EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ADOPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS PROMOTIONALTOOL BY SMALL BUSINESSES IN AMAC

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Abstract
The main concern of the study was an assessment of factors affecting the adoption of social media as a promotional tool among small businesses in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). Quantitative methods were utilized by the study, through a casual design, in the collection and analysis of primary data, collected via a questionnaire survey. Data used was obtained from a multistage sample made up of 391 small business owner-managers in the council. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was applied to the obtained data in the estimation of a path model establishing social media adoption as a function of different exogenous determining components under three contexts – Technology, Organization and Environment. From the result of the analysis, the study found that Perceived Benefits, Compatibility, Social Media Knowledge, Management Attitude, Customer Influence and Competitor influence were positive and statistically significant determinants of the adoption of social media as a promotional tool. It is thus, crucial that venture promotion programmes and strategies by the government and pertinent stakeholders incorporate practical communication on the application of social media in business contexts. Additionally, small business owners need to go beyond their localized mentality in exploiting the potential of social media. This would involve imbibing an innovative mindset that is open to the use of technology to boost their businesses. Additionally, adequate market analysis is crucial towards meeting business objectives. Business owners need to observe the nature of social media use in their market and develop promotional strategies that would incorporate the use of such technology in their own operations.
Keywords: *Social Media Adoption, TOE Model, AMAC, small business.*

INTRODUCTION

In light of the highly dynamic environment that has put huge constraints on the operation and survival of small businesses, many of these businesses have failed as a result of the problems they face in their daily activities. To operate favourably with prevailing market conditions, therefore, small business firms must look towards innovations that will boost market visibility, customer communication and patronage. An area very prominent in literature is that of social media marketing. Strategizing involves the consideration of alternative choices in steering businesses towards the achievement of desired goals, and as an effective business strategy, social media plays a crucial role in marketing and the creation of customer relationships, and with its low barrier to entry, is especially suitable for small businesses (Adebuyi et al., 2015). Social media, as a promotional tool, allows businesses to reach a large audience in a very short time period and with relative ease. Through such channels as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, it has given businesses an effective way to grow awareness about their products and marketing activities, and affords them the ability to develop relationships by communicating positive image and dialogue about their brand (Oxborrow, 2012).

Despite the huge benefits of social media in marketing, however, there has been observed low level of use among small businesses in Abuja, that has constrained their ability of reaching a wider range of customers (Negedu & Abdurrahman, 2020; Johnson, 2020). This spurred research interest, because as small business enterprises are usually not buoyant enough to compete favourably with larger ones, social media marketing presents them with low-cost solutions to build marketshare which is important for competitiveness and growth.The advancements in internet usage and mobile telephony have connected millions of potential customers into a network that presents businesses with huge market opportunities at low marketing costs. This presents huge potential for business performance and growth.

Furthermore, a review of pertinent literature such as Rahayu (2015), Alhaimer (2019), Ahamat et al. (2017), Mahliza, et al. (2020), Elkaseh et al. (2016), Gekombe et al. (2019), Ying et al. (2021), and Siamagka et al. (2015), among others, on factors responsible for the adoption of social media marketing and other innovative technologies by businesses,reveals an acute lack of literature on social media use, as it affects small businesses in AMAC. The study, therefore, aimed at an accurate empirical analysis of determinants of social media adoption among small businesses in AMAC, while contributing towards addressing existing shortcomings in available literature. To achieve this, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study.

H_{O1}:   Perceived Benefits have no significant effect on the adoption of social media as a promotional tool by small businesses in the Abuja Municipal Area Council.

H_{O2}:   Compatibility has no significant effect on the adoption of social media as a promotional tool by small businesses in the Abuja Municipal Area Council.

H_{O3}:   Social Media Knowledge has no significant effect on the adoption of social media as a promotional tool by small businesses in the Abuja Municipal Area Council.

H_{O4}:   Management Attitude has no significant effect on the adoption of social media as a promotional tool by small businesses in the Abuja Municipal Area Council.

H_{O5}:   Customer influence has no significant effect on the adoption of social media as a promotional tool by small businesses in the Abuja Municipal Area Council.

H_{O6}:   Competitor influence has no significant effect on the adoption of socialmedia as a promotional tool by small businesses in the Abuja Municipal Area Council.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Concept of Social Media
Social media can generally be described as virtually-based interpersonal interaction between individuals which transcends distance and geography. It involves the use of web-based platforms developed for individuals and communities to share information and opinions and to co-create content (Humaid & Ibrahim, 2019). Scott and Orlikowski (2014) give a specific definition of social media in the context of small businesses as an enabler to the performance of certain business task by leveraging technological capabilities. Here, social media acts as a tool for enabling businesses to produce user-generated content without physical presence through active engagement and online contributions of large numbers of people across time and space. Gomathi and Gowtham (2013) argue that social media has continued to evolve and offer consumers around the world new and meaningful ways to engage with the people, events and brands that matter to them. Furthermore, social media is growing rapidly and becoming an integral part of our daily lives.

Rostam (2020) gives specific benefits of social media to include the ability for global communication, enabling expansion of social base of individual and business relationships. It also allows for sharing of interests and instant sharing of information. Managers and businessmen, for example, can use social media to communicate directly with their customers, irrespective of time or where they are located. Additionally, social media can be an avenue for free advertising. If you have a private company and you need to promote your services or goods, you have no better way to send your message to millions of people through social media.

Social Media as a Promotional Tool
As the importance of digital marketing become more and more pronounced, many businesses, as observed by Arsath (2018), are interested in the determination of how social media can help them promote their products and services to existing and potential consumers. The use of social media as a promotional tool exists within the sphere of social media marketing. This encompasses the process of achieving marketing communication and branding goals through social media sites. It includes activities such as sharing content, videos and images by businesses with the aim of attracting the attention of consumers, as well as encouraging them to share with others through social media platforms. Social media marketing allows businesses to promote their products or

services through online social channels and to communicate with, and tap into, a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels (Adegbuyi, 2013; Kallio, 2015).

As highlighted by Góngora (2016), organizations who apply social media in their business functions for various reasons. One of which is to build brand awareness. Because all business profiles are unique, social media gives businesses the ability to develop a personality on social networks. The look and feel of their brand are all incorporated in its overall view, allowing them to easily stand out in the eyes of their customers (Góngora, 2016; Torr, 2015). Social media use can also provide an important source of market feedback through which businesses can attain useful information about their market. When customers have a complaint, question or compliment, many of them go directly to social media. Monitoring the social media space is therefore crucial for businesses to know that their customers are saying about them, which provides them with information they can use to learn and improve. Social media is also useful in helping businesses build deeper connections with their customers, which could push repeat purchases and facilitate customer retention. Social media functions as an effective channel for customer engagement, allowing businesses to interact with their customers directly and build relationships(Sklar, 2013; Smith, 2014).

Also, the use of social media as a way to promote products is a lot cheaper than traditional marketing and advertising methods. In addition, the amount of people that companies can reach by promoting a product through social media, together with the limited amounts of resources needed, makes social media the ideal platform for this purpose. Some interesting ways for companies to promote their products through social media is by organizing contests, by providing special deals and promotions or by simply uploading visual content, such as videos and/or photos (Ajmera, 2014; Góngora, 2016).Additionally, social media provides an avenue through which businesses can observe the activities of competitors. By analyzing what market rivals are doing, firms can gain insights into their strengths and weaknesses, as well as acquire direction in planning their own strategies.

Importantly, the study focused on this area of market visibility, concerned with how small businesses communicate to potential customers information about the business, about the products, where products can be obtained at what price and features of products available.Small business especially need visibility to survive and grow. A lot of businesses across the globe constantly seek to increase the channels of marketing their goods, services and ideas across the globe is increasing every day. This is because most business organizations want to showcase their products beyond their immediate environment(Alakali et al., 2013).

Concept of Small Business
Business enterprises are usually defined in terms of size based on certain recognized criteria. This definition may, however, differ across different country's as well as the economy's level of development. Accordingly, SMEDAN (2021) defines small businesses as enterprises with 10 to 49 employees, as well as value of assets ranging from N5 million to N50 million. This definition is however, not an exact one, meaning that small scaled businesses must not necessarily have the value of their assets in the range of N5 million to N50 million. The research study therefore relies on the employment criterion (i.e. businesses in the study area employing from 10 to 49 employees) in its definition of small business. This is in line with the recommendation given by SMEDAN (2021) for the employment-based classification to take precedence over the asset-based criteria.
Usually, small businesses are managed by the owners, and the strategic direction of these business is dictated by their personal objectives, management style and operational practices. The management process here, therefore, reflects features of highly personalized preferences, prejudices and attitudes of the owner-manager (Adebuyi et al., 2015). Additionally, small business owner-managers are guided by objectives and planning that are not systematically developed and carefully managed as in larger firms. The 2021 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) National Survey puts the total number of small enterprises in the country at 617,248 across various categories of industry, such as education, agriculture, manufacturing, retail, transportation and storage, accommodation and food services (SMEDAN, 2021).

Determinants of Social Media Adoption as a Promotional Tool

The research study sought to examine factors determining the adoption of social media as a promotional tool by small businesses in three contexts – Technology, organization and environmental. The technological context in which a firm operates plays an obvious role in determining the firm's adoption activity. Decisions to adopt technology depend on what is available, as well as how the available technology fits with the firm's current technology (Tornatzky et al., 1990).Technological characteristics determine how the innovation is utilized and adopted, which could either be advantageous or detrimental for the organization. This also applies to social media of which technological factors could entail relative advantage and compatibility.

Organizational factors among small businesses revolve around the owner-manager as they are usually the sole decision maker in such firms. In small firms, the owner-manager is pivotal in determining technology adoption, is responsible in explicating how the new technology fits into the organization's general strategy, and in driving and rewarding creativity and innovation. The owner-manager creates the perfect setting and provides the necessary resources so as to drive technology adoption (Lin, 2014). Ahmad et al. (2019) highlight the presence of substantial evidence that support from the owner-manager significantly drives organizational technology adoption. This is linked to the openness and receptiveness to novel ideas and innovations.

Finally, environmental factors refer to the external conditions within which the organization is operating. Samsudeen, et al. (2021) argue that the adoption of technology may bring about changes to industry structure and lead to possible changes in competition rules, the creation of competitive advantage, and the leveraging of new means for outperforming other industry players.

Perceived Benefits

The adoption of a certain technology is commonly decided by equating its possible advantages and disadvantages to that of other options. Perceived benefits reflect the subjective assessment made by individuals or organizations regarding the advantages and positive outcomes expected from adopting a new technology (Samsudeen et al., 2021). In the context of the study, Pew Research Centre (2018) describe perceived benefits as the advantages individuals believe they will attain from the use of social media platforms. Perceived benefits are critical in influencing technology adoption decisions. Once it is determined that the technology's advantages are far greater than its disadvantages, then the possibility of adopting it is higher (Samsudeenet al., 2021).

Compatibility

Compatibility describes the extent to which a technological innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, goals, needs and past experiences of potential adopters (Krishnamoorthy & Damle, 2017). Compatibility is, therefore, a crucial element in the adoption of social media by businesses. Within this context, Nurliza (2018) points out that the concern centres around the alignment or fit between the business and the social media platform they choose to engage with. Social media compatibility can be seen in terms of conformance with business objectives, in which case, the social media channel should align with business goals and provide the tools and resources necessary to meet them effectively. Such goals may include brand awareness, fostering customer engagement, or promoting products and services (Nurliza, 2018).

Social Media Knowledge

The social media knowledge of the owner-manager can be an important factor in determining the adoption of social media platforms in the operation of a business. Effective use of social media for business purposes requires a good understanding of different social media platforms. Different platforms possess unique features, demographics, user behaviour and content formats, which businesses need to familiarize themselves with.Many businesses may not adopt social media marketing due to lack of knowledge and understanding of information technology (Digiforce Marketing, 2021). Walsh (2022) argue that social media knowledge helps businesses craft a strategy that aligns with their brand voice, target audience preferences, and platform-specific best practices. Social media knowledge involves understanding the type of content that resonates with the target audience,

including text-based posts, images, videos, live streaming, or stories. By understanding these factors, businesses can create compelling and shareable content that attracts attention, builds brand loyalty, and drives meaningful interactions. Engaging with the social media community is vital for businesses to foster positive relationships with their audience (Walsh, 2022).

Management Attitude
Management attitude reflects the perception of the owner-manager to the degree of which they agree or disagree with the benefits social media could offer their firm. Management attitude towards social media is an important component of social media adoption in businesses.It is, thus, important for leaders to recognize the potential of social media and develop a comprehensive strategy for its use to fully realize its benefits.Management attitude refers to the mindset, beliefs, and approach of the management team towards social media and its integration into the overall business strategy. A positive management attitude drives strategic alignment, ensuring that social media efforts are integrated into the overall business strategy, marketing plans, and customer engagement initiatives (Wang et al., 2022).

According Rogers (1983, cited in Ismail & Ali, 2013), the decision on the adoption of technological innovation in an organization is preceded by the formation of a favourable or unfavourable attitude that innovation. In small businesses, as the main decision-maker, the perception of the owner-manager is of prime importance. The management's attitude heavily influences the organization's commitment, resource allocation, decision-making processes, and overall approach to leveraging social media platforms for business purposes (Hagen&Sørebø, 2017).

Customer Influence
Customer influence relates to pressure from customers as perceived by business enterprises. Das (2022) states that this acts in the form of recommendations and demands by customers on businesses to establish a presence and engage on social media platforms, and may manifest in various ways such customer preferences, feedback and reviews. In the era of rapid information transfer and changing market trends and customer tastes, customer pressure is fed by a number of factors including influencer culture and trends, competitive landscape and the need for effective customer service (Abbasiet al., 2022; He et al., 2015). Through customer influence, businesses face the expectation to establish a presence on social media platforms to meet customer demands, engage with their audience, manage reputation, and stay competitive. By responding to customer pressure and adopting social media, businesses can leverage the benefits of these platforms to enhance customer relationships, expand their reach, and ultimately achieve their business objectives (Das, 2022).

Competitor Influence
Samsudeenet al. (2021) describe competitive pressure as the extent of rivalry in an industry as a result of globalization, new technological advancement, and usage of knowledge. Technology adoption is a means of innovation for organizations in a competitive environment. Ahmad and Monfaradi (2017) allude to a band wagon effect where integrated social media applications and platforms is adopted by all the related trading partners. This bandwagon effect refers to the psychological drive to adopt a certain technology because other companies have done so, even to the extent of ignoring existing corporate strategies. The popular adoption of a certain technology will greatly influence others to do the same and companies in unstable business environments are more prone to such bandwagon effect (Ahmad & Monfaradi, 2017).According to Heshan (2013), this herd behaviour can help reduce post-adoption regret and thus, serve as a legitimate strategy in adopting a technology to enhance performance.

Empirical Review
Perceived Benefits and Social Media Adoption
Wirdiyanti et al. (2021) examined digital technology use among SMEs in Indonesia, with specific focus on the adoption of social media. Primary data was collected from 11548 SMEs across all provinces in Indonesia. The

PLS-SEM technique was employed as the method of data analysis, the result of which pointed to the finding that perceived benefits was a strong, positive and statistically significant determinant of social media adoption. In a related study, Mahliza et al. (2020) looked into the adoption of social media marketing among businesses in Indonesia. Cross-sectional data was used by the study, provided by a purposive sample of 115 microenterprise owner-managers in Jakarta, and analyzed using PLS-SEM. Findings indicated that the adoption of social media in the promotion of businesses was positively and significantly affected by its perceived benefits.

In a study conducted by Gekombe et al. (2019) in the Kenyan fashion industry, determinants of social media adoption were explored among operating SMEs in Nairobi and Kiambu. A sample of 394 owner-managers provided the needed primary data for the study. The analysis carried out supported the finding that the effect of perceived benefit on social media adoption was not statisitically significant. Ying et al.'s (2021) study, on the other hand, was aimed at determining the perceived benefits of social media adoption in the Ghanaian banking sector. Data used was collected, in a questionnaire survey, froma random sample of 200 employees of 12 selected banks across seven regions of the Ga-West Municipality in the greater Accra Region. PLS-SEM was employed to analyze the data collected for the study. The findings obtained showed that perceived benefits was a weak, but statistically significant determinant of adopting social media.

Compatibility and Social Media Adoption

A study was carried out by Trawnih et al. (2021) in Jordan to evaluate factors influencing the adoption of SMEs of social media during COVID-19. Primary data was used in the study, collected from a sample of 250 SME owner-managers in the Irbid city. The results of the PLS-SEM analysis carried out indicated that compatibility was a positive and significant determinant of social media adoption among businesses. A contradictory result was, however, arrived at by Ahmad et al. (2019) in a study carried out in the United Arab Emirates. Here, also applying PLS-SEM to primary data obtained from a survey involving 144 business owners across Abu Dhabi and Dubai, compatibility was found not to have significant impact on the adoption of social media among businesses.

Barnes and Jacobsen (2013) examined the impact of selected factors on the use of social media tools among fast growing small businesses in the United States.171 managers of the companies were interviewed by phone using a structured questionnaire. Simple percentages and graphs were used to analyze the collected responses. Findings arrived at indicated that compatibility had positive effect on the adoption of social media among the firms in the operation of their business. In their study, Ilona et al. (2019) evaluated social media adoption among SMEs in Indonesia. 28 SMEs operating in the west Sumatra province was used as the sample for the study. Primary data collected with the use of formulated questionnaires was analyzed with SEM-PLS. The result showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between compatibility and social media adoption.

Social Media Knowledge and Social Media Adoption

In their Brazilian study, Bogea and Brito (2018) examined the determinants of social media adoption by large companies. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17 marketing executives of large companies in Brazil. Knowledge of social media was found to be a strong determinant of social media adoption for businesses. In a related study conducted across digital marketing businesses in South Jakarta, Indonesia and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Afifah et al. (2018) found that social media adoption was positively influenced by social media knowledge, after applying PLS-SEM to cross-sectional data obtained from a purposive sample of 70 SMEs.

In a South African study conducted by Snyman and Visser (2014), the adoption of social media marketing among a sample of 334 registered dentists was explored. Collected data was analyzed with the use of tables, simple percentages and graphs. The result of the analysis provided the findings that showed that knowledge of social media was a positive determinant of its adoption.

Management Attitude and Social Media Adoption
Rasheed and Nafiz (2022) examined factors responsible for the adoption of social media among SMEs in the Greater Malé region of the Maldives. A casual design was adopted by the study, depending on the use of primary datacollected form 108 respondents, who were owner-managers of selected businesses. The collected data was used in the estimation of a multiple regression model. The findings reached from the obtained results of the analysis indicated that management attitude towards social media use did not have statistically significant effect on social media adoption. In a related study conducted by Pateli et al. (2020), the concern was an evaluation of the adoption of social media in the hospitality industry in Greece. Survey data was collected from 106 hospitality firms operating in Greece, specifically those operating in Corfu, the capital of the Ionian Islands region. Data analysis was done through the application of PLS-SEM on responses from 106 questionnaires. Findings were in support of positive effect of management attitude on social media adoption.

A study carried out by Luu et al. (2019) looked at factors affecting the adoption of social media by individual and household retailers in Vietnam. A questionnaire survey provided primary data collected from a sample of 773across Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Danang cities. After being analyzed with the PLS-SEM technique, variable relationship pointed to management attitude exerting positive and significant effect on social media adoption. Pemarathna (2019), on the other hand, examined social media adoption as a promotional tool by SMEs in Sri Lanka. Primary data was collected, via questionnaire survey, from a stratified sample of 150 managers of SMEs. The Ordinary Least Squares multiple regression technique was used as the method for analyzing the collected data. The result of the study was that management attitude had significant and positive impact on the adoption of social media as a promotional tool.

Customer Influence and Social Media Adoption
In an Egyptian study, Elnadi (2022) collected primary cross-sectional data from a purposive sample of 20 SME owner-managers. OLS multiple regression analysis was employed in the analysis of the collected data. Findings from the study indicated that customer influence was a crucial positive and significant determination of social media adoption among businesses. In another study conducted in India, Jindoliya's (2017) focused on retailing companies in Navi area in Mumbai. Here, a random sample of 385 provided the primary data for the study. Pearson's Chi-Square was employed to analyze the collected data. The result of the analysis indicated that pressure from customers was a positive and significant influencing factor for the adoption of social media as a promotional tool.

Sugandini et al. (2019) estimated a path model, with the use of PLS-SEM with the aim of evaluating influencing factors social media adoption in Indonesia. The primary data used was provided by a purposive sample of 210 SME owner-managers across Yogyakarta and South Sumatra regions. Findings arrived at from the results obtained indicated social media adoption as a promotional tool was positively and significantly influenced by pressure from customers. Furthermore, Maduku et al. (2016) did a study on factors responsible for the adoption of mobile marketing in the context of South Africa. Data was collected from a random sample of 205 SMEs in Gauteng and analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling. The findings obtained showed that customer influence had a positive effect on SMEs adoption of mobile marketing in South Africa.

Competitor Influence and Social Media Adoption
Satar and Alariffi (2022), in their study conducted in Saudi Arabia, empirically investigated adoption of social media in SMEs. In the course of the study, a questionnaire-based survey was conducted, and data from 111 SMEs was collected. The study model and associated hypotheses were tested using a multiple regression analysis. Findings arrived at indicated that competitive pressure positively and significantly influenced the adoption of social media in SMEs.In another study, Beier and Früh (2020) aimed at evaluating the influence of Technological, Organizational and Environmental (TOE) factors on the adoption of social media by hospitals in Switzerland. The study involved the collection of secondary data on 279 hospitals, sourced from social media accounts. Variable relationships and formulated hypotheses were tested an estimated binary logistic regression

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model. The study found that competitor pressure was a positive and significant predictor of social media adoption.

In a similar study, Manideep et al. (2019) explored influencing factors of the adoption of social media marketing in the wellness industry in India. A convenience sample of 139 entrepreneurs in Hyderabad Citywas used for the study survey. Hierarchical regression method was employed to determine the effect of these factors on the adoption of social media by the entrepreneurs.Findings arrived at revealed that that pressure from competitors had huge, significant and positive influence on the use of social media as a promotional tool.

Matikiti's (2018) study was on the application of social media as a promotional tool in the South African tourism industry. The study collected responses from 150travel agencies. Multiple regression analysis and one-way ANOVA were used for data analysis. The findings from the results gotten indicated that pressure from competitors was a prominent external factor and a statistically significant and positive determinant of the use of social media as a promotional tool.

Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) Theory

The study was guided by the Technology-Organization Environment (TOE) model developed by Tornatzky et al. (1990) to evaluate social media adoption in the marketing process of small businesses under three main settings – Technological, Organizational and Environmental. The technology context refers to the application of new technology. Al Rahbi (2017) specifically describes this as external technology available in the market place, but not in use by the business enterprise. The study evaluated the adoption of social media by small businesses from the technological context in terms of Perceived Benefits and Compatibility. Having an awareness of perceived benefits of the adoption of social media marketing, including the reduction of promotion and advertising costs, getting immediate feedback about products and services, as well as the facilitation of growth in business brands plays a significant role in the social media adoption decisions of small businesses (Al Rahbi, 2017). The lack of perceived compatibility may also hamper social media adoption levels, i.e., the extent to which the adoption of social media is perceived as consistent with existing values, past experiences and needs of owner-managers/businesses (Luu et al., 2019).

The organizational context defines technological adoption within the characteristics of the business firm. Cao et al. (2014) see the organizational context as the actions of internal structures and processes facilitating (or constraining) the adoption of social media in business marketing. The study looks at Management Attitude and Social Media Knowledge. Since the owner-manager is the chief decision maker in small businesses, their openness and support towards the use of social media would determine its adoption in the marketing drive of their businesses. Social media knowledge, on the other hand, refers to previous accumulated knowledge, experience and familiarity with social media technology. This is expected to play an important role in encouraging the adoption of social media as a marketing tool by small businesses. Small business' adoption of social media may depend on the knowledge of the owner on how to use social media technology.

Furthermore, the arena within which a business operates has been seen to represent a primary stimulus for the adoption of technological innovations as these enterprises respond to changes in their external environment. Here, the TOE recognizes factors such as Competitive Pressure, which plays a significant role in the adoption of technology. This signifies influence exerted from market rivals in the same industry (Oliveira et al., 2014). Businesses may adopt technological changes in response to competition within the industry so as not to lose competitive gain (Zainuddin et al., 2017). Under the environmental dimension, technological adoption may also be determined by Customer Pressure. Researchers such as Maduku et al. (2016) point out that compared to large businesses, SMEs are more susceptible to the pressure created by their customers to meet their expectations. Customer pressure and expectations may drive businesses to adopt technology.

The TOE theory has received recognition as an effective model that pragmatically explains and predicts adoption of new technologies. The TOE framework is considered to be relatively better than other related theories in its incorporation of a wider range of contexts and factors, which has earned enormous cross-context empirical and theoretical supports in different domains and underpinned many adoption inquiries more than any other framework.

METHODOLOGY

The research study adopted a causal study design in its evaluation of the evaluation of the causal relationship between TOE factors and social media adoption in small businesses in AMAC. The population for the study was the total number of small businesses in AMAC. As this number was unknown and assumed to be large, however, a representative sample was used, determined using the formula for unknown sample size provided by Cochran (1963).

$$n = \frac{z^2 p q}{e^2}$$

Where: n - Sample Size.

z - Z score at 95% confidence level (i.e., 1.96).

p - Standard Deviation (allows for variation in responses). In this case, 50% - 0.5.

q - 1 – Standard Deviation.

e - Tolerable Error (in this case 5%).

The sample size was therefore determined as,

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025}$$
$$= \frac{0.9604}{0.0025}$$
$$= 384.16$$
$$\approx 384$$

Although the necessary sample size was computed to be 384 respondents, oversampling was done to the rate of 10%, increasing the sample to 423 in order to address non-response problems. Multistage sampling was applied in the selection of survey participants for the study. This involved the combination random and snowball sampling techniques in finding small business owners to participate in the study survey across the districts of Nyanya, Garki, Gui, Gwagwa, Kabusa, Gwarimpa, Orozo and Karu. Efforts were made to ensure that the selection procedure was as wide as possible, given the research constraints.

The data used was collected in primary form, through a questionnaire survey, from owner-managers of the sampled businesses across the districts in AMAC. The questionnaire used was closed-ended and based on the 5-point Likert scale response format. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the questionnaire as a data collection tool, as well as to lend confidence to the effectives of analysis results and conclusions, measures of reliability, such as Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite reliability, as both convergent and discriminant validity were carried out, as is customary with Structural Equation Modeling. Additionally, a pilot study was conducted with 30 randomly sampled respondents for the purpose of providing valuable feedback that was incorporated into the instrument to make it more accurate. The instrument was also vetted by experienced researchers who had carried out studies in related areas, to ensure that the instrument measured what it was intended to.

The research study applied the use of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in the analysis of the collected data. The specified path model for the study, showed in figure 1, established the adoption of social media as a promotional tool by small businesses as an endogenous construct dependent on

exogenous determinants of Perceived Benefits, Compatibility, Social Media Knowledge, Management Attitude, Customer influence and Competitor Influence. All path coefficients were expected to be positively signed.

Figure 1: Model for the Study
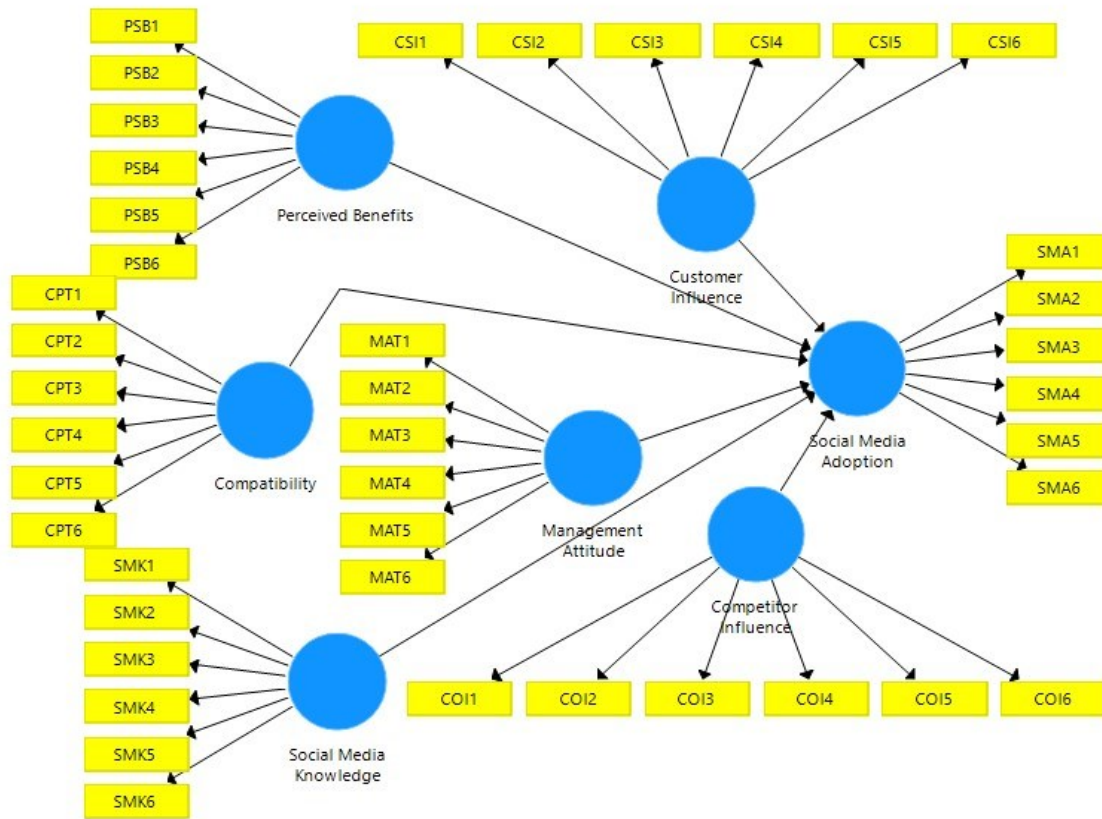
Source: Researcher's Compilation in SmartPLS, 2022.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In total, 423 questionnaires were administered to study respondents. Out of this number, 406 were retrieved, from which 391 were determined to be well filled and used for analysis. This indicated a response rate of $\frac{391}{406} = 96\%$

. Respondents constituted a snowball sample from randomly selected areas across the different districts in AMAC. The evaluation of the measurement model, i.e., the relationship between latent constructs and their measurement factors formed the first part of the analysis. This involved an assessment of indicator reliability, test of internal consistency and test of validity. To determine indicator reliability, the value of factor loadings for measurement variables were assessed. Tables 1 and 2include information on outer loadings estimated for construct indicators.

Table 1: Reliability Tests and Average Variance Extracted

Construct	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	
			rho_a	rho_c
Perceived Benefits		0.829	0.884	0.877
PBS1	0.832			
PBS2	0.854			

PBS3	0.734			
PBS4	0.873			
PBS5	0.729			
Compatibility		0.734	0.754	0.834
CPT3	0.833			
CPT4	0.810			
CPT5	0.826			
CPT6	0.708			
Social Media Knowledge		0.857	0.879	0.897
SMK1	0.866			
SMK2	0.795			
SMK3	0.769			
SMK4	0.765			
SMK5	0.785			

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

It was ensured that high loadings were achieved for all indicators; values were preferred at 0.7 or above, where they were comfortably higher than the point where they explained more than 50% of the variance in the indicator. Thus, values of more than 0.7 were maintained, in which case, factors not meeting the 0.7 benchmark were deleted (see tables 1 and 2), as recommended by Purwanto and Sudargini (2021). Accordingly, PBS6, CPT1, CPT2, SMK6 and CSI1 were removed. This was further substantiated by the fact that their exclusion improved the obtained values of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) across model constructs. Factor loadings retained, ranged from 0.708 to 0.873, indicating high levels of item reliability.

Table 2: Reliability Tests and Average Variance Extracted (Continued)

Construct	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability rho_a	rho_c
Management Attitude		0.885	0.904	0.912
MAT1	0.863			
MAT2	0.753			
MAT3	0.775			
MAT4	0.798			
MAT5	0.788			
MAT6	0.797			
Customer Influence		0.831	0.851	0.881
CSI2	0.847			
CSI3	0.771			
CSI4	0.708			
CSI5	0.761			
CSI6	0.768			
Competitor				

Influence		0.900	0.926	0.919
COI1	0.854			
COI2	0.764			
COI3	0.732			
COI4	0.770			
COI5	0.844			
COI6	0.881			
Social Media Adoption		0.860	0.864	0.899
SMA2	0.848			
SMA3	0.741			
SMA4	0.807			
SMA5	0.790			
SMA6	0.817			

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

Cronbach's Alpha and Composite reliability were employed in testing the reliability of the measurement model. The former was used to determine reliability in terms of internal consistency among construct items. Both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values must to be at least 0.7 to establish reliability (Ayodele et al., 2018; Sugiarta et al., 2023). As the values obtained, and summarized in tables 1 and 2, were all higher than 0.7, the consistency and stability of the study constructs were established.

Both convergent and discriminant validity tests were carried out in the course of assessing the measurement model. Convergent validity was specifically used to check the degree to which factor items come together in explaining variance in the same underlying construct. As is usually the case, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used by the study to check for convergent validity. Table 3 gives AVE statistics for model constructs.

Table 3: Average Variance Extracted for Model Constructs

	AVE
Perceived Benefits	0.589
Compatibility	0.560
Social Media Knowledge	0.635
Management Attitude	0.634
Customer Influence	0.597
Competitor Influence	0.655
Social Media Adoption	0.642

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

Computed as the mean of the square of the loading value for individual indicators, the AVE is specified by Hair etal.(2019) to signify convergent validity at values of 0.50 orhigher. All obtained values of AVE met this criterion. As the information contained in table 3 shows, convergent validity was confirmed for study constructs. In addition to convergent validity, constructs were also checked for discriminant validity using an assessment of cross loadings, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio and the Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

Computed values of cross-loadings are given in table 4, indicating factor loadings for indicators for their underlying constructs (bold and diagonal) compared against the value of loadings for these indicators when used to measure other constructs in the model. Here, to ensure discriminant validity, indicator loadings should be highest for the construct which they were formulated for (Purwanto & Sudargini, 2021). Discriminant validity, in terms of cross-loadings, as can be gathered from the information contained in table 4, can be seen to have been established for constructs. All individual bolded values can be seen to be larger than other values on the same row.

Table 4: Cross Loadings

	Perceived Benefits	Compatibility	Social Media Knowledge	Management Attitude	Customer Influence	Competitor Influence	Social Media Adoption
PBS 1	**0.832**	0.660	0.608	0.587	0.493	0.068	0.728
PBS 2	**0.854**	0.509	0.489	0.453	0.415	0.120	0.569
PBS 3	**0.734**	0.385	0.333	0.297	0.241	0.081	0.407
PBS 4	**0.873**	0.323	0.297	0.270	0.278	0.100	0.349
PBS 5	**0.729**	0.366	0.272	0.279	0.287	0.107	0.388
CPT3	0.551	**0.833**	0.565	0.518	0.445	0.074	0.692
CPT4	0.515	**0.810**	0.443	0.487	0.565	0.054	0.654
CPT5	0.310	**0.826**	0.330	0.312	0.436	0.016	0.484
CPT6	0.447	**0.708**	0.444	0.362	0.355	0.028	0.577
SMK1	0.583	0.637	**0.866**	0.549	0.437	0.042	0.692
SMK2	0.433	0.441	**0.795**	0.394	0.304	0.079	0.490
SMK3	0.381	0.408	**0.769**	0.366	0.249	0.009	0.491
SMK4	0.365	0.380	**0.765**	0.339	0.282	0.034	0.440
SMK5	0.414	0.480	**0.785**	0.366	0.320	0.013	0.494
MAT1	0.582	0.611	0.586	**0.863**	0.459	0.009	0.720
MAT2	0.322	0.397	0.304	**0.753**	0.319	0.071	0.475
MAT3	0.365	0.437	0.357	**0.775**	0.295	0.015	0.494
MAT4	0.424	0.431	0.374	**0.798**	0.327	0.054	0.508
MAT5	0.352	0.358	0.353	**0.788**	0.331	0.008	0.445
MAT6	0.411	0.429	0.427	**0.797**	0.365	0.037	0.528

CSI 2	0.491	0.598	0.410	0.431	0.847	0.084	0.596
CSI 3	0.340	0.442	0.347	0.349	0.771	0.021	0.438
CSI 4	0.320	0.417	0.281	0.297	0.708	0.078	0.381
CSI 5	0.293	0.411	0.260	0.282	0.761	0.019	0.439
CSI 6	0.343	0.418	0.256	0.343	0.768	0.014	0.427
COI1	0.089	0.008	0.042	0.032	0.026	0.854	0.051
COI2	0.056	0.020	0.040	0.034	0.033	0.764	0.035
COI3	0.073	0.004	0.012	0.018	0.015	0.732	0.029
COI4	0.106	0.046	0.011	0.046	0.042	0.770	0.050
COI5	0.104	0.043	0.012	0.015	0.080	0.844	0.083
COI6	0.116	0.075	0.054	0.037	0.010	0.881	0.114
SMA2	0.586	0.690	0.549	0.584	0.591	0.118	0.848
SMA3	0.467	0.619	0.428	0.426	0.599	0.064	0.741
SMA4	0.566	0.684	0.581	0.603	0.446	0.074	0.807
SMA5	0.523	0.606	0.532	0.518	0.363	0.054	0.790
SMA6	0.563	0.644	0.580	0.575	0.407	0.046	0.817

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

Possible discriminant validity problems were also tested using the HTMT ratio. HTMT refers to the mean of all correlations of indicators across constructs measuring different constructs, relative to the (geometric) mean of the average correlations of indicators measuring the same construct (Hair, et al., 2021). Researchers such as Henseler et al. (2015) and Kline (2015) recommend HTMT rations of less than 0.85. The HTMT values calculated, and shown in table 5, were determined to be less than this threshold.

Table 5: Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio Matrix

	Perceived Benefits	Compatibility	Social Media Knowledge	Management Attitude	Customer Influence	Competitor Influence
Perceived Benefits						
Compatibility	0.736					
Social Media Knowledge	0.601	0.735				

Management Attitude	0.555	0.681	0.563		
Customer Influence	0.524	0.760	0.465	0.504	
Competitor Influence	0.134	0.069	0.051	0.057	0.076
Social Media Adoption	0.749	0.514	0.760	0.757	0.698	0.089

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

Furthermore, the Fornell-Larcker criterion was employed as the third measure of discriminant validity. The criterion states that square root value of AVE must be higher than the correlation value of a particular construct with all other constructs (Dzin & Lay, 2021). Table 6 shows the result of Fornell-Larcker criterion assessment; the square root of each construct's AVE represented diagonally, and the correlation between the particular constructs and other constructs below each of those values. It can be seen that, for all constructs, the Fornell-Larcker criterion was met.

Table 6: Assessment of the Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	PBS	CPT	SMK	MAT	CSI	COI	Social Media Adoption
Perceived Benefits	0.767						
Compatibility	0.620	0.749					
Social Media Knowledge	0.559	0.604	0.797				
Management Attitude	0.529	0.571	0.518	0.796			
Customer Influence	0.472	0.602	0.409	0.447	0.772		
Competitor Influence	0.119	0.052	0.038	0.033	0.042	0.809	
Social Media Adoption	0.677	0.811	0.669	0.679	0.601	0.090	0.801

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

The structural, or inner model is concerned with the relationship existing between model constructs, i.e., Perceived Benefits (PBS), Compatibility (CPT), Social Media Knowledge (SMK), Management Attitude (MAT), Customer Influence (CSI),Competitor Influence (COI) and Social Media Adoption as a Promotional Tool (SMA), in the case of the study. The path analysis carried out involved a bootstrapping procedure that was essential for significance testing of formulated hypotheses governing variable relationships. This is due to the fact that bootstrapping allows for the derivation of standard errors, which are the standard deviation of the estimated coefficients across bootstrap samples. The use of standard errors facilitates the evaluation of the statistical significance of the model parameters. The estimated path model is shown as figure 2, showing indicator loadings and their associated probability values.

The bootstrapping process involves drawing a large number of samples from the original sample. 10,000 bootstrap samples were used in the study, as recommended by Streukens and Leroi-Werelds (2016). i.e., the bootstrap samples were used to estimate the path model 10,000 times.

Figure 2: Estimated Path Model for the Study
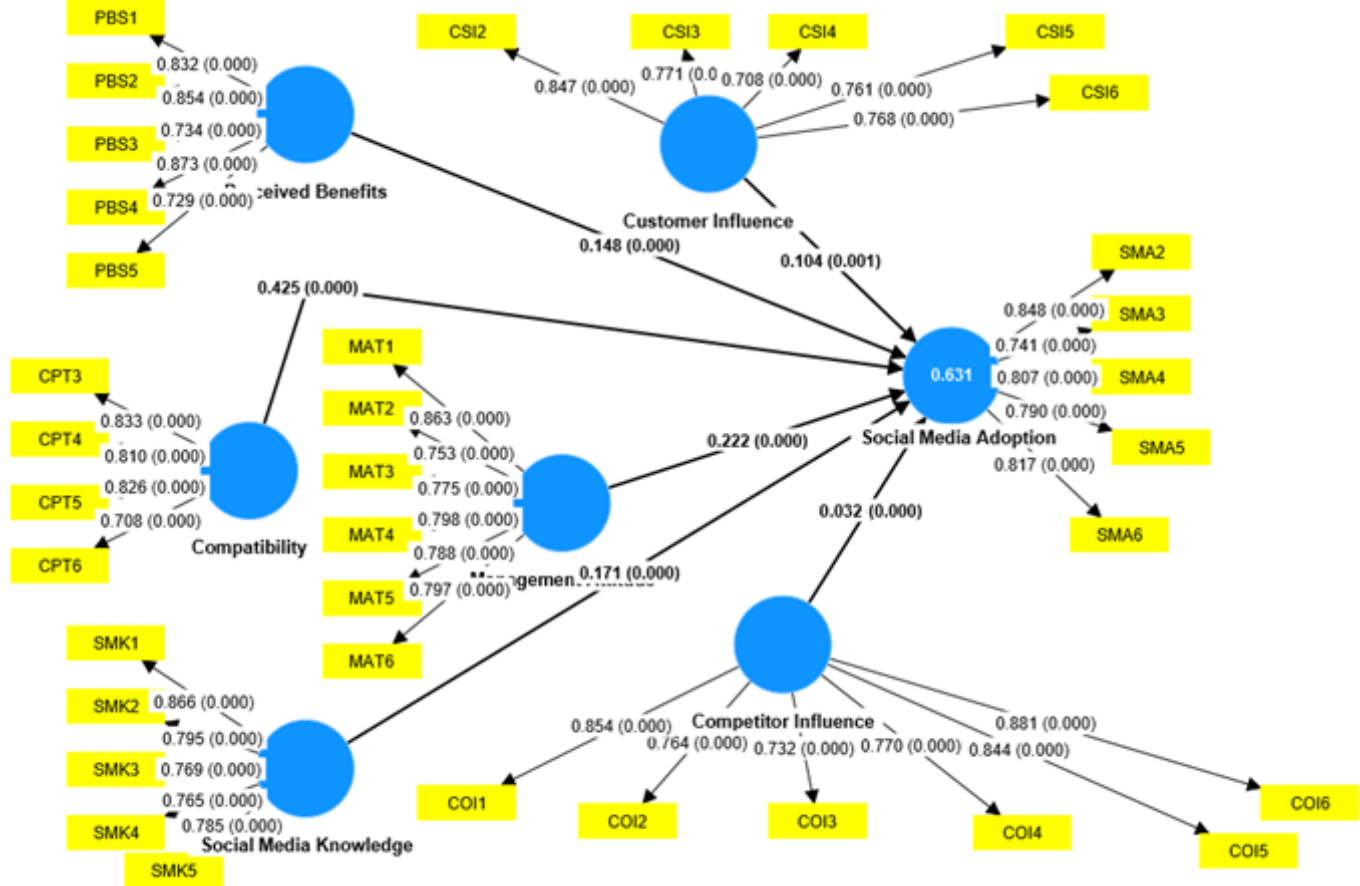
Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

The explanatory power of the estimated path model was evaluated with the use of the Coefficient of Determination (R^2) of the endogenous construct, and effect sizes (f^2) of predictor constructs. R^2 measures the magnitude of variability in the endogenous variable that can be explained by the exogenous variables (Purwanto & Sudargini, 2021). The estimated R^2 value of 0.631, as can be seen in table 7, implied that the variables of CPT, SMK, MAT, CSI and COI explained up to 63% of changes in SMA

Table 7: Coefficient of Multiple Determination

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Social Media Adoption	0.631	0.625

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

This indicated high explanatory power, as it was above the moderate value of 0.5, established by researchers such as Hair et al. (2021). As the value of R^2 would naturally increase with the addition of more variables in a model, its adjusted value is meant to compensate for this. However, the difference between this and the original value was only marginal. In addition to R^2 effect sizes were also considered to determine how the removal of exogenous constructs affected the R^2 of the endogenous construct. Large effect sizes were found for all exogenous constructs except Competitor Influence (COI), whose f^2 value was found to be low, as can be seen in the results presented in table 8. The effect size of compatibility was found to be the highest.

Table 8: Effect Sizes for Constructs (f²)

	Social Media Adoption
Perceived Benefits	0.051
Compatibility	0.333
Social Media Knowledge	0.072
Management Attitude	0.129
Customer Influence	0.030
Competitor Influence	0.004

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

Table 9 shows estimated path coefficients. From the estimation results obtained, all path coefficients were found to be positive and significant at 5% the significance level. Signage in all cases was consistent with a priori expectation.

Table 9: Estimated Path Coefficients for Study Model

	B	Sample Mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	t	P values	Decision (HO)
Perceived Benefits -> Social Media Adoption	0.148	0.150	0.033	4.478	0.000	Rejected
Compatibility -> Social Media Adoption	0.425	0.420	0.043	9.995	0.000	Rejected
Social Media Knowledge -> Social Media Adoption	0.171	0.172	0.033	5.162	0.000	Rejected
Management Attitude -> Social Media Adoption	0.222	0.224	0.032	7.000	0.000	Rejected
Customer Influence -> Social Media Adoption	0.104	0.104	0.032	3.293	0.001	Rejected
Competitor Influence -> Social Media Adoption	0.032	0.034	0.032	12.985	0.000	Rejected

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2022.

In light of the statistical significance of variable parameters, the null hypotheses formulated for the study were rejected in all cases (see table 9). Increases in the level of social media adoption were expected to occur with higher levels of perceived benefits (0.148, t = 4.478,p< 0.05). This was in line with findings reached by researchers such as Wirdiyanti et al. (2021), and Mahliza et al. (2020). However, it contradicted finding put forward by Gekombe et al. (2019), which was in support of a non-statistically significant effect.In the same vein, compatibility was found to be a positive and significant predictor of social media adoption (0.425, t = 9.995, p < 0.05), implying that increased levels of compatibility would, therefore, bring about higher levels of social media adoption. This, although contradicting Ahmad et al. (2019), who found a non-statistical effect, echoed findings put forward by Trawnih et al. (2021), and Barnes and Jacobsen (2013).

Similarly, the results obtained provided sufficient evidence in support of a positive and significant effect (0.171, t = 5.162, p < 0.05) of social media knowledge on the adoption of social media among small businesses in the Abuja Municipal Area Council. Bogea and Brito (2018), Afifah et al. (2018), and Snyman and Visser (2014) are examples of researchers that have reached similar conclusion. Also, Management Attitude was estimated to affect Social Media Adoption positively, in a statistically significant manner (0.222, t = 7.000, p < 0.05). Improved levels of management attitude towards the adoption of social media as a promotional tool, would, therefore, bring about higher levels of adoption of social media as a promotional tool among small businesses in AMAC. This positive effect was supported by pertinent studies found in extant literature such as Pateli et al.

(2020), and Luu et al. (2019). This, however, contradicted Rasheed and Nafiz (2022), who indicated a non-statistically significant effect.

Furthermore, the effects of Customer Influence (0.104, t = 3.293, p < 0.05), and Competitor Influence (0.0.32, t = 12.958, p < 0.05) were estimated as positive and significant. Higher levels of customer and competitor influence will, therefore, bring about higher levels of adoption of social media among businesses in AMAC. The positive effect of customer influence is confirmed by Elnadi (2022), Sugandini et al. (2019) and Maduku et al. (2016). On the other hand, the positive effect of competitor influence is supported by Satar and Alariffi (2022), Beier and Früh (2020), Manideep et al. (2019).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was mainly concerned with the evaluation of the determinants of social media adoption among small businesses in the Abuja Municipal area Council. Spurred by the recognized general low usage of social media among small businesses in the FCT, the study used the TOE model to examine influencing factors operating under different contexts. In line with the direction and objectives of the study, hypotheses were formulated and tested with data obtained from a cross-section of small business owners across AMAC. The selected variables of the study were all found to be instrumental in explaining the levels of social media adoption as a promotional tool. It is, therefore, crucial that business-related interventions by pertinent stakeholders incorporate practical communication on the application of social media in business contexts, and real-life scenarios of how social media adoption benefits businesses. Business owners, on their part, can look outwards to other industries and geographical contexts to seek out replicable social media use among other similar businesses.

Additionally, small business owners need to go beyond their localized mindset in exploiting the potentials of social media. The overfamiliarity with an entirely face-to-face interaction with customers may be keeping them from adopting social media-based promotion strategies. Through social media, businesses can more effectively communicate with customers, as well as collect feedback and resolve known issues. There needs to be a reorientation of perception of social media use from personal, towards business applications. This will exploit the wide-ranging benefits of using social media from a business context.

Additionally, small business owners need to imbibe an innovative mindset and be open to the use of technology to boost their businesses. An online medium where customers can access business information without being physically present at the geographical location is good for business. Businesses have the opportunity to be pace setters in adopting social media in marketing communication. This can open up a new avenue, that would set them apart as market leaders, where customers can readily have access to business related information, and businesses can easily meet the need of their target market and target their services and products towards those needs, to serve their customer base better. Proper market analysis is also crucial in meeting business objectives. It would be beneficial for businesses keep at pace with social media adoption in their industry.

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