

Impact of Marketing Strategies on Project Performance of Small and Medium Information Communication Technology Enterprises

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ABSTRACT:

The study is focused on the assessment of the effectiveness of different marketing strategies in Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in information communication technology in determination of success of their projects. For this, the research adopted the quantitative approach of research for the assessment of impact of social media, paid advertisement, discount sales and promotions (word of mouth) and then Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and websites. Relevant pieces of literature were reviewed for the comprehension of relevant information. The primary data was collected by the use of survey method of data collection which led to the development of in-depth statistical understanding of the resulting effects. From the adoption of statistical method of data analysis, the result which were driven identified the social media and the Word of Mouth (WOM) have a more significant relevance in the project success of SMEs in information communication technology.

Keywords:

Marketing Strategies, Project Performance, Small and Medium Enterprises, Information Communication Technology.

1. INTRODUCTION

As a result of the increasing level of competitiveness of the information communication technology sector, marketing practices of the firms which functions in this industry emerged as a significant component for these businesses (Ungerman, Dedkova and Gurinova, 2018). Marketing being a matrix of organisation of planning, production, pricing, promotion, distribution of goods, service, and ideas for the satisfaction of relevant customers and clients. In light of this, Shaltoni (2017) stated that the success of companies in the discussed sector specifically those of middle and small scale have is calculated through gauging of effectiveness of firms. This communication of value of different products as well as service to customers with the purpose of selling of their service has become increasingly complex in recent years as a result of the process of globalisation. Despite these complexities, variety of researchers including Abdurakhmanova et al. (2020) are focused on comprehension of variety of benefits delivered through an effective marketing strategy. These profits favourably included free advertising, lesser expensive than competitors and increase in buying of new products or equipment lines of an organisation for meeting the emerging need of information communication technology. Therefore, this research focuses on assessing the need and impact of marketing strategies on small and medium information

communication technology enterprises for increasing project performance.

1.1 Rationale of Study

The core rationale for conducting this research is to reduce project expenses that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) experience while marketing them for promotion. Therefore, a need of institutional strategies for the development of an in-depth understanding of the market, particularly with regards to their competitors and customers is identified. Zhang, Gu and Jahromi (2019) stated that due to operations being significantly small scaled, there are potential obstacles in assessing marketing and effectiveness of implemented techniques. This reduces potential of organisations' ability of achieving benefit of effective marketing through analysis of overall marketing environment to minimise adverse impacts on product or service. In this manner, a practical need of conducting this study is also identified, which has the tendency to allow firms to develop efficient marketing techniques.

Furthermore, with regards to theoretical need, Okundaye, Fan and Dwyer (2019) mentioned that the literature presents research and knowledge gaps when it comes to adoption of ICT (Information Communication Technology) by SMEs as their foundation. This is in relation with informing lack of information concerning how ICT based SMEs can compete globally, and increase profitability. Ramdani, Raja and Kayumova (2021) added that literature lacks in addressing cost of ICT applications, project and

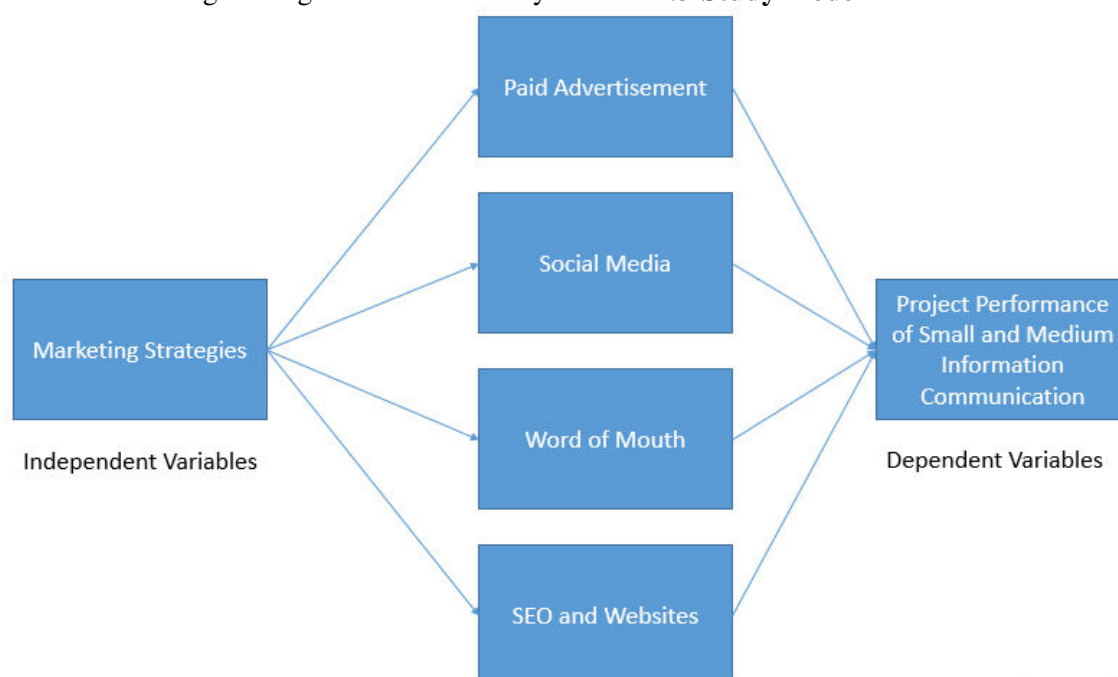
marketing expenses, available ICT skills, and ICT infrastructure regarding implementing ICT based SMEs. Thus, due to the focus of this study being on ICT based SMEs, another rationale is to reduce literature gaps present related to these companies being scarce.

1.2 Significance of Study

This study is chiefly beneficial for entrepreneurs who want to implement ICT based SMEs for competing internationally in the area of ICT. Another significance of this study is that ICT based SMEs can decrease their marketing expenses for promoting their products, services or projects through using effective marketing strategies that this study

asserts and elaborates. SMEs other than ICT-based can take this study as learning paradigm for formulating framework of marketing strategies to reduce expenses, compete in dynamic market, and gain competitive edge, globally. Lastly, countries working on developing economic and social strengths through building ICT based SMEs can take this study, and apply the implications to ensure effective implementation of these firms. Hence, this study provides authentic data, and efficiently performs research to contribute significantly to both practical and theoretical worlds.

1.3 Study Model



Different strategies of marketing which include both traditional and non-traditional methods including paid advertisement, social media, word of mouth and SEO and websites have potential impact on the success of the projects of SMEs in the information communication sector.

1.4 Hypothesis of the study

The first main hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant impact of marketing strategies (paid advertisement, social media, word of mouth and SEO and websites) on the project success of small and medium information communication technology firms.

The second main hypothesis

Ho2: There is a significant impact of marketing strategies (paid advertisement, social media, word of mouth and SEO and websites) on the project success of small and medium information communication technology firms.

Ho2-1: There is significant impact of paid advertisement on project performance of small and medium information communication technology firms.
Ho2-2: There is significant impact of social media on project performance of small and medium information communication technology firms.

Ho2-3: There is significant impact of word of mouth on project performance of small and medium information communication technology firms.

Ho2-4: There is significant impact of SEO and Websites on project performance of small and medium information communication technology firms.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Significance of marketing in project success of SMEs

The research of Bocconcelli et al. (2018) stated that the marketing is a crucial process for the recognition of the brand name as it allows consumers

to recall the project and services. The use of marketing allows the SMEs to aid the process of development of expectations in firms. Vassileva (2017) stated that an effective marketing strategy in SMEs to compete with the larger firms and gain a competitive advantage for the firm through the recognition of the branding efforts, that separates the separating the company from the competitors and increasing the likelihood for SMEs to developing a future client which make a purchase. Due to this, the marketing technique plays a significant role in the project success of different firms specially those on smaller scale (Zhang, Gu and Jahromi, 2019). SMEs utilises the marketing activity to enhance the focus on their objectives which enhances the ratio of the firm.

Nwankwo and Gbadamosi (2010) asserted that effective marketing allows SMEs to inform and address the unique operations and functionality of their projects to a wider audience. This contributes to increased success of projects as promotion and awareness is augmented among general public as well as targeted audience. Aksoy (2017) contributed that marketing can create a well-known status in the market, and enhance market acceptance that can allow to accomplish brand status. This leads to improving possibilities for growth of projects along with the entire organisation. Sadiku-Dushi, Dana and Ramadani (2019) alluded that through deploying a planned, researched and evidence-based marketing framework, long-term and short-term performance targets for promoting projects can be accomplished. Fulfilment of performance targets can impact success and growth of SMEs positively and sufficiently.

2.2 Variety of marketing techniques used in information communication technology sector

There are variety of techniques and methods related to marketing which is utilised by different firms which include both traditional and non-traditional methods for marketing of product and services (Krizanova et al., 2019). The study presented by Ungerman, Dedkova and Gurinova (2018) concluded that, the paid advertisement has long been used as a traditional marketing technique by firms in the sector. This allows the firms to gain the benefits of findings without the investment of additional amount of time in the process. Similarly, Jacobson, Gruzd and Hernández-García (2020) stated that in recent years, few non-traditional methods such as the use of social media and the discount sales and promotions and SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) and Websites have emerged as technique used by firms for ensuring the solidification of their brand image in comparison to their consumers.

Anser et al. (2020) attributed that marketing techniques in the ICT sector in easily accessing broad international information facilities, and resources to

attain competitive knowledge concerning targeted consumers. This empowers marketing channels; be it social media marketing, content marketing, search engine marketing, email marketing, affiliate marketing, and SMS marketing. In this regard, Pellegrin-Boucher, Le Roy and Gurău (2013) specified social media as a marketing technique is used in ICT sector for recognising opportunities, and applying marketing communication via multiple platforms. It allows to expand market, add value, attain diversity, improve revenue streams, achieve 24/7 convenience as well as enhance sales performance, consumer satisfaction, growth opportunity, and credibility. Therefore, marketing techniques enable exclusive representation of products and services, as well as management and promotion of sales through personalising needs of consumers, and building relationships with them.

2.3 Role of marketing strategies in the success of projects of SMEs in information communication technology

The research presented by the research of Chaffey and Smith (2017) stated that different marketing strategies in SMEs, have indicated to be crucial for the success of SMEs as and in terms of information communication technology, it helps the building of communication identities. In UK alone, about 53 million active social media users were observed and it was analysed that about 77.9 percent of the population of the UK utilises social media (Statista, 2021). As a result of this, the use of social media marketing strategy has emerged as a potential technique along with the paid advertisement which is the traditionally adopted method for promotion of products and services. In addition to this, Abdurakhmanova et al. (2020) identified that the Word of mouth (WOM) such as sales and discounts in collaboration with the SEO and marketing has emerged as a significant marketing tool in SMEs due to its reduced costs. The companies in information communication technology are using these methods for reaching their consumer base.

Consistent with the information, marketing strategies allow ICT based SMEs to develop a practical synopsis of project promotion that can enable them to extend it to vendors, managers, government or consultants (Alford and Page, 2015). This contributes to accomplishing long-term benefits in terms of project and organisational success as an independent vision is perceived clearly with gain of reimbursements. Parry et al. (2012) averred that through using marketing strategies effectively, ICT sector attains availability to new and wide range of consumers and their perceptions concerning their services and firms. It assists them to develop effective connections and partnerships with businesses in the

same area. This delivers the feasibility to elaborate with regards to being adaptive, and informing insights through enhancing technical competency, and putting forward a user-centred marketing.

2.4 Theoretical framework

The theory of planned behaviour in the social marketing processes play a significant role for firms as Giampietri et al. (2018) identified that it focusses research attention on individuals, consistent with downstream social marketing practice and is one of the most frequently used theories in social marketing. The research of Yadav and Pathak (2017) similarly comprehended that the theory allow firms to shape behaviours and attitude of consumer in support of the brand which leads to the generation of sales. Moreover, the research of Chaffey and Smith (2017) identified that the behaviour change among consumer is more likely when more of the social marketing benchmarks are applied. This allows the companies specifically SMEs in information communication technology to develop favourable conditions.

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2.4.1 Marketing Strategies

Marketing strategy denotes to overall game plan for reaching targeted and prospective customers, and turning them into regular consumers of services and products (Walker, 2014). According to Schwarzl and Grabowska (2015), a marketing strategy comprises value proposition of an organisational data on target consumer demographics, key brand messaging, and other high-level elements including promotion and success. Wymer (2011) defined that marketing strategy is a procedure, which permits to focus on restricted resources and means, and identify greatest opportunities accordingly to improve sales, and accomplish sustainable competitive advantage. An efficient marketing allows to start with a well-informed and considered marketing strategy to clearly describe measurable and realistic marketing objectives for the organisation. Smith (2011) stated that marketing strategy can impact the project performance in ICT based SMEs in terms of comprehensive and wide-ranging strategic planning. This includes definition of services and products, profile of competition and consumers, role of services and products in the market, and measurement of efficiency. Marketing strategies set the overall goal and direction for particular actions to be implemented for marketing the project and explaining tactics to be accomplished (Hollensen, 2018; Adinolfi, De Rosa and Trabalzi, 2011). It increases focus on the actions needed to reach the right consumers, and involve components of marketing investment, and sales results.

2.4.2 Paid Advertisement

Paid advertisement is a form of advertisement that one has to pay to marketers for the promotion of products and services (Chen and He, 2011). Ilyas and Nayan (2020) described that paid advertisement is a type of marketing in which a brand targets potential consumers on the basis of their interactions, intents, or interests with the brand. It is where organisations pay a publisher or marketer every time a consumer views, or clicks their ads on a website, search result, social media or a miscellaneous digital platform. It includes PPI (pay-per-impression) and PPC (pay-per-click) in which the owners of ad space are paid in exchange for use of that space (Huang and Depari, 2019). Rutz and Bucklin (2011) further alluded that paid advertisement delivers fast results, and enables to place ads for keywords to bring high-quality traffic to website without time and work investment. Nettelhorst and Brannon (2012) concurred that paid advertisement impact the project success of a company in a manner that it directs valuable channels to create a large number of target consumers, and guide them towards the project, product or service. It has the power to improve, and complement organic search performance, maximise visibility, and boost ranking to target audience. Rutz, Bucklin and Sonnier (2012) indicated that paid advertisement that is done through a blog, apps ads, and freelance has a huge potential to turn a project into something that the general and targeted public demands more.

2.4.3 Social Media

Social media is a computer-based technology that promotes and facilitates the sharing of thoughts, ideas, and information by means of developing virtual communities and networks (Tuten, 2020). Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi (2012) explicated that social media is an internet-based technology that delivers users a quick electronic communication of content. It is an interactive means of communication that permits users to exchange, share and create ideas, information, expressions, interests, purposes, and careers. Social media allows to reach to a broader audience, and engage and nurture with them regardless of their location, age, gender, culture and traditions (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). This leads to creating improved brand leads, awareness, sales and revenue. Constantinides (2014) indicated that social media impacts the project performance in a sense that it drives traffic to the company's website, creates new leads for partnerships with similar organisations and campaigns.

It also increases revenue by sales, fosters brand engagement, develops community around organisations, amplifies mentions in the press, and delivers social consumer services. Barker et al. (2012) concurred that project success of ICT based SMEs is

increased through social media marketing as it supports the business goals that assists in making more efforts to promote the project. Hence, putting forward a strategy to involve outlining of project objectives to work and create posts that reinforce the concept of the project. Therefore, social media is one of the most cost-effective, and versatile marketing methods, which ICT based SMEs can easily adopt to gain image and name in the market through informing about their project.

2.4.4 Word of Mouth

Word of Mouth (WOM) refers to the sharing and passing of information from person to person by means of utilising oral communication that can be as simple as telling someone about a promotion or getting a job (Bughin, Doogan and Vetvik, 2010). Martin and Lueg (2013) explained that word of mouth also includes other forms of communication including written communication as it involves passing or sharing of information, however, not one-to-one, but through a medium. This medium can include email, social media, blogging, texting, and calling as well. Word of mouth is a procedure that impacts and empowers organic debate or discussion, which is done freely concerning an organisation, brand, event or resource (Cheema and Kaikati, 2010). Lovett, Peres and Shachar (2013) stated that it impacts the project success in an ICT based SMEs as it allows to gets more users, consumers and clients for the project without making an effort, and simply through a conversation or review. In this manner, word of mouth includes and engages partners, and consumers to recommended an active strategy to make the project more known in the market, and develop competitive advantage, globally (Berger, 2014). This can reflect a user's interests in the organisation in their regular conversations eventually driven by their experiences, and feelings which sometimes goes being expectations.

2.4.5 SEO and Websites

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the procedure of amplifying website traffic by means of improving search engine results (Barbar and Ismail, 2019). It assists in making websites become more discoverable when searching terms are associated with a brand. Enaceanu (2010) defined that SEO is the procedure of optimising online content so that a search engine would like to display it as a top search result when searching for particular keywords. It allows to grow organic traffic, and display promising enhancements in terms of searching, and seeing the desired websites or results (Shafiee, Rahimzadeh and Haghighizade, 2016). As per Giomelakis and Veglis (2016), SEO is a guaranteed marketing strategy that assists in improving the flow of organic traffic towards the organisation's website, particularly, when trying to

promote the project. Through SEO, it becomes easy to outreach consumers, acquire skills to promote the project, and find digital marketing skills.

2.4.6 Project Performance of Small and Medium Information Communication Enterprises

Project performance is defined as efficiently managing and creating a project that is risk averse, and produces productive results (Kinyua, Ogollah and Mburu, 2015). Nkiru, Sidi and Abomeh (2018) highlighted that project performance includes planning a project to conduct good control and monitoring to accomplish project success, and focus on efficient project risk management, leading towards growth and success. Tarutė and Gatautis (2014) asserted that the term is no different when it comes to defining it in terms of ICT based SMEs as there is a direct and positive relation between project performance and success of ICT based SMEs. Kinyua, Ogollah and Mburu (2015) averred that the project performance and success of small and medium information communication technology enterprises are measured with regards to infrastructure, services, and users or consumers satisfaction. This is because project performance directly and significantly contributes to augmentation in patronage, sales, and market output and share. This improves the overall organisational productivity, performance, image and reputation in the market; be it globally or locally.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Out of the variety of research design including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, the quantitative design was selected for the research. According to the research presented by Dannels (2018), quantitative research method is the one which allows the researchers to collect and interpret numerical data through application of statistical model as the means of driving the findings. The use of this research design in this article allowed the researcher to collect factual information regarding the effectiveness of marketing techniques in terms of project success. This also fulfils the aim of research of the reduction of gap present in the literature.

3.2 Data Collection

There are two methods of data collection which are known as the primary and secondary research (Xu and Hickman, 2020). Out of these, the primary method of data collection results in the development of most recent data which is collected using primary techniques. This study was developed on the basis of data collection by secondary method of survey under the category of quantitative research. The

use of primary method of data collection method is beneficial for this study as it allowed researcher to collect most recent method of data collection through the involvement of different participant which have relevance with the researched phenomenon. The use of this method of data collection is also driven by the accuracy of results presented in the research of Apuke (2017) which permitted the researchers to add the quality research which exists on the assessment of marketing effects on project success.

3.3 Data Analysis

The use of an appropriate method of data analysis is a significant component for the research as it allows the application of the statistical models and logical technique in a systematic manner leading to the comprehension of the collected data (Peacock, 2019). This is supported by the research of Denis (2018) which identified this as the means of determining the quality of research through the development of accurate and in-depth research. This study use of quantitative method of data collection has adopted the method of statistical analysis using SPSS as an approach of interpretation of data which has been collected. The method of statistical analysis as per the identification of Elliott and Woodward (2019) has

several benefits such as it helps in examining the numerical data which collected during the research. Furthermore, the use of this technique is beneficial for the development of an in-depth understanding of the data as response of the participants can be interpreted and analysed statistically.

4. Analysis

4.1 Correlation

The correlational analysis is mainly a procedure that helps in identifying the association that exists between variables that are part of the study. It is imperative to note that the value range is usually from 0 to 1 which can be considered positive or negative, depending on the value. A positive value range shows that there exists a direct association between variables. However, a negative value range shows that there exists an inverse association between variables. It is imperative to note that the value range holds a significant value in assessing the positive and negative aspects. The value of 0.1 to 0.3 shows that there is a weak correlation, the value of 0.3 to 0.7 shows that there is a moderate correlation, and the value of 0.7 to 1 show that there is a high correlation between variables.

Correlations

		P1	Paid Advertisement	Social Media	Discount Sales and Promotions (Word of Mouth)	SEO and Websites	Project Performance of Small and Medium Information Communication
P1	Pearson Correlation	1	.904**	.311**	.278**	.347**	.245*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.002	.005	.000	.014
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
Paid Advertisement	Pearson Correlation	.904**	1	.664**	.639**	.695**	.587**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
Social Media	Pearson Correlation	.311**	.664**	1	.967**	.984**	.932**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
Discount Sales and Promotions (Word of Mouth)	Pearson Correlation	.278**	.639**	.967**	1	.962**	.924**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
SEO and Websites	Pearson Correlation	.347**	.695**	.984**	.962**	1	.909**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
Project Performance of Small and Medium Information Communication	Pearson Correlation	.245*	.587**	.932**	.924**	.909**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table1 - Correlation

Table 1 shows the correlation among variables of the current study. The paid advertisement value range is 0.587 which means that there is a moderate association between a paid advertisement and project performance

of small and medium information communication. The social media value range is 0.932 which means that there is a high association between social media and project performance of small and medium information

communication. The discount sales and promotions (word of mouth) value range is 0.924 which means that there is a high association between discount sales and promotions (word of mouth) and project performance of small and medium information communication. The SEO and Websites value range is 0.909 which means there is a high association between SEO and Websites and the project performance of small and medium information communication.

The aforementioned analysis reveals that, although all marketing strategies have a direct association with the dependent variable of project performance, a high

association was perceived with social media, discount sales and promotions and SEO and Websites. The management of small and medium information communication technology enterprises should focus on the aforementioned strategies in their operations.

4.2 Regression

Regression analysis is basically focused on assessing the link that exists among two variables and focuses on discovering the association that is part of the existing variables. This means that the effect of one variable over another will be assessed.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.940 ^a	.883	.878	.33104

a. Predictors: (Constant), SEO and Websites, Paid Advertisement, Discount Sales and Promotions (Word of Mouth), Social Media

Table2 - ModelSummary

Table 2 is the model summary, which focuses on the R-value and R-Square value. The R-value shows that there is a significant percentage of the value showing if the model can be considered as fit for practice. The R-squared value is mainly about the model showing the degree to which it can be considered fit for forecasting the other variable. The range of value is from 0 to 1, which reflects a strong value and a positive impact. On

the other hand, if the R-squared value is near 0, then that model is not fit for use at all. Considering Table 2, the R-value is .940 which means it is 94% reliable and fit for carrying out regression analysis. The R-squared value is 0.883 which means it is 88.3% able to predict the dependent variable. The independent variables are having a huge impact on the dependent variable.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	78.692	4	19.673	179.521	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.411	95	.110		
	Total	89.103	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance of Small and Medium Information Communication

b. Predictors: (Constant), SEO and Websites, Paid Advertisement, Discount Sales and Promotions (Word of Mouth), Social Media

Table3 - ANOVA Table

Table 3 is the ANOVA table. In the ANOVA table, the focus is on the sig value. It is imperative to note that the Threshold value is 0.05. If the sig value is more than 0.05, it is not considered to be appropriate, significant or reliable. The model cannot be considered appropriate for regression analysis. From Table 3, it has been observed that the sig value is .000 which

means that the model is reliable and fit for analysis. It can be stated that there is a strong link between the four independent variables (paid advertisement, discount sales and promotions, social media and SEO and websites) and the dependent variable (project performance of small and medium information).

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.392	.092		-4.272	.000
	Paid Advertisement	-.029	.058	-.025	-.500	.619
	Social Media	.925	.213	.956	4.346	.000
	Discount Sales and Promotions (Word of Mouth)	.381	.132	.409	2.878	.005
	SEO and Websites	-.381	.202	-.410	-1.884	.063

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance of Small and Medium Information Communication

Table 4 - Coefficient Table Table 4 is the Coefficient Table. The values that are in focus here are the sig value and B value. Considering the threshold value that has already been stated before, it can be perceived from table 4 that social media and discount sales and promotions (word of mouth) are having a positive impact as well as are considered fit for analysis. The B value of social media is .925 and the sig value is .000. On the other hand, the B value of discount sales and promotions (word of mouth) is .381 and the sig value is .005. It has been observed that social media and discount sales and promotion (word of mouth) marketing strategies have an impact on the project performance of small and medium information communication technology enterprises. Social media is

the type of marketing that can easily help project managers to improve their project performance. Social media would help the project managers in connecting with users and other people that would help them in obtaining ideas regarding various strategies that can be implemented to improve the overall performance. On other hand, the discounts and promotions in light of word of mouth would help project managers to get more consumers towards the project that is being worked on. The notion here is to ensure that more consumers focus on carrying out the project effectively as this would help to assess the flaws that exist in a project during its trial phase and iron out all the issues related to it.

4.3 Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis Number	Hypothesis	Status
Ho1	There is no significant impact of marketing strategies (paid advertisement, social media, word of mouth and SEO and websites) on the project success of small and medium information communication technology firms.	Rejected
Ho2	There is a significant impact of marketing strategies (paid advertisement, social media, word of mouth and SEO and websites) on the project success of small and medium information communication technology firms.	Accepted
Ho2-1	There is significant impact of paid advertisement on project performance of small and medium information communication technology firms.	Rejected
Ho2-2	There is significant impact of social media on project performance of small and medium information communication technology firms.	Accepted
Ho2-3	There is significant impact of word of mouth on project performance of small and medium information communication technology firms.	Accepted
Ho2-4	There is significant impact of SEO and Websites on project performance of small and medium information communication technology firms.	Rejected

Ho2-1 was rejected as based on findings, the significance value .619 of paid advertisement was greater than the threshold value of 0.05. Hence, showing no significant impact of paid advertisement on project performance of small and medium sized information technology firms.

Ho2-2 was accepted because the significance value .000 of social media was less than 0.05 threshold value. Thereby, demonstrating a significant impact of social media on project performance of small and medium sized information technology firms.

Ho2-3 was accepted because significance value .005 of word of mouth was found to be less than the threshold value of 0.05. Therefore, depicting a significant impact of word of mouth on project performance of small and medium sized information technology firms.

Ho2-4 was rejected as significance value of 0.63 of SEO and websites was greater than the threshold value of 0.05. Thus, displaying no significant impact of SEO and websites on project performance of small and medium sized information technology firms.

The above hypotheses of Ho2-1, Ho2-2, Ho2-3 and Ho2-4 were categorised under the main hypothesis of Ho2, which was accepted since, findings show that there is an impact of marketing strategies on the project success of small and medium information communication technology firms. Thereby, rejecting the null hypothesis of Ho1.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In this research article, the focus has been on examining the impact of marketing strategies on the project performance of small and medium information communication technology enterprises. The objectives covered in the article were to identify the diverse marketing strategies adopted by middle and small-scale enterprises, evaluating the significance of marketing strategies in the project performance of middle and small-scale enterprises, evaluating the effects of diverse marketing strategies on the project performance of middle and small-scale enterprises. From the literature review, it has been observed that marketing strategies play a crucial role in ensuring that project performance is improved and reflects in a positive way for the small and medium information communication technology enterprises. The methodology that was used in the article was positivism and the primary quantitative approach was adopted. The survey questionnaire was carried out with 100 project managers to assess which marketing strategies were considered to be more helpful for improving the project performance of small and medium information communication technology enterprises. The analysis revealed that social media and discount sales and promotions (word of mouth) were considered to be more relevant in terms of marketing strategies that would help in improving the

project performance. The project managers must ensure that they are focusing on utilising the two aforementioned strategies in a way that would help them in improving their project performance, while it is in the trial phase.

5.1 Recommendations

The recommendations based on the aforementioned evaluation are:

- The first recommendation is to ensure that during the trial phase of the project, the project managers market the product through the word of mouth, to the maximum extent possible. This would help them in attracting more users to the project, which would allow the project managers to assess the issues that exist during the trial phase.
- The second recommendation is to make use of social media to get feedback on how the project can be improved by uploading a video of the project during its trial phase. This would help in ensuring that the project is improved in a step-by-step process as per the feedback or suggestions that are received on the social media platforms.
- The third recommendation is to take suggestions through social media platforms before the initiation of the project. This would help the project managers to ensure that they are starting the project by considering all positive and negative aspects in relation to the project.

5.2 Future Implications

The future implications of the study are that it would help project managers in analysing which specific marketing strategies to use for improving the project. This way, the project managers would not spend their funds on other marketing strategies; but, only focus on two marketing strategies that have been discovered in this study. Furthermore, the study would also help the small and medium information communication technology industry as a whole as enterprises within the industry can focus on using the elements discovered in the study for their own project performance improvement.

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