

**A cross-cultural analysis of the factors that influence Social media-based
marketing in SMEs between Ireland and Nigeria**

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Abstracts

Small and Medium Enterprises have been supported in the developed and developing countries where social media platform has been considered as the common tools for the business. The development of the social media-based marketing platform has facilitated the SMEs to maintain resource planning and activities. This approach adopted a qualitative research design while using the explorative nature of the study. The 'focused group' study has been adopted where 50 respondents from Ireland and Nigeria have been communicated for the data collection. The thematic data analysis tool has resulted that social media marketing strategy combines the target market, brand value of marketing, interactions and communication planning. The SMEs in Nigeria and Ireland have been using social media strategy while managing the significance for the operation and promotion. Different SMEs have been using social media marketing strategy where the cultural factors in Ireland and Nigeria have been influencing SMEs to adopt and value SMM for the improvement of interaction.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) have emerged as the cost-effective business concerns that have efficiently responded towards fulfilling the diverse needs of the customers. Customer concentration has been considered as the fundamental strategic concentration of SMEs (Alves et al. 2016). In such a context, developing a customer-centric business communication and marketing effort has become a strategic challenge due to resource constraints. The development of the social media-based marketing platform has facilitated SMEs to respond to the resource constraint issue (Ashley and Tuteen, 2017). The access rate is higher in Ireland than that in Nigeria. In this manner, developing a social media-based marketing strategy for the Nigeria market is a strategic challenge for SMEs. Notably, the research would develop an explanatory comparison of the cross-cultural analysis of the dynamics that affect SMEs to assume social media-based marketing in the context of both countries.

1.1 Background of the Study

Small and medium enterprises tend to possess resource limitations due to organisational structure. However, due to organisational flexibility, SMEs can respond instantly to the changes in market perception (Atwong, 2016). In order to respond to market perception, barrier-free customer communication should be implemented by the SMEs. In the context of the SME sector of Nigeria, SMEs have focused on applying conventional marketing strategies by considering lower integration manner of the target cadres to social media. On the other hand, SMEs of Ireland have concentrated more on a marketing approach that is based on social media to ensure maximum utilisation of the online resources. However, the practice of marketing based on social media has remained a strategic challenge for SMEs of Nigeria due to insufficient logistic support, where SMEs of Ireland are in competitive advantage in terms of developing a refined strategy. For this reason, the study on the factors that have an influence on SMEs to select a model that would apprai to the SME sector.

1.2 The rationale of the Study

The study on cross-cultural factors to influence the implementation of a marketing strategy based on social media would facilitate SMEs to develop a resource-effective and process efficient marketing strategy. This cross-cultural research would focus on operational issues that have created a competitive edge over the development of the marketing strategy based on social media for SMEs of both Ireland and Nigeria. Resource limitation has been the key strategic challenge for the development of SMEs. In this perspective, deciding on allocating resources to business development has always been a crucial point for the tactical decision-makers of the SMEs (Brink, 2017). The investment in product development would enhance organisational competitiveness of the SMEs. However, investment in customer communication facilitates SMEs to ensure customer engagement through the organisational value chain. In this perspective, a strategic dilemma arises regarding taking a decision on the allocation of organisational resources to business development and customer engagement (Chamelian, 2016). By considering the value addition perspective, SMEs are required to trade-off regarding investing in a marketing strategy based on social media and business development.

1.3 Aim and objectives and Questions

Emphasis here is to conduct a comparative study on the factors influencing SMEs to develop a social media-based marketing platform between economically two different countries. As a developing country Nigeria and for developed country Ireland has been selected below:

- To distinguish conceptual and theoretical issues regarding social media marketing exist between Nigeria and Ireland.
- To appraise the financial costs and risk factors connected to the implementation of social media marketing platforms among mentioned countries.
- To evaluate the operational issues regarding the execution of the marketing platform based on social media in Nigeria and Ireland.
- To examine the level to which social media has a constructive influence on the buying behaviour of the target customer groups in the context of a developed and developing country.

1.4 Research question

The essence of this study is to ascertain the factors that influence SMEs to develop a social media-based marketing platform to add value to the organisation.

The following questions will act as sub-questions of the study:

- What are the conceptual and theoretical concerns regarding social media that exists among Nigeria and Ireland?
- What are the financial risk and cost associated with the adoption of social media-based marketing among two mentioned country?
- What are the main operational issues involving the practice of social media-based marketing among Nigeria and Ireland?
- To what degree social media has impacted on customer's buying abilities in the context of a developed and developing country?

Chapter 2: Literature Chapter

2.1 Introduction

The business with a large investment in small or new business start-up, development of brand awareness has always been the target. In developing brand value and awareness, the application of social media-based marketing is considered as right and easy platforms. Perhaps, different countries have different values and factors influencing the customer's demand and purchase decision (Adetula et al., 2016). Establishments are utilizing strategies differently, and this is the best way an industry or business organisation can use to reach to its customers at less cost. The differences in the cultures and locations may affect the small organisations while adopting social media-based marketing strategies. However, SMM helps SME in every location in engaging customers and introducing their products and brand with fewer costs. This section has explained all the literature reviews and critical discussion related to investigation and comparison of fostering the synergy of SMEs in Ireland and Nigeria. The discussion has added framework, models, and data regarding the adoption of social media-based marketing strategies and factors contributing to SMM in SMEs in these two countries.

2.2 Social media marketing

Social media marketing has emerged since the social media platform has been introduced. According to Luo et al. (2013), the social media platform represents the rooms for every individual for sharing information with each other. Heggde and Shainesh (2016) argued that social media is interactive computer-mediated technologies for the communication and collaboration of each organisation and individual in the market. Kietzmann et al. (2017), on the other hand, mentioned that social media platforms are rated as the platform of marketing for the organisations and people. Hence, the tool is considered as the platform of interaction and distribution of information.

However, Mazurek-Łopacińska and Sobocińska (2017) are of the opinion that social media marketing is a different form of Internet marketing where the organisations use networking and social connection, platform and websites as the marketing and promotional tools. Paniagua and Sapena (2017) reviews are with social media-based marketing is the alternative to engage the customers where other traditional media could not engage the customer before. Sener and Hacıoglu (2017) mentioned that to

produce content and to share the content in the social network have formed social media marketing for the organisation. Thus, the social network with lots of ability for promoting of the brand has been considered as social media-based marketing for the people.



Figure 1: Usages of social media-based marketing in countries

Source: (Devi, 2017)

Figure 1 represented that the usages of social media-based marketing have emerged in different locations as they pay higher more than developing countries. It is to note that developed countries use social media-based marketing where the developing countries are relying on the internet and social media-based marketing for the growth of the business (Busaidi et al., 2019). In this sense, being developing countries, Nigeria had almost 123.49 million internet users who have encouraged the industries to use social media-based marketing for the business. While In Ireland, the usages of social media-based marketing are growing less than in other developed countries.

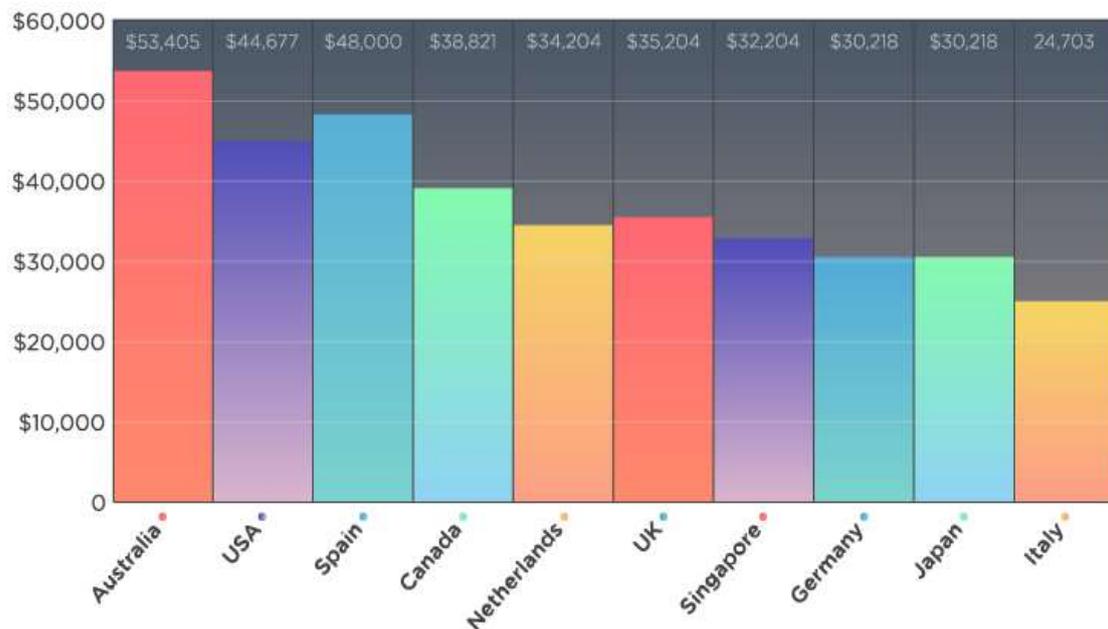


Figure 2: Comparison of higher pays in social media-based marketing

Source: (Devi, 2017)

Figure 2 represented that Australia, the USA, Spain, Canada, and the UK are paying more in social media-based marketing compared to other countries. There are lots of factors driving these countries to invest more in C for better performance of the organisations and business, mostly SMEs.

2.2.1 Classification of Social media networks

According to Trainor et al. (2014), the organisation would select the social media network that generally people are aware of. For SMEs, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat are used as the most common platform of social media. On the other hand, Alarcón-del-Amo et al. (2018) argued that the small and medium industries would target social media networks where generally the customer spend their time. In this process, different types of social networks are available for the companies.



Figure 3: Classification of Social media networks

Source: Alarcón-del-Amo et al. (2018)

Mazurek-Łopacińska and Sobocińska (2017) stated that social media networks are known as social networks. For a small organisation, Facebook is considered as the most common social networks, among others where customers are available in this platform. However, Devi (2017) opined that Twitter and LinkedIn are considered as the common social networks for certain medium organisations where business peoples are available in each of the tools, and customers or consumers are mostly available on Facebook. On the contrary, Paniagua and Sapena (2017) argued that most of the people consider social media networks as a media sharing network regarding the purposes. Not every small and medium organisation will adopt each of the social media networks. However, Mabhungu and Van (2017) mentioned that some of the SMEs tend to focus on using Media Sharing Networks including YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat, as the individuals and owners of the organisation can share any sort of information. But, Sener and Hacıoglu (2017), opined that under the classification of the social media network, Discussion Forums are often ignored in SME's marketing strategy as very few people use this platform. The customers of SMEs would not have high involvement in some of these platforms at all. However, Tajvidi and Karami (2017) mentioned that apart from the discussion forum, social and media sharing network, there are different tools and platforms used for certain types

of SMEs and organisations and individuals for different purposes. These are Bookmarking & Content Curation Networks and others. But, Kietzmann et al. (2017) responded that the small and medium organisations are searching for customers wherein social media, “Consumer Review Networks” allow the customers to get a review from different products. Lankova et al. (2018) opined differently that other than common tools of social media, Blogging & Publishing Networks and Social Shopping Networks have been emerging among the consumers, customers, and organisations. However, Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018) stated that Interest-Based Networks are helping small organisations and businesses to identify their audiences who are interested in communicating and promoting the products in the market.

2.3 Small and medium enterprises (SME’s)

The economy of the country is highly cognate to the small and medium organisations in the market. To study SMEs and to understand its right concept, numerous studies have proved that there is no specific concept or definition of small and medium organisations (Rishi and Bandyopadhyay, 2018). According to Morra et al. (2018), small and medium organisations are known as the enterprises named by adjectives, where the size and scale matter to compare. The quantitative, measurable indicators are used at this point to identify whether the business is large or small businesses. Lankova et al. (2018) supporting statement added that the international policymakers apply quantitative measurement for measuring and defining the SMEs. Chirumalla et al. (2018) argued that the industries define small and medium organisations based on employees and capital.

Ahmad et al. (2018) stated that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are known as businesses with limited capital and personnel numbers for the operation. Different countries have different employee’s number of defining small and medium-sized enterprises. Enyioko and Okwandu (2019) reiterates that the organisation could be small or medium businesses based on the number of employees, total assets, and annual sales. The organisation with the low number of employees and low financial criteria will be known as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Abiola-Oke and Aina (2019) stated that in medium-sized businesses, around 300 workers could work wherein a small organisation, less than 150 employees work.

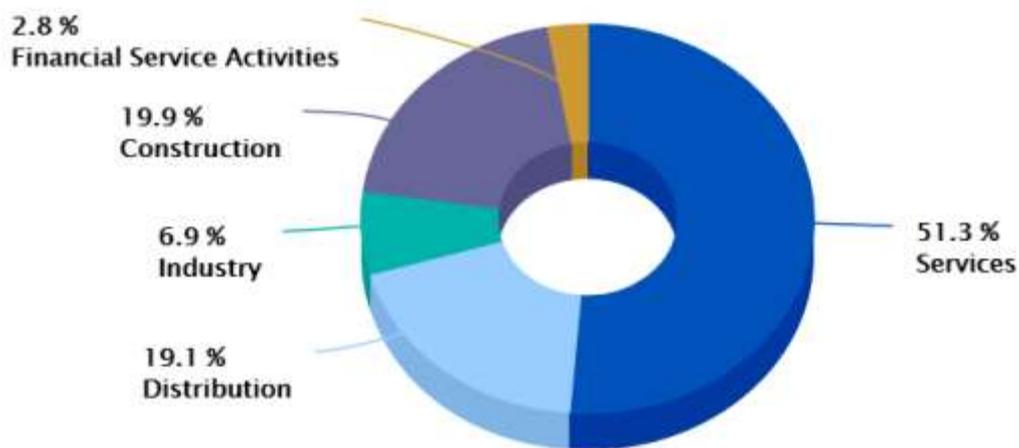


Figure 4: Importance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Ireland

Source: Enyioko and Okwandu (2019)

In Ireland, the need for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) has constantly been increasing owing to the contribution of SMEs in the economy. SMEs are contributing to the service sector mostly, which was around 51.3% in the year 2014. The growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are increasing in developing countries as well.

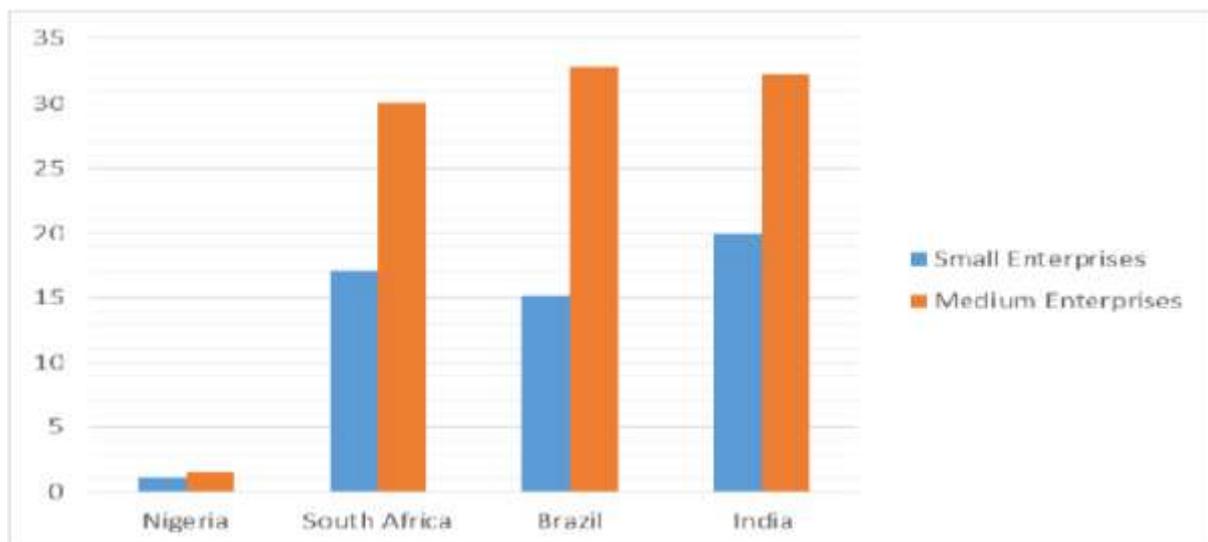


Figure 5: Growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Source: Abiola-Oke and Aina (2019)

The study of Abiola-Oke and Aina (2019) has represented the timeframe of 5 years (from 2013 to 2018). This study stated that compared to other countries developing for the economy, Nigeria had seen less growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the consumer's good sector. India, Brazil and South Africa have been using technologies while giving more investment to Medium enterprises more than a small organisation. Thus, the contribution of SMEs has been encouraging Nigeria to be supportive of SMEs in order to develop business, service, and other sectors.

2.3.1 Importance of SME's

Small and medium-sized enterprises are getting supports from the government for their contribution and importance to different sectors (Barreda et al., 2013). The SMEs have a contribution towards service and business as they are more efficient and can keep up with the new demands while using technologies and tools. According to Luo et al. (2013), SMEs have more importance in economic factor as this develops working styles, employment rate and income of the people to defeat the economic crisis. Barreda et al. (2013), on the other hand, discussed that SMEs have a higher role in influencing the leading enterprises for innovation and product development for the customers. But, Trainor et al. (2014) argued that SMEs have higher impacts on society and service. Due to SMEs, the individual has the option to start their own business with less capital. The income has been balanced, and the individual's spending power has developed as well. Heggde and Shainesh (2016), on the contrary, stated that SMEs have a higher contribution to the consumer market with higher innovation and product development. However, the industries and country have higher impacts from SMEs in their manufacturing and industrialisation side.

According to Kietzmann et al. (2017), SMEs have different impacts on developing and developed countries. The contribution towards the economy and the supports from the government would not be the same in these countries.

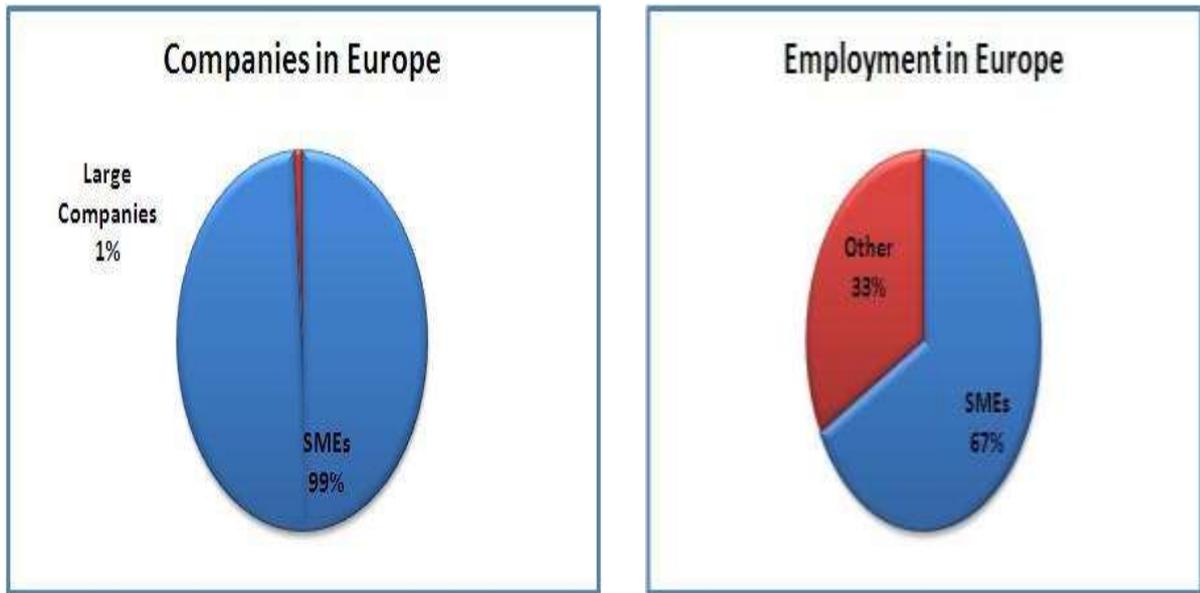


Figure 6: Importance of SMEs in the UK

Source: Kietzmann et al. (2017)

Figure 6 showed that the UK supports SMEs more than other sectors. The companies are mostly working under SMEs, around 99%, where employment in Europe is developed around 67% from SMEs. When it comes to developing countries, SMEs have different performance and achievement.

2013 Nigerian GDP: Old vs. New Estimates

Nominal GDP, in millions of Nigerian naira

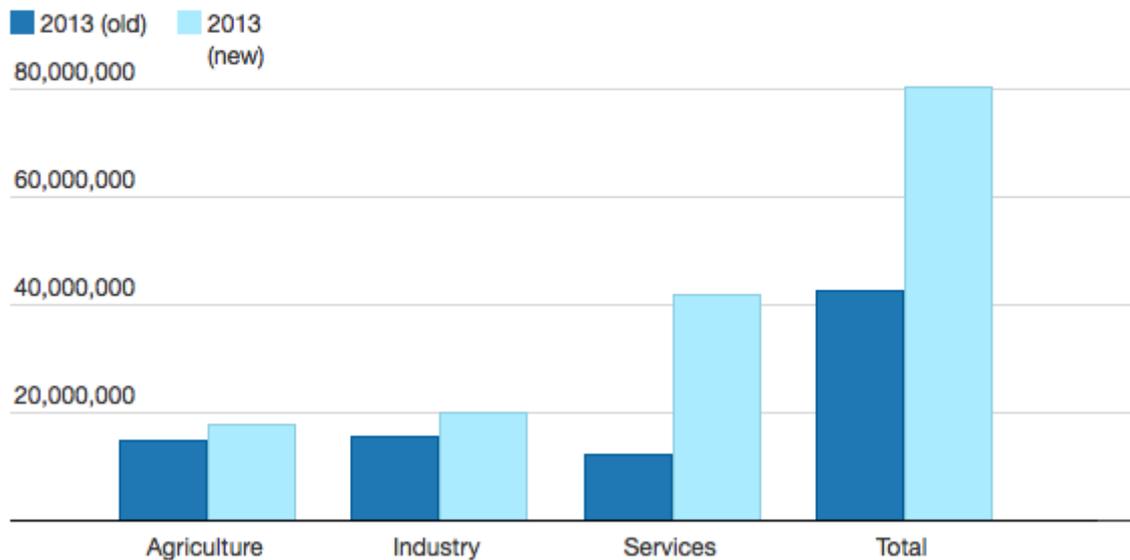


Figure 7: GDP with SMEs in Nigeria

Source: Chirumalla et al. (2018)

The GDP helps to represent the country's economy and political power. In Nigeria, the growth of SMEs has been contributing to the development of GDP due to better service and operation of the different sectors (Cheng and Shiu, 2018). Mostly, in the service sector, the GDP has been developed through SMEs in the country. According to Tajvidi and Karami (2017), the importance and significance of SMEs would vary from country to country. SMEs have always encouraged the people and sectors with significant roles in the world economy. Sener and Hacioglu (2017) proffered that without having supports from the government and resource, SMEs could not drive economic growth. But, Paniagua and Sapena (2017) are of contrary opinion that forming SME requires ideas and fewer resources more than legal bindings or rules and capital. Thus, SMEs can start their business within countries that have a higher potentiality for the economy.

When the SMEs are developed in developing countries, the impacts of SMEs are different. Mazurek-Łopacińska and Sobocińska (2017) stated that SMEs with supports from the government highly influenced entrepreneurship development and growth of the employment rate. Entrepreneurship businesses are highly connected to the formation of SMEs. On the other hand, Kietzmann et al. (2017) argued that SMEs

have been helping the country to develop each of the sectors to improve image and resources. However, Iankova et al. (2018) responded differently that when people have proper employment and disposable income, the country would have a higher contribution to their economy as well. On the contrary, Chirumalla et al. (2018) stated that in developing countries, SMEs had been considered an effective antipoverty programme which have developed innovation and sustainable growth in the industries. Supporting the statement, Alarcón-del-Amo et al. (2018) further added that the organisations with a new idea could bring growth in the sector with supports towards the economy. Even the stable economic environment has increased opportunities for the individual as well. But, Ahmad et al. (2018), on the contrary, opined that SMEs need to have supports from the government and financial sector to carry out their normal business activities.

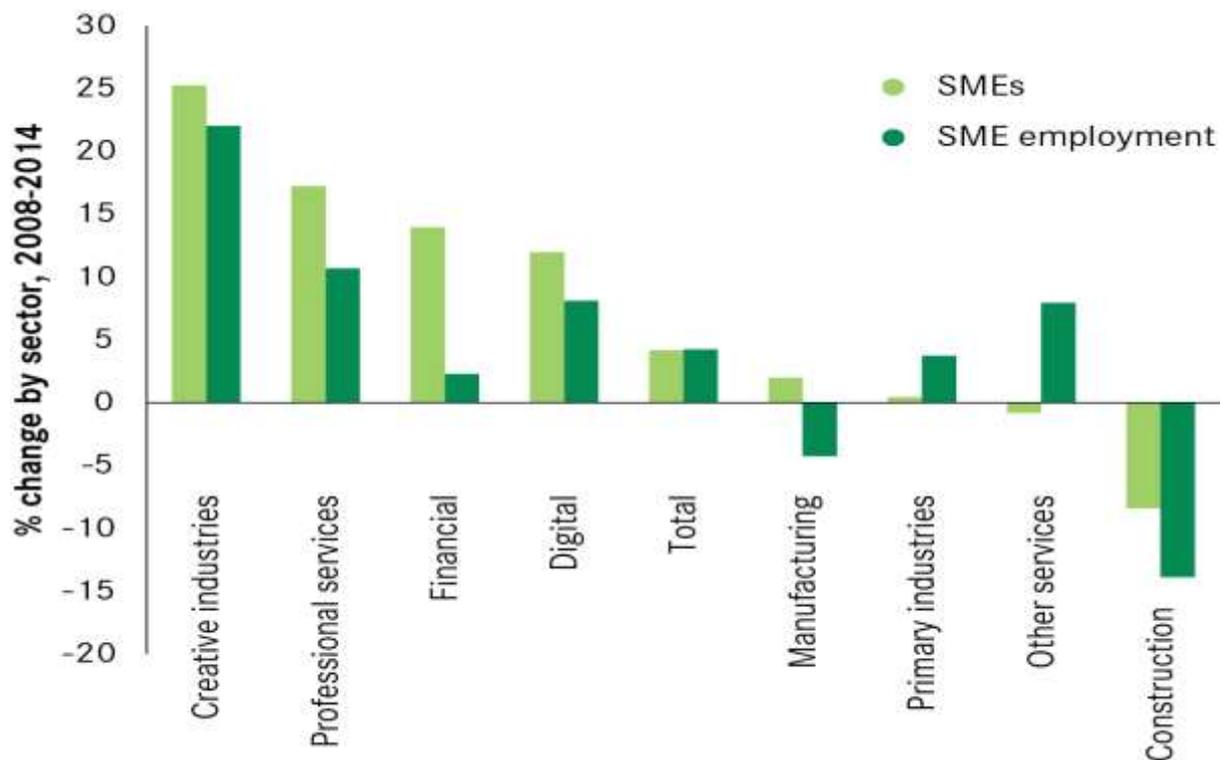


Figure 8: SMEs and employment in different sectors

Source: Rishi and Bandyopadhyay (2018)

From every sector to industry, SMEs have supported national economies with economic progress. Figure 8 represented that not every sector allows SMEs for the operation. The evidence from the years 2008 to 2014 represented that SMEs have introduced creative industries with higher employment. Unfortunately, the construction

sector has fewer supports for SMEs with low employment rates (Cheng and Shiu, 2018). The opportunities for SMEs and employment with SMEs have been decreased. However, 25% have been increased in creative industries with entrepreneurship where countries are supportive of SMEs.

2.4 Cultural difference of IRELAND and NIGERIA on business

Cultural differences regarding the business of Ireland and Nigeria relate to the socio-economic and cultural factors of these two countries. The differences of cultures of Ireland and Nigeria on business are as follows:

Ireland	Nigeria
SMEs and high Entrepreneurship	SMEs and low Entrepreneurship
High Involvement of employee	Low involvement of employees
The high growth of SMEs	Medium growth of SMEs
High economy support for business	Low economy scale

2.4.1 SMEs and high Entrepreneurship

SMEs, in a particular country, has its own operation and business performance. In Ireland, SMEs are categorised as establishments engaging less than 250 persons. According to Duan, Deng and Corbitt (2012), in other countries, the number of employees engaged in SMEs can vary. Lawless et al. (2014) stated that SMEs of the world mostly have common features and measurements. Thus, despite certain differences, SMEs in Ireland are similar to SMEs in other countries.

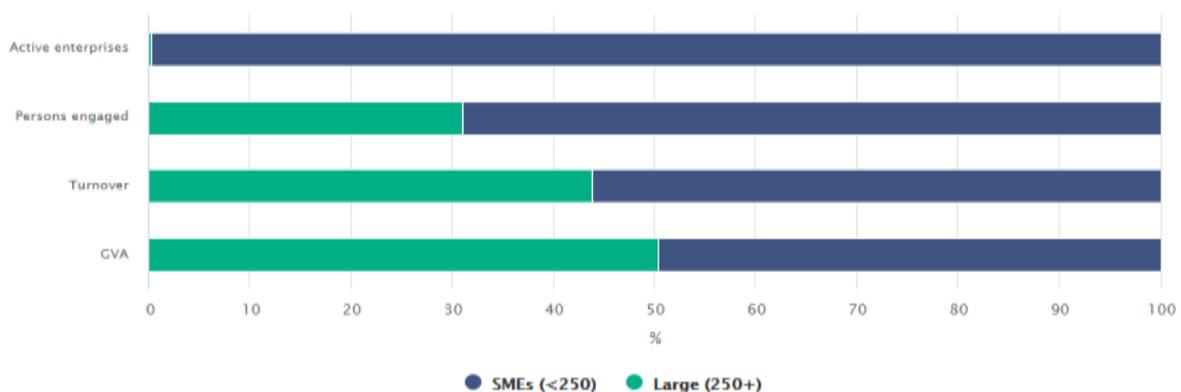


Figure 9: SME percentage share of key variables

Source: (Sanchez Badini et al., 2018)

The figure represented that compared to large industries, more than 99.8% of small and medium enterprises are active in Ireland in the year 2014. In these enterprises, around 69% of the employees have been engaged. Hence. SMEs have developed 56.1% of total Turnover with 50% of Gross Value added.

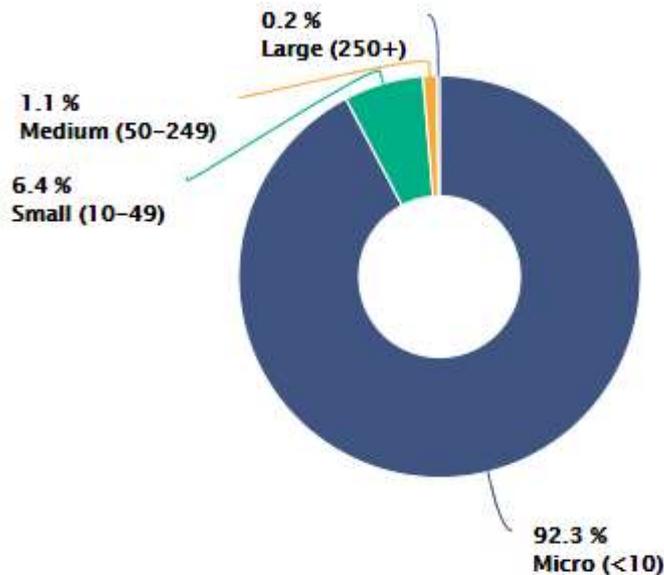


Figure 10: Active enterprises by size in sectors

Source: (Sanchez Badini et al., 2018)

Ali et al. (2013), explains that most of the large industries are active for business and employment. Lawless et al. (2014) pointed out that recently, the market has been changing with lots of trends and operations. In this way, SMEs are bringing more innovation and creativity with lots of engagement of the employees. Figure 10 represented that in Ireland, a small organisation employing less than 50 and more than nine has been serving in different sectors, around 6.4%. SMEs have been engaging the employees while taking 7.5% of the total number of active enterprises in the country, more than large industries.

In Nigeria, the definition of small and medium business is the same where different authors and schools can have other concepts and ideas as well. According to Nwankwo et al. (2012), SMEs are defined based on its investment, the number of

employees, available equipment for the business and operation. On the contrary, Duan, Deng, and Corbitt (2012) argued that SMEs are differentiated regarding their legal structure, benefits and drawbacks. They may have higher benefits compared to large industries, but, they have less capital and less scope for the expansion. However, Olusegun and Akinbode (2016) mentioned that SMEs are defined and stated with their sales turnover and, fixed capital investment for the business. These features and elements of the concept depicts different tendencies in countries. In Nigeria, the small scale business will be employing less than ten people. Adetula et al (2016) stated that in Nigeria, the small organisations have an investment in equipment, tools and machinery less than six hundred thousand naira. Also, the capital for manufacturing small scale organisations in Nigeria will be less than N150,000. On the contrary, Eze and Bikeze (2017) stated that in some cases, SMEs might have more than ten employees and less than 50 employees with the investment up to N60,000.

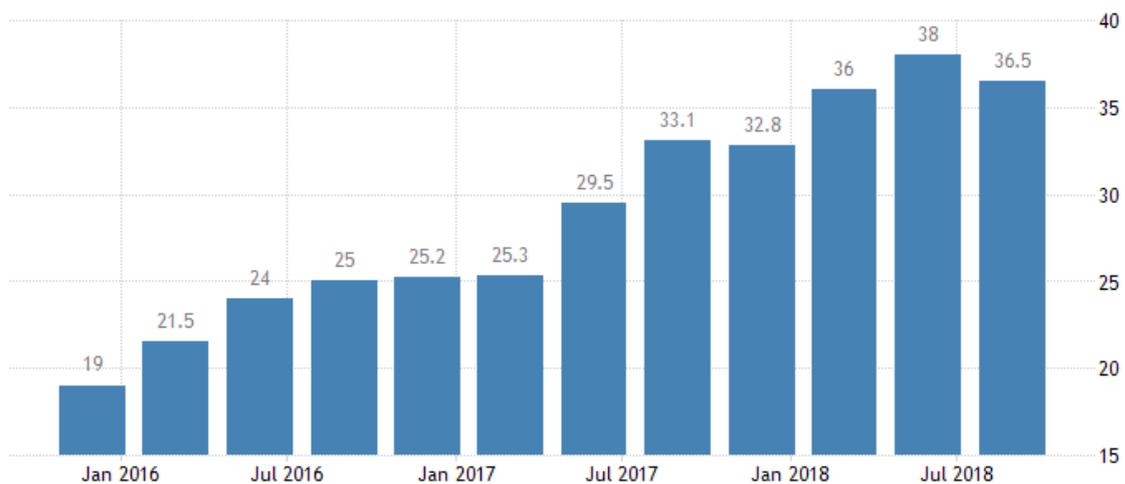


Figure 11: Youth Unemployment rate in Nigeria

Source: Gidado and Babakura (2019)

The youth unemployment rate has been higher in the year 2018 in Nigeria. However, the country has been managing its SMEs and other sectors in order to recommend the youth for entrepreneurship to develop employment rate and income.

2.4.2 Involvement of Employees

According to Mabhungu and Van (2017), the employees of SMEs are determinants in enhancing the viability of business. Sanchez Badini et al. (2018), on the contrary, stated that employment in SMEs could be depended on the resource and abilities. The large industries produce employment opportunities more than SMEs. However, Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018) responded that SMEs provide opportunities for every single person to use their idea and knowledge for entrepreneurship. It encourages people to build their own enterprises with less complexity.

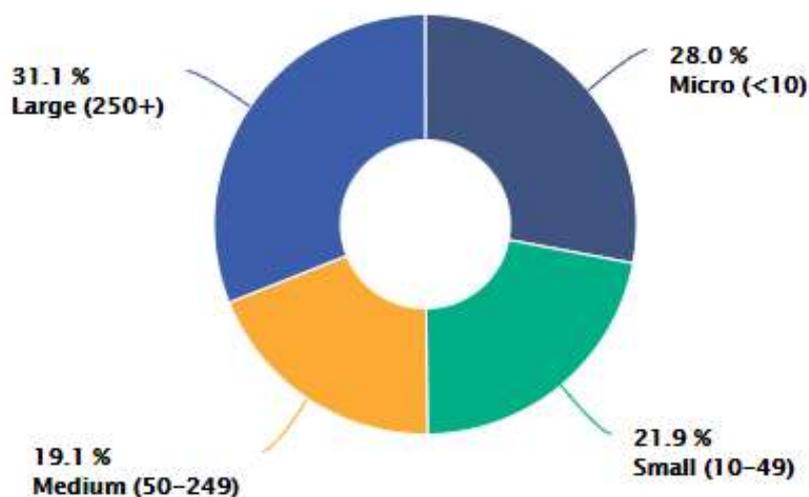


Figure 12: Number of persons engaged in the sector

Source: Mabhungu and Van (2017)

SMEs have been hiring employees from different sources with more opportunities. Around 41% of total persons are engaged in SMEs of Ireland, which is higher than both large and micro-enterprise.

According to Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018), in developing countries, most of the SMEs work under the commercial sector. Recently, there are trends for SMEs of working under the service industry such as fast-food, hotels, and restaurants and so on. However, Busaidi et al. (2019) mentioned that it depends on the ability of the owner to build SMEs in a particular sector. But, Gidado and Babakura (2019) did not agree and argued that not every country delivers the same scopes for owners or SMEs to build the business. Hence, the scope and supports from the government reflect the establishment of SMEs in particular industries. Nigeria has many scopes in the service sector with high involvement of the employees recently (Gidado and Babakura, 2019).

2.4.3 Growth of SMEs

Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018) stated that in SMEs, different services and products are served to the customers. This has reflected the establishment of SMEs in different sectors in the country. Lankova et al. (2018) bicker that SMEs cannot flourish in the sector and cannot establish its reputation in every sector. Different sectors have different priority and requirement, which cannot be handled by SMEs. However, Alarcón-del-Amo et al. (2018) are on the contrary that SMEs come up with a new idea and innovation. The individuals and entrepreneurs can bring new to the table while working in a different sector with SMEs. Hence, in every sector, SMEs have their effectiveness and changes regarding size and capital (Enyioko and Okwandu, 2019).

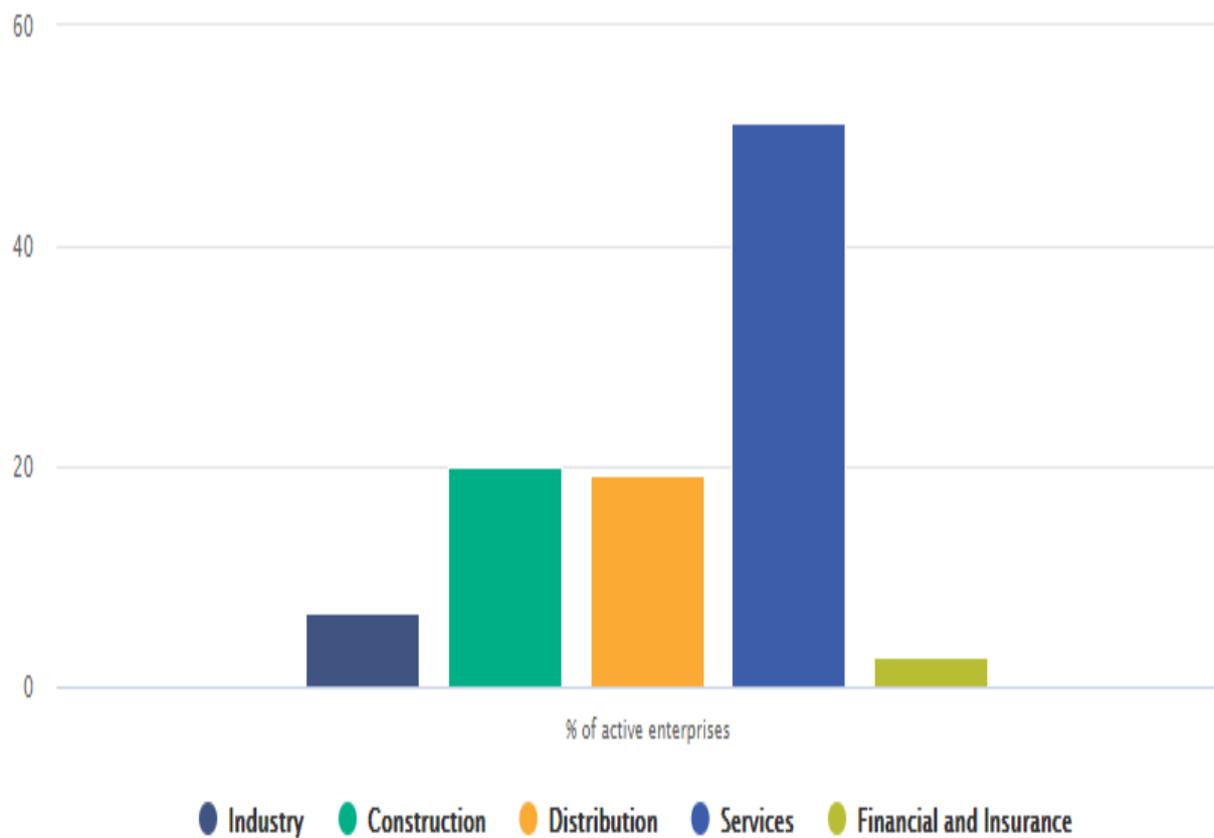


Figure 13: SMEs with a number of enterprises

Source: Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018)

In Ireland, SMEs are serving different sectors with enterprises. Around 51% of the enterprises of SMEs have been serving the Services sector, 21% in the Distribution sector and 19% in Industry sectors and 8% in the Construction sector. The construction sector has less potentiality and scope for SMEs.

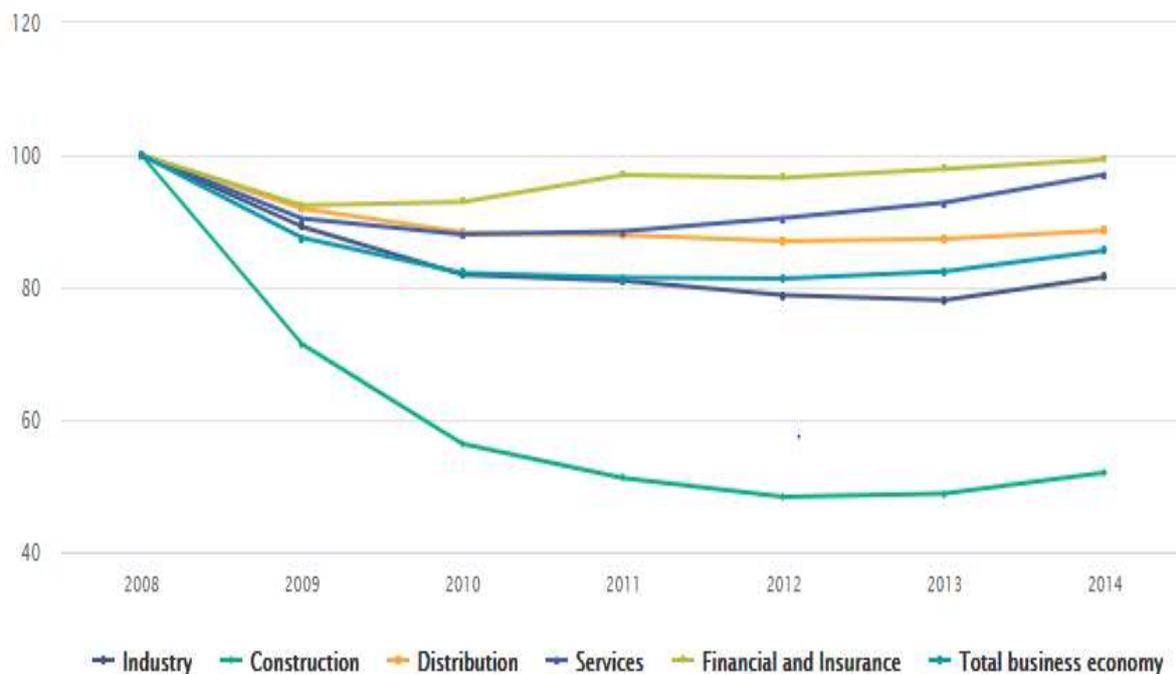


Figure 14: Employment in SMEs from 2008 to 2014

Source: Alarcón-del-Amo et al. (2018)

Every industry delivers options to employment for the people (Enyioko and Okwandu, 2019). In Ireland, the SMEs are trying to increase the scope for employment through operation and business. From the years 2008 to 2014, SMEs have been able to develop their employees in almost every sector except Construction. In the construction sector, the decrease in employment of SMEs has been visible for the past few years.

Being one of the developing countries, Nigeria has been dealing with pressure from both sides of the market. However, the country has seen the growth of SMEs through supports and infrastructure. Mabhungu and Van (2017) stated that the contribution of SMEs in GDP and the Economy of Nigeria has encouraged both government and society to work for SMEs.

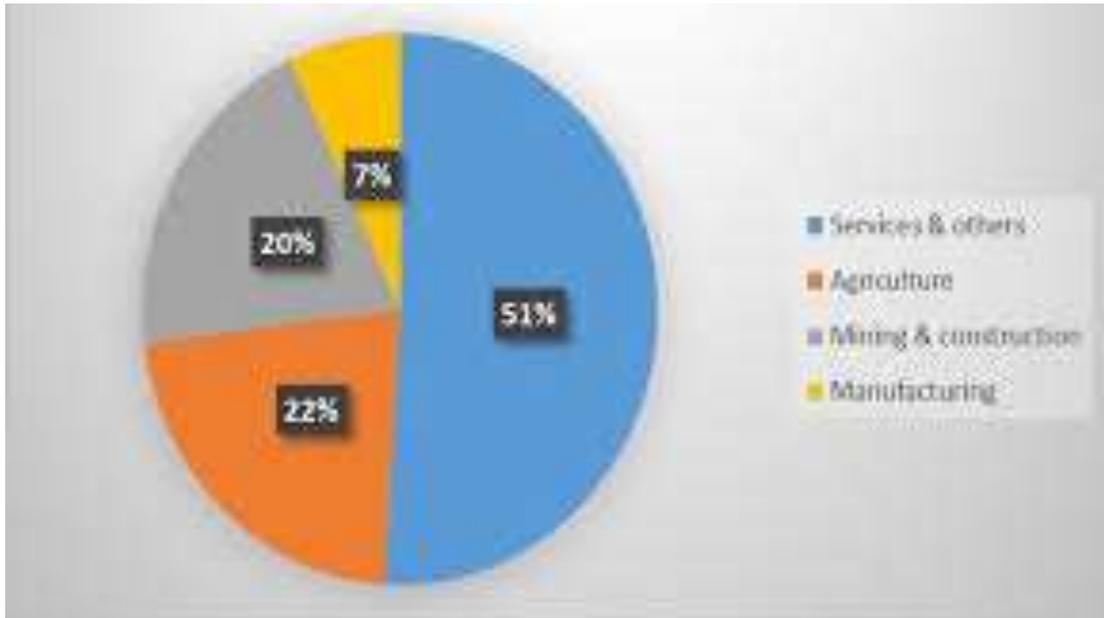


Figure 15: Contribution of SMEs in Nigeria

Source: Nwankwo et al. (2012)

Many industries in Nigeria are categorised as a small business. Figure 14 represented that 51% of the small and medium organisations are working under service and other sectors. 22% are working under agriculture, 20% of them working under mining and construction and 7% of them are contributing to the manufacturing sector. Compared to Ireland, Nigeria has more participation of SMEs in the construction and mining sector.

2.4.4 Barriers and Economy Supports for SMEs

Every small and medium business enterprise needs support from different factors. But, the barriers can be higher for small enterprises in the market (Mabhungu and Van, 2017). Not every country has the same scopes for the SMEs. According to Nwankwo et al. (2012), the culture of the country has been the main element of the SMEs that allows or affects the establishment of SMEs. Adetula et al. (2016) argued to the statement that the culture of the country has never been an obstacle for the development of SMEs. The motivation can be developed from the culture of the country. Ireland has a Masculine society for the business, which is highly success-oriented and driven. Thus, the SMEs are highly supported by society and the government. On the other hand, Olusegun and Akinbode (2016) stated that Nigerian society has been following collectivist culture. They value communal ownership of resources where the individualism has less value. However, this country has been trying to focus on establishing more SMEs in the different service sectors for the contribution towards the economy.

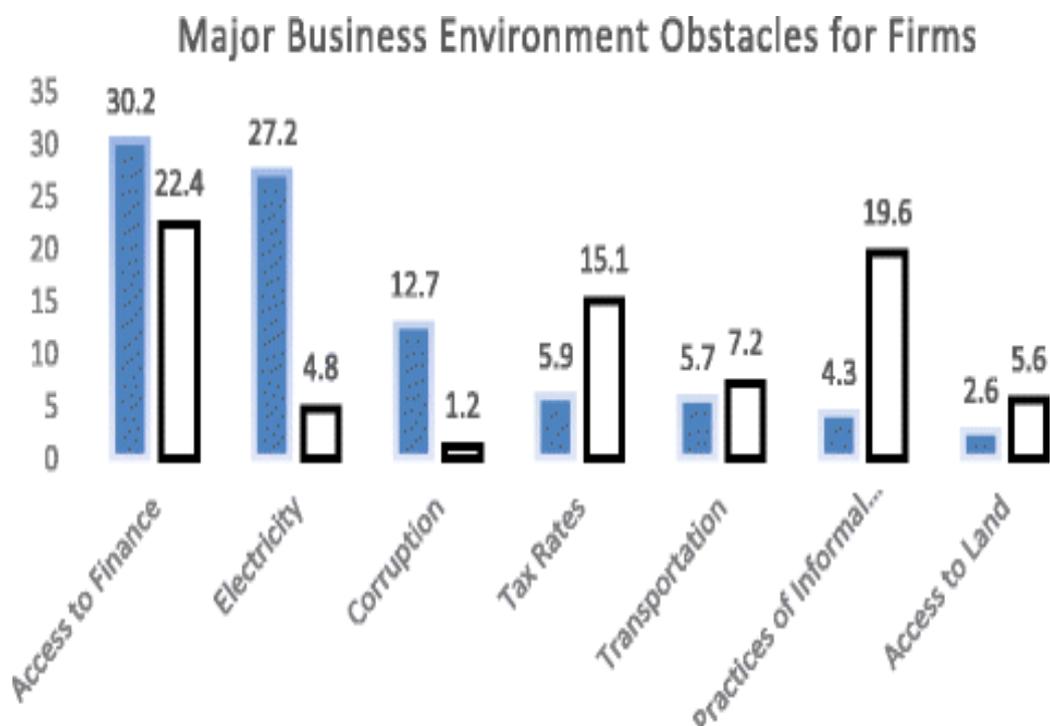


Figure 16: Barriers for SMEs in Nigeria (blue) and Ireland (White)

Source: Eze and Bikeze (2017)

Figure 18 represented that Nigeria has barriers from different sectors more than Ireland while developing SMEs. Nigeria has barriers towards accessibility to funding, electricity, and corruption for more than 30.2%, 27.2% and 12.7% respectively. On the other hand, in Ireland, barriers come from tax rates, transportation, practice for informality, and access to land, which are 15.1%, 7.2%, 19.6% and 5.6% respectively. Eze and Bikeze (2017) stated that every country has different scopes and barriers to SMEs and other services. Between Nigeria and Ireland, funds and accessibility to the finance are barriers for the establishment of SMEs. But, on the other hand, R argued that Ireland has higher funding supports from Nigeria. Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018) mentioned that funds could not be the main problem for the establishment of SMEs, but, the availability of resource and equipment can be barriers for the countries. On the contrary, Sanchez Badini et al. (2018) opined differently that SMEs mostly get supports and resources from developed countries more than developing countries. At the same time, the barriers can be developed from developing countries as well. But, Gidado and Babakura (2019) did not agree and stated that most of the cases, the developing countries try to support the development of SMEs as they contribute to economic development. But, the barriers of SMEs can be higher in developed countries due to higher competition.

2.5 Social media on SME's

2.5.1 Benefits of social media marketing on SME's

The small and medium organisations utilizes this innovation more than any other large industries. The usage on SMEs have brought lots of scopes and the opportunity to the business (Mabhungu and Van, 2017). Ali et al. (2013), in his views are that social media marketing is also known as digital marketing which has entirely transformed and changed the way that SMEs communicate, connect and engage with their buyers and customers. But, Adetula et al. (2016) argued that the usage of digital marketing has become crucial. The SMEs may get benefits from using social media marketing in a cost-effective method of marketing more than engagement with the customers. Mabhungu and Van (2017) mentioned that social media marketing had opened the door to get customers online. In addition, it allows the customers and your competitors would get the business online. Supporting the statement, Eze and Bikeze (2017)

further added that SME could identify existing or potential customers in social media in every location.

However, the industries with a small scale in the market would accept social media marketing for other reasons and benefits except for customer’s engagement. Tajvidi and Karami (2017) stated that most of the small organisations are using social media marketing for various purposes. Their availability has encouraged social media platform to bring more services to them. In the study of Sener and Hacıoglu (2017), small organisations have been using social media marketing for their business.

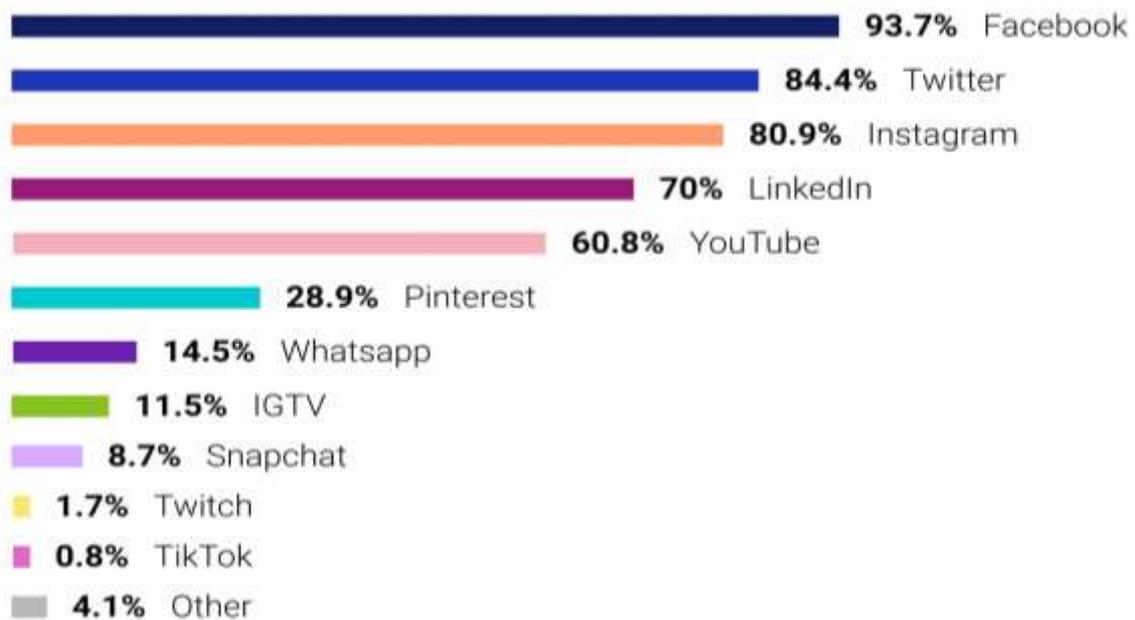


Figure 17: Usages of social media marketing in SMEs

Source: (Sener and Hacıoglu, 2017)

Around 93.7% of SMEs are using Facebook for social media marketing where 84.4% of them use Twitter and 80.9% use Instagram, 70% use LinkedIn, 60.8% use YouTube and 28.9% use Pinterest and so on. Paniagua and Sapena (2017) stated that SMEs could measure their success and effectiveness while using online campaigns through social media marketing which was not possible with the help of traditional marketing. On the contrary, Mazurek-Łopacińska and Sobocińska (2017) argued that the small organisation pays attention to promotion and communication with the help of social media marketing. Also, it allows the industry to have market research easily without investing a penny.

But, Kietzmann et al. (2017) did not agree and stated that market research or market analysis is not the only benefit that is derived from social media marketing. The organisation can promote and communicate with customers. But, the most effective benefit that comes from social media marketing is that the organisation can rebrand and revitalise the brand of the organisation (Ali et al., 2013). On the other hand, Ahmad et al. (2018) responded differently that rebranding the small business may require long term processes from the SMEs through social media marketing which is mostly ignored by the companies. The SMEs look for the options to get benefits from the short-term project. Alarcón-del-Amo et al. (2018) further added to the statement that social media marketing had encouraged the organisation to have a sale person without any employee or less number of the employee for 24/7.

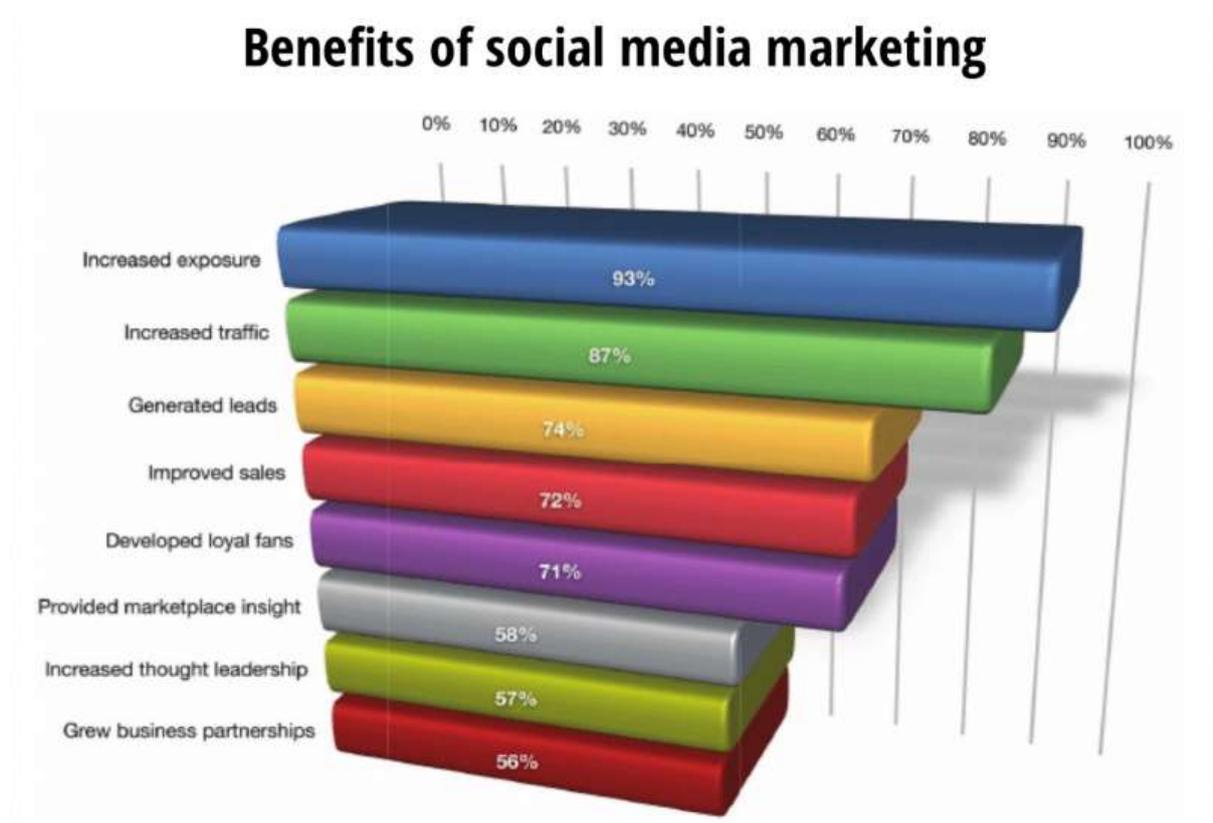


Figure 18: Benefits of social media marketing

Source: (Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2018)

The figure represented that social media marketing has brought benefits to SMEs in almost every part of marketing and operational techniques.

Cheng and Shiu (2018) mentioned, social media marketing can be of immense value and the best way to promote the brand and products recently. But, SMEs often cannot

see that social media marketing helps them to manage their ROI very easily. But, Chirumalla et al. (2018), on the contrary, opined that SMEs had supported the usages of social media marketing for the promotion of their organisations only. They have zero thinking of having high ROI. However, Iankova et al. (2018) responded that now a day, the small organisations have high knowledge of benefits developed from social media marketing. They are building an online brand community and brand awareness among the customers while engaging them in social media marketing. Apart from other statements, Morra et al. (2018) stated that SMEs might have a different audience and target market where the traditional market can be expensive to get the audience. The social media marketing can allow the establishment to reach the right people.

Modern problems in the market require modern solutions. Thus, while implementing digital marketing, the organisation prefers to reduce the number of the visit of the customers in their stores, Rishi and Bandyopadhyay (2018) said. On the contrary, Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018) mentioned that the SMEs are experimenting with social media marketing and digital marketing for achieving the set objectives.

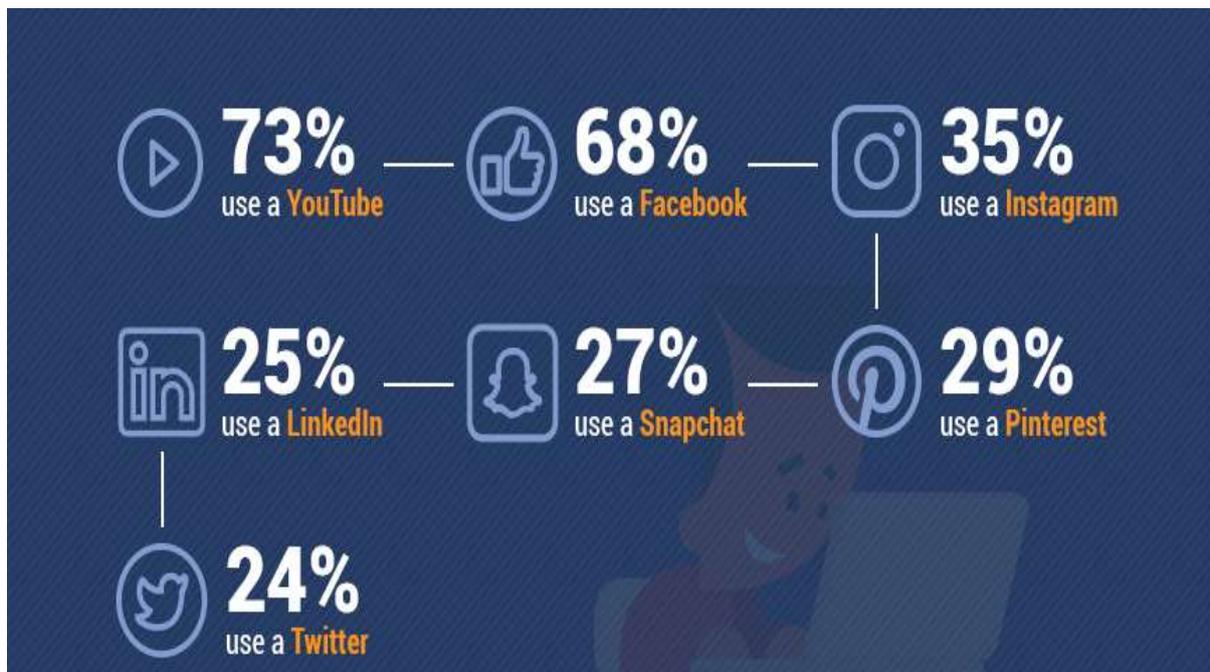


Figure 19: Adults using social media

Source: (Lawless et al., 2014)

In Ireland, 73% of the customers use YouTube, 68% of them use Facebook, and 35% use Instagram and so on. The growing number of customers and people involving in

social media has encouraged SMEs to develop digital strategies for social media marketing. Thus, Sanchez Badini et al. (2018) stated that social media marketing allows the organisation to control their online image through the platform. Busaidi et al. (2019) argued that social media marketing cares for a relationship where the organisation tends to value customer relationships more than other benefits.



Figure 20: Top selection of social media marketing

Source: (Busaidi et al., 2019)

In Nigeria, most of the small and mediums industries are using the social media platform in order to develop their performance and communication (Ali et al., 2013). Around 73% use social media for their marketing approach. 73% of the organisations use the website to inform the customers and to promote products, 57% prefer to have email-marketing and so on.

According to Gidado and Babakura (2019), social media marketing has been used in most of the developed countries due to its convenience and fast service for the customers. Abiola-Oke and Aina (2019) responded that social media marketing has been common to the market for its cost-effectiveness and better productivity. On the other hand, Enyioko and Okwandu (2019) maintained that most of the small and medium organisations chose to use social media marketing to monitor the competitor's strategies and activities for the business.

2.5.2 Barriers to adopting Social media on SME's

Adoption of any media, whether it is traditional or digital, and the organisation may go through certain barriers and problems (Ali et al., 2013). However, the obstacles and barriers towards the adoption of social media marketing may be different from one country to another. According to Sener and Hacioglu (2017), the primary disadvantage of using social media marketing is that the organisation must provide skilled labour and time for the business. The social media marketing needs consistency and monitoring where the high intense labour is needed. On the other hand, Tajvidi and Karami (2017) argued that the labour-intensive is not the problem as the owner can communicate with the customers in social media marketing. But, social media marketing takes time from the business and for the promotion as well.



Figure 21: Drawbacks of social media marketing

Source: (Olusegun and Akinbode, 2016)

From thousands of benefits, social media marketing comes up with lots of drawbacks towards SMEs. Paniagua and Sapena (2017) stated that social media marketing is unreliable in most of the cases. Some people have the idea of social media as a personal space, and they would not take seriously any promotion of the products. However, Mazurek-Łopacińska and Sobocińska (2017) argued that most of the SMEs might have higher followers in social media marketing, but they would not be potential customers for the business. On the contrary, Kietzmann et al. (2017) stated that social media marketing cannot attract all the existing customers or cannot engage all the potential new customers on social media. The lack of trust issues of the customers can be a barrier in this way (Kietzmann et al., 2017). However, most of the SMEs are using content for interaction in social media marketing. But, some of them have failed to use social media marketing and platform as the two-way communication tool, Mabhungu and Van (2017) explained.

How satisfied are you with your current digital marketing¹ Return on Investment (ROI)?

¹ Online – eg Google AdWords, Facebook Ads, SEO, banner advertising, etc.

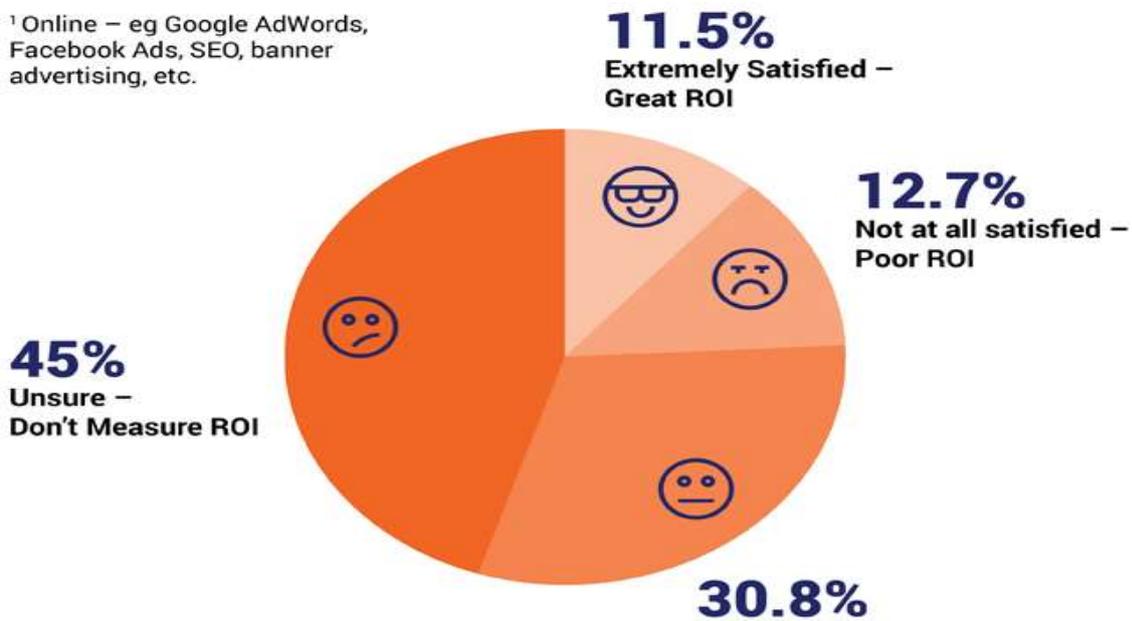


Figure 22: Satisfaction of Using social media marketing

Source: (Kurniawan and Asharudin, 2018)

In a study of Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018), the small organisations have extremely satisfied while using social media marketing which was 11.5%, 12.7 has not been satisfied due to its poor ROI, 45% of the organisations have not measured ROI, and 30.8% of them have not been satisfied due to its ineffectiveness. Rishi and Bandyopadhyay (2018) stated that social media marketing is not in favour of time durations and takes time in managing business. where Iankova et al. (2018) explained that the organisation would not have control in social media marketing. The loss of control can be of a disservice.

2.6 Theoretical context

2.6.1 Technology acceptance model

The organisation using technology and social media marketing must go with different tools and models in order to value the activities. According to Morra et al. (2018), the technology acceptance model (TAM) has been considered in most of the SMEs as

information systems theory where the model reflects how the users are in terms of operations in the market. There are different factors related to this model.

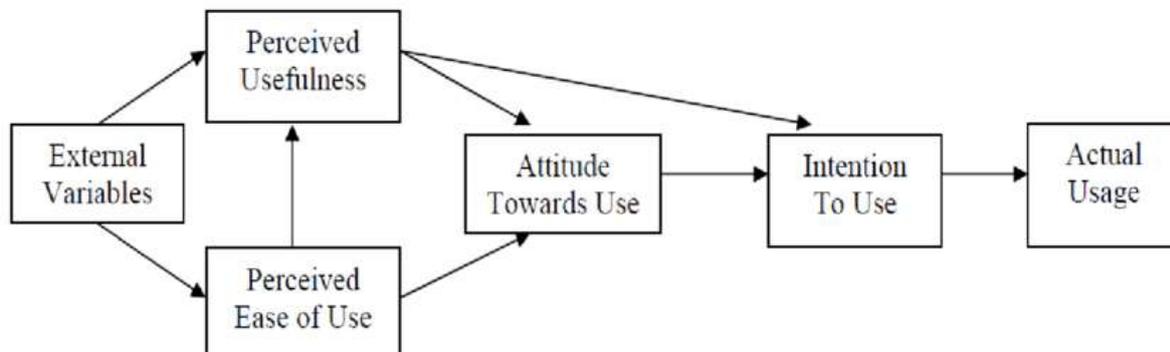


Figure 23: Technology acceptance model (TAM)

Source: Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018)

Iankova et al. (2018) explained that social media platforms had not taken lots of time among the customers as the people are living in virtual life lately. Chirumalla et al. (2018) mentioned that TAM had been continuously studied where the small organisation can follow this theory to handle the users and their content in social media marketing.

2.6.2 Social Staircase

Lots of tools and models are identified while adopting technologies and social media marketing. Barreda et al. (2013) stated that Social Staircase had been considered as one of the tools to use four steps for converting and promoting the brand in Social Media. Each of the stages has a different feature. In this study, this four-stage model can be used.

The Social Staircase

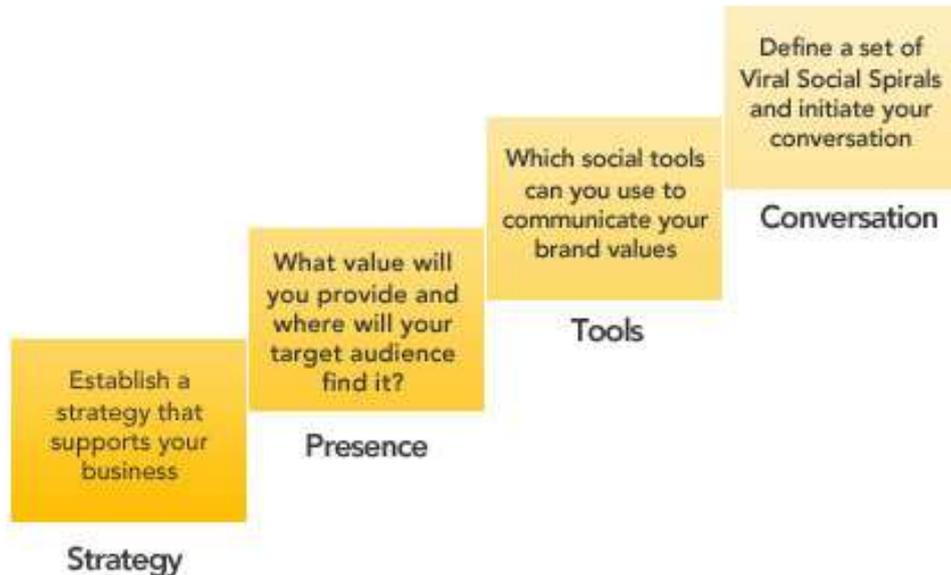


Figure 24: Social Staircase model

Source: (Tajvidi and Karami, 2017)

The stage starts with the development of Strategy. Luo et al. (2013) dug in the business needs to make a strategy while focusing on the development. The 2nd stage confirms the need for a presence in the market with the help of technologies. Trainor et al. (2014) contend that most of the companies might support the stage of presence while ignoring the need for proper strategy. Tajvidi and Karami (2017) discussed the tools are required more than other stages while using the staircase. However, in stage 4, the organisation needs to value the content and give feedback to the customers in the social media platform.

2.6.3 Social Tool Matrix

In the social tool matrix, the organisation must have a proper structure, planning, organisation and control while handling the social media platform. The organisation cannot pick any tool out from blue while working in the market. The organisation needs a social tool matrix after the selection of Social Staircase. Ahmad et al. (2018) stated that with the assistance of Social Tool Matrix, the organisation analyses a set of social tools while accepting one of them to fulfil the strategy.



Figure 25: Social Tool Matrix

Source: Ahmad et al. (2018)

2.6.4 Social Viral Spiral

The social viral spiral allows the organisation to use tools and media for connecting the customers. According to Kurniawan and Asharudin (2018), the social media platform requires high time where the different tools require different time, money, connection and involvement. Thus, the organisation needs to use proper social viral spiral while fulfilling the strategy and tools for the business and promotion in social media platform.

The Social Viral Spiral

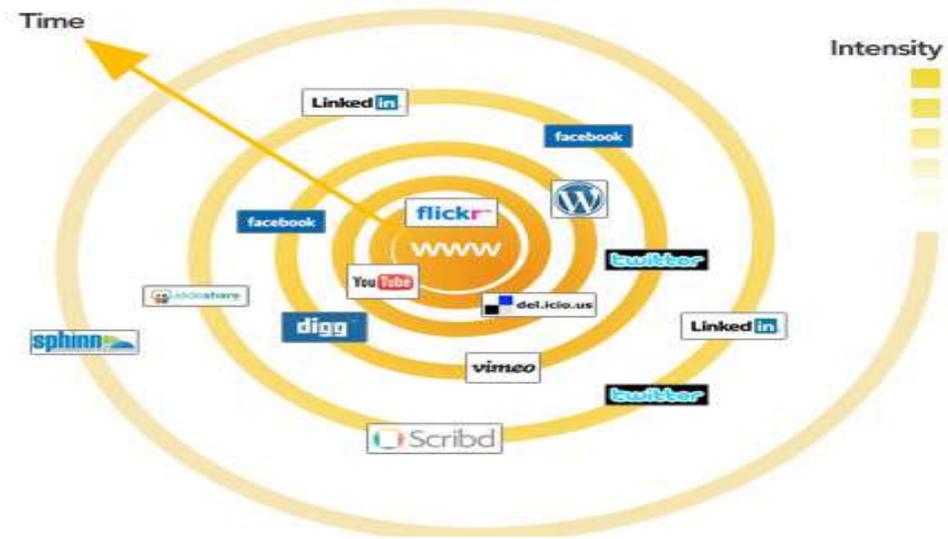


Figure 26: Social Viral Spiral

Source: (Kurniawan and Asharudin, 2018)

2.7 Research Conceptual Framework

In this context is to demonstrate the cultural factors supporting the adoption of social media marketing in SMEs of Ireland and Nigeria. The conceptual research framework is given below:

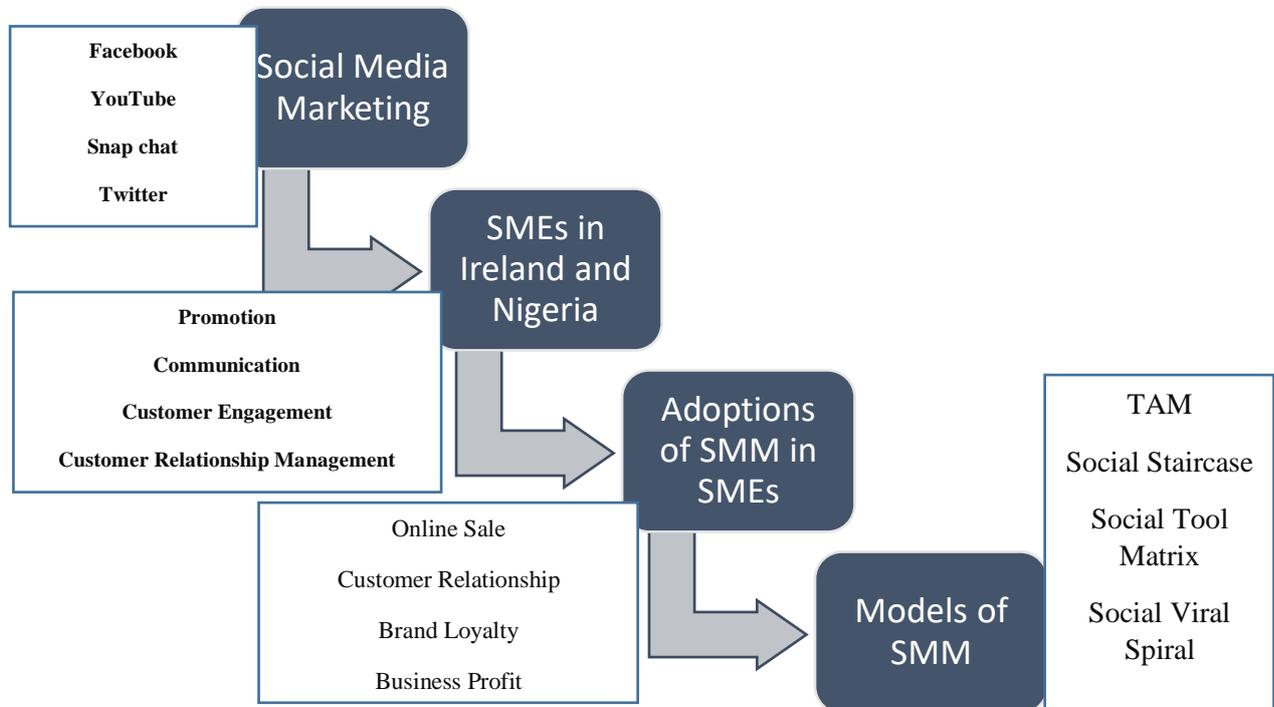


Figure 27: Research Conceptual Framework

Source: Own

The research study has discussed social media marketing, its usages, its operation and classification in the market in the first place. The framework has also represented that the discussions regarding SMEs in Ireland and Nigeria with comparison have been added. The 3rd stage discussed the adoption of social media marketing in SMEs for its benefits and disadvantages. The 4th part has reflected the tools and models available for social media marketing and the acceptance of technologies in the market.

2.8 Summary

Numerous studies have been conducted based on social media marketing or the adoption of social media marketing, its benefits or drawbacks in the organisation, concepts of the small and medium organisation or comparative analysis of SMEs between two different countries, adoptions of social media marketing for promotion and so on. The biggest literature gap was that all of the studies have not considered each of the discussions in their studies. But, this research study has fully discussed the concept of social media marketing, SMEs in different countries, adoption of social media marketing, its benefits and drawbacks with theory and models. Also, this literature review has developed a conceptual research framework to study with all the factors related to this project.

In the study of “A comparative, cross-cultural analysis of the factors that influence SMEs to adopt Social media-based marketing between Ireland and Nigeria”, adoption of social media-based marketing in two countries has been discussed. The emerging of social media-based marketing likes with interactive computer-mediated technologies where the organisations are using social media-based marketing over traditional media for various reasons. Classification of Social media networks represented the usages and differences of different media and platform for the communication and promotion of the products. The definition of SMEs varies from one country another as it varies between Ireland and Nigeria. Mostly, the number of employees, capital, size of the organisation and sale of the company are used for the measurement of the SMEs. The small and medium organisations have been social media-based marketing more than other large industries for its thousands of benefits. But, adopting social media-based marketing in a small organisation comes up with lots of barriers and drawbacks. However, different models and tools such as the Technology acceptance model (TAM) and Social Staircase can be used for adopting social media-based marketing in SMEs.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This technique provides an outline regarding the data collection, processing and interpretation with a view to constructing a valid research conclusion. In this regard, the following research methodology has been developed by considering the research constraint issues and research objectives to be achieved.

3.2 Research Design

The study will adopt a qualitative procedure by taking into cognisance the explorative tendencies. In response to the qualitative research design, a cram session be conducted (Braun and Clarke, 2015). This focus group study will consider the SME sector of Ireland and Nigeria. In order to label the factors that have an influence on social media-based marketing decision of the SMEs, a focused group study on SMEs of the case study countries will be conducted. The use of primary and secondary sources will be ensured to establish a databased research study (Brown and Hale, 2016). Since both primary and secondary data sources will be explored, information risk in terms of research, conclusion development can be eliminated.

3.3 Population of the Study

The SMEs of Ireland and Nigeria is the key area of concentration of the research study. In this regard, to understand the factors that have an influence on SMEs to take social media-based marketing initiatives will the focused research area. The SMEs of Ireland and Nigeria are the selected research population. However, due to resource constraints, a specific sample will be preferred out of the delving population.

3.4 Sample Size and Technique

This inquest will adopt a non-probabilistic style to ascertain the research template. 'Convenience' sampling method will simplify the inquiry study to ensure quality sample reckoning for the research study. In this convenience sampling method, the investigator will use a judgemental approach to select the required sample (Brunsdon, 2017). While selecting a research sample, the research study will emphasise on

ownership characteristic, capital structure, customers to be served and investment on social media-based marketing strategy. As a result, expected quality in terms of research sample selection can be ensured.

50 SME owners will be selected to collect the required research data. A relatively small sample size has been selected to ensure cost-effectiveness in terms of data collection and processing (Bryman and Bell, 2016). Twenty-five respondents from Ireland and 25 respondents from Nigeria will be selected. An online platform will be used to reach the research sample. Email communication and social media interaction will be a cost-effective process to communicate with the respondents.

3.5 Reliability and Validity Instrument

The research reliability issue is related to the usefulness of the research outcomes to interpret the research phenomenon. In the first phase, to ensure the reliability of the research outcomes, 'test-retest' criteria will be followed. In this regard, the research outcomes will be verified by considering different time gaps (Chapman and Feit, 2015). The longitudinal approach will facilitate the research study to respond to the test-retest issue. In the following phase, '*parallel forms reliability*' issue will be used to analyse the effectiveness of the research method. This research study has considered the primary research study (Clough, 2016). However, in order to analyse the reliability of the research outcomes, both primary and secondary research data can be used. At the same time, the use of both qualitative and quantitative research data will facilitate the research study to ensure the acceptability of the research outcomes. In the final phase, an '*inter-rate reliability*' test will be applied (Cohen et al. 2017). This test will verify the research outcomes under different research environments. The use of an external assessor to verify the research outcomes will ensure the research study in response to the reliability issue.

In order to respond to the acceptability of the research study, validity issues should be dealt with from a critical point of view. In the first phase, 'face validity' should be responded. This face validity criterion can be achieved by constructing a valid research question that is aimed at addressing the research gap. In the following phase, '*construct validity*' criteria should be considered (Cottrell, 2017). In this regard, the usefulness of the measurement tool that will be used to analyse the research data should be analysed from a critical point of view. This research study will follow a

primary study, and for this reason, the measurement tool should be selected by considering the validity issue (Creswell, 2016). In the following phase, 'criterion validity' should be responded. This criterion validity is related to the consideration of alternative research methods. For instance, the research study will use a focused group study to collect the required research data. In this regard, the validity of the effectiveness of the focused group study should be analysed by using another method, such as an interview or online survey.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

This research study will implement a 'thematic' data analysis method to analyse the qualitative research data. This thematic analysis method will facilitate the research study to develop a data pattern by analysing the qualitative research data (Denscombe, 2016).



Figure: Thematic Data Analysis Method

Source: Cohen et al. (2017)

The thematic data analysis method follows five steps beginning with qualitative data collection, code generation, initial theme generation, reviewing themes and defining final themes. In the initial stage, qualitative data will be collected from the selected SME owners from Ireland and Nigeria. By using online platforms such as email and social media, responses on factors affecting social media-based marketing decisions will be collected (Easterby-Smith, 2016). In the following stage, 'codes' will be developed by reviewing the responses. These themes will be reviewed to generate specific themes that will represent the research objectives. In the final stage, themes will be finalised based on research objectives and research questions (Fisher, 2016). However, if the researcher has limited access to research information, then this thematic research study will lead to inconsistency and a lack of coherence in generating specific research themes.

3.7 Decision Rule

The research conclusions will be constructed by analysing the research data and considering the research objectives to be achieved. The research findings will be explained under each research objective (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2017). In the first phase, conceptual and theoretical understanding regarding social media-based marketing in the context of SMEs of Ireland and Nigeria will be explained. In the following segment, financial costs and risk factors regarding the implementations of social media-based marketing in the context of SMEs will be disseminated. In the later phase, research findings will be presented by highlighting the operational issues related to social media-based marketing activities for SMEs. In the final phase, the impact of social media-based marketing on the buying behaviour of the customers of SMEs will be analysed.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

The research study will be conducted by considering the ethical factors so that data accuracy, data efficacy can be ensured. The fundamental code of ethics will be followed while collecting and analysing data for the research study. Data accuracy and confidentiality will be ensured by applying a code of ethics in order to go ethical with the project (Gill and Johnson, 2016). However, a focused group interview will be conducted while collecting primary data from different data sources so that data authenticity can be ensured for the related users. In this regard, the confidentiality of the participants will be ensured for the ethical purpose of the research study. Simultaneously, data beneficence and nonmaleficence will be kept on focus in order to facilitate the related users of the research study (Greetham, 2017). Moreover, acknowledgement of the data sources will be maintained while collecting primary and secondary data so that data validity can be ensured. Again, data biasness and data manipulation will be controlled with a strategic and ethical way to provide accurate information to the users of the research study.

3.9 Limitation

The time limitation of the research has limited the scope of the area of data collection, which constraints the research to consider a large-scale research proposal. Thus, the possibility of sample error due to the small scale of related data has become a strategic challenge for the research users to make strategic decisions (Hague et al. 2017). Moreover, due to the resource and time limitation, a longitudinal research study has

not conducted which hinder the research study from selecting vast data area to accumulate research data (King and Horrocks, 2016). For instance, collecting primary data from a limited number of random population is not enough to explain the exact effect of social media-based marketing in Ireland and Nigeria.

3.10 Conclusion

In the forenamed, this will implement a qualitative research study, taking into cognisance the explorative outlook of the study. A focus group study will be implemented to collect the required research data. By using a convenience non-probability sampling method, 50 SME owners from Ireland and Nigeria will be selected. The responses will be collected by using online platforms such as email and social media. By using the thematic research analysis method, qualitative research data will be subdivided to develop a specific probing theme. In the final phase, the research outcomes will be presented against each research objective.

Chapter 4 Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

A social media marketing strategy combines an understanding of the target market, value of marketing, necessities of interactions and communication planning. The social media marketing strategy has helped the companies to build their marketing and promotional activities in order to target and attract the customers. Social media strategy has been effective choices for SMEs due to its benefits and significance for the operation and promotion. However, different countries with different SMEs have been using social media marketing strategies to approach the market and to maintain business. The cultural factors in Ireland and Nigeria in SMEs have affected their adoption of the social media marketing strategy for the expansion, business operation, and promotion. This part has analysed the data within thematic analysis with discussion. 18 ISME owners have responded to the questionnaire properly and 14 NSME owners have provided information for the data collection.

4.2 Data Analysis and Discussion

Theme 1: Concept of SME

The small and medium organisations have a different scale and adjectives with measurable indicators for defining them in the market. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Ireland have limited capital and limited employees for management and operation. ISME1 (Ireland) has answered their concept of SMEs “*We have very few numbers of employees for marketing and operation in the workplace.*” NSME1 has answered to their concept of SMEs “*My organisation has low sale turnover with higher liability for the business.*” However, in Nigeria, the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have different employment opportunities and sales turnover compared to Ireland. The state of SMEs in Ireland has been increasing compared to Nigeria due to the contribution of SMEs in the economy and growth of the business sectors.

Theme 2: Reasons for adopting Social Media based Marketing strategy in SME.

Social media marketing strategy has different usages in the organisations while giving so many benefits and options through the social media platform. The SMEs in different markets have different opinions and strategies with reasons for adopting a social media-based marketing strategy. ISME2 has answered that “*We are out of capital, but*

we need to promote our business in this competitive market. Social media is the best thing for us to choose other options.” NSME2 has answered the content “Social media platform has helped us to target more customers. We are communicating with as much as customers we want! I love it!” ISME3 has answered “I did not like social media marketing at the beginning. But I am working on it.” However, some organisations look for options for sharing information with each other with interactive computer-mediated technologies. Here the social media-based marketing strategy can help SMEs to make a decision about Internet marketing for promoting the brand and products.

Social marketers' top goals for social

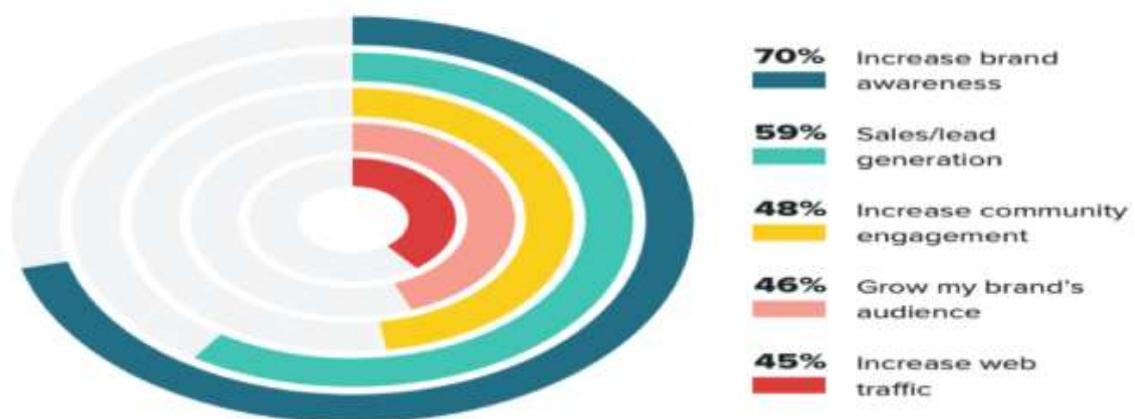


Figure: Reasons for adopting SMM

Source: (Chirumalla et al., 2018)

Some SMEs in Nigeria have been adopting a social media-based marketing strategy to integrate the internet users. On the other hand, in Ireland, social media-based marketing strategy has accelerated the organisations and business where small and medium organisations have been adopting more strategies and brand positioning through social media. NSME2 has represented that “Most of our competitors have been using social media-based marketing strategy for engaging the customers. The main reason for using social media-based marketing strategy for our organisation is related to the requirement of less fund for higher promotion.” Thus, the reasons for using social media-based marketing strategy mostly relate to funding, management and its impacts on the market.

Theme 3: Benefits of social media-based marketing strategy more than other traditional marketing strategies.

The small and medium organisations had used traditional marketing strategies, and they are using technologies and social media platforms apart from traditional marketing strategies. Social media marketing has transformed the way that SMEs perceive about customers communicate and connect the customers in the market. NSME3 has stated “The digital marketing has become crucial and we cannot afford the cost. Social media marketing is a cost-effective method of marketing, and we can easily get new customers online”. SMEs in Ireland have customers and competitors in online where social media marketing has helped them to manage promotion and communication easily without investing for the market research or other criteria.

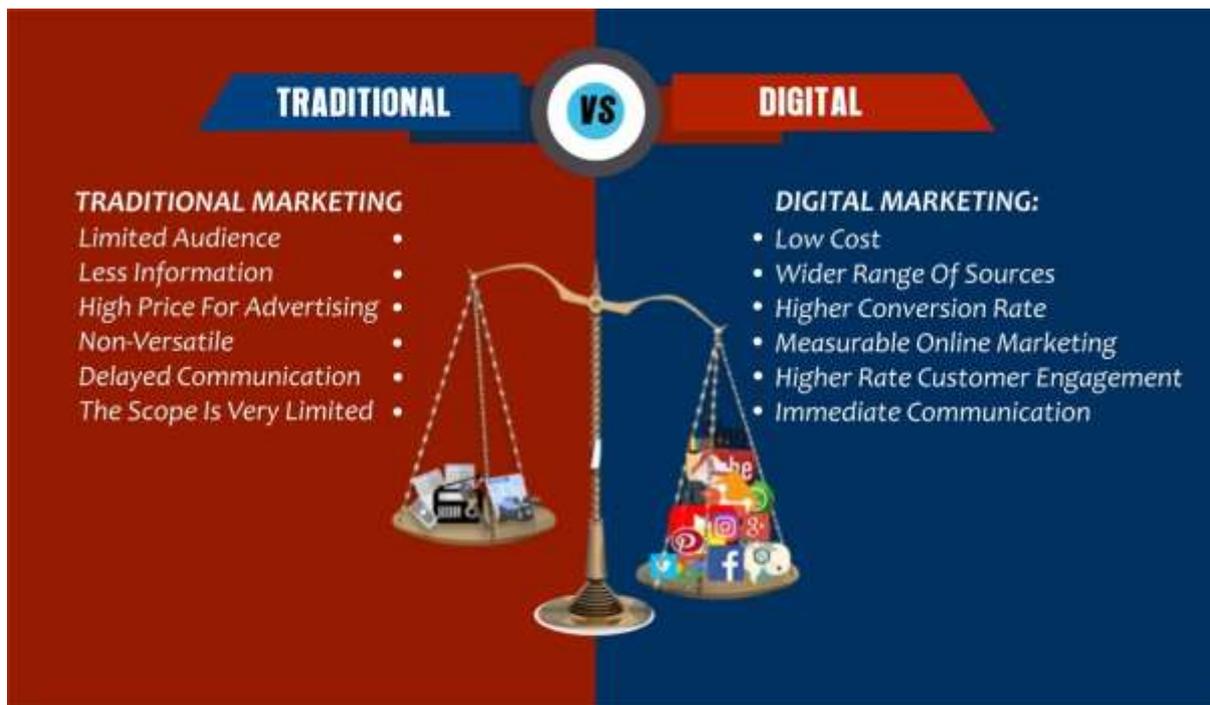


Figure: SMM vs. Traditional marketing

Source: (Abiola-Oke and Aina, 2019)

ISME4 mentioned “*The companies need to have a proper change management plan in order to accept the change and manage their impacts in the workplace. The changes have been made with opinion and without expectations in our organisation. Thus, we prefer social media marketing to promote and communicate with customers while*

working on the brand.” Compared to traditional media, the SMEs with social media-based marketing strategy have more effectiveness in the brand revitalisation and long term process with less cost and higher benefits. The usages of social media marketing strategy can help the organisation only for the promotion. ISME5 has answered that *“Social media platform has helped us to work on our brand and promotion while focusing on updated promotional approach. We can easily communicate. This cannot be possible in traditional media!”* Apart from that, different audience and target markets are available in social media-based marketing strategy compared to traditional media marketing. NSME4 stated that *“Our customers are online more than in stores. We are starting our online services very soon.”* The social media-based marketing strategy has helped the organisation to reduce the number of the visit of the customers in their stores with more engagement of the customers. With the help of cost-effectiveness, social media-based marketing strategy has helped SMEs in different countries for promotion and other activities.

Theme 4: Impacts of social media-based marketing strategy on operational costs of SME.

Recently, the impacts on business and its growth have been affected by the issue in the market. However, SMEs are using social media-based marketing strategy to maintain their promotion and communication, which has reduced the operational costs. ISME6 has answered that *“With the help of social media platform, our cost and time of handling operation such as giving mail, interacting with customers or advertising our services have been reduced. My company can easily get more profit.”* SMEs in Ireland has always been positive for customers and employee engagement. They have their system for a change management plan to support innovative performance and entrepreneurship development while adopting a social media-based marketing strategy. Also, in Nigeria, SMEs are getting used to prefer social media-based marketing strategy with a change management model and plan in order to fulfil the goals of the promotion of the company. NSME5 has answered the content *“I must say, my cost has been reduced since I have chosen to use Facebook page for my organisation”*. ISME21 has answered *“I often find it difficult to handle the operation in social media platform. But, I am sure the marketing strategy has been effective for operational management.”* Some SMEs may have a different point of view towards social media-based marketing strategy for managing operational costs. But, they

cannot ignore the fact that social media platform can help them to handle any situation with proper social media-based marketing strategy while managing operation completely in online media. Thus, Nigeria has been witnessed the growth of organisations using social media-based marketing strategy for better operation and performance in the market.

Theme 5: Responses of customers toward the implementation of a social media-based marketing strategy.

The customers are getting more power over the years where the organisation cannot maintain the strengths of influencing the customers. Any new approach to marketing and promotion requires customer attitude and responses for the implementation of strategies. ISME7 has answered that *“The customers are connected. They respond through social media, and it is pretty quick to handle the request and responses of the customers.”* The social media-based marketing strategy has literally helped the SMEs in the country to focus on every response and demand of the customers in the social media platform. The customers have different responses and demands related social media-based marketing strategy of the organisation as well.



Figure: Customer expectation in response rate in SMM

Source: (Mazurek-Łopacińska and Sobocińska, 2017)

NSME6 has answered to the content *“Our customers love to give us feedback at any time. And I make sure my employees give them the information that they are looking*

for". Customers search for information from the sellers on the social media platform. The best and quick responses from the organisation through social media platforms increase the trust and participation of the customers.

The customers rely on technology and the internet while managing social media platform for their virtual life. Also, the customers tend to visit stores less with the help of online services given by the organisations. Thus, SMEs of the country have been using online services and social media platforms to connect and engage the customers. ISME8 has answered "*I prefer to engage my customers while communicating with them. My 3 employees maintain communication and promotion in the social media-based platform while managing marketing strategy for the sake of our company.*" The customer's attitude lies in the communication from the organisation and promotion. These can increase the costs of operation, marketing and activities of the organisation. Thus, social media-based marketing strategy has been effective to handle the customer attitude and customer responses in the workplace.

Theme 6: The organisational control over social media-based marketing strategy

When it comes to the usages of social media-based marketing strategy, the organisational control over the strategy requires to be effective unless the organisation can face certain types of situations in virtual life. ISME9 has answered that "*Life must go on. We are heading to the platform of social media, and I cannot expect higher control over the strategy.*" Customers and competitors are involved in the social media platform. Also, the organisation can find more customer who is not potential for the business.

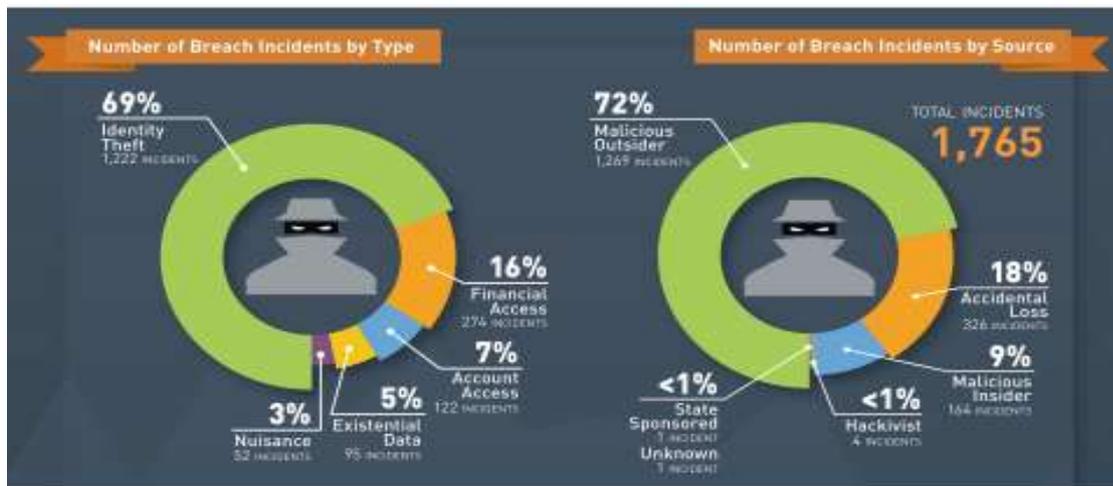
NSME7 has answered the content "*Social media platform has lots of issues which cannot be controlled by the organisation. But, I try to maintain our brand value and promotional approach with the flow of the information.*" This is necessary to maintain the flow of the information in order to control the social media-based marketing strategy. The social media platform has lots of scopes for involving customers and sharing information in a minute. Before posting and promoting the products, the organisation must be aware of the customer's interests and content of their information. ISME10, ISME11 and ISME12 have answered in the same manner "*I prefer to look over my content which is used for the social media-based marketing*

strategy. I cannot take the risk of being affected in a social media platform.” However, the organisation has less control over the usages and management of social media-based marketing strategy as the social media platform can have its own power compared to the organisation. SMEs can control the information and content of advertisement and interaction by the employees.

Theme 7: Issues raised due to a social media based marketing strategy regarding information theft.

Most of the SME owners in Ireland and Nigeria have pointed out how they have faced the information theft and impacts on thefts. Various customers and competitors can easily copy the information and image from the social media platform to use for their own purposes. NSME7 has stated *“We are facing the problems of using the same image or information in the social media. This actually raised the trust issues among the customers. What should I do?”* In this situation, the customers would not have trusted in social media marketing and existing customers can have a negative point of view towards SMEs due to trust issues. To protect the content for interaction in social media marketing, the organisation needs to focus on different strategies as issues are raised. ISME13 has answered that *“I have been using our name inside of the image with content. This is all we can do right now.”* NSME8 in Nigeria has answered the content *“We have been using different content and information while being ensured that they are unique. Also, we tend to engage the customers to reduce the issues of information theft or trust issues.”*

Breach Incidents by Type and Source



Source: Gemalto 2017

Adoption of any media from social media platforms can increase obstacles and barriers regarding information theft. Using social media marketing in SMEs require skilled labour where the SMEs often find it difficult to get skilled employees. But, information theft can affect the brand value, advertisement, trust of the customers, and loyalty. The information and content used for the advertisement can be easily copied or imitated by the other competitors. ISME20 has answered “I have seen how the information is copied by others. *I did not like social media marketing as my content has been used by others. I have heard about regulation but it is not that serious to look at.*” The government has given scopes to work for social media regulation to minimise the possibilities of information theft.

Theme 8: Social media platform used by SME to conduct social media-based marketing strategy.

Not every platform gives the same energy and scopes for targeting the customers. The organisation uses social media network where the customers are involved. Most of the common social media platforms are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat, where the organisation would target social media networks for the promotion of the products. SMEs cannot use every single platform of social media for social media-based marketing strategy as the customers are not available in every platform. NSME9, NSME10 and NSME11 have stated: “*We prefer to use the common social media platform for social media-based marketing strategy in order to get our customers.*” One owner has added that “*Facebook is considered as the most common social networks and social media platform and I cannot think of any social media-*

based marketing strategy without it.” Most of the consumers are mostly available on Facebook. Social media networks can help the small and medium organisation to adopt social media networks for social media-based marketing strategy. However, there are more options to deliver advertisement and content through video marketing on YouTube and promotion through Instagram, and Snapchat. The classification of the social media network and social media platform can help the organisation to find out the customers and high involvement. Most of the small and medium organisations can take supports while searching from the different sources of social media networks. ISME14 has answered that *“I prefer to create a video of our products and use on Facebook and YouTube. These are the perfect combination to get more attention and more customer involvement.”* NSME12 has answered the content *“For social media-based marketing strategy, and social media platform has been used as the right path for us. However, I have chosen to work on a common platform from time to time to get more attention and to increase the social media presence of mine.”* ISME15 has answered *“I cannot take the risk of using the wrong one or more platform for social media-based marketing strategy. I can use the common and less complex one, which is Facebook for the promotion of my product.”* This is how SMEs are using the common and cost-effective platform of social media-based marketing strategy in order to manage the skills and performance of the organisation.

Theme 9: The major issues influencing SMEs to implement the social media-based marketing strategy.

SMEs have lots of benefits while being established and formed in the market. The limitations and barriers are higher as well, which can affect their business and operation in the market. There are some issues and concerns have been increasing, which influence the usages of the social media-based marketing strategy for the sake of SME’s profit. ISME16 has answered that *“We prefer to implement social media-based marketing strategy as I have low capital and I do not want to invest in other media with lots of money!”* Money matters when it comes to promotion. Not every organisation has higher investment or capital for the promotion. For SMEs, social media-based marketing strategy is the best choices for marketing planning and approaches. NSME13 has answered *“In our company, we are using a social media-based marketing strategy to connect as many as customers I want for my business. It is easy and fun. My employees can communicate them without investing more time*

and energy.” The organisation cannot invest time in the promotion and marketing with a low budget and low skills or labour. The usages of social media-based marketing strategy have been positive for SMEs to handle their business, not only the marketing but also the operational management can be easily managed in the company. ISME17 has answered *“I tend to use social media marketing for my company as it is easy and I can interact with both new and old customers with the same content. I did not want to invest much for my promotion at all.”* When it comes to the promotion and advertisement, the SMEs cannot ignore the effectiveness of social media-based marketing strategy. Also, the customers are available in the social media platform, which happens to be the best choices for the organisations.

Theme 10: Recommendation for the effective implementation of the social media-based marketing strategy for SMEs.

For the effective implementation of the social media-based marketing strategy of SMEs, the company should focus on certain strategies and techniques. The first thing that the SMEs need to maintain is the content development for social media marketing. With the right content and information for the potential customers in the social media-based marketing strategy, the SMEs can easily manage the promotion of the products. ISME18 has answered that *“I give proper content in my advertisement. My employees work with market research and develop content for the sake of the customers.”* NSME14 has answered *“For the development of social media-based marketing strategy, my employees have been given scope and time for learning and engaging the customers. Engaging and attaching customers are important for my company to have feedback easily and to influence the customers easily.”* For the development of the advertisement and promotion, a social media-based marketing strategy needs to be related to SMEs within the common social media platform.

4.3 Discussion

Concept of SME

The growth of SMEs in different countries has influenced the thinking of the entrepreneurs and the perception of the government. The right understanding was required to help the SMEs with proper resource planning and infrastructure. However, different countries have different values and understanding of SMEs. The similar discussion of Eze and Bikeze (2017) has been found representing that concept of the small and medium organisations varies from one place to another. The SMEs in different sectors have different natures and characteristics with differences in employees and sales turnover. They can vary from capital to employment, sale turnover and operation in the market. But, dissimilar discussion of Chirumalla et al (2018) has represented that concept of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) has been same in different countries. The definition and concept can have the same meaning and system in different countries with a different point of views from the state and authorities.

Reasons for adopting Social Media based Marketing strategy in SME.

Every country supports SMEs as the business environment and economy are influenced by positive results through the small and medium organisations in the market. Also, in SMEs, social media-based marketing strategy has been effective with their benefits and impacts. The main reasons for adopting social media-based marketing strategy are the low investment, higher customer involvement, customer's presence, promotion and communication. The similar discussion of Cheng and Shiu (2018) has been found representing that SMEs in different markets have been using social media-based marketing strategy based on their advantages in promoting the brand and products for the customers. Also, in developing countries such as Nigeria and others have been supporting the usages of social media-based marketing strategy in order to communicate with the customers and to create brand positioning in the virtual life.

Benefits of social media-based marketing strategy more than other traditional marketing strategies.

The period keeps changing with intentional and uncontrollable incidents since the industrial period. Thus, the usages of social media marketing on SMEs have been increasing compared to traditional types of marketing approaches and planning. The small and medium organisations cannot manage their promotion with traditional marketing strategies as they cost higher than the capital of the SMEs. Compared to traditional media, social media-based marketing strategy comes up with lots of benefits regarding communication, brand value, promotion, customer engagement, social media presence and brand positioning. The similar discussion of Abiola-Oke and Aina (2019) has been found representing that usages of social media marketing strategy have helped SMEs to get all the benefits under a single roof. The SMEs are more able to communicate with millions of customers within a single image or content via social media-based marketing strategy. The costs are lower and the benefits are higher with supports for the marketing and promotional strategies.

Impacts of social media-based marketing strategy on operational costs of SME.

The organisation with a higher number of liability with low employees goes through lots of changes due to the external environment and internal management. With the right leadership styles and culture, the organisation can manage the environment for the employees. In this situation, the SMEs can cut down the operational costs with the help of social media-based marketing strategy. The similar discussion of Mazurek-Łopacińska and Sobocińska (2017) referred to that social media-based marketing strategy can give options for both promotion and communication. The operational costs of SMEs rely on these two activities where social media can reduce the cost of these activities. On the other hand, dissimilar discussion of Morra et al (2018) has been found representing that social media-based marketing strategy can help the organisation to promote the business. But, some of the operations of SMEs such as

consultants or products cannot be managed within social media. Thus, operational costs cannot be reduced. However, the SMEs can minimise the cost of promotion and management through social media-based marketing strategy within their workplace.

Responses of customers in social media-based marketing strategy.

The organisation can easily target customers via social media-based marketing strategy while engaging them in their brand. But, the responses of the customers vary from segment to segment and market. But, the companies are using lots of market development and market penetration strategies to fulfil the expansion and connection with the customers. The similar discussion of Nwankwo et al (2012) has been found representing that the customers prefer to be engaged in social media of the organisation. Thus, proper implementation of strategies can help SMEs to create positive responses of the customers. The social media-based marketing strategy has encouraged SMEs to be more focused on customer's demand and their reactions while working on their services and product's quality.

The organisational control over social media-based marketing strategy

The organisation must use promotional approaches and marketing planning to promote their products, brand and organisation and to increase sale, loyal customers and profit of the company. But, the lack of organisational control over social media-based marketing strategy can affect the brand reputation of the organisation. The similar discussion of Lawless et al (2014) has been found representing that most of the SMEs cannot control the usages of social media-based marketing strategy as the virtual life is far different than the reality. The social media platform comes up with lots of new techniques and strategies for managing promotion. But, the company cannot manage the impacts of social media-based marketing and content used in marketing. In this regard, Trainor et al (2014), the dissimilar discussion has been found representing that most of the SMEs tend to hire and train the employees for getting skills in managing resource and market development strategies through social media-based marketing strategy. Also, the companies have been working on their online

brand community and brand positioning to control social media-based marketing strategy for better performance.

Issues related to information theft in Social media-based marketing strategy

Information and content used for the marketing and promotion need to be clear and attractive to attract the customers. Social media marketing is when it comes to the personal space and promotion of the products. But, the SMEs go through lots of struggle while using social media platform due to information theft. The similar discussion of Iankova et al (2018) has been found representing that often the information of products of one company in social media platform has been copied and used by the other companies. Thus, the companies have dealt with lots of trust issues among the customers. The dissimilar discussion of Abiola-Oke and Aina (2019) has been found representing that most of the customers have trust issues in social media platform already. Thus, the company with information and content in the promotion can influence their thinking. However, SMEs must deal with information theft while handling the situation in the media.

Social media platform used by SME for marketing strategy.

The organisation uses social media platform based on their need, the position of the customers and availability of target customers. The SMEs target common social media platform among the customers to get more audiences. The similar discussion of Enyioko and Okwandu (2019) has represented that organisation believes in approaching a common platform when it comes to marketing and promotional planning. In this regard, using common social media platform helps the organisation to conduct social media-based marketing strategy. The SMEs in different countries, both in developed and developing countries, common social media platforms and social media networks are approached and used. Mostly Facebook, YouTube and Instagram have been approached as social media networks for better social media-based marketing strategy.

Major issues influencing SMEs for social media-based marketing strategy.

Adoption of the social media platform for a social media-based marketing strategy is crucial for the companies. Lots of obstacles and barriers can be related to social media marketing for SMEs. Also, the SMEs can get pushed by the internal and external

environment to support and to implement the social media-based marketing strategy. The similar discussion of Ahmad et al (2018) has been represented that SMEs can easily promote their brand and products under social media-based marketing strategy with less investment and less labour force. Also, the SMEs can engage the customers without investing more to the market promotion.

Effective implementation of the social media-based marketing strategy for SMEs.

To implement a social media-based marketing strategy in SMEs, the management needs to pay attention to their market, geographical situation, product's features and promotion. For the effective implementation of the social media-based marketing strategy of SMEs, the geographical location has higher impacts on the organisation. Also, the SMEs need to focus on content development while adopting social media-based marketing strategy for a particular customer segment. A similar discussion of Trainor et al (2014) has been found representing that the content used in marketing approach can help the SMEs to build better promotion and brand image. Thus, the priority should be given to the content for a social media marketing strategy.

4.4 Summary

The small and medium organisations have a different scale with different characteristics in the markets. Both Ireland and Nigeria have been supporting SMEs for adopting social media-based marketing strategy to promote their business in the competitive market. The social media-based marketing strategy comes up with lots of benefits compared to traditional marketing strategies. The social media-based marketing strategy reduces the operational costs of SME with the benefits of operation and marketing. Thus, the owners of the SMEs in both countries are using social media-based marketing strategy to maintain their promotion and communication while getting customer responses and engaging customers.

Chapter 5 Conclusions and Recommendation

5.1 Introduction

The social media platform has convinced the industries to work on their promotion and marketing approaches regarding the business. When it comes to the small business organisation, social media-based marketing would be helpful for them to flourish and to communicate with the market. In different markets and different location, social media platform has helped SMEs to get benefits and to maintain the operation. The research has been done on “Cross-cultural analysis of the factors that influence Social media-based marketing in SMEs between Ireland and Nigeria.” The research aim and objectives have been accomplished through the data analysis section of the research study.

5.2 Accomplishment of Research Objectives

Research Objective 1

The 1st research objective of this research study was to recognise conceptual and theoretical issues regarding the marketing platform based on social media. Social media marketing strategy has different usages in organisations. Even in SMEs, social media marketing strategy has lots of usages for the operation, marketing and customer relationship management. The marketing approaches used in the social media

platform have been increasing benefits and options for the SMEs in different markets. The usages of social media marketing strategy in SMEs of Nigeria and Ireland have been different based on accessibility to the internet, resource planning and supports for the organisation. However, in both countries, the purpose of a social media marketing strategy and the effectiveness of the social media platform has been similar. The SMEs are able to make the decision for digital marketing and online communication for promoting the brand with the help of social media marketing strategy. Apart from that, the social media-based marketing strategy has been used in SMEs for the development of different benefits compared to traditional marketing strategies and approaches. The social media platform in Ireland has helped SMEs to maintain communication and connection of the customers where in Nigeria, the usages of social media marketing strategy have helped them to use the cost-effective method of marketing. Most of the SMEs in Ireland have confirmed the availability of the customers in social media platform where they can easily focus on change management with the help of strategy. The potential target markets and customers are available in the platform where cost-effective social media-based marketing strategy helps the companies to manage their promotion and communication. However, the usages of social media marketing strategy depend on the skills and learning of the employees in SMEs. The SMEs of Nigeria and Ireland are using social media-based marketing strategy to fulfil the goals of the promotion of the company. Compared to Ireland, the skills and labour planning for social media marketing strategy have not been effective in Nigeria.

Recommendation for Research objective 1

The social media platform helps the small organisation to influence customers in social media, and to promote brand and products with less cost and less hard work. The SMEs in Ireland and Nigeria have been using different social media marketing strategies in order to maintain their marketing approaches and promotional planning. But, the SMEs need to focus on using social media platforms for social media marketing strategy. These are as follows:

- The organisation must identify the market segmentation; customer's buying behaviour and their marketing channel to communicate with the potential customers, to promote the brand, to develop social media presences and to

value the two-way communication. In this way, the SMEs of Ireland and Nigeria need to work on their resource planning and activities for the social media platform and social media marketing strategy.

- The SMEs need to identify the proper usages of the social media marketing strategy for customer relationship management. The potential customers need to be engaged and communicated where the relationship with the customer's needs to be managed.
- The small organisations need to identify the common social media platforms to use better promotional strategy and marketing approach for the market. Also, the management needs to pay attention to the usages of motivation through the usages of the social media marketing strategy for targeting particular customers.

Research Objective 2

The 2nd research objective was to analyse the financial costs and risk factors connected to the implementation of the marketing platform based on social media. The marketing and promotional approaches and planning have been affecting the business with higher costs and complexities. However, when the SMEs in Ireland and Nigeria have been implementing the marketing platform based on social media, the financial costs and risk factors are lower compared to the expectation. The social media marketing strategy in the platform has a lower cost related to its promotion, social media presence, connection with the customers and management of social media marketing with the operation. However, the risk factors are higher in social media marketing strategy in every country, whether it is developing or developed country. The main risk is related to information theft in the social media platform. Most of the SME owners of Nigeria and Ireland have confirmed the availability of information theft and its impacts on their social media presence, trusts of the customers and brand loyalty. Apart from that, the social media platform has a limitation of targeting different customer segmentations as not every type of customer is available in social media platform. Also, the social media platform has trust issues of the customers which can affect the sale and business profit of the small organisation in the long run. Most of the SMEs do have the ineffective labour force to communicate with the customers, to handle the complaints and to maintain daily interaction and responses in social media platform. In this situation, the lack of engagement of the customers and poor content

has affected the performance of marketing approaches and the promotion of SMEs in the social media platform. Apart from these, the lack of interaction and proper content for the advertisement can be a risk factor at the beginning of the implementation.

Recommendation for Research objective 2

Risk factor and financial cost of the implementation and usages of the social media marketing strategies in social media platform have been higher for SMEs. In this order, the small organisation needs to focus on managing the implementation of a social media marketing strategy. Some recommendations are as follows:

- For the implementation and management of marketing in a social media platform, small organisations must have a proper understanding of the social media platform. The resource planning with the understanding of the content, usage of social media marketing strategy, availability of the customers and preference will help the organisation to put the right content and to promote their products.
- Before using social media marketing strategy and the platform, the SMEs of Ireland and Nigeria must identify the possible risk regarding their brand development, promotion of the products, available customers and information theft. In this order, proper management and knowledge of implementing and managing the social media marketing strategy for the organisation and market would be required.
- The management needs to give priority in training of the employees and information system for SMEs. Both of them help the employees and management to maintain any possible risk for marketing approaches in relation to the social media platform. Also, the content development with the right information and customer engagement would help SMEs in Nigeria and Ireland to reduce the possible risk factors. In this order, customer engagement needs to be developed for the implementation of a social media marketing strategy in SMEs.

Research Objective 3

The 3rd research objective was to assess the operational issues regarding the execution of the marketing platform based on social media. The operational issues are

related to marketing planning, approaches and mix for the organisation. The social media platform requires resource, employees, skill, labour productivity and strategy to maintain marketing planning and approaches. The SMEs of countries are managing operational issues regarding the development of social media-based marketing strategy to maintain their promotion. The operation and activities of SMEs are expected to be effective in order to maintain a social media presence. However, SMEs in Nigeria and Ireland have been facing the limitation regarding low capital, lack of labour productivity and skills, work force and system, lack of strategy and scopes for the markets. With the help of social media-based marketing strategy, the organisation can communicate with their own employees and the customers. The engagement would be clearly effective in social media platform when it comes to the marketing approaches used in SMEs. Also, in SMEs, the operational negative issues would be mitigated through a social media platform where the organisation can manage innovative performance. Every SME searches for a platform to communicate with targeted customers with less cost and higher benefits. Also, the platform is expected to have benefits for the promotion, communication, operation and management of brand of the organisation. In every aspect, the small organisation of Ireland has been capable of handling the operational issues. On the other hand, in Nigeria, the SMEs have less potentiality to maintain the activities regarding social media-based marketing strategy for operational management. The organisational control over the marketing approaches and strategy can decide the effectiveness of operational management for handling operational issues. In SMEs of Nigeria, the lack of skills in employees has affected their capability to handle the complaints of the customers in social media platform. But when it comes to Ireland, the labour productivity has not been the issues where the trust issues of the customers, including higher competition in social media platform can affect the operation.

Recommendation for Research objective 3

Operational issues regarding execution and management of marketing in social media platform can affect the profit, brand value and reputation of the organisation. For

SMEs, the operational issues need to be handled with the help of employee engagement and usages of internet and technology. In this situation, the recommendations are given to issues:

- The management of SMEs needs to identify a requirement for using social media-based marketing strategy for managing the content development and promotional approaches. In this situation, the management would be able to make a decision regarding the operation management, its potential issues and activities regarding social media-based marketing strategy. The right leader and teams will help the SMEs to make the right decision in social media platform for the marketing activities.
- The communication is necessary for the employees while they are being engaged in the organisation. The management of SMEs needs to develop a communication plan for both customers and employees for the operation, promotion and service development in the market. The clear two-way communication in SMEs of Ireland and Nigeria can help the employees to work effectively and the management to deliver responses to the customers.
- The SMEs of Nigeria and Ireland need to develop Customer Relationship Management to maintain the usages of social media-based marketing strategy. In this order, the management of SMEs needs to maintain clear communication, relationship management, and response system and feedback management through the social media platform.

Research Objective 4

The 4th research objective was to analyse the degree to which customer communication based on social media has a positive influence on influencing buying behaviour to the target customer groups. The customers of the market prefer to be communicated through the social media platform. The organisation with more power in social media presence can influence the customers in many ways. Communication with the customers would help the organisation to influence the perception and customer buying behaviour. SMEs in Ireland have seen that the customers would have positive perception and feelings while being interacted within a short time. With the help of continuous communication, the SMEs are able to maintain their marketing and promotional strategy with a cost-effective system. The SMEs confirmed that the

response rate of the organisation had helped them to maintain the trust and loyalty of the customers. The more the customers are communicated, the more they build up a positive vibe about the organisation. Under social media-based marketing strategy and communication plan, the organisation can easily identify the demand of the customers in the social media platform. With the different responses and demands help the organisation to make the right decision regarding the service and product. Most of the customers rely on technology were around 98% prefer to be internet for getting products, having friends and recommendation and others. To get more scopes for targeting the customers, common social media platforms and networks can help the organisation for the promotion of the products. But, the SMEs of Nigeria and Ireland have seen that the consumers are available in different social media platforms where small and medium organisations adopt social media networks. In this situation, the communication with the customers and high involvement of the customers would increase the possible scopes for the SME to work with low skills and budget. For the effective implementation of the social media-based marketing strategy, the application of communication plan and marketing approaches clearly influence the culture, perception and motivation for the customers.

[Recommendation for Research objective 4](#)

The development of motivation to influence the customer buying decision in order to increase sale and profit, the organisation can rely on social media-based marketing strategy in the social media platform. However, not every SMEs have a proper idea of handling customer communication and responses to develop positive influences for buying behaviour. Certain recommendations are given below:

- To develop a positive influence among the customers for buying behaviour, the organisation needs to maintain proper and fast responses in social media platform. The response and interaction with the customers would be the effective social media marketing for SMEs in Nigeria and other developing countries. In the meantime, the employees should be able to have understanding and information to communicate and to answer back to the customers for better responses.
- For managing any risk and any issues that can affect customer relation and buying behaviour, the organisations need to identify the possible issues. The SMEs in Ireland have much better risk management and skills of the employees

compared to Nigeria. Thus, skill development and training for the employees are necessary to handle the response, communication and promotion of the organisation in social media-based marketing strategy.

- Customer relationship management is required for the communication and customer engagement in the social media platform. To value the positive thinking and perception of the customers, the SMEs need to work on their advertisement. The two-way communication in advertisement and promotion always have better impacts on the customers. In this reason, the development of promotion with communication would help the organisation to engage the customers and to connect them with positive perception towards the business. Even the customers would have proper understanding and motivation for the purchase decision in the particular social media-based marketing strategy of the small organisation.

5.3 Limitation of the study and Future Scope:

The research study of “Cross-cultural analysis of the factors that influence Social media-based marketing in SMEs between Ireland and Nigeria” has limitation over the findings as not every cultural factor of the country differentiates the usages of SMM in SMEs. However, the research study could have focused on different contents or issues. Future scopes of the study are Usages of content and preference of SMM of SMEs in developing and developed countries or the research study can focus on examining the motivational factors used in SMM by SMEs of different countries and customer buying decision.

5.4 Summary

The motivational factors in social media platform related to content development and social media marketing strategy. For influencing the perception of the customer, the small and medium organisations need to work on their social media-based marketing strategy. The cultural differences may be higher for SMEs in Ireland and Nigeria. But, most of the cases, the usages, impacts, benefits and limitations of social media-based marketing strategy in SME would be similar in both countries. Thus, the SMEs need to value customer engagement, communication and advertisement in social media platform for the marketing approaches and promotion of their products.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Q1. What do you think about SME?

Q2. Why do you think that SME should adopt Social Media based marketing strategy?

Q3. What do you think about benefits that social media-based marketing strategy has more than other traditional marketing strategies?

Q4. How does social media based marketing strategy has an impact on operational costs of SME?

Q5. What are the responses of customers toward the implementation of a social media-based marketing strategy?

Q6. How satisfied do you regard the organisational control over social media-based marketing strategy and why?

Q7. What types of issues have been raised due to social media-based marketing strategy regarding information theft?

Q8. Which social media platform does your SME prefer to conduct social media-based marketing strategy, and why?

Q9. What are the major issues influencing your SME to implement the social media-based marketing strategy?

Q10. What do you recommend for the effective implementation of the social media-based marketing strategy for SMEs?