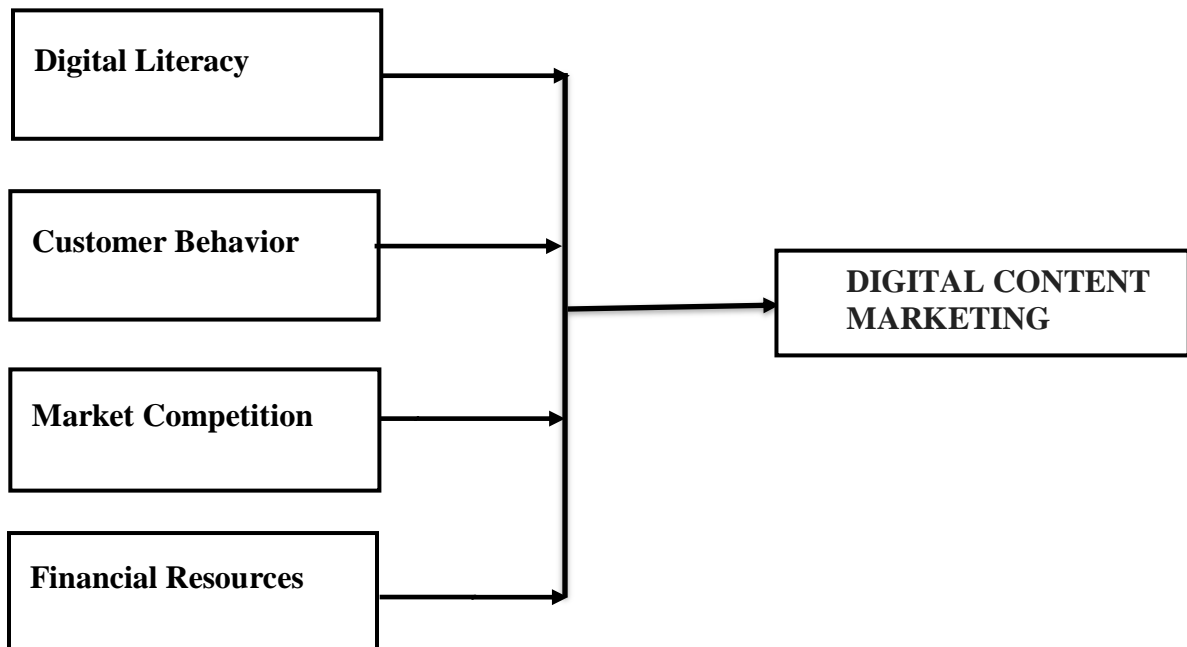


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2024)

2.5 Operationalization of Variables

2.5.1 Digital Literacy

This variable encompasses the skills and knowledge that Sindo Fish Traders possess in using digital tools and platforms effectively for marketing purposes. Higher levels of digital literacy are expected to positively influence the capacity to create and disseminate effective digital content. As the digital literacy levels of Sindo Fish Traders increase, their ability to create and manage effective digital content improves, leading to better marketing outcomes. This relationship suggests that traders who are more proficient in digital tools are likely to see higher levels of engagement and sales as a result of their marketing efforts.

2.5.2 Customer Behavior

This variable reflects the way customers interact with digital content, their preferences, buying patterns, and engagement levels. Merchants may better satisfy their customers' demands and expectations by adjusting their marketing strategy based on what they learn about their behavior. The success of the traders' marketing campaigns is strongly correlated to how their customers behave. By understanding how their customers interact with digital content, Sindo Fish Traders can tailor their messaging and approaches to resonate better with their audience, thus enhancing engagement and driving sales.

2.5.3 Market Competition

This variable denotes the level of competition within the fish trading sector in Homa Bay County. It measures how competitive pressures influence Sindo Fish Traders' marketing strategies, pricing, and overall business operations. A highly competitive market may compel Sindo Fish Traders to innovate and differentiate their offerings through creative digital marketing strategies. The effectiveness of their digital content marketing can be influenced by how well they respond to competitive pressures.

2.5.4 Financial Resources

This variable addresses the financial capabilities of Sindo Fish Traders to invest in digital marketing strategies. The level of financial resources available can significantly affect their ability to adopt digital tools, create quality content, and engage in marketing campaigns. The level of financial resources available to Sindo Fish Traders is crucial for investing in digital marketing initiatives. Adequate funding can allow traders to adopt advanced technologies, engage in targeted campaigns, and improve the quality of their content, thereby enhancing overall marketing effectiveness.

2.6 Chapter Summary

In the literature review, previous research is thoroughly examined to ensure it is relevant to the study's variables and aims. Doing so necessitates delving into previously established facts and ideas, as well as clarifying current notions. In addition to reviewing conceptual frameworks and empirical literature, this chapter delves into research gaps, how variables are transformed into quantifiable quantities, and provides chapter summaries. For the purpose of documenting, the review incorporates data pertaining to the study's important variables.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Methods for carrying out the research study according to the suggested approach are detailed in this chapter. The method and study design that were used are detailed in it. Information on the intended participants, sample, and sampling technique, as well as the study's instruments, pilot, validity, reliability, data processing, and ethical issues are covered extensively in this chapter.

3.1 Research design

A research design outlines the research's purpose and approach, providing a conceptual framework for conducting the research (Kothari & Garg, 2015). The research utilized a descriptive research design, which aims to observe and classify behavior without altering it in any manner (Bordens & Abbott, 2017). A descriptive research design facilitates researchers in organizing and conducting studies that yield comprehensive information about topics, individuals, locations, or specific instances under investigation (Bickman & Rog, 2018).

3.2 Target population

A population is postulated to be a collection of components, people, occasions, administrations or gatherings of things being studied (Ngechu, 2004). The target population consisted of 280 Sindo Fish Traders, Homabay County.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

A study's sample design is the procedure for picking a subset of a larger population to research in order to ensure that the results are representative of the whole. The process of choosing things to be observed for a certain research is called sample design, according to Kothari (2004). For this study, the researcher used a census sampling strategy, which is a

method for choosing respondents who are believed to be representative of the target population.

3.4 Research Instruments

Research instruments, which include surveys, tests, and questionnaires (Bickman & Rog, 2018), are used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was the primary data collection tool as it is cost-effective, simple to administer, and time-saving (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2018).

3.5 Pilot Study

An evaluation of the data collecting instruments' efficacy will be done in advance of actually starting to gather the data. The poll survey was conducted among the target group in the same county because it is representative of that population. The questions were amended, more questions were added, and other issues were addressed (Cooper & Schindler, 2018).

3.5.1 Validity Test

Validity is the degree to which a research instrument accurately and credibly measures the concept it intends to measure (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). To find and fix any problems with the research instrument, validity testing was carried out during the piloting phase of this study. The purpose of the validity test is to guarantee that the data collected from the instrument will be useful in achieving the study's aims. The validity and trustworthiness of the data gathering tools were also established by the pilot research (Cooper & Schindler, 2018).

This research used a battery of validity tests, including content, criteria, and construct validity. Content validity was used to assess whether the research instrument accurately measures all relevant aspects of the study's concepts (DeVellis, 2017). Criterion validity was used to evaluate how well the research instrument correlates with other established measures of the same concepts (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). Finally, construct validity was employed to ensure that the research instrument measures the underlying theoretical

constructs of the study while differentiating them from other related concepts (Campbell & Fiske, 1959).

3.5.2 Reliability Test

Reliability is the extent to which a research instrument consistently produces accurate and credible results when employed on the same individuals or samples repeatedly (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). During the pilot phase, the research instrument was subjected to a reliability test to guarantee that it consistently produces credible and correct data.

Several methods exist for determining reliability, including the test-retest, internal consistency, and parallel-forms approaches (DeVellis, 2017). In order to establish the reliability of the research instrument, this study used the internal consistency approach and calculated the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. According to DeVellis (2017), a research instrument is considered credible if its Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is 0.7 or above.

To guarantee the research instrument is reliable for usage in the real study, its dependability was evaluated during the piloting period, and any required adjustments were performed. When employed with the actual sample size, the reliable research instrument should produce similar or consistent results as those obtained during the pilot study (Kothari & Garg, 2015; Cooper & Schindler, 2018).

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Questions posed in the form of questionnaires served as the main means of data gathering for this investigation. A variety of statistical analysis, including as descriptive, inferential, and correlational approaches, may be used to the results of a questionnaire study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2018).

The participants in the research were invited to fill out the questionnaires online via social media and email. The online platform ensured convenience and encourages increased response rates (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). The use of online questionnaires also guarantees anonymity to the respondents, which contributed to a more honest and accurate response rate (Bordens & Abbott, 2017).

The study's participants were provided with clear instructions on the questionnaires to reduce ambiguity, ensure data quality, and minimize errors (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). Additionally, a pilot test was carried out by the researchers to detect and address any problems with the questionnaires.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis in this study included categorizing and arranging the acquired raw data in order to get information pertinent to the investigation. We used SPSS version 26 to evaluate the quantitative data that we obtained. The raw data was coded to reveal themes and patterns before drawing any broad conclusions. This allowed for a more thorough examination. Also included in the data analysis step was a descriptive statistics examination of the findings, which were then shown visually in tables and figures.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The study upheld ethical considerations that protect the participants' rights and interests. Ethical considerations refer to the principles that guide the research process to ensure that researchers adhere to established norms and practices to prevent harm to participants and maintain research integrity (Resnik, 2015).

3.8.1 Informed Consent

Participants' informed permission was sought and acquired by the researchers before to their participation in the research project. As part of the informed consent process, participants were briefed about the study's goals, methods, and potential hazards; they were then given the opportunity to ask any questions they had. Prior to carrying out the investigation, the researchers secured permission letters from both the University and the Siaya County Referral Hospital.

3.8.2 Voluntary Participation

The study maintained the principle of voluntary participation, meaning that participants were not penalized in any way for declining to take part in the research. After verbal requests for participation, participants indicated their readiness to participate by signing the informed consent form.

3.8.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality of the responders was guaranteed by the researchers. Each participant's personal information was handled with the highest level of secrecy. No one outside of the study team was granted access to this information. The Management University of Africa mandated that the data be used only for academic purposes, such as conducting research and drafting a project report.

3.8.4 Privacy

All aspects of the research project were designed to ensure the participants' anonymity. To ensure the privacy of the respondents, we did not ask for their names or contact details on the surveys.

3.8.5 Anonymity

The research team took great care to protect the anonymity of all participants. It was requested that the participants refrain from including their names or any other personally identifiable information on the surveys. This safeguarded the subjects from any possible injury or unfavorable outcomes while also increasing the degree of secrecy.

3.9 Chapter Summary

Providing a research process outlining the technique that was employed, this chapter has focused on the study's methodology. Through the methodology, which outlines the technique used throughout the research, the study sought to accomplish its main purpose. Topics covered include study ethics, methodology, data gathering, processing, and analysis; research design; and population, sample, and sampling techniques.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Research Findings

4.1.1 Demographic Information

The study's features were defined by the biographical information that respondents were requested to contribute. Factors such as respondents' gender, age, degree of education, and years of experience in the workforce were considered.

Table 4. 1: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	129	46%
Female	151	54%
Total	280	100

Source: Researcher (2024)

The findings show that 129 men (or 46% of the total sample) and 151 females (or 54% of the entire sample) responded to the survey (see Table 4.1 for details on the gender distribution among the participants). It seems that there is a little bias towards female responders in this sample, as shown by the reasonably balanced gender distribution..

Table 4. 2: Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21-30 years	56	20%
31-40 years	92	33%
41-50 years	112	40%
51 years and above	20	7%
Total	280	100

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.2 presents the age distribution of the respondents. The ages of the participants are categorized into four groups: 21-30 years (20%), 31-40 years (33%), 41-50 years (40%), and 51 years and above (7%). The age group of 41 to 50 is the most common, with 40% of the total responses.

Table 4. 3: Highest Level of Education

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	28	10%
Secondary	84	30%
College	98	35%
University	70	25%
Total	280	100

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.3 outlines the highest level of education achieved by the respondents. The distribution shows that 10% completed primary education, 30% had secondary education, 35% attended college, and 25% hold university degrees. A notable 35% of respondents have a college education, which may indicate a relatively skilled workforce engaging in procurement planning.

4.1.2 Study Objectives

4.1.2.1 Digital Literacy

Table 4. 4: Digital Literacy

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
I feel confident in my ability to use digital tools and platforms for marketing my fish trading business.	63%	20%	3%	10%	3%	100%
I have received adequate training in digital marketing strategies relevant to my business.	80%	13%	0%	7%	0%	100%
My understanding of social media platforms enhances my ability to market Sindo fish products effectively.	20%	40%	7%	10%	23%	100%
I regularly update my skills and knowledge related to digital marketing technologies.	60%	30%	3%	3%	4%	100%
Increased digital literacy has positively impacted my sales and customer engagement efforts.	70%	27%	0%	0%	3%	100%

Source: Researcher (2024)

The data collected regarding digital literacy among Sindo Fish Traders in Homa Bay County reveals significant insights into the traders' confidence and capabilities in utilizing digital tools for marketing. The first statement indicates that 63% of the respondents feel confident in their ability to use digital tools and platforms for marketing their fish trading business, suggesting a fairly positive perception toward digital competence. However, a notable 10% expressed disagreement, highlighting a potential segment of traders who may require additional support and training to enhance their digital literacy.

Training plays a vital role in effective digital marketing, and the responses show that 80% of traders believe they have received adequate training in relevant digital marketing strategies. This high percentage is encouraging and suggests that educational efforts in

digital marketing are reaching a significant portion of the fish trading community. Only 7% felt they did not receive sufficient training, which points to an area for improvement wherein targeted training programs could be beneficial.

Traders' familiarity with social media platforms improves the effectiveness of their advertising for Sindo fish goods, according to 20% of respondents who strongly agree and 40% who agree. Regardless, 33% of those who took the survey expressed a lack of knowledge about how to make good use of social media by disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. This gap signifies the need for additional training focused specifically on social media marketing strategies tailored to the fish trading sector.

The data also reveals that 60% of traders regularly update their skills and knowledge related to digital marketing technologies, which is a positive indicator of proactive engagement with the digital landscape. However, with 7% of respondents indicating neutrality and another 7% in disagreement, it appears that some traders may not prioritize continuous learning, which can impede their adaptation to rapidly evolving digital marketing trends.

Lastly, the statement regarding the impact of increased digital literacy on sales and customer engagement is met with strong agreement, as 70% of respondents acknowledged a positive correlation. The absence of disagreement on this statement underscores the perceived benefits of digital literacy, suggesting that traders recognize its value in enhancing their business outcomes. This affirmation indicates that enhancing digital literacy is not just an educational endeavor but essential for improving performance in sales and customer relations.

In summary, the findings reflect a generally positive attitude towards digital literacy among Sindo Fish Traders, with significant confidence in using digital tools and platforms. However, there remains a clear opportunity to improve understanding and application of social media marketing, alongside continual skills updates. Addressing these gaps through targeted training and support could further enhance the effectiveness of digital content marketing strategies within this sector.

4.1.2.2 Customer Behavior

Table 4. 5: Customer Behavior

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
I believe that my customers are becoming more engaged with digital content related to my products.	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Customer feedback obtained through digital channels influences my marketing strategies.	17%	23%	10%	13%	0%	100%
I observe that customers prefer using digital platforms to research fish products before making purchases.	10%	43%	3%	13%	30%	100%
Understanding customer preferences helps me create more effective digital marketing content.	37%	40%	10%	7%	6%	100%
I actively analyze customer behavior data to improve my digital marketing campaigns.	47%	37%	0%	0%	16%	100%

Source: Researcher (2024)

The survey data concerning customer behavior among Sindo Fish Traders indicates a strong belief in the engagement of customers with digital content. Notably, 67% of respondents agree or strongly agree that their customers are becoming more engaged with digital content related to their products. This positive perception reflects an understanding of the growing importance of digital platforms in customer interactions. The absence of any neutral or negative responses in this category further underscores the confidence that traders have in the role of digital content in enhancing customer engagement.

When it comes to the influence of customer feedback, 40% of respondents agree or strongly agree that feedback obtained through digital channels shapes their marketing strategies, though a considerable 33% remain neutral. This suggests that while some traders actively incorporate feedback into their strategies, there is an opportunity for others to enhance their responsiveness to customer insights. The relatively lower engagement observed in this area

signifies a potential gap that could be addressed by emphasizing the importance of utilizing feedback in formulating marketing approaches.

Regarding research behaviors, only 10% of respondents strongly agree that customers prefer to use digital platforms to research fish products before making purchases, with 43% agreeing. However, a concerning 30% disagreed, indicating a divide in perceptions about customer research practices. This discrepancy may reflect varying experiences among traders and suggests the need for further investigation into how customers interact with digital platforms prior to purchase.

Understanding customer preferences appears to be a critical factor for successful marketing, as indicated by 77% of respondents who agree or strongly agree that this understanding aids in creating effective digital marketing content. The majority acknowledgment highlights a conscious effort among traders to tailor their content according to customer needs, fostering a more resonant digital marketplace.

A substantial 84% of traders recognize the importance of analyzing customer behavior data to enhance digital marketing campaigns. However, the 16% who disagree indicates that while many are proactive, there remains a segment of traders not fully leveraging data analytics for their marketing strategies. This insight reveals the potential benefits that could arise from increasing awareness and capabilities in data analysis for the traders to better inform their marketing efforts

4.1.2.3 Marketing Competition

Table 4. 6: Marketing Competition

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
I monitor my competitors' digital marketing strategies to inform my own practices.	23%	20%	0%	10%	47%	100%
Competitive pressure motivates me to enhance my digital content marketing efforts.	50%	50%	3%	7%	3%	100%
I believe that a strong online presence is crucial to compete effectively in the fish trading market.	17%	40%	7%	13%	23%	100%
I regularly assess how my competitors engage with customers through digital content.	67%	0%	0%	3%	30%	100%
Adapting to market competition has led me to explore innovative digital marketing techniques.	90%	0%	0%	10%	0%	100%

Source: Researcher (2024)

In analyzing the competitive landscape, the data demonstrates a mixed response towards monitoring competitors' digital marketing strategies. While only 23% of respondents strongly agree that they actively monitor their competitors, a notable 47% strongly disagree. This indicates that despite the competitive pressures within the market, many traders may not be sufficiently tracking their rivals' strategies, representing an area for future improvement.

However, competitive pressure does seem to motivate traders, with 100% of respondents (50% strongly agree and 50% agree) recognizing its influence on enhancing their digital content marketing efforts. This unanimous response indicates a strong acknowledgment of the need to adapt and innovate due to competitive forces, suggesting that external market pressures are actively shaping traders' marketing strategies.

The importance of a robust online presence is also recognized, with 57% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing, though 36% expressed disagreement. This highlights

an awareness among fish traders regarding the essential role of digital marketing in remaining competitive. However, some traders still appear to underestimate its significance, reflecting a potential barrier to fully embracing digital marketing strategies.

Remarkably, 67% of fish traders are committed to regularly assessing how their competitors engage customers through digital content, pointing to a proactive approach among this segment. Moreover, 90% of respondents agree that adapting to market competition has compelled them to explore innovative digital marketing techniques, indicating a strong inclination to evolve and innovate in response to market dynamics.

4.1.2.4 Financial Resources

Table 4. 7: Financial Resources

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
I feel that my current budget for digital marketing is sufficient to achieve my business goals.	63%	20%	0%	0%	17%	100%
Financial resources influence my ability to invest in modern digital marketing tools.	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Limited financial resources hinder my establishment of a strong online presence.	57%	40%	0%	3%	0%	100%
I prioritize digital marketing spending when allocating my overall business budget.	67%	0%	0%	3%	30%	100%
Access to additional financial resources would allow me to improve my digital content marketing efforts.	50%	20%	0%	10%	20%	100%

Source: Researcher (2024)

In terms of financial resources, 63% of respondents feel that their current budget for digital marketing is adequate to meet their business goals. This positive sentiment indicates that a substantial majority are confident in their financial planning with respect to digital marketing. However, 17% expressed dissatisfaction, suggesting some traders still face challenges in budget allocation.

Furthermore, an overwhelming 90% of respondents agree that financial resources significantly influence their ability to invest in modern digital marketing tools. This illustrates the vital role of financial support in enabling traders to adopt current marketing technologies. Nevertheless, 57% admitted that limited financial resources hinder their efforts to establish a robust online presence, showcasing a critical obstacle faced by many traders that could affect their overall marketing effectiveness.

The prioritization of digital marketing expenses is affirmed by 67% of traders, indicating that many recognize the importance of allocating budget towards enhancing their digital marketing capabilities. However, the 30% who disagree raise concerns about the willingness or ability of some traders to invest adequately in this area.

Access to additional financial resources is seen as a key driver for improving digital content marketing efforts, with 70% of respondents acknowledging that greater funding would allow them to bolster their marketing strategies. This highlights a crucial need for financial support mechanisms and programs that could empower Sindo Fish Traders to optimize their digital marketing initiatives.

4.1.2.5 Digital Content Marketing

Table 4. 8: Digital Content Marketing

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
I believe that using digital tools and platforms has significantly improved my ability to market my fish products effectively.	53%	20%	0%	10%	17%	100%
The use of digital content marketing strategies has positively influenced customer engagement and interaction with my fish trading business.	70%	20%	0%	0%	0%	100%
My digital marketing efforts have successfully expanded the reach and visibility of my fish trading business to a wider audience.	57%	20%	0%	23%	0%	100%
I have observed an increase in sales as a result of implementing digital content marketing strategies in my fish trading activities.	57%	0%	0%	13%	30%	100%
I feel that additional training and support in digital marketing techniques would enhance my ability to effectively promote my fish products online.	40%	30%	0%	10%	20%	100%

Source: Researcher (2024)

The data regarding digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders reveals valuable insights into their perceptions of the effectiveness of digital marketing tools and strategies. Starting with the belief that using digital tools and platforms has significantly improved their marketing capabilities, 53% of respondents expressed agreement or strong agreement, indicating a positive reception to digital marketing methods. However, the 17% who strongly disagree highlights a noticeable minority who may not perceive benefits from these tools, suggesting that their experiences or implementation may differ from that of their peers.

A striking 70% of respondents acknowledged that digital content marketing strategies have positively influenced customer engagement and interaction with their fish trading business.

This unanimous recognition of the benefits of digital engagement reflects a strong understanding of the role these strategies play in fostering relationships with customers, reinforcing the importance of digital platforms for business success.

The statement regarding the expansion of reach and visibility through digital marketing yielded positive responses, with 57% of traders supporting this claim. Nevertheless, 23% disagreed with the assertion of increased reach, which suggests that while digital marketing is viewed favorably, there remains some skepticism about its effectiveness in broadening audience engagement among certain traders.

When considering the impact of digital marketing strategies on sales growth, the results are mixed. While 57% agree that they have observed an increase in sales, 30% disagree, which shows that not all traders are experiencing the same benefits or may face challenges in translating digital marketing efforts into actual sales. This discrepancy could prompt further investigation into the effectiveness of specific marketing strategies employed by these traders.

Finally, when addressing the need for additional training and support in digital marketing techniques, 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that such resources would enhance their promotional activities. This research underscores a distinct recognition of the need for continuous education and assistance in digital marketing, suggesting that traders are keen to enhance their abilities and eventually attain higher success in their marketing endeavors.

In summary, the analysis of digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders demonstrates an overall positive perception of digital tools' effectiveness in enhancing marketing efforts and customer engagement. However, there are mixed responses regarding sales growth and the need for further training, indicating areas for potential improvement in implementing digital strategies. Fostering accessible training resources and addressing concerns about the effectiveness of digital marketing could significantly advance the traders' capacity to utilize digital content marketing more effectively.

4.2 Chapter Summary

Overall, the analysis of customer behavior, marketing competition, and financial resources collectively indicates that while there is a positive foundation among Sindo Fish Traders for leveraging digital content marketing, there are distinct areas that warrant further attention. Addressing gaps in competitive awareness, enhancing the utilization of customer feedback, and ensuring adequate investment in digital marketing activities are essential steps that could significantly improve the effectiveness of marketing strategies within this sector.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Findings

5.1.1 Digital Literacy

The data collected regarding digital literacy among Sindo Fish Traders in Homa Bay County reveals significant insights into the traders' confidence and capabilities in utilizing digital tools for marketing. The first statement indicates that 63% of the respondents feel confident in their ability to use digital tools and platforms for marketing their fish trading business, suggesting a fairly positive perception toward digital competence. However, a notable 10% expressed disagreement, highlighting a potential segment of traders who may require additional support and training to enhance their digital literacy. Training plays a vital role in effective digital marketing, and the responses show that 80% of traders believe they have received adequate training in relevant digital marketing strategies. This high percentage is encouraging and suggests that educational efforts in digital marketing are reaching a significant portion of the fish trading community. Only 7% felt they did not receive sufficient training, which points to an area for improvement wherein targeted training programs could be beneficial. Regarding traders' comprehension of social media platforms, 20% of respondents highly concur and 40% believe that their expertise improves their marketing initiatives for Sindo fish goods. Nonetheless, 33% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed, showing a deficiency in properly using social media. This gap signifies the need for additional training focused specifically on social media marketing strategies tailored to the fish trading sector. The data also reveals that 60% of traders regularly update their skills and knowledge related to digital marketing technologies, which is a positive indicator of proactive engagement with the digital landscape. However, with 7% of respondents indicating neutrality and another 7% in disagreement, it appears that some traders may not prioritize continuous learning, which can impede their adaptation to rapidly evolving digital marketing trends. Lastly, the statement regarding the impact of increased digital literacy on sales and customer

engagement is met with strong agreement, as 70% of respondents acknowledged a positive correlation. The absence of disagreement on this statement underscores the perceived benefits of digital literacy, suggesting that traders recognize its value in enhancing their business outcomes. This affirmation indicates that enhancing digital literacy is not just an educational endeavor but essential for improving performance in sales and customer relations.

5.1.2 Customer Behavior

The survey data concerning customer behavior among Sindo Fish Traders indicates a strong belief in the engagement of customers with digital content. Notably, 67% of respondents agree or strongly agree that their customers are becoming more engaged with digital content related to their products. This positive perception reflects an understanding of the growing importance of digital platforms in customer interactions. The absence of any neutral or negative responses in this category further underscores the confidence that traders have in the role of digital content in enhancing customer engagement. When it comes to the influence of customer feedback, 40% of respondents agree or strongly agree that feedback obtained through digital channels shapes their marketing strategies, though a considerable 33% remain neutral. This suggests that while some traders actively incorporate feedback into their strategies, there is an opportunity for others to enhance their responsiveness to customer insights. The relatively lower engagement observed in this area signifies a potential gap that could be addressed by emphasizing the importance of utilizing feedback in formulating marketing approaches. Regarding research behaviors, only 10% of respondents strongly agree that customers prefer to use digital platforms to research fish products before making purchases, with 43% agreeing. However, a concerning 30% disagreed, indicating a divide in perceptions about customer research practices. This discrepancy may reflect varying experiences among traders and suggests the need for further investigation into how customers interact with digital platforms prior to purchase. Understanding customer preferences appears to be a critical factor for successful marketing, as indicated by 77% of respondents who agree or strongly agree that this understanding aids in creating effective digital marketing content. The majority acknowledgment highlights a conscious effort among traders to tailor their content

according to customer needs, fostering a more resonant digital marketplace. A substantial 84% of traders recognize the importance of analyzing customer behavior data to enhance digital marketing campaigns. However, the 16% who disagree indicates that while many are proactive, there remains a segment of traders not fully leveraging data analytics for their marketing strategies. This insight reveals the potential benefits that could arise from increasing awareness and capabilities in data analysis for the traders to better inform their marketing efforts.

5.1.3 Marketing Competition

In analyzing the competitive landscape, the data demonstrates a mixed response towards monitoring competitors' digital marketing strategies. While only 23% of respondents strongly agree that they actively monitor their competitors, a notable 47% strongly disagree. This indicates that despite the competitive pressures within the market, many traders may not be sufficiently tracking their rivals' strategies, representing an area for future improvement. However, competitive pressure does seem to motivate traders, with 100% of respondents (50% strongly agree and 50% agree) recognizing its influence on enhancing their digital content marketing efforts. This unanimous response indicates a strong acknowledgment of the need to adapt and innovate due to competitive forces, suggesting that external market pressures are actively shaping traders' marketing strategies. The importance of a robust online presence is also recognized, with 57% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing, though 36% expressed disagreement. This highlights an awareness among fish traders regarding the essential role of digital marketing in remaining competitive. However, some traders still appear to underestimate its significance, reflecting a potential barrier to fully embracing digital marketing strategies. Remarkably, 67% of fish traders are committed to regularly assessing how their competitors engage customers through digital content, pointing to a proactive approach among this segment. Moreover, 90% of respondents agree that adapting to market competition has compelled them to explore innovative digital marketing techniques, indicating a strong inclination to evolve and innovate in response to market dynamics.

5.1.4 Financial Resources Analysis

In terms of financial resources, 63% of respondents feel that their current budget for digital marketing is adequate to meet their business goals. This positive sentiment indicates that a substantial majority are confident in their financial planning with respect to digital marketing. However, 17% expressed dissatisfaction, suggesting some traders still face challenges in budget allocation. Furthermore, an overwhelming 90% of respondents agree that financial resources significantly influence their ability to invest in modern digital marketing tools. This illustrates the vital role of financial support in enabling traders to adopt current marketing technologies. Nevertheless, 57% admitted that limited financial resources hinder their efforts to establish a robust online presence, showcasing a critical obstacle faced by many traders that could affect their overall marketing effectiveness. The prioritization of digital marketing expenses is affirmed by 67% of traders, indicating that many recognize the importance of allocating budget towards enhancing their digital marketing capabilities. However, the 30% who disagree raise concerns about the willingness or ability of some traders to invest adequately in this area. Access to additional financial resources is seen as a key driver for improving digital content marketing efforts, with 70% of respondents acknowledging that greater funding would allow them to bolster their marketing strategies. This highlights a crucial need for financial support mechanisms and programs that could empower Sindo Fish Traders to optimize their digital marketing initiatives.

5.1.5 Digital Content Marketing Analysis

The data regarding digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders reveals valuable insights into their perceptions of the effectiveness of digital marketing tools and strategies. Starting with the belief that using digital tools and platforms has significantly improved their marketing capabilities, 53% of respondents expressed agreement or strong agreement, indicating a positive reception to digital marketing methods. However, the 17% who strongly disagree highlight a noticeable minority who may not perceive benefits from these tools, suggesting that their experiences or implementation may differ from that of their peers. A striking 70% of respondents acknowledged that digital content marketing

strategies have positively influenced customer engagement and interaction with their fish trading business. This unanimous recognition of the benefits of digital engagement reflects a strong understanding of the role these strategies play in fostering relationships with customers, reinforcing the importance of digital platforms for business success. The statement regarding the expansion of reach and visibility through digital marketing yielded positive responses, with 57% of traders supporting this claim. Nevertheless, 23% disagreed with the assertion of increased reach, which suggests that while digital marketing is viewed favorably, there remains some skepticism about its effectiveness in broadening audience engagement among certain traders. When considering the impact of digital marketing strategies on sales growth, the results are mixed. While 57% agree that they have observed an increase in sales, 30% disagree, which shows that not all traders are experiencing the same benefits or may face challenges in translating digital marketing efforts into actual sales. This discrepancy could prompt further investigation into the effectiveness of specific marketing strategies employed by these traders. Finally, when addressing the need for additional training and support in digital marketing techniques, 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that such resources would enhance their promotional activities. This research underscores a definitive recognition of the need for continuous education and assistance in digital marketing, suggesting that traders are keen to enhance their abilities and eventually attain higher success in their marketing endeavors.

5.2 Conclusions of the Study

The research on the determinants influencing digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders in Homa Bay County has uncovered significant insights regarding the traders' digital literacy, consumer behavior, competitive landscape, financial resources, and the overall efficacy of their digital marketing strategies.

The findings indicate that while a substantial portion of the traders feel confident in their digital skills and have received adequate training, there remains a significant segment that requires further support, particularly in leveraging social media effectively.

Customer engagement through digital content is perceived positively, although a divide exists regarding the awareness of digital platforms for research prior to purchasing.

Additionally, the competitive pressures within the market challenge traders to innovate and adapt through digital marketing, yet there is still a notable lack of monitoring competitors' strategies.

Financial resources significantly impact the traders' ability to invest in digital marketing tools, with many indicating that increased funding would enhance their marketing efforts.

Overall, the traders show a willingness to improve and adapt their digital marketing practices, though there are areas that require focused interventions.

5.3 Recommendations of the Study

The results should inform the development of more specific training programs aimed at improving Sindo Fish Traders' digital literacy. These programs should specifically address the use of social media and data analytics, ensuring that traders are well-equipped to engage customers online effectively.

It is also advisable for traders to establish networks or associations that facilitate the sharing of best practices and monitoring of competitors' strategies, which can drive collective growth in digital marketing initiatives.

Financial support mechanisms should be considered to provide traders with the resources necessary to invest in modern digital marketing tools, thereby establishing a stronger online presence.

Lastly, continuous evaluation and feedback mechanisms should be implemented to track digital marketing strategies' effectiveness, helping traders adjust their approaches to meet customer needs more effectively.

5.4 Suggestions of the Study

Future research should explore the specific challenges faced by traders who reported skepticism about the effectiveness of digital marketing tools to understand the barriers that may inhibit their adoption.

Additionally, longitudinal studies could be conducted to monitor changes in digital marketing practices and their impact on sales over time. Investigating customer behavior and preferences in more detail would also be beneficial to tailor marketing strategies effectively.

A more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of digital content marketing in the fisheries industry might be gained by broadening the scope of the research to include comparisons with other locations.

Lastly, engaging with policy-makers to highlight the need for supportive regulations and funding opportunities for small-scale traders could drive systemic change in the digital marketing landscape.

5.5 Chapter Summary

In summary, this chapter synthesizes the critical findings of the study, drawing conclusions about the state of digital content marketing among Sindo Fish Traders. It outlines the implications of digital literacy, customer behavior, and competitive pressures, emphasizing the need for enhanced training and financial support to improve marketing strategies. The chapter concludes with recommendations to strengthen traders' digital capabilities, along with suggestions for future research directions that can build on the insights gained from this study. The findings underscore the importance of fostering a supportive environment for digital marketing in the fisheries sector, with the potential to drive significant business growth and customer engagement.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

Kindly fill out this form to the best of your knowledge and ability.

1. What is your gender?

Male Female

2. What is your age?

18-24 Years 25-34 Years 35-44 Years 45-54 Years

55 and above

3. What is your highest level of education completed?

Primary School Secondary School College/University

SECTION B: THE FACTORS AFFECTING DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING AMONG FISH TRADERS IN KENYA. A CASE OF SINDO FISH TRADERS, HOMA BAY COUNTY.

Use the Likert scale in this section to your knowledge and skill about the following perspectives on the factors affecting digital content marketing among fish traders in Kenya.

A case of Sindo Fish Traders, Homa Bay County. *Where 1= Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Disagree and 5= Strongly Disagree*

DIGITAL LITERACY

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I feel confident in my ability to use digital tools and platforms for marketing my fish trading business.					
I have received adequate training in digital marketing strategies relevant to my business.					
My understanding of social media platforms enhances my ability to market Sindo fish products effectively.					
I regularly update my skills and knowledge related to digital marketing technologies.					

Increased digital literacy has positively impacted my sales and customer engagement efforts.					
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CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I believe that my customers are becoming more engaged with digital content related to my products.					
Customer feedback obtained through digital channels influences my marketing strategies.					
I observe that customers prefer using digital platforms to research fish products before making purchases.					
Understanding customer preferences helps me create more effective digital marketing content.					
I actively analyze customer behavior data to improve my digital marketing campaigns.					

MARKET COMPETITION

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I monitor my competitors' digital marketing strategies to inform my own practices.					
Competitive pressure motivates me to enhance my digital content marketing efforts.					
I believe that a strong online presence is crucial to compete effectively in the fish trading market.					
I regularly assess how my competitors engage with customers through digital content.					
Adapting to market competition has led me to explore innovative digital marketing techniques.					

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that my current budget for digital marketing is sufficient to achieve my business goals.					
Financial resources influence my ability to invest in modern digital marketing tools.					
Limited financial resources hinder my establishment of a strong online presence.					
I prioritize digital marketing spending when allocating my overall business budget.					
Access to additional financial resources would allow me to improve my digital content marketing efforts.					

DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I believe that using digital tools and platforms has significantly improved my ability to market my fish products effectively.					
The use of digital content marketing strategies has positively influenced customer engagement and interaction with my fish trading business.					
My digital marketing efforts have successfully expanded the reach and visibility of my fish trading business to a wider audience.					
I have observed an increase in sales as a result of implementing digital content marketing strategies in my fish trading activities.					
I feel that additional training and support in digital marketing techniques would enhance my ability to effectively promote my fish products online.					

THANKS FOR YOUR RESPONSE