Effect of Social media marketing adoption on the market performance of small businesses in Plateau state

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Abstract
Notwithstanding the growing importance of digital platforms, many small businesses in Plateau State struggle to translate social media marketing adoption into tangible market performance gains. This study investigated how relative advantage, management support, and customer pressure influence the adoption of social media marketing and its subsequent effect on market performance. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 388 business operators across the state. Data analysis and hypothesis testing were conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed that, all the three adoption components were supported, and therefore, have positive and statistically significant effects on market performance. Customer pressure had the strongest positive effect on market performance, followed by management support and relative advantage. Collectively, these results imply that, while internal elements such as relative advantage and management support are also important influencing factors, customer-driven pressures overwhelmingly exert the strongest influence on market performance among small businesses in Plateau State. Based on these results, it is recommended that; to improve market performance, small business owners in Plateau State should leverage customer pressure by communicating social benefits, invest in training, and allocate resources in achieving superior market performance. Policymakers should also design targeted interventions that will assist SMEs leverage customer pressure as a catalyst for digital adoption to faster increased sales growth and the overall market competitiveness.

Keywords: Social media marketing, Relative advantage, Management support, Customer pressure, Mall businesses, Market performance

Introduction

The adoption of social media marketing has significantly reshaped the market performance of small businesses, often acting as a key differentiator in crowded and resource-constrained environments. Small businesses that strategically integrate platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, snapchat, among others, into their operations typically report measurable gains in sales growth, customer reach, customer acquisition, brand visibility, and competitive responsiveness compared to those relying solely on traditional or passive marketing methods. This digital shift correlates strongly with improved market performance indicators, including higher sales conversion rates, increased brand loyalty through direct consumer interaction, and agile responsiveness to market trends. However, the effect is not uniformly positive in the sense that, performance gains depend heavily on strategic content alignment, consistent analytics use, and the ability to convert online engagement into offline transactions. Small businesses that adopt a structured, insight-driven social media approach are better positioned to effectively engage and outperform their non-adopting peers in market share and customer retention, while those with sporadic or misaligned adoption risk wasted resources, losing customer base and consequently a decline in profitability index.

Notwithstanding the proven potential of social media marketing to drive visibility, efficiency, and growth, a significant number of small businesses in Plateau State continue to operate without its adoption, creating a critical performance gap that threatens long-term sustainability. By relying on traditional or passive methods such as word-of-mouth, foot traffic, or static websites, these businesses suffer from limited customer reach and low visibility, effectively rendering them invisible to digitally native consumers who discover brands primarily through social platforms. As a result, they encounter higher customer acquisition costs as they are compelled to engage expensive alternatives like print ads, direct mail, or radio, thereby eroding marketing efficiency and profitability.

Furthermore, the absence of social media engagement exposes these small businesses to a competitive disadvantage and stagnant growth, allowing agile, social-savvy rivals to capture market share, build brand loyalty, and leverage real-time customer insights while non-adopters fall into irrelevance, stalled revenue progression, weakening customer retention and decline in profitability. This situation raises concerns about the extent to which these small businesses are effectively leveraging social media marketing as a strategic tool, as well as the extent to which the integration of social media marketing in their business models can help them attain higher levels of performance.

Failure to adopt social media marketing does not merely represent a missed opportunity but it actively undermines and weakens market competitiveness, drives up operational costs, and jeopardizes the long-term growth path of the business. These gaps have created a need to understand the factors influencing adoption and how specific drivers like relative advantage, management support and customer pressure affect the overall market performance. The study, therefore, sought to determine the specific effect of social media adoption in marketing on the performance of small businesses in the state, towards providing informed understanding, as well as strategic responses for improving the business landscape in Plateau State.

Specifically, the study conceptualised social media marketing adoption factors in terms of Relative Advantage, Management Support and Customer Pressure based on Tornatzky and Fleischer's (1990) Technology - Organization - Environment (TOE) framework. The TOE model explains the adoption of technology as influenced by technological, organisational and environmental factors. Within this perspective, the technological component focuses on relative advantage with focus on the extent to which the technology is perceived as being better than the existing methods. In the organisational context, management support, as a crucial internal characteristic of the firm, can be vital in determining adoption decisions. This is especially critical in small businesses where the owner-manager is solely responsible for the strategic direction of the business.

In the environmental context, on the other hand, are external conditions and pressures that influence an enterprise's decision to adopt and implement new technologies. Here, a firm can be compelled to adopt technology in response to evolving customer needs and expectations, as businesses increasingly respond to digitally active consumers who demand online presence and engagement. The study integrates the TOE with dynamic capabilities theory in explaining how technology adoption factors, in this case, social media marketing, explain performance outcomes among small businesses in the state.

The study, by doing so, contributes to the understanding of how these businesses can leverage technology for improved competitiveness, growth, and sustainability, while also highlighting the contextual challenges that must be addressed to maximise the benefits of digital transformation.

The study aimed to achieve the following objectives.

1) Examine the effect of relative advantage on the market performance of small businesses in Plateau State.
2) Measure the effect of management support on the market performance of small businesses in Plateau State.
3) Ascertain the effect of customer pressure on the market performance of small businesses in Plateau State.

Literature Review

Concept of Market Performance

Market performance - encompassing sales growth, customer reach, customer acquisition, brand visibility and competitive responsiveness - remains a critical yet often elusive outcome for small businesses in developing economies, where resource constraints and infrastructural deficits limit traditional marketing effectiveness (Akinbode and Fagbohun, 2020; Ogunyomi and Bruning, 2016). Modern advancements in technology have shaped various aspects of human activities, including the way businesses operate within various sectors across the world. The growing innovations in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is emphasized by Omoniyi et al. (2024) to have permeated various economic sectors, including commerce, shaping the way organisations operate and interact. The recognition of the importance of digital technology goes beyond convenience, to a realisation of the range of possibilities and opportunities that can be strategically harnessed to enhance sustainable performance, growth, and resilience (Ramawela and Chukwuere, 2020).

Within the context of small businesses, the integration of technology into operations provides opportunities to streamline processes, improve efficiency, reach new markets, and respond more effectively to customer demands. Firm performance has often been conceptualized

as the capacity of an enterprise to utilize its resources in a manner that ensures both efficiency and effectiveness in meeting organizational objectives (Taouab and Issor, 2019). Market performance is a key dimension of business performance that specifically focuses on the effectiveness of a company's market operations. This includes the firm's ability to attract and retain customers, respond to changing market demands, and achieve a favourable position within its industry. Yusheng and Ibrahim (2020) explain market performance as a vital dimension of firm performance reflecting a firm's effectiveness in achieving favourable outcomes in its target market, specifically its capacity to meet customer needs, strengthen competitive positioning, and respond to evolving opportunities and challenges.

The study measured market performance in terms of sales growth; the concept, according to Li et al. (2022), directly reflects a firm's ability to convert its strategic initiatives into tangible financial outcomes; it measures the expansion of revenue through increased transaction volumes, broader customer bases, or improved product and service offerings. For small businesses, it is not merely a financial metric but also a sign of competitiveness and sustainability. At a practical level, sales growth often translates into increases in sales volume, which epitomises the firm's ability to stimulate demand, capture market share, and sustain revenue streams (Omondi, 2017). The importance of sales growth lies in its ability to help managers track overall market growth or decline, identify trends in consumer choice, and assess the effectiveness of campaigns such as branding, advertising, and customer relationship management (Negi, 2024). Furthermore, as Alase et al. (2021) argue, sales volume provides a relative measure of success by benchmarking performance against competitors, offering a more objective indicator than internal financial ratios alone.

Social Media Marketing Adoption: Relative Advantage

Social media adoption refers to the deliberate integration of social media into the marketing processes of a business enterprise. Oyewole (2019) notes that the adoption of new technology occurs through a comprehensive process encompassing the acceptance, integration, and utilisation of technological innovations in daily operations or routines of individuals, organisations or communities. Based on the TOE framework, a crucial factor influencing social media adoption is perceived relative advantage. This refers to the extent to which social media technology is perceived as being superior to the existing tools, methods or practices it is intended to replace (Tornatzky et al., 1990).

This attribute is central to understanding why SMEs make adoption decisions, as it captures the tangible and intangible benefits that firms expect to gain. Hence, businesses may weigh whether technologies can deliver measurable benefits, such as in economic and operational contexts. Swani (2021) asserts that a firm's adoption behaviour improves in tandem with the scale of benefits it perceives from the technology. Where the adoption of social media marketing is perceived as significantly improving competitiveness and productivity, businesses are far more likely to adopt them. Conversely, when benefits appear marginal or unclear, adoption is often delayed or rejected despite potential long-term advantages.

Social Media Marketing Adoption: Management Support

Management support is one of the most decisive factors influencing technology adoption. It reflects the extent to which corporate leaders and business owners perceive the significance of adopting digital technologies and how actively they allocate resources, establish strategic visions, and encourage employees to embrace transformation (Maroufkhani et al., 2020). In the context of social media marketing, management support refers to the extent to which top management or business owners are committed to and actively involved in the adoption and implementation of social media marketing within the business. It encompasses the provision of necessary resources, strategic direction, training, and encouragement required to successfully integrate social media into business operations.

Within small businesses owners or managers are the chief determiners of the strategic direction taken, and are thus responsible for providing an environment conducive for technological adoption (Popli et al., 2022; Baabdullah et al., 2021). Attitudinal commitment from leadership is therefore crucial. Managers who understand the strategic significance of digital adoption and maintain positive attitudes toward change are more likely to foster an organisational culture that embraces learning, experimentation, and innovation (Ooi et al., 2018). Therefore, owners or managers who recognise the strategic importance of social media marketing are more likely to allocate time, finances, and human resources toward its adoption.

Social Media Marketing Adoption: Customer Pressure

In the environmental context, customer pressure can also play a role in determining adoption of technology among firms. Customer pressure in the context of social media marketing adoption refers to the influence exerted by customers on businesses to adopt and utilise social media platforms as part of their service delivery and communication processes. In today's digital age, customers increasingly expect businesses to maintain an active online presence, respond promptly to inquiries, and engage with them through social media channels. Maroufkhani et al. (2020) explains this effect as the demands and expectations of clients that compel firms to innovate, ensuring that their products, services, and operations remain aligned with evolving market behaviours. This pressure can arise from changing consumer behaviour, increased digital literacy, and the widespread use of smartphones and internet services.

Customers often prefer businesses that are easily accessible online, provide timely updates, and offer interactive engagement. Importantly, Sahu et al. (2018) argue that customer pressure may not always manifest explicitly through direct demands but often operates implicitly through market behaviour. Declining patronage of firms that lack digital visibility, slower customer service, or inconvenient payment methods indirectly pressures SMEs to embrace technologies. This subtle yet powerful influence is reinforced by the growing ability of customers to compare businesses online, share feedback instantly, and switch to competitors that provide better digital experiences. Consequently, small businesses may feel compelled to adopt social media marketing in order to meet these expectations and remain competitive. As customer expectations diffuse across customer segments, businesses are compelled to reconfigure their business models in line with these evolving demands (Matarazzo et al., 2021).

Empirical Review

Relative Advantage and Market Performance

Nautwima et al. (2025), in an empirical study carried out among SMEs in Namibia, utilised an explanatory design in a PLS-SEM analysis of survey data obtained from a cross-section of 97 owner-managers in Windhoek. Findings indicated that the effect of relative advantage in technology adoption was positive and statistically significant in predicting performance among businesses in the study area. In a related study conducted in Saudi Arabia, Alhumoudi (2025) employed a mixed-methods approach in the examination of the examination of digital technology adoption effect on performance. Analysis of survey data from a convenience sample of 390 respondents showed a positive and significant effect of relative advantage on the performance of businesses.

Other related studies such as Qalati et al. (2024), conducted in Pakistan, El-Shihy and Mohamed (2023) in Egypt, Niraj et al. (2024) conducted in Thailand, and Phiet's (2024) study among businesses in Vietnam, also found positive and significant effect of relative advantage in technology adoption on business performance. However, Faiz et al. (2024) in their Indonesian study did not find relative advantage to have significant effect on business performance. This finding was echoed by Gekombe et al. (2019) in their study among SMEs in the Kenyan fashion industry.

Management Support and Market Performance

In their Indonesian study, Ruslaini et al. (2025) examined the effect of digital technology on the performance of SMEs using an explanatory research design, in which survey data was sourced from a purposive sample of 315 business owners and managers and analysed using Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modelling (CB-SEM). Findings showed a positive and significant effect of management support on business performance. In another study carried out in Thanh Hoa, Nguyen and Nguyen (2025) applied PLS-SEM analysis to primary data obtained from a field survey involving a sample of 594 business heads in an explanatory study.

From estimated results, it was found that management support for technology adoption positively predicted business performance. Pertinent studies including Grimaldo et al. (2024), Almashawreh (2023), and Omrani et al. (2024) were also in support of a positive and significant effect of management support on business performance. Contrastingly, Obinna-Azubuike et al. (2025), Wasudawan and Sim (2024), and Rasheed and Nafiz (2022) did not find management support to significantly predict performance.

Customer Pressure and Market Performance

In an Egyptian study, Elnadi (2022) examined critical factors affecting the adoption of digital technology among SMEs. Using a causal approach, survey data was acquired from 20 business owner-managers and anlysed via multiple regression. Findings were in support of a positive and significant effect of customer pressure on business performance. A similar study was carried out by Putro et al. (2025) among culinary SMEs in Bogor District, West Java in Indonesia. In their quantitative approach, primary data was obtained, through a field survey providing 125 sets of valid responses from business owners. Analysis was carried out via PLS-SEM, results from which showed customer pressure in technology adoption to be a positive and significant predictor of performance among businesses. A number of other studies, including Susanty et al. (2025), Rofi'i (2025), Kiprono and Rono (2023), and Chiekezie and Ezekwe (2024) were also in

support of a positive and significant effect of customer pressure on the performance of businesses within various contexts.

Theoretical Framework

Integrated Technology-Organization-Environmental (TOE) Framework and Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT)

This study employed a combined theoretical foundation integrating the TOE framework and Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT). Proposed by Tornatzky et al. (1990), the TOE framework suggests that a firm's adoption of technological innovations is influenced by three contextual dimensions: technological, organizational, and environmental. The technological context addresses the characteristics and readiness of adoptable technologies; the organizational context focuses on internal resources like managerial support; and the environmental context considers external pressures, including competition.

Widely applied in SME technology adoption research, this framework offers a structured approach to examining factors that enable or constrain adoption decisions and subsequent performance outcomes (Nguyen and Nguyen, 2025; Ta and Lin, 2023; Wasudawan and Sim, 2024). DCT complements TOE by explaining how firms deliberately build capabilities to sense and seize opportunities and transform operations to sustain competitive advantage. Together, the two frameworks provide a holistic lens: TOE identifies the contextual drivers of adoption, while DCT explains how firms internally leverage those drivers to achieve superior performance. This integrated perspective offers a comprehensive explanation of how social media marketing adoption influences the performance of SMEs in Plateau State.

Methodology

This study employed an explanatory research design, a deliberate choice aimed at rigorously examining the direct relationships among the variables and how they affect market performance outcomes. Specifically, the design enabled the investigation of how three exogenous constructs - relative advantage, management support, and customer pressure - influence the endogenous construct of market performance among small businesses in Plateau State. Unlike descriptive designs that simply observe phenomena, the explanatory approach allowed for hypothesis testing and inference, making it well-suited for the study's objectives.

The target population comprised all owners or managers of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operating within Plateau State. According to the data published by the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN, 2021), the total number of registered businesses in the state stood at 10,163. Given the impracticality of surveying this entire population due to constraints of time, cost, and accessibility, a representative sample was statistically derived. To achieve this, the widely accepted Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination formula for finite populations was applied.

This formula calculates the required sample size (n) as the quotient derived from the population size and desired confidence and precision levels, ensuring that findings drawn from the sample can be generalized back to the broader population with acceptable margins of error.

$$\frac{\chi^2 Np(1-p)}{e^2(N-1)+\chi^2 p(1-p)},$$

Where:

χ2- Chi-square at 1 degree of freedom and 95% confidence level (3.841)

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N- Population size
p- Population proportion (assumed to be 0.5 for maximum sample size)
e- Margin of error (0.05) therefore,

$$n = \frac{3.841(10163)(0.5)(1-0.5)}{0.05^2(10163-1)+3.841(0.5)(1-0.5)}$$

$$= \frac{39036.08(0.5)(0.5)}{0.0025(10{,}162)+3.841(0.5)(0.5)}$$

$$= \frac{39036.08(0.25)}{25.405+3.841(0.25)}$$

$$= \frac{9759.021}{25.405+0.96025}$$

$$= \frac{9759.021}{26.36525}$$

$$\approx 370$$

Although the necessary sample size was computed as 370 respondents, this number was increased by 74 respondents (20%) to correct for non-response or missing data, which is a common problem with empirical studies of this nature. Thus, the number of respondents who participate in the study was 444. Multistage sampling was employed in the selection of respondents in the study area. Firstly, one Local Government Area was randomly selected from each senatorial zone. Areas of high business concentration were then determined.

Subsequently, respondents were chosen based on proportionate quotas of 148 across each of the three locations. 444 questionnaires were administered, 415 were retrieved, and 388 were certified valid for analysis. The study relied on the use of primary data acquired, in a field survey, through the administration of a closed-ended questionnaire. The research instrument was designed in two sections. The first was concerned with collecting biographical information of respondents including age, sex and area of business specialisation. The second, on the other hand, contained measurement scales for model constructs evaluated based on the 5-point Likert scale response framework. Measurement scales were adapted from related studies in which they were previously validated and successfully deployed.

For Relative Advantage, scale items from Moore and Benbasat (1991) were operationalised for the current study. Additionally, the Management support scale was adapted from Jiménez-Barrionuevo et al. (2011), while Customer Pressure was measured using the scale provided by Fiaz (2024). Furthermore, the Market Performance scale was sourced from Hailemariam (2020), focused on the measurement of sales growth as a proxy for performance. The administration of the instrument was carried out in both physical and electronic formats. The former followed the Drop-Off/Pick-Up (DOPU), while electronic copies of the questionnaire were developed using Google Forms and distributed via Whatsapp. Path analysis, via the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) approach, was applied in examining the causal relationship between determining factors and business performance. This was achieved with the use of the SmartPLS statistical software.

Results

After data screening and missing value analysis of 460 retrieved questionnaires, 384 valid responses were retained as the final sample. The sample was dominated by retail (28.9%) and services (24.7%), followed by agriculture (20.1%) and manufacturing (17.5%), indicating that trade and service activities prevail in Plateau State's SME sector. Most businesses were well-established: 63.2% had operated for over five years, and 35.1% for more than ten years,

reflecting stability and market experience. Educationally, 48.5% of owners held tertiary qualifications and 14.4% postgraduate degrees, suggesting moderate to high managerial capacity. Gender distribution was male-dominated (68.6%). Overall, the sample comprised experienced, moderately educated, predominantly male operators in trade and services.

Descriptive statistics (Table 1) showed low-to-moderate responses across all items, indicating that small businesses remain in early or transitional stages of social media adoption. Benefits like productivity, competitiveness, and customer engagement recorded moderate means - recognized but not fully realized. Cost reduction scored lower, implying ongoing expenses for advertising, data, and skills training. Managerial involvement showed comparatively lower means, reflecting weak management support, limited resources and training, and informal adoption not strategically embedded. Customer-related items scored moderately higher, indicating some pressure from expectations and feedback, though insufficient to drive full adoption. Business performance outcomes - sales growth, customer reach, customer acquisition, brand visibility and market response - were also moderate, likely due to low managerial support and incomplete social media utilization.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Construct Indicators

Indicator		Mean	Std. Dev
RAD1	Social media marketing improves our business productivity	3.080	1.020
RAD2	Using social media marketing enhances the quality of our products and services through customer interaction and feedback	2.970	1.060
RAD3	Social media marketing offers better performance than traditional marketing methods such as word-of-mouth and print advertising	3.120	1.010
RAD4	Adoption of social media marketing reduces our operational and marketing costs	2.780	1.100
RAD5	Social media marketing improves our competitiveness compared to other businesses	3.150	0.980
MST1	Top management actively supports the adoption of social media marketing in our business	2.950	1.070
MST2	Management provides sufficient resources such as internet access, devices, and advertising budget for social media marketing	2.810	1.110
MST3	Management encourages training and skill development for effective use of social media marketing	2.740	1.130
MST4	Management monitors and evaluates the progress of social media marketing implementation	2.690	1.150
MST5	Management communicates the importance of adopting social media marketing for business growth	2.900	1.080
CUP1	Adopting social media marketing is essential to meet the demands of our customers	3.200	0.990
CUP2	Customer expectations influence our decision to use social media marketing platforms	3.140	1.020
CUP3	Customer feedback through online platforms encourages us to adopt social media marketing	3.250	0.970
CUP4	Customer satisfaction depends on our active presence on social media platforms	2.980	1.050

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CUP5	There is a strong customer-driven need for us to adopt social media marketing and digital innovation	3.180	1.000
MKP1	On average, our business sales have increased over the past three years	3.050	1.010
MKP2	Market receipts have increased over the past three years	2.960	1.040
MKP3	Our market performance has been impressive relative to competitors over the past three years	2.880	1.070
MKP4	Our business has been attracting new customers consistently over the last three years	3.120	0.990
MKP5	Market response to our products and services has been positive over the past three years	3.080	1.000
MKP6	Revenue from our products has increased over the past three years	2.940	1.030

Note. SmartPLS Output.

Data from field responses highlighted the fact that, although there is awareness of its potential benefits and some degree of customer-driven motivation, the lack of strong managerial backing and limited strategic implementation constrain its effectiveness in enhancing business performance. As is conventional with PLS-SEM analysis, both measurement model assessment and structural model estimation were carried out towards meeting research objectives. In the assessment of measurement model accuracy, both reliability and validity measures were applied in the study. This commenced with the determination of indicator reliability, as stipulated by Hair et al. (2022). Indicators were determined to be reliable at loading values of at least 0.708, square of loading values of at least 0.5 and statistical significance at 5% alpha level. These criteria informed the retention of the indicators presented in Table 2. Consequently, indicators which did not meet these thresholds: CUP2, CUP4, MKP6, MST1 and RAD2 were deleted from their respective measurement models.

Table 2: Measurement Indicator Statistics

Indicator	Loading	Loading^2	Std. Dev.	t	P Value
CUP1 <- Customer Pressure	0.717	0.514	0.033	21.762	0.000
CUP3 <- Customer Pressure	0.865	0.748	0.012	69.802	0.000
CUP5 <- Customer Pressure	0.846	0.716	0.015	57.688	0.000
MKP1 <- Market Performance	0.818	0.669	0.018	46.050	0.000
MKP2 <- Market Performance	0.807	0.651	0.019	42.989	0.000
MKP4 <- Market Performance	0.827	0.684	0.016	51.142	0.000
MKP5 <- Market Performance	0.853	0.728	0.014	61.575	0.000
MST2 <- Management Support	0.866	0.750	0.016	55.190	0.000
MST3 <- Management Support	0.845	0.714	0.019	44.188	0.000
MST4 <- Management Support	0.810	0.656	0.027	30.125	0.000
MST5 <- Management Support	0.831	0.691	0.024	34.477	0.000
RAD1 <- Relative Advantage	0.864	0.746	0.014	63.033	0.000
RAD3 <- Relative Advantage	0.870	0.757	0.013	68.438	0.000
RAD4 <- Relative Advantage	0.859	0.738	0.015	56.375	0.000
RAD5 <- Relative Advantage	0.847	0.717	0.017	51.099	0.000

Note. SmartPLS Output.

Construct internal consistency reliability was also confirmed with satisfactory Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability coefficients. As shown in Table 3, Reliability values for all constructs were above the 0.7 threshold.

Table 3: Internal Consistency Reliability for Model Constructs

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Customer Pressure	0.741	0.765	0.852	0.660
Management Support	0.860	0.874	0.904	0.703
Market Performance	0.845	0.846	0.896	0.683
Relative Advantage	0.883	0.884	0.919	0.740

Note. SmartPLS Output.

Furthermore, both convergent validity (using AVE), and divergent validity, via Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratios, were tested among constructs. Both were confirmed for the measurement model. Computed AVE values, as can be seen in Table 3, ranged from 0.660 to 0.740, confirming convergent validity with values higher than 0.5 for all constructs. For construct pairs in Table 4, HTMT ratios were measured against the conservative threshold of 0.85. all HTMT coefficients were far lower than this value, confirming the uniqueness of each construct, reflected in the high ability of indicators to provide measurement for their underlying construct.

Table 4: Divergent Validity Results

	Customer Pressure	Management Support	Market Performance
Management Support	0.280		
Market Performance	0.025	0.345	
Relative Advantage	0.077	0.069	0.200

Note. SmartPLS Output.

The confirmation of internal consistency and both convergent and divergent validity reflected the accuracy of the measurement model, and allowed for the estimation of structural model relationships. This was achieved via a bootstrapping process involving 5,000 subsamples (see Figure 1).

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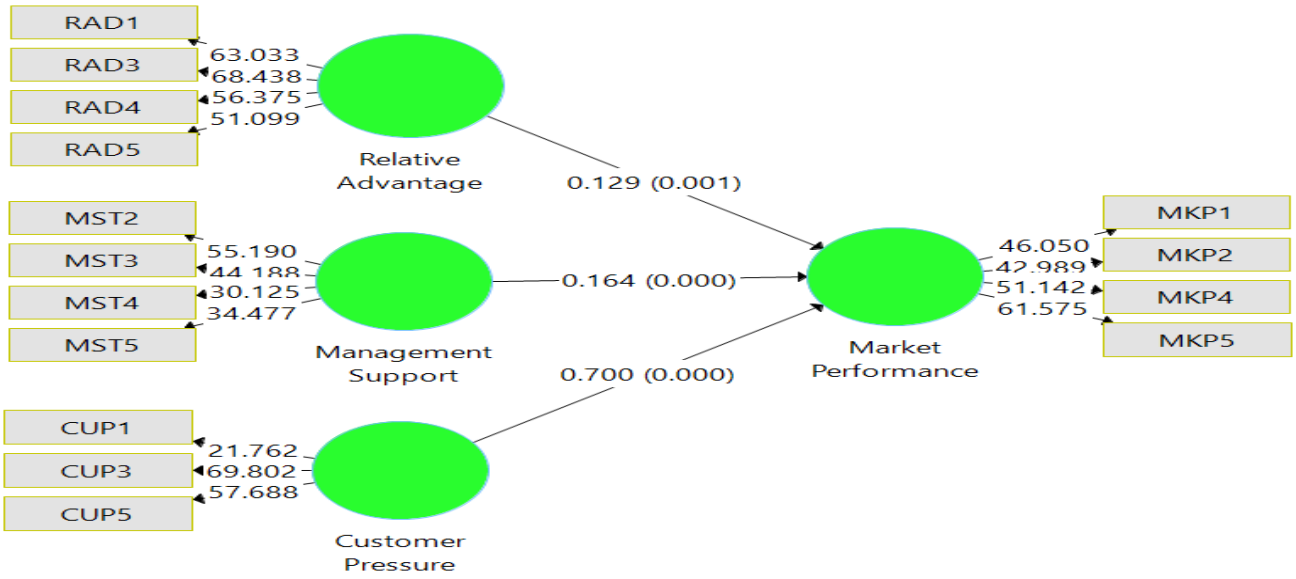
Figure 1: Estimated Path Model Showing Direct Relationship between Selected Exogenous Constructs and Market Performance.



Note. SmartPLS Output.

However, to ensure the accuracy of path coefficients, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were used in testing for the presence of multicollinearity. VIF coefficients, presented in Table 5, were all less than the adopted conservative threshold of 3 indicating that multicollinearity was not a problem.

Table 5: VIF for Inner Model

	Market Performance
Customer Pressure	2.013
Management Support	1.078
Relative Advantage	1.937

Note. SmartPLS Output.

In-sample predictive power was determined with the use of the Coefficient of Multiple Determination (R2). The adjusted value of 0.99, shown in Table 6, indicated that about 70% of changes in Market Performance are attributable to the exogenous constructs of Relative Advantage, Management Support and Customer pressure. This is indicative of a high explanatory power.

Table 6: In-Sample Predictive Power

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Market Performance	0.701	0.699

Note. SmartPLS Output.

Estimated path coefficients, their associated significance statistics, as well as test of hypothesis are presented in Table 7. All path relationships were estimated to be positive and statistically significant at 5% alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not accepted in any of the cases.

Table 7: Estimated Path Relationships with Associated Mean, Standard Deviation and Significance Statistics

Path Relationship	β	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p Value	HO Decision
Relative Advantage -> Market Performance	0.129	0.131	0.040	3.243	0.001	**Not Accepted**
Management Support -> Market Performance	0.164	0.165	0.032	5.078	0.000	**Not Accepted**
Customer Pressure -> Market Performance	0.700	0.699	0.037	19.003	0.000	**Not Accepted**

Note. SmartPLS Output.

Discussion of findings

Findings reveals that, all three hypothesized relationships are statistically significant, leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses in each case. First, relative advantage demonstrated a positive and significant effect on market performance ($\beta = 0.129$, $p = 0.001$), suggesting that small businesses in Plateau State that perceive social media marketing as beneficial compared to traditional methods tend to experience modest improvements in market outcomes. However, the relatively low beta value indicates that perceived advantage alone is not a strong driver.

Management support showed a stronger positive effect ($\beta = 0.164$, $p < 0.001$), implying that, when owners and managers actively provide resources, training, and strategic direction for social media adoption, market performance improves more noticeably. Customer pressure exerted a remarkably strong influence on market performance ($\beta = 0.700$, $p < 0.001$), by far the most dominant predictor. This finding underscores that, external demand, expectations, and feedback from customers are the primary forces driving small businesses to adopt social media marketing in ways that enhance sales growth, customer reach, customer acquisition, brand visibility and market responsiveness. Collectively, these results suggest that, while internal factors like relative advantage and management support matter, customer-driven pressures overwhelmingly shape market performance outcomes among SMEs in Plateau State.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study concluded that relative advantage, management support, and customer pressure each have positive and statistically significant effects on the market performance of small businesses in Plateau State. Customer pressure emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.700$, $p < 0.001$), followed by management support ($\beta = 0.164$, $p < 0.001$) and relative advantage ($\beta = 0.129$, $p = 0.001$), leading to the rejection of all null hypotheses. Customer pressure as the dominant predictor indicates that, external customer demands are the primary drivers of successful social media marketing adoption among SMEs in Plateau State.

The study recommended that, small business owners actively communicate the tangible advantages of social media marketing to their teams, invest in structured training and resource provision to strengthen management support, and establish responsive mechanisms for capturing and acting upon customer feedback and expectations. Policymakers and business development agencies should also design targeted interventions that help SMEs leverage customer pressure as a catalyst for digital adoption, thereby fostering improved sales

growth, customer reach, customer acquisition, brand visibility and overall market competitiveness.

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