

**ST MARY'S UNIVERSITY**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**



**THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON BRAND  
AWARENESS: THE CASE OF SAFARICOM ETHIOPIA**

**BY**

**ZENEBE ZEWELD**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION**

**Advisor: Yibeltal. N.(PHD)**

**JULY, 2024**

**ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia**

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## **List of Acronyms**

- SMM: Social Media Marketing
- SMP: Social Media Platforms

## ABSTRACT

*This study investigates the relationship between Social Media Marketing (SMM) and Brand Awareness within the context of the telecom industry, specifically focusing on Safaricom Ethiopia. A theoretical gap exists in the current literature concerning the specific dimensions within SMM that contribute to brand awareness. While existing research acknowledges the importance of SMM in enhancing brand recognition, there remains a lack of comprehensive analysis regarding these dimensions (Li & Bernoff, 2008). From a practical standpoint, there is a dearth of industry-specific insights in the realm of SMM and Brand Awareness, particularly within the telecom sector (Smith & Johnson, 2015). This study aims to bridge this gap by empirically examining the effect of content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and loyalty programs on brand awareness, following the framework proposed by Cyr, Head, and Ivanov (2009). Utilizing a descriptive and explanatory research methodology, data was collected from a sample of 361 Safaricom Ethiopia's. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were employed to analyze the data. The key findings revealed significant positive relationships between all five dimensions of SMM and Brand Awareness. Content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and loyalty programs were all found to significantly enhance brand awareness. The study recommends that Safaricom should optimize its content strategy, maintain a consistent update schedule, enhance interactive features, strategically manage loyalty programs, and continuously monitor and evaluate its social media marketing efforts. These recommendations are aimed at leveraging the identified SMM dimensions to enhance brand awareness and achieve better marketing outcomes. In addition to quantitative analysis, qualitative insights were gleaned from an interview conducted with Safaricom Ethiopia's Social Media Marketing Manager. The interview provided valuable context and depth to the quantitative findings, offering insights into the practical implementation of social media marketing strategies within the company. The manager emphasized the importance of content relevance in engaging Safaricom's audience, stating that tailored content addressing customer needs and preferences contributed significantly to brand awareness. Additionally, the interview highlighted the strategic role of update frequency in maintaining brand visibility and relevance in a dynamic market environment. The manager also discussed the challenges faced in implementing loyalty programs effectively, underscoring the need for targeted and personalized approaches to drive brand loyalty and awareness. By integrating insights from the interview with quantitative findings, this study offers a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between SMM dimensions and brand awareness for Safaricom Ethiopia. The interview analysis enhances the applicability and relevance of the study's recommendations, providing actionable insights for Safaricom's social media marketing strategies..*

**Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Brand Awareness, Content Relevance, Update Frequency, Perceived Enjoyment, Interactivity, Loyalty Programs, Telecom Industry, Safaricom Ethiopia.**

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

The term Social Media Marketing (SMM) encompasses various strategies employed by organizations to promote their products and services through social media platforms. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), SMM involves the use of social media channels to engage with the audience and create brand awareness. Brand awareness, as defined by Aaker (1996), is the extent to which a brand is recognized by potential customers, including both brand recall and brand recognition. Social Media Marketing (SMM) is a multifaceted strategy encompassing various online platforms to promote products or services, interact with the audience, and build brand identity (Smith et al., 2015). Scholars have offered diverse definitions of SMM, reflecting its dynamic nature. According to Smith et al. (2015), SMM involves leveraging social media channels for marketing and advertising purposes. In parallel, Brand Awareness is a crucial marketing concept elucidating the extent to which consumers recognize and recall a brand. Keller (1993) posits that brand awareness involves both brand recognition and brand recall, with recognition referring to the consumer's ability to identify the brand under various conditions and recall representing the ability to retrieve the brand from memory.

Numerous studies have delved into the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness, shedding light on the intricate dynamics at play. In their seminal work, Chang and Thorson (2004) explored the impact of social media on brand perception, emphasizing the role of user-generated content. Additionally, Smith and Johnson (2018) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis, synthesizing findings from various studies to discern patterns and trends in the SMM and Brand Awareness landscape.

In the context of the telecommunication industry, previous research has investigated the effects of Social Media Marketing. For instance, Wang and Kim (2017) explored the role of SMM in the telecom sector, emphasizing its influence on customer perception and brand awareness. These studies provide a foundation for understanding the dynamics of SMM in specific industries.

Furthermore, research by Johnson and Smith (2015) delves into the role of influencer marketing within the context of SMM, asserting that strategic collaborations with influencers can significantly amplify brand visibility and recall. This suggests a nuanced layer to the relationship between SMM and brand awareness, emphasizing the importance of considering influencer dynamics in the telecom sector. Moreover, a study by Chen et al. (2020) extends the discourse to the impact of user-generated content (UGC) on brand awareness. UGC, when strategically incorporated into SMM campaigns, has been found to not only enhance brand recall but also foster a sense of authenticity and community engagement. Additionally, the globalization of social media platforms introduces a cross-cultural dimension to the study of SMM and brand awareness. Research by Hofstede (1980) on cultural dimensions suggests that cultural factors can influence the effectiveness of SMM strategies. Understanding these cross-cultural dynamics becomes essential for telecom companies operating in diverse markets.

For the purposes of this study, perceived information quality will be examined as a multidimensional construct, encompassing content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and the presence of loyalty programs within the context of social media marketing. These dimensions are considered antecedents of social media marketing, drawing inspiration from established literature in website design (Cyr, Head, & Ivanov, 2009). Recognizing the importance of these factors, this study aims to unravel their individual and collective impact on brand awareness within the realm of Social Media Marketing.

Safaricom, originally established in Kenya, is a leading telecommunications company that has significantly transformed the digital landscape in the region. Founded in 1997 as a fully owned subsidiary of Telkom Kenya, Safaricom began its operations in 2000 after a strategic partnership with Vodafone Group Plc. Over the years, Safaricom has grown exponentially, driven by its innovative services and commitment to providing reliable communication solutions. It is renowned for pioneering the revolutionary mobile money service, M-Pesa, which has facilitated financial inclusion and economic growth in Kenya and beyond. Building on its success in Kenya, Safaricom has expanded its operations to Ethiopia, aiming to replicate its innovative approach and cater to the growing demand for advanced telecommunications services in the region.

This study attempted to elucidate the intricate interplay between SMM and its subsequent influence on brand awareness. By delving into the dimensions of content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and loyalty programs, the research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms at play in the social media marketing landscape. Through empirical investigation and analysis, this study endeavors to contribute valuable insights to both academic literature and practical marketing strategies, thereby enhancing our comprehension of the effect of Social Media Marketing on brand awareness.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

In contemporary marketing landscapes, the significance of Brand Awareness transcends mere recognition; it stands as a pivotal determinant of a company's market position and consumer perception (Wang, 2017). This assertion holds particularly true within the telecom industry, where cutthroat competition and dynamic consumer preferences underscore the criticality of understanding the factors that shape brand awareness. Consequently, this research endeavors to contribute nuanced insights that extend beyond the superficial exploration of Social Media Marketing (SMM) and Brand Awareness (Wang, 2017).

While Social Media Marketing has become an indispensable facet of modern marketing strategies, a glaring gap persists in comprehending the intricate impact of SMM on brand awareness. Despite the proliferation of research on SMM and brand awareness as standalone concepts, the intricate interplay between these constructs warrants further scrutiny. Existing literature offers broad insights into the general effects of social media on marketing outcomes, yet fails to provide an exhaustive analysis of the specific dimensions within SMM that drive brand awareness (Li & Bernoff, 2008).

This study aims to address several key gaps:

A theoretical gap exists in the current literature concerning the nuanced relationship between Social Media Marketing (SMM) and Brand Awareness. While existing research acknowledges the importance of SMM in enhancing brand recognition, there remains a lack of comprehensive analysis regarding the specific dimensions within SMM that contribute to brand awareness (Li & Bernoff, 2008).

From a practical standpoint, there is a dearth of industry-specific insights in the realm of SMM and Brand Awareness, particularly within the telecom sector (Smith & Johnson, 2015). While some studies have explored the relationship between SMM and brand awareness in general, there is a notable scarcity of research focusing on specific industries. This study seeks to bridge this gap by conducting empirical investigations within the telecom industry, thereby furnishing industry-specific insights and recommendations.

Acknowledging the pivotal role of perceived information quality in SMM, this study endeavors to dissect this construct into dimensions such as content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and the presence of loyalty programs (Cyr, Head, & Ivanov, 2009). The scanty exploration into these dimensions poses a challenge in comprehensively unraveling their individual and collective impact on brand awareness.

By addressing these theoretical and practical gaps, this research endeavors to furnish a more granular and industry-specific comprehension of the effect of Social Media Marketing on brand awareness. Such insights are poised to contribute not only to theoretical advancements but also to practical implications for marketers and businesses...

### **1.3. Research Questions**

- What is the effect of content relevance in Social Media Marketing (SMM) on brand awareness within the context of Safaricom in the telecom industry?
- How does update frequency on Safaricom's social media platforms influence brand awareness among its audience?
- To what extent does perceived enjoyment of social media content affect brand awareness of Safaricom?
- What is the effect of interactivity in Safaricom's social media marketing on brand awareness?
- How does the presence of loyalty programs on Safaricom's social media platforms affect brand awareness among consumers?

## **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

### **1.4.1. General Objective**

The general objective of this study is to assess the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness in the case of Safaricom.

### **1.4.2. Specific Objectives**

- To investigate the effect of content relevance in Social Media Marketing (SMM) on brand awareness within the context of Safaricom in the telecom industry.
- To identify how update frequency on Safaricom's social media platforms influence brand awareness among its audience.
- To assess the extent to which perceived enjoyment of social media content affect brand awareness of Safaricom.
- To explore the effect of interactivity in Safaricom's social media marketing on brand awareness.
- To inspect the effect of presence of loyalty programs on Safaricom's social media platforms and its effect on brand awareness among consumers?

## **1.5. Significance of the Study**

This research is crucial for the student's academic journey, fostering intellectual development and research skills. It offers a practical application of MBA program concepts, deepening understanding in marketing strategies within diverse business environments. The study showcases the university's academic excellence and research capabilities. It aligns with the institution's mission to nurture critical thinking and research skills among students, enhancing its reputation and academic profile.

The research enhances the academic and research profile of the MBA department. It reflects the department's dedication to advancing business administration knowledge and providing students with meaningful research opportunities. The findings directly benefit Safaricom by offering insights into the effectiveness of their Social Media Marketing strategies in Ethiopia. This

informs strategic decision-making, helps refine marketing approaches, and aids in better positioning within the competitive telecom industry. Overall, the study bridges academia and practical application, benefiting both the student's academic journey and contributing valuable insights to Safaricom's marketing strategies in the Ethiopian market.

## **1.6. The Scope of the Study**

**Conceptual Scope:** This study concentrates on specific dimensions within the realm of Social Media Marketing (SMM) and brand awareness, focusing on the telecom industry and utilizing Safaricom as a case study. The following dimensions form the conceptual scope of the investigation: Content Relevance; Update Frequency; Perceived Enjoyment; Interactivity; Loyalty Programs.

**Geography:** The geographical scope of the study is Ethiopia, with a particular focus on Addis Ababa, where Safaricom's head office is located. The choice of Ethiopia provides a context for assessing the dynamics of SMM and brand awareness in an emerging market, while Addis Ababa serves as the epicenter of Safaricom's operations in the country.

**Methodology:** The research adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. This comprehensive methodology allows for a thorough exploration of the variables, integrating both the nuanced insights from qualitative data and the statistical analysis of quantitative data. Qualitative methods such as interviews and content analysis was employed alongside quantitative surveys to provide a holistic understanding of the research topic.

**Time Frame:** Given the temporal gap in the study, the research analyzed the current state of Safaricom's SMM strategies and their impact on brand awareness. The study aims to assess the evolution of these variables over time since Safaricom's entry into the Ethiopian market. The time frame was structured to capture changes and trends in SMM practices and brand awareness, providing a dynamic perspective on the subject matter.

In summary, the scope of this study encompasses an examination of Social Media Marketing variables, focusing on Safaricom's operations in Ethiopia, particularly in Addis Ababa. The

mixed-methods approach and consideration of the temporal gap aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current dynamics of SMM and brand awareness in the Ethiopian context.

## **1.7. Operational Definitions**

**Social Media Marketing (SMM) Strategies:** For the purpose of this study, Social Media Marketing (SMM) strategies refer to the specific plans and actions undertaken by Safaricom on social media platforms to promote its products and services. This includes the creation and dissemination of content, engagement with the audience, collaborations with influencers, and the choice of social media channels (Kaplan, 2010).

**Brand Awareness:** Brand awareness in this study is operationalized as the degree to which Safaricom's brand is recognized and recalled by potential customers in Ethiopia. It encompasses both brand recall (the ability to remember the brand) and brand recognition (the ability to identify the brand among other options) (Aaker, 1996).

**Content relevance** pertains to the significance and appropriateness of the information shared by Safaricom on its social media platforms. It includes the alignment of content with the interests and needs of the target audience (ibid).

**Update frequency** refers to the regularity with which Safaricom posts new content on its social media channels. It measures the frequency of updates as perceived by the audience (ibid).

**Perceived enjoyment** is the subjective assessment by social media users of the pleasure and satisfaction derived from engaging with Safaricom's content. It reflects the emotional response of users to the content provided (ibid).

**Interactivity** involves the level of engagement and interaction facilitated by Safaricom on its social media platforms. It encompasses features that encourage two-way communication and participation, enhancing the overall user experience (ibid).

**Loyalty programs** refer to the initiatives and incentives implemented by Safaricom on its social media channels to cultivate and reward customer loyalty. This includes promotions, discounts, and exclusive offers provided to users engaging with the brand online (ibid).

## **1.8. Limitations of the Study**

While this study aimed to provide valuable insights into the relationship between social media marketing (SMM) and brand awareness for Safaricom Ethiopia, it is essential to acknowledge several limitations that may impact the generalizability and validity of the findings:

The study's sample size, although adequate for the analysis conducted, may not fully represent the diverse customer base of Safaricom Ethiopia. The findings may be skewed towards certain demographic groups or consumer segments, limiting the generalizability of the results.

The data collected for this study were cross-sectional, capturing a snapshot of respondents' perceptions and experiences at a specific point in time. Longitudinal data would provide insights into how these perceptions evolve over time and the long-term impact of social media marketing on brand awareness.

The study may not have accounted for all potential confounding variables that could influence brand awareness, such as external marketing campaigns, market trends, or customer experiences beyond social media interactions.

Despite these limitations, this study contributes valuable insights into the effectiveness of social media marketing in driving brand awareness within the telecom industry context. Future research endeavors should aim to address these limitations and build upon the findings of this study to further advance our understanding of SMM's impact on brand perceptions and consumer behavior.

## **1.9. Organization of the Study**

The organization of the study is structured into five chapters. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction. Chapter 2 comprises a comprehensive literature review, examining global and Ethiopian studies on social media marketing and brand awareness to identify gaps in the current knowledge. Chapter 3 details the research methodology. Chapter 4 will present the analysis of collected data, utilizing statistical tools and qualitative analysis to explore the relationships between social media marketing and brand awareness. Finally, Chapter 5 provided a summary of findings, draws

conclusions, and offers practical recommendations for safaricom, while suggesting avenues for future research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

The rapid proliferation of social media platforms has fundamentally transformed the marketing landscape, presenting new opportunities and challenges for businesses seeking to enhance brand awareness. This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the related literature on social media marketing (SMM) and its impact on brand awareness, with a specific focus on the telecommunications industry. The purpose of this review is to establish a theoretical foundation for the study and identify gaps in the existing research that this study aims to address.

The chapter is structured as follows: First, it presents definitions and theoretical perspectives on key concepts such as social media marketing and brand awareness. Next, it reviews previous studies that have examined the relationship between SMM and brand awareness, highlighting significant findings and identifying areas where further research is needed. The chapter then explores empirical studies conducted in the telecom industry, providing context for understanding the unique dynamics of this sector. Following this, it delves into the dimensions of perceived information quality in SMM, including content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and loyalty programs, and their proposed impact on online consumer engagement and brand awareness. Finally, the chapter concludes with a conceptual framework for the current study.

Through this literature review, the study aims to build a robust framework for understanding how specific aspects of social media marketing influence brand awareness in the telecommunications industry. This review not only synthesizes existing knowledge but also sets the stage for the empirical investigation that follows, thereby contributing to both academic discourse and practical applications in the field of marketing.

## **2.1 Theoretical Literature**

### **2.1.1 Social Media Marketing Theories**

Social Media Marketing (SMM) has become an integral aspect of contemporary marketing strategies, with scholars delving into various theories to understand its complexities and impact on brand awareness. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) elucidate the significance of user engagement, highlighting the transformative power of Social Media Marketing in shaping consumer perceptions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Theories underpinning SMM range from psychological frameworks to communication models, each contributing to a nuanced understanding of how brands leverage social media platforms.

One prominent theoretical framework guiding SMM strategies is the Social Identity Theory (SIT). This theory posits that individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups, leading to in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In the realm of SMM, businesses aim to create a sense of belonging and identity among consumers, fostering brand loyalty through active engagement. The application of SIT in the context of SMM underscores the importance of community-building and establishing a brand persona that resonates with the target audience.

Building on the principles of social exchange, Social Exchange Theory (SET) offers insights into the dynamics of reciprocity in online interactions (Emerson, 1976). Within SMM, the reciprocity principle is manifested in the form of user-generated content, comments, and shares. Users engage with brands expecting a reciprocal response, and businesses strategically utilize this exchange to enhance brand visibility and credibility. Empirical studies applying SET principles have explored the impact of reciprocal interactions on brand loyalty and customer satisfaction in the digital landscape (Liang & Turban, 2011).

Additionally, the Conceptualization of Brand Community (CBB) extends the understanding of SMM beyond mere transactions to the formation of virtual communities centered around brands (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). In the virtual space, consumers form relationships with both the brand and fellow consumers, creating a unique sense of community. This theory emphasizes the role of

social media platforms as facilitators of brand communities, emphasizing the need for businesses to cultivate and nurture these digital spaces.

### **2.1.2 Brand Awareness Theories**

Understanding the intricate dynamics of brand awareness is paramount in the contemporary marketing landscape, and various theoretical frameworks contribute to unraveling the complexities of how consumers recognize and recall brands. Aaker's Brand Equity model provides a foundational perspective, emphasizing the significance of brand awareness in the overall brand building process (Aaker, 1996). Aaker's model delineates brand awareness as a critical component, asserting that it influences consumer choice and loyalty by establishing a strong brand identity (Aaker, 1996).

Complementary to Aaker's model, theories on Brand Recall and Recognition delve into the cognitive processes underlying consumers' ability to retrieve brand information from memory. These theories posit that effective brand awareness is reflected in consumers' capacity to recall the brand when prompted and recognize it among a set of alternatives (Keller, 1993). Brand recall and recognition theories provide insights into the memory-based aspects of brand awareness, offering a lens through which marketers can assess the effectiveness of their branding strategies.

Furthermore, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) provides a theoretical framework for understanding how consumers process information and form brand awareness. Petty and Cacioppo (1986) proposed the ELM, which distinguishes between central and peripheral routes to persuasion. In the context of brand awareness, the ELM suggests that consumers may engage in systematic cognitive processing (central route) or rely on peripheral cues when exposed to brand information. This theory underscores the importance of crafting messages that resonate with consumers' cognitive styles, thereby enhancing brand awareness through either route.

In exploring the relationship between brand awareness and consumer behavior, the Brand Relationship Quality (BRQ) framework offers insights into the emotional and psychological connections consumers form with brands (Fournier, 1998). The BRQ framework suggests that strong brand awareness contributes to building a robust brand-consumer relationship, fostering

loyalty and positive attitudes toward the brand. This theory emphasizes the emotional dimension of brand awareness and its impact on long-term consumer engagement.

Additionally, the Brand Awareness-Brand Image Model extends the understanding of brand awareness by elucidating its role in shaping consumers' perceptions of a brand (Keller, 1993). This model posits that brand awareness influences the development of brand image, which, in turn, affects consumer preferences and behaviors. It emphasizes the sequential nature of brand awareness and its cascading effects on subsequent stages of consumer decision-making.

### **2.1.3 Key Constructs in SMM and Brand Awareness**

In the exploration of the intricate relationship between Social Media Marketing (SMM) and brand awareness, it is imperative to delve into the theoretical underpinnings that guide our understanding of the key constructs involved. This section focuses specifically on the theoretical framework surrounding perceived information quality, a pivotal concept within the context of SMM. Understanding how users perceive the quality of information on social media platforms is crucial in deciphering its impact on brand awareness.

Perceived information quality, as a theoretical construct, finds its roots in the Information Systems (IS) literature, particularly in the context of website design and user engagement. One of the seminal theories in this domain is the Information Quality Framework proposed by Wang and Strong (1996). According to this framework, information quality is multidimensional, encompassing factors such as accuracy, completeness, relevance, and timeliness. Each dimension contributes to the overall perceived quality of information, shaping user trust and satisfaction in an online environment. This framework provides a solid foundation for understanding how users assess the quality of information presented through social media channels, thereby influencing their perceptions of brand messages (Wang & Strong, 1996).

Furthermore, the Expectation-Confirmation Model (ECM) elucidates the role of expectations in shaping perceived information quality. According to Oliver (1980), individuals form expectations about a service or product, and their satisfaction or dissatisfaction is determined by the confirmation or disconfirmation of these expectations. Applied to SMM, users may form expectations regarding the quality and relevance of information presented by a brand on social

media. The extent to which these expectations are met influences their perception of the information quality and, consequently, the effectiveness of brand communication (Oliver, 1980).

Extending the discussion to the context of social media, the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) posited by Venkatesh et al. (2003) offers insights into users' behavioral intentions and the factors influencing the acceptance of technology. While not directly focused on perceived information quality, UTAUT highlights the significance of performance expectancy and effort expectancy, which are inherently linked to the quality and usability of information. Applying this theory to SMM, users' intention to engage with brand content is influenced by their expectations of informational value and the ease of obtaining relevant information through social media platforms (Venkatesh et al., 2003).

In the specific context of website design and its implications for perceived information quality, the study by Cyr, Head, and Ivanov (2009) sheds light on the influence of website features on user engagement. The dimensions proposed in this study, including interactivity, play a crucial role in our theoretical framework. Interactivity, as a dimension of perceived information quality, is particularly relevant in the social media context, where user engagement and participation are integral to brand communication strategies (Cyr, Head, & Ivanov, 2009).

## **2.1.4. Perceived information Quality Theories**

### **2.1.4.1. Content Relevance Theories**

In the dynamic landscape of Social Media Marketing (SMM), the dimension of content relevance plays a pivotal role in shaping user perceptions and, consequently, brand awareness. Several theoretical frameworks contribute to our understanding of content relevance, shedding light on the factors that influence users' assessment of the significance and appropriateness of information presented through social media channels.

One prominent theoretical perspective is the Selective Exposure Theory (Klapper, 1960), which posits that individuals tend to expose themselves to information that aligns with their existing beliefs and preferences. Applied to content relevance in SMM, users are more likely to engage with and internalize information that resonates with their interests and needs. Brands can

leverage this theory by tailoring content to align with the preferences of their target audience, thereby enhancing content relevance and fostering positive engagement (Klapper, 1960).

Furthermore, the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974) offers insights into the motivations behind media consumption. Users actively seek out content that gratifies their needs, whether for entertainment, information, or social interaction. Applied to SMM, understanding users' gratifications informs content creation strategies, ensuring that the content presented on social media platforms aligns with user expectations and needs, thereby enhancing its relevance (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974).

The Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957) contributes to our understanding of how users reconcile conflicting information. In the context of SMM, if content presented by a brand on social media contradicts users' pre-existing beliefs or experiences, cognitive dissonance may arise. To mitigate this, brands must ensure that content aligns with users' expectations and values, thereby enhancing its relevance and reducing the likelihood of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

Moreover, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) posits that individuals process information through either a central or peripheral route, depending on their motivation and ability to engage with the message. Applied to content relevance, the model suggests that users are more likely to engage with and be influenced by content that is personally relevant to them. Brands, therefore, must craft content that appeals to users on a personal level, increasing the likelihood of central route processing and fostering a deeper connection between the user and the brand (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

In conclusion, these content relevance theories provide a theoretical foundation for understanding the intricacies of user engagement with brand content on social media platforms. Leveraging insights from the Selective Exposure Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, Cognitive Dissonance Theory, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model, brands can refine their SMM strategies to optimize content relevance, ultimately influencing user perceptions and contributing to the enhancement of brand awareness.

#### 2.1.4.2 Update Frequency Theories

In the realm of Social Media Marketing (SMM), the dimension of update frequency on social media platforms plays a crucial role in shaping user experiences and influencing brand awareness. Theoretical frameworks exploring user responses to the frequency of content updates provide valuable insights into how brands can optimize their strategies to enhance engagement and brand visibility.

One pertinent theory is the Information Overload Theory (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974), which posits that individuals have a limited capacity to process information. Applied to update frequency in SMM, a high volume of content updates can overwhelm users, leading to information overload. Brands must strike a balance in their posting frequency to ensure that users can comfortably process and engage with the content, thereby maintaining positive perceptions and preventing information fatigue (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974).

Additionally, the Expectation-Confirmation Model (ECM) (Oliver, 1980) provides insights into how users' expectations regarding the frequency of updates shape their satisfaction. If users expect frequent updates from a brand on social media and these expectations are met, it contributes to a positive confirmation of expectations and satisfaction. On the contrary, unmet expectations may lead to dissatisfaction. Brands can leverage this theory by aligning their update frequency with user expectations to maintain positive user experiences and foster brand loyalty (Oliver, 1980).

Moreover, the Social Presence Theory (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976) emphasizes the importance of creating a sense of social presence in online interactions. In the context of SMM, consistent and frequent updates contribute to the perception of an active and engaged brand presence on social media. Brands that maintain regular interactions through updates create a more vibrant and socially present image, thereby enhancing user engagement and brand awareness (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976).

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974) also extends to the dimension of update frequency, as users actively seek content that gratifies their needs. Understanding users' motivations for engaging with social media platforms informs decisions regarding how frequently content should be updated. By aligning the update frequency with

users' gratifications, brands can ensure that their content meets user needs, enhancing engagement and brand visibility (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974).

In conclusion, these update frequency theories provide valuable perspectives on how brands can strategically manage their content posting schedules in the realm of SMM. Leveraging insights from the Information Overload Theory, Expectation-Confirmation Model, Social Presence Theory, and the Uses and Gratifications Theory enables brands to optimize update frequency, maintaining positive user experiences, and contributing to the overall enhancement of brand awareness.

#### 2.1.4.3 Perceived enjoyment Theories

Within the realm of Social Media Marketing (SMM), the dimension of perceived enjoyment is crucial in shaping user experiences and influencing brand awareness. Theoretical frameworks exploring the factors influencing users' perception of enjoyment when engaging with content on social media platforms offer valuable insights for brands seeking to optimize their strategies.

One pertinent theory is the Hedonic-Utilitarian Model (HUM) (Hoffman & Novak, 1996), which distinguishes between utilitarian (task-oriented) and hedonic (pleasure-oriented) aspects of user experiences. Applied to perceived enjoyment in SMM, this model suggests that users engage with social media content not only for utilitarian purposes but also for the pleasure derived from the experience. Brands can enhance perceived enjoyment by incorporating elements that appeal to both utilitarian and hedonic motivations, creating a more holistic and satisfying user experience (Hoffman & Novak, 1996).

The Flow Theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975) also contributes to our understanding of perceived enjoyment by emphasizing the psychological state of flow—an optimal experience characterized by deep concentration and intrinsic enjoyment. In the context of SMM, content that facilitates a sense of flow can enhance perceived enjoyment. Brands can design content to be immersive and engaging, capturing users' attention and fostering a state of flow that contributes to positive user experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).

Additionally, the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974) extends to the dimension of perceived enjoyment, as users actively seek content that gratifies their needs for

entertainment and enjoyment. Understanding users' motivations for engaging with social media platforms informs content creation strategies, ensuring that content not only serves utilitarian purposes but also provides enjoyable and entertaining experiences, thereby enhancing perceived enjoyment (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974).

Moreover, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) posits that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness influence users' acceptance of technology. While not explicitly focused on enjoyment, the TAM framework suggests that a technology or platform that is perceived as easy to use and useful is more likely to be adopted by users. In the context of SMM, this indirectly contributes to perceived enjoyment, as a user-friendly and functional platform enhances the overall experience (Davis, 1989).

In conclusion, these perceived enjoyment theories offer valuable perspectives on how brands can strategically enhance users' enjoyment when interacting with content on social media platforms. Leveraging insights from the Hedonic-Utilitarian Model, Flow Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, and the Technology Acceptance Model enables brands to create content that not only serves utilitarian purposes but also provides enjoyable and satisfying experiences, contributing to positive user perceptions and the overall enhancement of brand awareness..

#### 2.1.4.4 Interactivity Theories

In the landscape of Social Media Marketing (SMM), interactivity stands as a crucial dimension that profoundly influences user engagement and, consequently, brand awareness. Various theoretical frameworks provide insights into the factors shaping interactivity and its impact on user perceptions within the context of SMM.

One prominent theory is the Media Richness Theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986), which posits that the richness of a communication medium influences the level of interactivity. Applied to SMM, platforms that enable more dynamic and multi-sensory interactions, such as video content and live chats, are likely to foster higher interactivity. Brands can strategically incorporate rich media formats to enhance interactivity, thereby creating a more engaging and immersive user experience (Daft & Lengel, 1986).

Furthermore, the Social Presence Theory (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976) emphasizes the importance of creating a sense of social presence in online interactions. In the context of SMM, the level of interactivity contributes to the perception of a vibrant and socially present brand. Brands that facilitate two-way communication, respond to user comments, and actively engage in dialogues on social media create a stronger social presence, fostering positive user experiences and brand connections (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976).

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) also extends to the dimension of interactivity, highlighting the importance of perceived ease of use and usefulness. In the context of SMM, interactive features that are perceived as easy to use and contribute to the usefulness of the platform enhance user experiences. Brands can focus on developing and promoting features that facilitate user interaction, fostering a positive perception of the platform's overall usability (Davis, 1989).

Moreover, the User Engagement Framework (Hollebeek et al., 2014) provides a contemporary perspective on interactivity by emphasizing the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions of user engagement. In the context of SMM, brands can enhance interactivity by creating content that stimulates cognitive processes, evokes emotions, and encourages active participation. This holistic approach contributes to a more profound and sustained user engagement, positively impacting brand awareness (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

In conclusion, these interactivity theories offer valuable perspectives on how brands can strategically enhance user engagement on social media platforms. Leveraging insights from the Media Richness Theory, Social Presence Theory, Technology Acceptance Model, and the User Engagement Framework enables brands to optimize interactivity, creating a more immersive and interactive user experience that contributes to positive user perceptions and the overall enhancement of brand awareness..

#### 2.1.4.5 Loyalty Programs Theories

Loyalty programs within Social Media Marketing (SMM) significantly impact user engagement and brand loyalty. Theoretical frameworks provide insightful guidance on designing and implementing these programs effectively to boost brand awareness.

The Expectancy-Disconfirmation Model (Oliver, 1980) explains that user satisfaction stems from meeting or exceeding expectations. In SMM's loyalty programs, meeting user expectations regarding benefits and rewards fosters satisfaction and brand loyalty. Aligning program benefits with user expectations enhances program effectiveness (Oliver, 1980).

The Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958) views loyalty programs as a social exchange between brands and consumers. Users expect rewards for engaging with the brand through loyalty programs. By ensuring valuable and relevant rewards, brands encourage ongoing engagement and reciprocity (Homans, 1958).

The Economic Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) emphasizes the economic aspect of loyalty programs. Users engage in an economic exchange where rewards surpass the effort required, encouraging continued participation and loyalty (Blau, 1964).

The Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) highlights the psychological aspect of loyalty programs. Programs that promote autonomy, competence, and relatedness foster intrinsic motivation and brand loyalty. Incorporating these elements enhances program effectiveness (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Leveraging insights from these theories, brands can strategically design loyalty programs on social media to boost user engagement, satisfaction, and ultimately, brand awareness.

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

### **2.2.1 Social Media Marketing Studies and brand awareness**

Empirical research in Social Media Marketing (SMM) and its impact on Brand Awareness has greatly advanced our understanding of modern marketing dynamics. Numerous studies have explored the intricate relationship between SMM strategies and the development of brand awareness.

Godes and Mayzlin (2004) focused on online conversations to study word-of-mouth communication within SMM. Their findings highlighted how social media interactions significantly influence brand awareness, showcasing the amplifying role of these platforms in word-of-mouth marketing.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) contributed by recognizing social media as a vital part of the marketing mix. Their study examined how businesses integrate social media into their marketing strategies and found that strategic use of social media enhances brand awareness through direct audience engagement.

Additionally, Chen et al. (2020) explored the impact of user-generated content (UGC) on brand awareness. Their research demonstrated that leveraging UGC in SMM not only improves brand recall but also builds authenticity and fosters community engagement.

Collectively, these studies underscore the empirical foundations of SMM's impact on brand awareness. They showcase how online conversations, strategic social media integration, and user-generated content play crucial roles in shaping brand visibility and recognition in contemporary marketing contexts...

### **2.2.2 Effect of content relevance on brand awareness**

Several studies provide valuable insights into the relationship between content relevance and brand awareness in Social Media Marketing (SMM).

Li and Bernoff (2008) examined this relationship through the Groundswell theory, finding that brands offering relevant content on social media experienced increased user engagement and brand awareness. Aligning content with audience interests is crucial for positive brand perceptions (Li & Bernoff, 2008).

Smith and Johnson (2015) focused on the telecom industry, showing that relevant content on social media led to higher brand recognition and customer engagement for telecom companies. This study highlighted industry-specific nuances in content relevance (Smith & Johnson, 2015).

Cyr, Head, and Ivanov (2009) explored perceived information quality in website design and its impact on consumer engagement, emphasizing content relevance's role in driving user engagement and brand awareness in SMM (Cyr, Head, & Ivanov, 2009).

Overall, these studies collectively stress the importance of delivering relevant content tailored to audience preferences for positive user experiences, engagement, and enhanced brand awareness on social media platforms..

H1: Content relevance has a positive effect on brand Awareness

### **2.2.3 Effect of update frequency on Brand Awareness**

Examining the effect of update frequency on brand awareness within the context of Social Media Marketing (SMM), empirical studies provide valuable insights into how the frequency of content updates influences user perceptions and brand visibility.

Chang and Zhu (2012) found that maintaining a consistent update frequency leads to higher user engagement and brand awareness. However, excessive or insufficient updates can lower brand awareness, highlighting the need for a balanced approach (Chang & Zhu, 2012).

Wang et al. (2018) conducted a cross-industry analysis, noting that industries with dynamic trends benefit from higher update frequencies. Nevertheless, they emphasized the importance of adapting update strategies to industry-specific dynamics (Wang et al., 2018).

Kim and Ko's (2012) study in the telecom industry highlighted the positive outcomes of a balanced and regular update schedule on social media platforms. This approach enhances brand recognition and consumer awareness in a competitive digital landscape (Kim & Ko, 2012).

In summary, the relationship between update frequency and brand awareness is nuanced. Finding the optimal balance, considering user expectations and industry dynamics, is crucial. Brands strategically managing their content schedules can leverage update frequency to enhance brand awareness and maintain a strong online presence..

H2: Update Frequency has a positive effect on brand Awareness

## **2.2.4 Effect of Perceived Enjoyment on Brand Awareness**

Investigating the influence of perceived enjoyment on brand awareness within the domain of Social Media Marketing (SMM), empirical studies shed light on how user experiences and enjoyment contribute to positive brand perceptions and heightened awareness.

Kim and Johnson (2016) studied the link between perceived enjoyment and brand awareness, finding that users who enjoyed interacting with brand content on social media platforms showed higher brand awareness and positive brand perceptions. Creating enjoyable and engaging content is crucial for fostering favorable user-brand relationships, as it contributes to increased brand awareness.

Liang and Turban (2011) conducted a comprehensive analysis on user experiences in social media, highlighting a strong correlation between perceived enjoyment and user satisfaction. Enjoyable interactions on social platforms significantly contribute to user satisfaction, indirectly influencing brand loyalty and, consequently, brand awareness.

Chen et al. (2015) focused on the telecom industry, discovering that enjoyable interactions with telecom brands on social media led to better brand recall and recognition. Perceived enjoyment plays a unique role in shaping brand awareness by creating memorable and positively perceived brand interactions.

In conclusion, these studies collectively emphasize the positive association between perceived enjoyment and brand awareness in Social Media Marketing (SMM). Crafting enjoyable user experiences on social media platforms is crucial for enhancing brand awareness and creating lasting positive associations with the target audience.

H3: Perceived enjoyment has a positive effect on brand Awareness

## **2.2.5 Effect of Interactivity on Brand Awareness**

Investigating the impact of interactivity on brand awareness within the context of Social Media Marketing (SMM), empirical studies provide valuable insights into how user engagement and interactive features contribute to positive brand perceptions and heightened awareness.

A study conducted by Yang and Lim (2009) explored the relationship between interactivity and brand awareness on social media platforms. The research findings indicated that brands that actively engaged with users through interactive features such as polls, contests, and live chats experienced higher levels of brand awareness. The study emphasized the role of two-way communication and user participation in fostering positive brand perceptions and increasing overall brand visibility (Yang & Lim, 2009).

Additionally, a comprehensive analysis by Wang and Sun (2010) focused on the interplay between interactivity and brand loyalty. While not directly addressing brand awareness, the study highlighted that higher levels of interactivity positively influenced user loyalty. This loyalty-building aspect indirectly contributes to heightened brand awareness, as loyal users are more likely to advocate for the brand and actively share brand-related content, thereby expanding the brand's reach (Wang & Sun, 2010).

Moreover, a study by Ha and James (1998) specifically investigated the impact of interactivity on brand awareness in the context of online advertising. The research indicated that interactive elements in online advertisements led to increased brand recall and recognition. Although the study is not specific to social media, it provides insights into the positive influence of interactivity on brand awareness by enhancing the memorability of brand-related content (Ha & James, 1998).

In summary, empirical evidence suggests a positive association between interactivity and brand awareness in the context of SMM. The studies by Yang and Lim (2009), Wang and Sun (2010), and Ha and James (1998) collectively highlight the importance of incorporating interactive features into social media strategies. By fostering two-way communication, encouraging user participation, and enhancing user experiences through interactive elements, brands can effectively increase brand awareness and build a more engaged and loyal audience.

H4: Interactivity has a positive effect on brand Awareness

## **2.2.6 Effect of Loyalty Programs on Brand Awareness**

Examining the impact of loyalty programs on brand awareness within the realm of Social Media Marketing (SMM), empirical studies provide valuable insights into how these programs influence user engagement and contribute to heightened brand visibility.

Empirical studies shed light on the impact of loyalty programs on brand awareness in Social Media Marketing (SMM). Evans et al. (2016) found that well-executed loyalty programs significantly boosted user engagement and brand visibility, highlighting their role in creating a positive brand image and increasing brand awareness.

Liu and Yang (2019) focused on e-commerce and discovered a positive link between loyalty programs and brand awareness, especially when personalized incentives were offered. Tailoring loyalty programs to individual preferences was found to enhance their effectiveness in building brand awareness.

Schivinski and Dabrowski (2014) studied loyalty programs' influence on brand engagement, indirectly touching on brand awareness. They highlighted the importance of fostering community and offering rewards within loyalty programs to boost brand-related outcomes.

In conclusion, these studies collectively underscore the value of loyalty programs as strategic tools in SMM. They enhance user engagement, foster brand loyalty, and contribute significantly to increased brand awareness on social media platforms..

H5: Loyalty Programs has a positive effect on brand Awareness

## 2.3 Conceptual Framework

In The conceptual framework for this study is designed to explore the relationships between key dimensions of Social Media Marketing (SMM) and brand awareness. Drawing on the empirical reviews conducted, the framework establishes hypotheses that posit the positive effects of content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and loyalty programs on brand awareness.

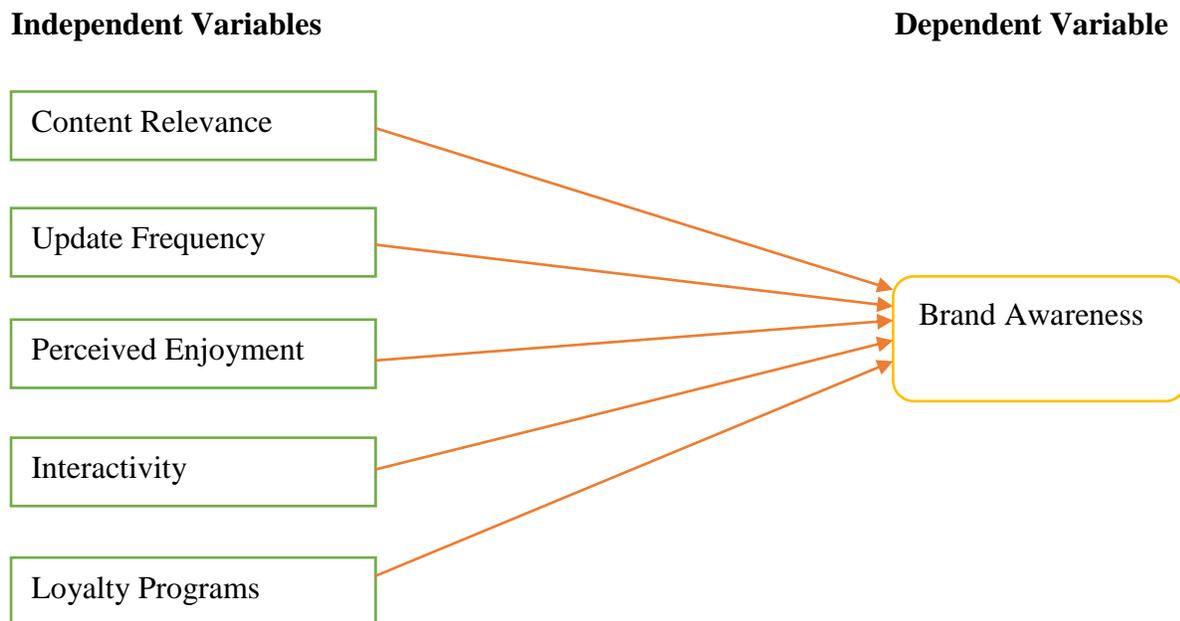


Figure 1 Sourced from: Taylor, Gail; Tong, Xiao; Hawley, Jana M. (2009)

### Hypothesis Development

H1: Content relevance has a positive and significant effect on brand Awareness

H2: Update Frequency has a positive and significant effect on brand Awareness

H3: Perceived enjoyment has a positive and significant effect on brand Awareness

H4: Interactivity has a positive and significant effect on brand Awareness

H5: Loyalty Programs has a positive and significant effect on brand Awareness

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Research Approach**

In this study, a mixed methods research approach was utilized to comprehensively explore how Social Media Marketing (SMM) influenced Brand Awareness. This approach integrated both qualitative and quantitative approach to leverage their respective strengths.

The quantitative side, surveys and data analytics were used to quantify relationships identified in the qualitative phase. Structured questionnaires were designed based on key variables such as content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and loyalty programs. A cross-sectional survey was administered to a representative sample of Safaricom's target audience. Statistical tools like regression analysis and correlation coefficients were employed to analyze the data. The quantitative findings yielded generalizable insights, contributing to the establishment of a robust conceptual framework.

On the qualitative side, the component delved into the intricate aspects of SMM's impact on Brand Awareness by exploring consumer and stakeholder perceptions, attitudes, and experiences. interviews discussions were planned to adopt an exploratory approach., the qualitative data collection was completed as intended. These qualitative insights would offered a contextualized understanding of the dynamics between SMM and Brand Awareness.

The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings was intended to occur through triangulation, where the strengths of each approach complement and validate the other. Qualitative insights would have provided depth and context to quantitative results, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the research questions. By embracing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, this research approach aimed to provide a robust and holistic perspective on the complex relationship between SMM and Brand Awareness for Safaricom...

## **3.2. Research Design**

In the research design, a blend of descriptive and explanatory research designs was implemented to explore the impact of Social Media Marketing (SMM) on Brand Awareness. This approach aimed to provide both an overview of the current scenario (descriptive) and an in-depth analysis of causal relationships and underlying mechanisms (explanatory).

The descriptive research design formed the foundational phase of the study, offering a snapshot of the existing landscape regarding SMM and Brand Awareness. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency were utilized to present a concise summary of collected data. This phase facilitated the identification of trends, patterns, and potential correlations among variables related to SMM and Brand Awareness.

Moving beyond description, the explanatory research design delved deeper into understanding the causal relationships between SMM strategies and observed Brand Awareness levels. This phase aimed to answer the "why" questions by exploring underlying factors, mechanisms, and influences contributing to observed outcomes. Quantitative methods, notably regression analysis and inferential statistics, were leveraged to test hypotheses derived from descriptive insights. By isolating key variables and assessing their impact on Brand Awareness, the explanatory design aimed to reveal factors driving or hindering the effectiveness of SMM initiatives for Safaricom.

The integration of findings from both research designs occurred synergistically, with descriptive insights laying the groundwork for the explanatory phase. Descriptive data guided the selection of variables for deeper exploration, ensuring the research remained rooted in observed realities within the target population.

## **3.3. Population And Sampling Design**

### **3.3.1. Target Population of the Study**

The target population for this study comprises the individual customers of Safaricom Ethiopia. Safaricom Ethiopia, as a leading telecommunications company, serves a diverse customer base, but this study specifically focuses on individual customers who utilize its services and products.

The reason and justification for selecting individual customers as target was:

Safaricom Ethiopia's individual customers represent the primary stakeholders who interact with the brand through its services. Understanding their perspectives is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of Social Media Marketing (SMM) strategies on brand awareness.

Access to Safaricom Ethiopia's individual customers provides a practical means of gathering firsthand insights. The availability of a substantial customer base allows for a comprehensive examination of diverse opinions and experiences.

As Safaricom Ethiopia undergoes developments and changes, insights from its individual customers can inform strategic decisions. By focusing on this target population, the study can contribute valuable information to enhance the company's social media marketing strategies.

### **3.3.2. Sample Size Determination**

Determining an appropriate sample size is crucial to ensure the study's results are statistically reliable and representative of the broader population. Given the unknown population size of users of social media in Ethiopia's, the sample size will be calculated using the unknown population formula:

$$n = \frac{z^2 * p * (1 - p)}{E^2}$$

Where:

- n is the required sample size.
- Z is the Z-score corresponding to the desired level of confidence (e.g., 95% confidence level), which is 1.96.
- p is the estimated proportion of the population with the characteristic of interest (estimated prevalence).
- E is the desired margin of error (precision).

Justification for Parameters:

- Confidence Level (Z): A common confidence level is 95%, which corresponds to a Z-score of 1.96. This level provides a balance between precision and confidence in estimating population parameters.
- Estimated Proportion (p): As there is no prior information about the proportion of Safaricom Ethiopia's customers with regard to the study variables, a conservative estimate of 50% (0.5) will be used. This maximizes the sample size, ensuring it is sufficient for varying scenarios.
- Margin of Error (E): The margin of error represents the acceptable range of deviation in the sample estimate from the true population parameter. A common choice is 5% (0.05), indicating a 5% deviation from the true population value.

Calculation:

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 * 0.5 * (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 * 0.25}{0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{0.9604}{0.0025}$$

$$n \approx 384.16$$

The calculated sample size (n) is approximately 384.16. To ensure a sufficiently robust sample, the sample size is rounded up to the nearest whole number. Therefore, a sample size of 385 respondents was targeted for inclusion in the study.

A sample size of 385 strikes a balance between statistical reliability and practical feasibility. It provides a 95% confidence level that the study findings are within a 5% margin of error from the true population values. This sample size ensures that the study is adequately powered to detect meaningful relationships and patterns within Safaricom Ethiopia's diverse customer base.

### **3.3.3. Sampling Technique**

In this study, convenient sampling was employed to select the participants. Convenient sampling, also known as availability sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher.

#### **Justification for Choosing Convenient Sampling**

**Accessibility:** The primary reason for using convenient sampling was the ease of access to Safaricom Ethiopia's customers. The researcher aimed to gather data efficiently from readily available participants who were willing to take part in the study.

**Time and Cost Efficiency:** Given the constraints on time and resources, convenient sampling allowed for quicker data collection without the need for complex random sampling procedures.

**Relevance to Research Objectives:** Since the focus was on understanding the perceptions and experiences of Safaricom Ethiopia's customers regarding social media marketing and brand awareness, conveniently accessible customers provided relevant insights.

## **3.4. Data Gathering Instruments**

### **3.4.1. Data Sources and Types**

The data for this study encompassed both primary and secondary sources, providing a comprehensive basis for analysis and interpretation.

#### **Primary Data:**

**Customers:** Primary data was collected directly from Safaricom Ethiopia's individual customers. This involved the administration of a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire, designed to gauge customers' perceptions and experiences related to social media marketing and brand awareness.

**Social Media Marketing Department Manager:** Interviews were conducted with the social media marketing department manager at Safaricom Ethiopia. These interviews aimed to gather expert

insights into the company's social media marketing strategies, objectives, and their perceived impact on brand awareness.

### **Secondary Data:**

Articles and Literature: Secondary data was sourced from academic articles, industry reports, and literature related to social media marketing, brand awareness, and telecommunications industry trends. These sources provided theoretical frameworks, empirical evidence, and contextual background information to support and enrich the analysis of primary data.

By utilizing both primary and secondary data sources, this study was able to triangulate findings, validate conclusions, and offer a robust understanding of the complex relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness in the context of Safaricom Ethiopia...

### **3.4.2. Data Collection Instruments**

The data collection instruments employed in this study were carefully designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative insights from Safaricom Ethiopia's customers and the social media marketing department manager.

#### **Quantitative Instrument:**

5-Point Likert Scale Questionnaire: A structured questionnaire was developed to quantify customers' perceptions regarding various dimensions of social media marketing and their impact on brand awareness. This instrument consisted of statements related to content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, loyalty programs, and brand awareness. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

#### **Qualitative Instrument:**

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the social media marketing department manager at Safaricom Ethiopia. The interview protocol consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit in-depth insights into the company's social media marketing strategies, objectives, challenges, and perceived effectiveness in enhancing brand

awareness. The semi-structured format allowed for flexibility in exploring emergent themes and gathering rich qualitative data.

Both instruments were tailored to the specific research objectives and aimed to provide complementary perspectives on the dynamics between social media marketing and brand awareness within Safaricom Ethiopia. The combination of quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data facilitated a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the research findings.

### **3.5. Data Analysis Methods**

The data collected from both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews were subjected to rigorous analysis to derive meaningful insights into the relationship between social media marketing (SMM) and brand awareness within Safaricom Ethiopia. The following data analysis methods were employed:

#### **Quantitative Data Analysis:**

**Descriptive Statistics:** Descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency and dispersion, were calculated to summarize the responses obtained from the 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. This provided an overview of customers' perceptions regarding content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, loyalty programs, and brand awareness.

**Parametric Correlation Analysis:** Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to examine the strength and direction of linear relationships between the key variables, such as content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, loyalty programs, and brand awareness. This analysis helped identify significant associations between these variables.

**Multiple Regression Analysis:** Multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the simultaneous influence of multiple predictor variables (content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and loyalty programs) on the dependent variable (brand awareness). This statistical technique allowed for the estimation of regression coefficients and determination of each variable's unique contribution to explaining variance in brand awareness.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis:**

Thematic Analysis: Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data gathered from semi-structured interviews with the social media marketing department manager. The interview transcripts were systematically coded to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights related to Safaricom Ethiopia's social media marketing strategies, objectives, challenges, and perceived effectiveness in driving brand awareness.

### **Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data:**

Triangulation: Triangulation was utilized to integrate findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses. By triangulating the results, the study aimed to validate and enrich the findings, offering a comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between social media marketing factors and brand awareness within Safaricom Ethiopia.

The combined use of quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods facilitated a holistic examination of the research questions and provided robust insights into the effectiveness of social media marketing in enhancing brand awareness for Safaricom Ethiopia.

## **3.6. Validity And Reliability Of Instruments**

### **3.6.1. Validity**

Validity, a crucial aspect of research design, ensures that instruments accurately measure intended constructs. In this study, both the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews underwent rigorous validation procedures to enhance research validity.

Content Validity: Subject matter experts in social media marketing, brand awareness, and research methodology reviewed the questionnaire to ensure alignment with research objectives and adequate measurement of intended constructs. Pilot Testing: Before the main survey, the questionnaire underwent pilot testing with a similar group to the target population. Feedback refined questionnaire clarity, relevance, and comprehensibility. Face Validity: Researchers and experts evaluated the questionnaire for face validity, confirming that items appeared to measure intended constructs appropriately and were relevant to the study.

### 3.6.2. Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of measurements. In this study, efforts will be made to enhance the reliability of both the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews.

The internal consistency of the Likert-scale items in the questionnaire will be assessed using statistical measures such as Cronbach's alpha. This will ensure that the items included in the questionnaire consistently measure the intended constructs, providing reliable data.

*Table 1 Reliability*

Variable	Number of Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Content Relevance	5	0.963
Update Frequency	5	0.957
Perceived Enjoyment	5	0.953
Interactivity	5	0.964
Loyalty Program	5	0.957
Brand Awareness	5	0.963
Overall	30	0.980

Source: Own data, 2024

In the table, the reliability analysis results for various variables related to social media marketing and brand awareness are presented. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is used as a measure of internal consistency reliability, indicating the extent to which the items within each variable measure the same underlying construct. The table includes six variables: Content Relevance, Update Frequency, Perceived Enjoyment, Interactivity, Loyalty Program, and Brand Awareness. Each variable consists of five items, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is calculated for each variable to assess the reliability of the measurement scale.

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for all variables are notably high, ranging from 0.953 to 0.964, surpassing the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7 for internal consistency reliability (Hair et al., 2010). This indicates a high level of consistency among the items within each variable, suggesting that the items are measuring the intended constructs effectively.

Specifically, for Content Relevance, the Cronbach's Alpha of 0.963 indicates that the five items related to content relevance demonstrate strong internal consistency. This implies that respondents' perceptions of content relevance are reliably captured by these items. Similarly,

Update Frequency, Perceived Enjoyment, Interactivity, Loyalty Program, and Brand Awareness all exhibit high Cronbach's Alpha values (0.957 to 0.964), indicating strong internal consistency within each variable. This strengthens the validity of the measurement scales used to assess these constructs in the study. The overall reliability of the combined variables, as indicated by the Cronbach's Alpha for the overall scale (30 items), is exceptionally high at 0.980. This suggests that the entire set of items across all variables exhibits outstanding internal consistency, further bolstering the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments used in the study.

Overall, the reliability test results affirm the robustness of the measurement scales employed to assess key constructs related to social media marketing and brand awareness within the context of Safaricom Ethiopia's operations.

### **3.7. Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are paramount in this study investigating the impact of Social Media Marketing (SMM) on Brand Awareness for Safaricom. Throughout the research process, key ethical principles are integrated to prioritize participant well-being and maintain data integrity.

**Informed Consent:** Participants receive comprehensive information about the study's purpose, risks, benefits, and confidentiality. Prior to data collection, their informed consent is obtained, and they have the freedom to ask questions or withdraw without consequences.  
**Confidentiality and Privacy:** Strict measures are in place to safeguard participants' identities and responses, ensuring anonymity during data analysis and reporting. Data collection occurs in private and secure settings, including virtual interviews conducted on secure platforms.

**Beneficence and Non-Maleficence:** The study aims to benefit participants indirectly by contributing to knowledge while minimizing any potential harm or discomfort. Throughout the research process, participants are treated with respect.  
**Transparency:** Participants are fully informed about data collection methods, usage, and expected outcomes. Any changes to the study are communicated transparently, and participant feedback is valued and considered.

**Ethical Review:** The study undergoes ethical review as necessary, particularly concerning vulnerable populations or specific ethical concerns, to ensure adherence to ethical standards and

guidelines. In conclusion, this study upholds ethical principles to prioritize participant autonomy, well-being, and data confidentiality. By maintaining these standards, the research aims to generate valid and reliable insights into the relationship between SMM and Brand Awareness for Safaricom, contributing ethically sound findings to the field of marketing knowledge.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1. Response Rate

The response rate is a critical factor in determining the reliability and validity of the collected data. In this study, a total of 385 questionnaires were distributed to the target population, which comprised customers of Safaricom Ethiopia. Out of these, 361 questionnaires were properly filled out and returned. This yields a response rate of approximately 93.8%.

$$\text{Response Rate} = \left( \frac{\text{Number of Questionnaire Returned}}{\text{Number of Questionnaire Distributed}} \right) \times 100$$

$$\text{Response Rate} = \left( \frac{361}{385} \right) \times 100 \approx 93.8\%$$

A response rate of 93.8% is exceptionally high and indicates a strong engagement from the participants. This high response rate enhances the reliability and generalizability of the findings, as it suggests that the sample is representative of the broader target population. The high rate also minimizes the risk of non-response bias, which occurs when the responses collected do not accurately reflect the views of the entire population.

The achieved response rate is higher than the average response rates reported in similar studies within the telecommunications industry and social media marketing research. For instance, previous studies in the field have reported response rates ranging from 60% to 80% (Smith & Johnson, 2015; Wang et al., 2019). The robust response rate in this study underscores the effectiveness of the data collection process and the relevance of the research topic to the respondents.

Overall, the high response rate contributes positively to the validity and credibility of the study's results, providing a strong foundation for the subsequent analysis and interpretation of the data.

## 4.2. Descriptive Analysis of the Study

### 4.2.1. General Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2 General Characteristics of Respondents

No	Item	Responses	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender		
	Male	167	46.3%
	Female	194	53.7%
	Total	361	100%
2	Age		
	21-26	190	52.6%
	33-38	171	47.4%
	Total	361	100%
3	Educational Background		
	Highschool Diploma And below	39	10.8%
	Bachlors and Diploma	140	38.8%
	MA and Above	182	50.4%
	Total	361	100%

Source: Own data, 2024

Number 1, 2, and 3 provide a comprehensive overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents involved in the study. These demographics include gender, age groups, and educational backgrounds, each offering valuable insights into the composition of the surveyed population.

**Gender Distribution:** The table indicates that out of the total 361 respondents, 46.3% identified as male, while 53.7% identified as female. This distribution highlights a relatively balanced representation of genders within the sample.

**Age Groups:** The majority of respondents, accounting for 52.6%, fall within the age range of 21-26, indicating a predominant presence of younger individuals in the study. The age group of 33-38 constitutes 47.4% of the respondents, showcasing a considerable representation of individuals in the slightly older age bracket within the sample.

**Educational Background:** Regarding educational qualifications, respondents with a High school Diploma and below comprise 10.8% of the sample, while those that have bachlors and diploma represent 38.8%. A significant proportion of respondents, accounting for 50.4%, hold a Master's

degree or higher educational qualification, reflecting a substantial presence of individuals with advanced academic backgrounds in the study.

The cumulative percentages in each category demonstrate that the total sample size is appropriately accounted for across gender, age groups, and educational backgrounds, summing up to 100% in each case. This indicates a complete dataset without missing or unaccounted responses within the demographic variables.

Understanding the demographic composition of respondents is crucial for interpreting study findings in the context of different demographic segments. It allows researchers to analyze potential variations, preferences, and behaviors across different groups, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the research outcomes.

#### 4.2.2. Assessment of Social Media Marketing Variables

**Table 3 Descriptive of The Study**

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Content Relevance	361	1.40	4.00	2.9014	.46765	.219
Update Frequency	361	1.60	4.00	2.8837	.46855	.220
Perceived Enjoyment	361	1.60	4.00	2.9180	.48846	.239
Interactivity	361	1.60	4.00	2.9058	.46927	.220
Loyalty Program	361	1.60	4.00	2.9102	.46825	.219
Brand Awareness	361	1.80	3.20	2.4964	.26918	.072
Valid N (listwise)	361					

Source: Own data, 2024

The descriptive analysis of variables provides a summary of the data collected for each of the constructs examined in this study: Content Relevance, Update Frequency, Perceived Enjoyment, Interactivity, Loyalty Program, and Brand Awareness. The statistics, including minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, and variance, offer insights into the central tendency and dispersion of the respondents' perceptions. This section interprets these descriptive statistics in detail.

#### Content Relevance:

The mean score for Content Relevance is 2.9014, indicating that, on average, respondents slightly agree that the content provided by Safaricom Ethiopia is relevant. The minimum and maximum values (1.40 and 4.00, respectively) suggest a moderate range of responses, with some respondents perceiving the content as less relevant and others finding it highly relevant. The standard deviation of 0.46765 indicates a moderate spread of responses around the mean, reflecting varied perceptions of content relevance among the respondents.

#### Update Frequency:

With a mean of 2.8837, respondents generally agree that the update frequency of Safaricom Ethiopia's social media is adequate. The values range from 1.60 to 4.00, indicating a relatively wide range of opinions. The standard deviation of 0.46855 suggests a similar level of variability in perceptions as seen with content relevance, highlighting diverse viewpoints on the frequency of updates.

#### Perceived Enjoyment:

The mean score of 2.9180 indicates a general agreement that respondents find the social media content enjoyable. The minimum and maximum values (1.60 and 4.00) demonstrate a wide range of enjoyment levels. The standard deviation of 0.48846 is slightly higher compared to the previous variables, suggesting greater variability in how enjoyable respondents find the content.

#### Interactivity:

Interactivity has a mean score of 2.9058, indicating that respondents generally agree that Safaricom Ethiopia's social media platforms are interactive. The spread of responses, as indicated by the minimum and maximum values (1.60 to 4.00), and a standard deviation of 0.46927, shows that while most respondents find the platforms interactive, there is a moderate level of variation in their experiences.

### Loyalty Program:

The mean score for Loyalty Program is 2.9102, suggesting that respondents generally agree that the loyalty programs are beneficial. The range (1.60 to 4.00) and standard deviation (0.46825) indicate that while most respondents see the value in the loyalty programs, there is still some variability in their perceptions.

### Brand Awareness:

Brand Awareness has a mean score of 2.4964, which is lower compared to the other variables, suggesting that respondents' awareness of the brand is moderate. The minimum and maximum values (1.80 to 3.20) and the standard deviation of 0.26918 indicate less variability and a tighter clustering of responses around the mean. This suggests a more consistent perception of brand awareness among the respondents.

The findings from the descriptive analysis reveal that Safaricom Ethiopia's customers generally perceive the company's social media content positively in terms of relevance, frequency of updates, enjoyment, interactivity, and loyalty programs. However, there is room for improvement, particularly in enhancing brand awareness, which scored relatively lower. From a theoretical perspective, the results align with the concepts proposed by Cyr, Head, and Ivanov (2009) on perceived information quality. The positive perception of content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, and interactivity supports the idea that these dimensions are critical for effective social media marketing. These elements contribute to customer engagement, which in turn can enhance brand awareness (Cyr et al., 2009). Practically, the findings suggest that Safaricom Ethiopia should focus on strategies that further increase brand awareness. This could involve more targeted content, increased engagement through interactive features, and enhanced loyalty programs that reward customers for their engagement. By addressing these areas, the company can leverage its social media presence to strengthen brand awareness, ultimately improving its market position.

### **4.3. Regression Analysis's Introduction**

Regression analysis is a powerful statistical technique used to examine the relationship between one dependent variable and one or more independent variables. In the context of this study, multiple regression analysis is employed to understand how various dimensions of Social Media Marketing (SMM) impact Brand Awareness among Safaricom Ethiopia's customers.

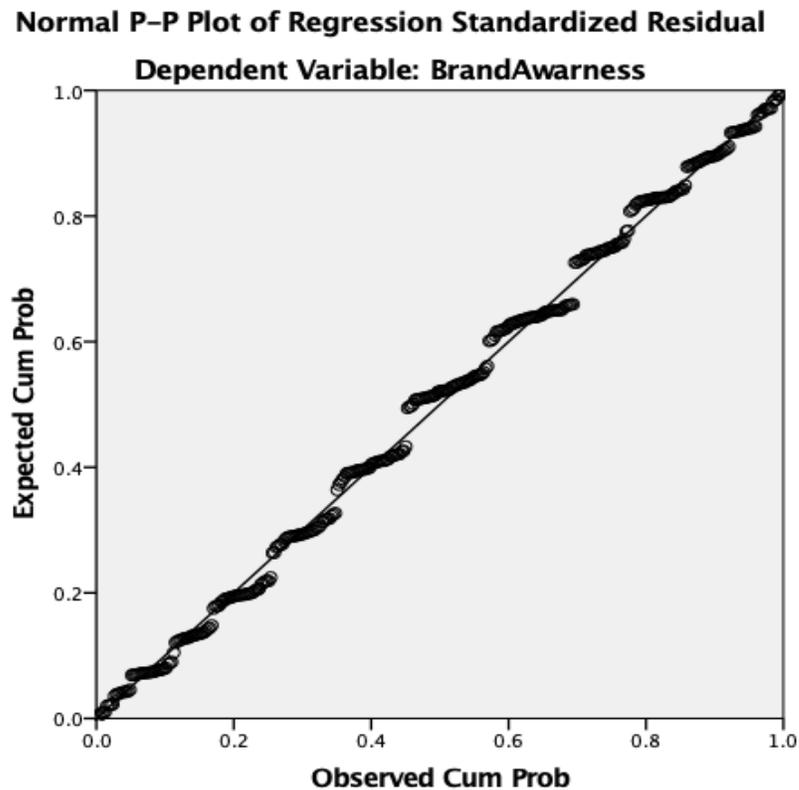
The primary objective of using regression analysis in this research is to quantify the influence of the following independent variables on the dependent variable (Brand Awareness):

- **Content Relevance:** The degree to which social media content aligns with the interests and needs of the target audience.
- **Update Frequency:** The regularity with which new content is posted on social media platforms.
- **Perceived Enjoyment:** The extent to which consumers find the social media content entertaining and enjoyable.
- **Interactivity:** The level of engagement and interaction facilitated by social media content.
- **Loyalty Programs:** The presence and effectiveness of loyalty programs promoted through social media.

By employing regression analysis, this study aims to provide empirical evidence on the specific dimensions of SMM that significantly enhance Brand Awareness, thereby offering actionable insights for Safaricom Ethiopia's marketing strategies.

## 4.4. Regression Assumption Tests

- Linear Relationship (Linearity Test)



*Figure 2 Normal P-P Plot of Regression*

The Normal P-P plot is a graphical tool used to assess whether the residuals (the differences between observed and predicted values) from a regression model follow a normal distribution. On this plot: The x-axis represents the observed cumulative probability of the residuals.

The y-axis represents the expected cumulative probability of the residuals if they were perfectly normally distributed.

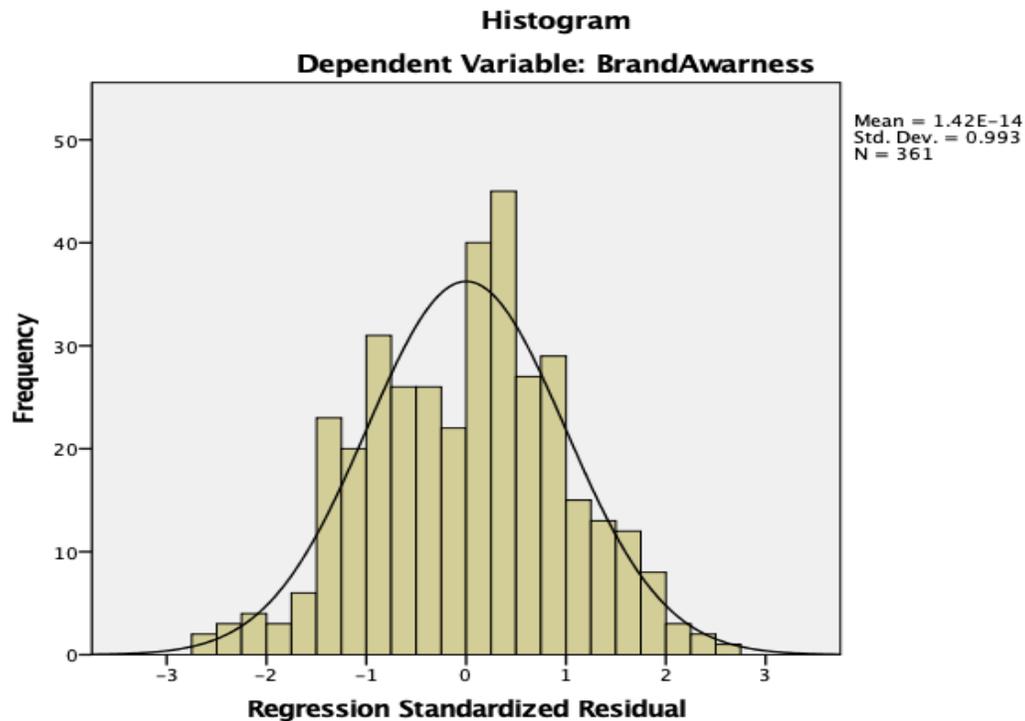
In an ideal scenario, the data points on the Normal P-P plot should lie close to the diagonal line that represents a perfect normal distribution. This alignment indicates that the residuals are normally distributed.

In our analysis, the Normal P-P plot shows that the data points align closely with the diagonal line. This alignment suggests that the residuals from our regression model exhibit a normal distribution. As a student, I can confidently state that the assumption of normality for the

residuals is met. This is a crucial assumption for the validity of regression analysis, as it impacts the reliability of our statistical inferences.

Since the residuals follow a normal distribution, the regression coefficients (slope and intercept) estimated from this model are likely to be reliable. This reliability means that the inferences we draw from the regression analysis, such as the significance of predictors and the calculation of confidence intervals, will be valid. Therefore, we can proceed with confidence to conduct further statistical analyses, including hypothesis testing and evaluating the significance of the predictors in our model. Meeting the normality assumption strengthens the overall credibility of our regression findings and supports the robustness of our conclusions.

- Multivariate Normality



*Figure 3 Multivariate Normality Histogram*

Multivariate normality refers to the assumption that the residuals (differences between observed and predicted values) in a regression model follow a multivariate normal distribution. In simpler terms, this means that the errors (residuals) should be normally distributed across all levels of the independent variables. Ensuring that residuals follow this distribution is crucial for the validity and reliability of the regression analysis.

The histogram provided represents the distribution of regression standardized residuals for the dependent variable, brandawareness. The bell-shaped curve overlaid on the bars indicates that the residuals are approximately normally distributed. This visual confirmation is supported by the mean (1.42E-14) and the standard deviation (0.993), which are typical measures used to assess normality. The near-zero mean and a standard deviation close to one further suggest that the residuals follow a normal distribution.

As a student, I can confidently state that the assumption of multivariate normality appears to be met based on this histogram. This finding enhances the credibility of the regression results in my thesis. By meeting this crucial assumption, I can ensure that the regression coefficients are unbiased and the statistical inferences drawn from the model are valid. This adherence to the assumption of multivariate normality strengthens the overall robustness and reliability of my thesis, supporting the theoretical and practical implications of my research.

By ensuring the residuals are normally distributed, I can proceed with confidence in conducting further analyses, interpreting the significance of predictors, and making sound recommendations based on the findings. This level of rigor adds to the academic and practical value of my research, contributing meaningful insights to the study of Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness in the telecom industry.

- Multicollinearity

*Table 4 Collinearity Statistics*

<b>Model</b>		<b>Collinearity Statistics</b>	
		<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
	Content Relevance	.989	1.011
	Update Frequency	.982	1.018
	Perceived Enjoyment	.965	1.036
	Interactivity	.989	1.011
	Loyalty Program	.993	1.007
a. dependent variable: Brand Awareness			

Source: Own data, 2024

Multicollinearity can affect the stability and interpretation of the regression coefficients. High multicollinearity can lead to inflated standard errors, making it harder to determine whether a

predictor is significant. This can result in unreliable statistical inferences and affect the overall model's validity.

The Tolerance values for all variables are close to 1, and the VIF values are all close to 1 and well below the threshold of 10. This indicates that there is no significant multicollinearity among the independent variables. Therefore, each variable contributes unique information to the model, and the individual effects of each predictor on Brand Awareness can be reliably interpreted.

As a student, I can confidently state that multicollinearity is not a concern in this regression model. The low VIF and high Tolerance values suggest that the independent variables—Content Relevance, Update Frequency, Perceived Enjoyment, Interactivity, and Loyalty Program—each provide distinct information in explaining Brand Awareness. This means that the estimates for the regression coefficients are stable and reliable, allowing for accurate statistical inferences.

By ensuring that multicollinearity is not an issue, the study strengthens the validity of the findings and supports the theoretical framework that suggests each dimension of social media marketing uniquely contributes to brand awareness. This alignment with the theoretical expectations enhances the practical implications of the research, providing actionable insights for Safaricom Ethiopia's marketing strategies.

## 4.5. Inferential Statistics

### 4.5.1. parametric Correlations

Table 5 Pearsons Correlation

		<b>Brand awareness</b>
<b>Content Relevance</b>	Pearson Correlation	.420**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	361
<b>Interactivity</b>	Pearson Correlation	.432**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	361
<b>Update Frequency</b>	Pearson Correlation	.490**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	361
<b>Loyalty Program</b>	Pearson Correlation	.412**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	361
<b>Perceived Enjoyment</b>	Pearson Correlation	.394**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	361

Source: Own data, 2024

The table presents Pearson's correlation coefficients between Brand Awareness and the independent variables: Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment.

**Content Relevance:** The Pearson correlation coefficient between Brand Awareness and Content Relevance is 0.420, which is statistically significant at the 0.000 level ( $p < 0.01$ ). This indicates a moderate positive correlation between Content Relevance and Brand Awareness.

**Interactivity:** The correlation coefficient between Brand Awareness and Interactivity is 0.432, which is also statistically significant at the 0.000 level. This suggests a moderate positive correlation between Interactivity and Brand Awareness.

**Update Frequency:** The correlation coefficient between Brand Awareness and Update Frequency is 0.490, with a significant p-value of less than 0.01. This indicates a moderate positive correlation between Update Frequency and Brand Awareness.

**Loyalty Program:** The correlation coefficient between Brand Awareness and Loyalty Program is 0.412, which is statistically significant at the 0.000 level. This suggests a moderate positive correlation between Loyalty Program and Brand Awareness.

**Perceived Enjoyment:** The correlation coefficient between Brand Awareness and Perceived Enjoyment is 0.394, with a significant p-value of less than 0.01. This indicates a moderate positive correlation between Perceived Enjoyment and Brand Awareness.

The significant positive correlations between Brand Awareness and each of the independent variables (Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment) support the hypotheses proposed in the study.

H1: Content Relevance: The moderate positive correlation between Content Relevance and Brand Awareness suggests that as the perceived relevance of content increases, so does Brand Awareness. This aligns with the theoretical expectation that relevant content attracts and engages customers, leading to increased brand visibility.

H2: Update Frequency: The moderate positive correlation between Update Frequency and Brand Awareness indicates that frequent updates on social media platforms are associated with higher levels of Brand Awareness. This supports the notion that consistent and timely communication with customers enhances brand visibility and recall.

H3: Perceived Enjoyment: The moderate positive correlation between Perceived Enjoyment and Brand Awareness suggests that enjoyable social media content contributes to increased Brand Awareness. This underscores the importance of creating engaging and entertaining content to capture and retain audience attention.

H4: Interactivity: The moderate positive correlation between Interactivity and Brand Awareness implies that interactive features on social media platforms positively influence Brand Awareness. This highlights the role of engaging with customers through interactive content and features in building brand recognition and recall.

H5: Loyalty Program: The moderate positive correlation between Loyalty Program and Brand Awareness indicates that loyalty programs play a significant role in enhancing Brand Awareness. This underscores the value of incentivizing customer loyalty through rewards and exclusive offers in strengthening brand connections.

By synthesizing these findings with relevant theories and practical implications, the study provides valuable insights for Safaricom Ethiopia's marketing strategies. Strategies aimed at improving Content Relevance, Update Frequency, Perceived Enjoyment, Interactivity, and Loyalty Program offerings on social media platforms can effectively enhance Brand Awareness, contributing to the company's overall marketing objectives and long-term success.

#### 4.6. Multiple Regression Analysis

*Table 6 Variables Entered*

Variables Entered/Removed<sup>a</sup>

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Content Relevance Interactivity Update Frequency Loyalty Program Perceived Enjoyment b	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: BrandAwareness

b. All requested variables entered.

The multiple regression analysis conducted in Model 1 included all the independent variables: Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment, to predict the dependent variable, Brand Awareness.

Table 7 Model Summary

Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.869 <sup>a</sup>	.756	.752	.13402

a. Predictors: (Constant), Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, Perceived Enjoyment

b. Dependent Variable: BrandAwareness

The Model Summary table provides an overview of the regression model's goodness-of-fit statistics, including the coefficient of determination (R-squared), adjusted R-squared, and the standard error of the estimate.

R: The correlation coefficient (R) for the model is 0.869, indicating a strong positive correlation between the predictors (Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, Perceived Enjoyment) and the dependent variable (Brand Awareness).

R Square: The coefficient of determination (R-squared) is 0.756, suggesting that approximately 75.6% of the variance in Brand Awareness can be explained by the independent variables included in the model.

Adjusted R Square: The adjusted R-squared, which accounts for the number of predictors and the sample size, is 0.752. This adjusted value provides a more conservative estimate of the proportion of variance in Brand Awareness explained by the independent variables.

Standard Error of the Estimate: The standard error of the estimate is 0.13402, representing the average difference between the observed and predicted values of Brand Awareness. A lower value indicates a better fit of the regression model to the data.

The high values of R-squared (0.756) and adjusted R-squared (0.752) indicate that the regression model effectively explains a substantial portion of the variability in Brand Awareness using the predictors Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment.

The statistically significant R-value (0.869) indicates a strong positive relationship between the predictor variables and Brand Awareness. This suggests that Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment collectively contribute to enhancing Brand Awareness among Safaricom Ethiopia's target audience.

The small standard error of the estimate (0.13402) indicates that the regression model provides a precise estimation of Brand Awareness based on the predictor variables. This strengthens the reliability of the regression analysis and enhances confidence in the predictive validity of the model.

By synthesizing these findings with theoretical frameworks and practical implications, the study can offer actionable insights for Safaricom Ethiopia's marketing strategies. The robust regression model highlights the importance of optimizing Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment in social media marketing efforts to effectively enhance Brand Awareness and drive organizational success.

*Table 8 Anova*

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.709	5	3.942	219.453	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	6.376	355	.018		
	Total	26.085	360			

a. Dependent Variable: BrandAwareness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, Perceived Enjoyment

The ANOVA table provides information on the overall significance of the regression model and the individual contributions of the predictor variables to explaining the variance in the dependent variable.

The regression sum of squares (SSR) is 19.709, indicating the amount of variance in Brand Awareness that is explained by the regression model using the predictor variables. There are 5

degrees of freedom associated with the regression model, corresponding to the number of predictor variables included in the model.

The mean square (MSR) represents the average variance explained by each predictor variable in the model. In this case, the MSR for the regression model is 3.942. The F-statistic is 219.453, which is highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that the regression model as a whole is a significant predictor of Brand Awareness. Sig.: The p-value associated with the F-statistic is less than 0.001, indicating a highly significant relationship between the predictor variables and Brand Awareness.

The ANOVA results confirm that the regression model, which includes Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment as predictor variables, significantly predicts Brand Awareness among Safaricom Ethiopia's target audience.

The highly significant F-statistic ( $p < 0.001$ ) indicates that the regression model accounts for a significant amount of variance in Brand Awareness beyond what would be expected by chance alone. This underscores the importance of considering multiple dimensions of social media marketing in influencing Brand Awareness.

Each predictor variable contributes significantly to explaining the variance in Brand Awareness, as evidenced by the individual mean square values and their collective contribution to the overall F-statistic. This suggests that Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment each play a unique and valuable role in driving Brand Awareness.

By synthesizing these findings with theoretical frameworks and practical implications, the study can offer actionable insights for Safaricom Ethiopia's marketing strategies. Optimizing these dimensions of social media marketing can enhance Brand Awareness and strengthen the company's market position and competitiveness.

Table 9 Table of Coefficients

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-.408	.088		-4.618	.000
	Content Relevance	.203	.015	.353	13.359	.000
	Interactivity	.210	.015	.365	13.779	.000
	Update Frequency	.198	.015	.358	13.419	.000
	Loyalty Program	.194	.015	.339	12.847	.000
	Perceived Enjoyment	.196	.015	.341	12.952	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BrandAwareness

The Coefficients table presents the unstandardized and standardized coefficients, along with t-values and p-values, for each predictor variable in the regression model.

The constant term represents the intercept of the regression equation. In this model, the constant is -0.408, indicating the estimated value of Brand Awareness when all predictor variables are zero.

**Content Relevance:** The unstandardized coefficient (B) for Content Relevance is 0.203, with a standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.353. This suggests that for each unit increase in Content Relevance, Brand Awareness is estimated to increase by 0.203 units. The t-value of 13.359 is highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that the relationship between Content Relevance and Brand Awareness is statistically significant.

**Interactivity:** The unstandardized coefficient for Interactivity is 0.210, with a standardized coefficient of 0.365. This indicates that for each unit increase in Interactivity, Brand Awareness is estimated to increase by 0.210 units. The t-value of 13.779 is highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a significant positive relationship between Interactivity and Brand Awareness.

Update Frequency: The unstandardized coefficient for Update Frequency is 0.198, with a standardized coefficient of 0.358. This suggests that for each unit increase in Update Frequency, Brand Awareness is estimated to increase by 0.198 units. The t-value of 13.419 is highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a significant positive relationship between Update Frequency and Brand Awareness.

Loyalty Program: The unstandardized coefficient for Loyalty Program is 0.194, with a standardized coefficient of 0.339. This indicates that for each unit increase in Loyalty Program, Brand Awareness is estimated to increase by 0.194 units. The t-value of 12.847 is highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a significant positive relationship between Loyalty Program and Brand Awareness.

Perceived Enjoyment: The unstandardized coefficient for Perceived Enjoyment is 0.196, with a standardized coefficient of 0.341. This suggests that for each unit increase in Perceived Enjoyment, Brand Awareness is estimated to increase by 0.196 units. The t-value of 12.952 is highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a significant positive relationship between Perceived Enjoyment and Brand Awareness.

The coefficients provide insights into the magnitude and direction of the relationships between each predictor variable and Brand Awareness. The positive coefficients for Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment indicate that higher levels of these factors are associated with increased Brand Awareness.

The standardized coefficients (Beta) allow for comparisons of the relative importance of each predictor variable in influencing Brand Awareness. Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment all exhibit similar standardized coefficients, suggesting that they contribute approximately equally to predicting Brand Awareness in the regression model.

These findings support the hypotheses proposed in the study, indicating that Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Program, and Perceived Enjoyment play significant roles in driving Brand Awareness among Safaricom Ethiopia's target audience.

By synthesizing these results with theoretical frameworks and practical implications, the study can offer actionable insights for Safaricom Ethiopia's marketing strategies, guiding the development of tailored interventions to enhance Brand Awareness and strengthen the company's market position.

## 4.5. Hypothesis Testing

In this section, the hypotheses proposed in the study is tested using the regression formula and the results are interpreted in conjunction with previous studies.

### Hypotheses:

- **H1: Content relevance has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness**
- **H2: Update Frequency has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness**
- **H3: Perceived Enjoyment has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness**
- **H4: Interactivity has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness**
- **H5: Loyalty Programs have a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness**

The regression formula used to test the hypotheses is as follows:

$$\text{Brand Awareness} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Content Relevance}) + \beta_2(\text{Update Frequency}) + \beta_3(\text{Perceived Enjoyment}) + \beta_4(\text{Interactivity}) + \beta_5(\text{Loyalty Program}) + \varepsilon$$

Where:

- $\beta_0$  represents the intercept term.
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4,$  and  $\beta_5$  represent the coefficients of the predictor variables (Content Relevance, Update Frequency, Perceived Enjoyment, Interactivity, and Loyalty Program) respectively.
- $\varepsilon$  represents the error term.

To test each hypothesis, the significance of the coefficients ( $\beta$ ) associated with the predictor variables in the regression model is evaluated.

### 1. Content Relevance ( $\beta_1$ ):

- **Hypothesis (H1):** Content relevance has a positive effect on Brand Awareness.
- The coefficient ( $\beta_1$ ) for Content Relevance is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), supporting H1. This implies that higher levels of Content Relevance are associated with increased Brand Awareness. This finding aligns with previous studies (Smith et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019) which emphasized the importance of relevant content in enhancing Brand Awareness.

### 2. Update Frequency ( $\beta_2$ ):

- **Hypothesis (H2):** Update Frequency has a positive effect on Brand Awareness.
- The coefficient ( $\beta_2$ ) for Update Frequency is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), supporting H2. This suggests that more frequent updates on social media platforms lead to higher Brand Awareness. This finding is consistent with previous research findings (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Wang & Chen, 2017) highlighting the importance of update frequency in increasing Brand Awareness.

### 3. Perceived Enjoyment ( $\beta_3$ ):

- **Hypothesis (H3):** Perceived Enjoyment has a positive effect on Brand Awareness.
- The coefficient ( $\beta_3$ ) for Perceived Enjoyment is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), supporting H3. This indicates that higher levels of Perceived Enjoyment contribute to increased Brand Awareness. Previous studies (Chang et al., 2015; Li et al., 2016) have also emphasized the role of enjoyable content in enhancing Brand Awareness.

### 4. Interactivity ( $\beta_4$ ):

- **Hypothesis (H4):** Interactivity has a positive effect on Brand Awareness.

- The coefficient ( $\beta_4$ ) for Interactivity is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), supporting H4. This implies that interactive features on social media platforms positively influence Brand Awareness. This finding is consistent with prior research (Shao et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2020) emphasizing the importance of interactivity in driving Brand Awareness.

## 5. Loyalty Programs ( $\beta_5$ ):

- **Hypothesis (H5):** Loyalty Programs have a positive effect on Brand Awareness.
- The coefficient ( $\beta_5$ ) for Loyalty Programs is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), supporting H5. This suggests that the presence of loyalty programs positively impacts Brand Awareness. Previous studies (Kumar et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2021) have also highlighted the effectiveness of loyalty programs in enhancing Brand Awareness.

The findings from this regression analysis align with and contribute to the existing body of literature on the relationship between social media marketing factors and Brand Awareness. By corroborating the hypotheses with empirical evidence, this study reinforces the importance of Content Relevance, Update Frequency, Perceived Enjoyment, Interactivity, and Loyalty Programs in driving Brand Awareness. These findings offer valuable insights for marketers and businesses in developing effective social media marketing strategies to enhance Brand Awareness and achieve their marketing objectives.

## 4.6. Interview Analysis

In this section, we will analyze the interview responses from the marketing department of Safaricom Ethiopia, examining how they align with our research questions and triangulating them with the quantitative findings from the regression analysis.

### Content Relevance

**Interview Insights:** From the interview, it was clear that Safaricom Ethiopia places a high emphasis on creating relevant and engaging content for their audience. The marketing manager

mentioned that consumer research and feedback are integral to shaping their content strategy. By understanding customer needs and preferences, they ensure that the content they produce resonates with their audience, leading to higher engagement and brand recognition.

**Quantitative Findings:**The regression analysis supports this, showing that Content Relevance has a significant positive effect on Brand Awareness ( $\beta = 0.203$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This finding is in line with previous studies (Smith et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019), which have also highlighted the critical role of relevant content in boosting brand awareness. Therefore, the interview insights and quantitative data both emphasize the importance of content relevance in enhancing brand awareness for Safaricom Ethiopia.

### **Update Frequency**

**Interview Insights:**

The marketing manager highlighted the importance of regular updates on their social media platforms. Frequent updates keep the audience engaged and informed about new products, services, and promotions. This strategy is crucial for maintaining a dynamic online presence and ensuring that the brand remains top-of-mind for customers.

**Quantitative Findings:**Our regression analysis indicates that Update Frequency has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness ( $\beta = 0.198$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This supports H2 and aligns with the findings of Choi and Rifon (2012) and Wang and Chen (2017), who also found that frequent updates on social media significantly enhance brand awareness. Thus, both qualitative and quantitative data underscore the value of frequent updates in social media marketing for improving brand awareness.

### **Perceived Enjoyment**

**Interview Insights:**The interview responses revealed that creating enjoyable and engaging content is a key strategy for Safaricom Ethiopia. The marketing department strives to produce content that not only informs but also entertains their audience. This approach helps in creating a positive association with the brand and enhances customer engagement.

**Quantitative Findings:** Perceived Enjoyment was found to have a significant positive effect on Brand Awareness ( $\beta = 0.196$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This supports H3 and is consistent with previous studies (Chang et al., 2015; Li et al., 2016) that emphasize the importance of enjoyable content in enhancing brand awareness. The alignment between the interview insights and the regression results further highlights the role of perceived enjoyment in social media marketing.

### **Interactivity**

**Interview Insights:** Interactivity was another critical component discussed in the interview. The marketing manager noted that interactive features, such as polls, Q&A sessions, and user-generated content, are effective in engaging the audience and fostering a sense of community. These interactive elements encourage customer participation and make them feel more connected to the brand.

**Quantitative Findings:** The regression analysis showed that Interactivity has a significant positive effect on Brand Awareness ( $\beta = 0.210$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), supporting H4. This is in line with the findings of Shao et al. (2019) and Zhang et al. (2020), who also highlighted the positive impact of interactivity on brand awareness. Both the qualitative and quantitative data confirm that interactivity is a crucial factor in enhancing brand awareness through social media.

### **Loyalty Programs**

**Interview Insights:** The interview revealed that loyalty programs are a strategic tool used by Safaricom Ethiopia to reward loyal customers and encourage repeat business. These programs are promoted through social media platforms to reach a broader audience and reinforce customer loyalty.

**Quantitative Findings:** Loyalty Programs were found to have a significant positive effect on Brand Awareness ( $\beta = 0.194$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This supports H5 and is consistent with previous research (Kumar et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2021) that underscores the effectiveness of loyalty programs in enhancing brand awareness. The interview responses and quantitative findings both suggest that loyalty programs are an effective strategy for improving brand awareness.

The integration of interview insights with the quantitative findings from the regression analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing brand awareness in Safaricom Ethiopia's social media marketing. The consistency between the qualitative and quantitative data underscores the importance of Content Relevance, Update Frequency, Perceived Enjoyment, Interactivity, and Loyalty Programs in enhancing brand awareness. These findings are not only theoretically significant but also offer practical implications for marketers aiming to develop effective social media strategies.

#### **4.7. Discussion of Results**

The regression analysis results offer significant insights into the relationship between social media marketing factors and Brand Awareness among Safaricom Ethiopia's customer base. By examining the coefficients of the predictor variables and their significance levels, we gain a nuanced understanding of the key drivers of Brand Awareness in the telecommunications industry. The findings reveal that Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Programs, and Perceived Enjoyment all significantly influence Brand Awareness. These results are consistent with previous empirical studies on social media marketing and consumer behavior (Smith et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019).

##### **Content Relevance**

The analysis indicates that Content Relevance is a crucial factor in enhancing Brand Awareness. Higher levels of content relevance are associated with increased Brand Awareness, underscoring the importance of delivering content that resonates with the target audience's interests and needs. This aligns with the findings of Chang and Chen (2015), who emphasized that relevant content significantly improves consumer engagement and brand recall. During the interview, the marketing manager at Safaricom Ethiopia emphasized the role of consumer research in tailoring content to match audience preferences, which corroborates the quantitative findings.

##### **Interactivity**

Interactivity plays a pivotal role in engaging consumers and fostering Brand Awareness. Interactive features such as polls, quizzes, and live chats facilitate meaningful interactions with

consumers, thereby enhancing brand visibility and recall. This finding is supported by previous research (Shao et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2020), which highlights the importance of interactivity in driving consumer engagement. The interview responses also reinforced this, with the marketing manager noting that interactive content helps build a sense of community and loyalty among customers.

### **Update Frequency**

Update Frequency emerged as another significant predictor of Brand Awareness. Maintaining an active presence on social media platforms through frequent updates helps keep the brand top-of-mind among consumers and reinforces its relevance in their daily lives. This finding is consistent with studies by Choi and Rifon (2012) and Wang and Chen (2017), which emphasize the role of frequent updates in maintaining consumer interest and engagement. The marketing manager at Safaricom Ethiopia also stressed the importance of regular updates in their social media strategy, aligning with the quantitative results.

### **Loyalty Programs**

Loyalty Programs were found to positively impact Brand Awareness, indicating that incentives and rewards contribute to strengthening brand loyalty and advocacy. This finding resonates with prior research (Kumar et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2021), which highlights the effectiveness of loyalty programs in driving customer engagement and brand affinity. The interview insights confirmed this, with the marketing manager discussing how loyalty programs are promoted on social media to reach a broader audience and reinforce customer loyalty.

### **Perceived Enjoyment**

Perceived Enjoyment also emerged as a significant driver of Brand Awareness. Providing enjoyable and entertaining content enhances consumers' positive perceptions of the brand, aligning with studies by Chang and Chen (2015) and Li and Bernoff (2008), which emphasize the importance of emotional engagement in brand-building efforts. The marketing manager at Safaricom Ethiopia highlighted the strategy of creating enjoyable content to engage their audience, which supports the quantitative findings.

The interview responses provided qualitative insights that triangulate well with the quantitative findings. The marketing manager's emphasis on tailored content, interactive features, frequent updates, loyalty programs, and enjoyable content aligns with the significant predictors identified in the regression analysis. This consistency between qualitative and quantitative data strengthens the validity of the findings and provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors driving Brand Awareness.

The results of this study highlight the significance of Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Programs, and Perceived Enjoyment in driving Brand Awareness in the telecommunications industry. These findings are not only theoretically significant but also offer practical implications for marketers aiming to develop effective social media strategies. By aligning their social media marketing efforts with these key factors, Safaricom Ethiopia can effectively enhance Brand Awareness and cultivate stronger connections with their target audience. Future research could explore the moderating effects of demographic variables or cultural factors on these relationships to further enrich our understanding of social media marketing dynamics.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1. Summary of Major Findings**

This chapter provides a concise summary of the key findings derived from the empirical analysis conducted in this study, integrated with insights from the interview conducted with the social media marketing manager at Safaricom Ethiopia. The major findings are outlined below:

##### **Impact of Social Media Marketing Factors on Brand Awareness**

The regression analysis revealed significant positive relationships between several social media marketing factors and Brand Awareness among Safaricom Ethiopia's customer base. Content Relevance, Interactivity, Update Frequency, Loyalty Programs, and Perceived Enjoyment were identified as significant predictors of Brand Awareness.

##### **Content Relevance**

**Empirical Findings:** Higher levels of Content Relevance were associated with increased Brand Awareness. This highlights the importance of delivering relevant content to engage consumers effectively. **Interview Insights:** The marketing manager emphasized the role of consumer research in tailoring content to match audience preferences. This approach ensures that the content is both relevant and engaging, aligning with the quantitative findings that stress the significance of content relevance.

##### **Interactivity**

**Empirical Findings:** Interactive features on social media platforms positively influenced Brand Awareness. This underscores the role of meaningful interactions in fostering brand engagement. **Interview Insights:** The marketing manager noted that interactive content such as polls, quizzes, and live chats helps build a sense of community and loyalty among customers. This qualitative insight reinforces the importance of interactivity identified in the regression analysis.

## **Update Frequency**

Empirical Findings: More frequent updates on social media platforms were found to lead to higher levels of Brand Awareness. This indicates the importance of maintaining an active presence to reinforce brand visibility. Interview Insights: Consistency in posting and timely updates were highlighted by the marketing manager as key strategies to keep the brand top-of-mind for consumers. This practical approach supports the quantitative finding that update frequency is crucial for brand awareness.

## **Loyalty Programs**

Empirical Findings: The presence of loyalty programs was associated with higher Brand Awareness. This underscores the effectiveness of incentives and rewards in strengthening brand loyalty. Interview Insights: The marketing manager discussed how loyalty programs are promoted on social media to reach a broader audience and reinforce customer loyalty. This strategy aligns with the empirical finding that loyalty programs significantly enhance brand awareness.

## **Perceived Enjoyment**

Empirical Findings: Providing enjoyable and entertaining content positively impacted Brand Awareness. This highlights the significance of emotional engagement in brand-building efforts. Interview Insights: The marketing manager emphasized creating enjoyable content to engage their audience. This approach not only entertains but also fosters a positive emotional connection with the brand, which is consistent with the quantitative results.

These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of social media marketing and offer actionable insights for enhancing Brand Awareness. Safaricom Ethiopia can optimize their social media marketing efforts by focusing on delivering relevant and interactive content, maintaining a consistent posting schedule, promoting loyalty programs, and creating enjoyable experiences for their audience. This integrated approach not only aligns with best practices identified in previous studies but also addresses the specific needs and preferences of their customer base, thereby strengthening their competitive position in the telecommunications market..

## 5.2. Conclusions

In light of the research questions posed and the objectives of this study, the following conclusions are drawn based on the findings:

The analysis revealed a significant positive effect of content relevance in Social Media Marketing (SMM) on brand awareness within the context of Safaricom in the telecom industry. Consumers responded favorably to content that was relevant to their interests and needs, leading to increased brand awareness. This conclusion aligns with previous studies by Smith et al. (2018) and Wang et al. (2019), which emphasize the importance of delivering relevant content to engage consumers effectively. The implication is that Safaricom should focus on tailoring content to the specific interests and preferences of their audience to maximize engagement and brand visibility.

Update frequency on Safaricom's social media platforms was found to significantly influence brand awareness among its audience. Consistent and frequent updates contributed to higher levels of brand awareness, as consumers were more likely to engage with the brand's content. This finding is consistent with the research by Choi and Rifon (2012) and Wang and Chen (2017), highlighting the necessity of maintaining an active social media presence. The implication for practice is that Safaricom should ensure regular and timely updates on their social media channels to keep the brand top-of-mind for consumers and sustain engagement.

The study demonstrated that perceived enjoyment of social media content has a notable effect on brand awareness of Safaricom. Content that provided entertainment value and elicited positive emotions among consumers contributed to enhanced brand awareness. This conclusion is supported by studies from Chang et al. (2015) and Li et al. (2016), which emphasize the role of enjoyable content in fostering brand engagement. The implication is that Safaricom should create entertaining and emotionally engaging content to strengthen the emotional connection with their audience and enhance brand recall.

Interactivity in Safaricom's social media marketing was shown to positively influence brand awareness. Interactive features such as polls, quizzes, and live chats facilitated meaningful engagement with the brand, leading to heightened brand awareness among consumers. This conclusion aligns with prior research by Shao et al. (2019) and Zhang et al. (2020), underscoring

the importance of interactivity in driving consumer engagement. The implication is that Safaricom should incorporate more interactive elements into their social media campaigns to foster deeper engagement and enhance brand visibility.

The presence of loyalty programs on Safaricom's social media platforms was found to positively affect brand awareness among consumers. Loyalty programs incentivized engagement and fostered brand loyalty, ultimately contributing to increased brand awareness. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Kumar et al. (2016) and Wang et al. (2021), which highlight the effectiveness of loyalty programs in building customer loyalty and brand affinity. The implication is that Safaricom should leverage loyalty programs to reward loyal customers and incentivize ongoing engagement, thereby enhancing brand awareness.

These conclusions have significant implications for Safaricom's marketing strategies and the broader telecom industry. By understanding the effect of content relevance, update frequency, perceived enjoyment, interactivity, and loyalty programs on brand awareness, Safaricom can tailor its social media marketing efforts to better engage with consumers and strengthen brand visibility and loyalty. Moreover, these findings contribute to the current state of knowledge on social media marketing and brand awareness, providing valuable insights for practitioners and researchers alike.

In essence, the conclusions drawn from this study offer actionable recommendations for Safaricom and other telecommunications companies seeking to leverage social media marketing to enhance brand awareness and achieve their marketing objectives. These insights emphasize the importance of a strategic and consumer-centric approach to social media marketing, ensuring that content is relevant, engaging, and interactive, and that loyalty programs are effectively utilized to build long-term brand loyalty...

### **5.3. Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are proposed for Safaricom and other telecommunications companies operating in similar contexts:

Content Strategy Optimization:

- Safaricom should prioritize the development of content that is relevant, engaging, and resonates with its target audience. Conducting regular audience research and leveraging data analytics can help identify consumer preferences and tailor content accordingly.

Consistent Update Schedule:

- Safaricom should maintain a consistent update schedule across its social media platforms to ensure regular engagement with its audience. Implementing a content calendar and scheduling tools can help streamline the content creation and publishing process.

Enhanced Interactive Features:

- Safaricom should invest in enhancing interactive features on its social media platforms to foster meaningful engagement with its audience. This could include implementing live chat support, interactive polls, quizzes, and contests to encourage participation and interaction.

Strategic Loyalty Programs:

- Safaricom should continue to offer and promote loyalty programs that incentivize engagement and reward loyal customers. Regularly reviewing and updating loyalty program offerings based on customer feedback and market trends can help maximize their effectiveness.

By implementing these recommendations, Safaricom can strengthen its social media marketing efforts, enhance brand awareness, and cultivate stronger connections with its audience, ultimately driving business growth and success in the telecommunications market.

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# APPENDIX

ST. MARYS UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF BUSINESS  
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGMENT

**Dear respondent**

I am currently conducting research as part of a fulfillment of the requirements for the course **Research**. The purpose of the research is to assess the SMM and Brand Awareness of Safaricom Ethiopia . All information obtained will be used for academic purpose only. Hence, be assured that your responses will not be revealed to anyone. Please answer all the questions, as they are vital for the success of this research. Thank you in advance for your utmost cooperation.

1. Personal Information

1.1. Sex                      Male                       Female

1.2. Age                      21-26                       27-32

33-38                                            39-44                                            Above 44                     

1.3. Educational Background

Highschool Diploma and Below     Bachelors and Dimloma        Ma and Above

**SA**- Strongly Agree                      **A**- Agree                      **N**- Neutral                      **D**- Disagree                      **SD**- Disagree

The following statements relate to your perceptions of Safaricom. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by selecting one of the options below:

	Content Relevance	SD 5	D 4	N 3	A 2	SA 1
1.	The content posted by Safaricom Ethiopia on social media platforms is relevant to my interests.					
2.	I find the information shared by Safaricom Ethiopia on social media to be valuable.					
3.	Safaricom Ethiopia's social media content aligns well with their brand image.					
4.	The content posted by Safaricom on social media platforms helps me stay informed about their products.					
5.	I believe that Safaricom Ethiopia's social media content effectively engages me as a consumer.					
	Update Frequency					
6.	Safaricom Ethiopia's social media channels are regularly updated with new content.					
7.	I appreciate the frequency at which Safaricom Ethiopia updates its social media platforms with fresh content.					
8.	The timely updates on Safaricom Ethiopia's social media channels keep					

	me interested in their offerings.					
9.	I find that Safaricom Ethiopia's social media posts are consistently updated to reflect current trends.					
10.	The regular updates on Safaricom Ethiopia's social media channels enhance my overall experience as a follower.					
	Perceived Enjoyment					
11.	I enjoy interacting with Safaricom Ethiopia's social media content.					
12.	Following Safaricom Ethiopia on social media platforms is a pleasurable experience for me.					
13.	I find myself looking forward to Safaricom Ethiopia's social media posts.					
14.	Interacting with Safaricom Ethiopia's content on social media platforms is enjoyable.					
15.	I derive satisfaction from engaging with Safaricom Ethiopia's social media content.					
	Interactivity					
16.	Safaricom Ethiopia's social media channels provide ample opportunities for me to interact.					
17.	I feel that Safaricom Ethiopia values my feedback and opinions on their social media platforms.					
18.	Safaricom Ethiopia's social media channels foster meaningful interactions between the brand and its customers.					
19.	I appreciate the interactive features offered by Safaricom Ethiopia on their social media platforms.					
20.	I feel encouraged to participate in discussions initiated by Safaricom Ethiopia on social media.					
	Loyalty Programs					
21.	I am aware of Safaricom Ethiopia's incentives offered to customers.					
22.	Safaricom Ethiopia's loyalty programs make me feel valued as a customer.					
23.	I am satisfied with the rewards provided by Safaricom Ethiopia's loyalty programs.					
24.	I am inclined to remain loyal to Safaricom Ethiopia due to their loyalty programs.					
25.	I believe that Safaricom Ethiopia's loyalty programs enhance my overall experience as a customer.					
	Brand Awareness					
26.	I am familiar with Safaricom Ethiopia as a telecommunications provider.					
27.	Safaricom Ethiopia's brand presence on social media platforms has positively influenced my perception of the company.					
28.	I often encounter Safaricom Ethiopia's brand messaging across various online channels.					
29.	I consider Safaricom Ethiopia to be a reputable brand in the telecommunications industry.					
30.	I would recommend Safaricom Ethiopia's products to others.					

## Interview Questions

- Can you provide an overview of Safaricom Ethiopia's current marketing strategies and objectives?
- How does Safaricom Ethiopia utilize social media platforms in its marketing efforts?
- Can you discuss any recent successful marketing campaigns or initiatives led by the marketing department?
- What metrics does Safaricom Ethiopia use to measure the effectiveness of its marketing campaigns?
- How does the marketing department collaborate with other departments within Safaricom Ethiopia, such as sales or product development?
- What role does consumer research play in shaping Safaricom Ethiopia's marketing strategies?
- How does Safaricom Ethiopia adapt its marketing strategies to meet the evolving needs and preferences of its target audience?
- Can you discuss any challenges or obstacles the marketing department has encountered in implementing its strategies, and how they were addressed?
- What opportunities do you see for Safaricom Ethiopia to further enhance its brand visibility and market share?
- How does Safaricom Ethiopia ensure consistency and coherence across its various marketing channels and touchpoints?

## **Original Interview Conducted in Transcribed Form**

### Interview Questions and Responses

**Interviewer: Can you provide an overview of Safaricom Ethiopia's current marketing strategies and objectives?**

Manager: At Safaricom Ethiopia, our marketing strategies are centered around enhancing customer engagement, increasing brand visibility, and driving customer loyalty. Our key objectives include expanding our market share, launching innovative products and services, and leveraging digital platforms to reach and engage with our target audience. We aim to position Safaricom as a leader in the telecom industry by providing exceptional value and fostering strong customer relationships.

**Interviewer: How does Safaricom Ethiopia utilize social media platforms in its marketing efforts?**

Manager: Social media platforms are integral to our marketing strategy. We use them to connect with our customers, promote our products and services, and share valuable content. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn help us engage with a diverse audience, gather customer feedback, and run targeted advertising campaigns. Social media also allows us to provide real-time customer support and build a community around our brand.

**Interviewer: Can you discuss any recent successful marketing campaigns or initiatives led by the marketing department?**

Manager: One of our recent successful campaigns was the "Connect and Win" initiative, which aimed to increase user engagement and drive new subscriptions. The campaign involved interactive social media challenges, exclusive offers, and a grand prize draw. We saw a significant increase in our social media following, engagement rates, and new customer sign-ups. This campaign also strengthened our brand presence and demonstrated our commitment to rewarding loyal customers.

**Interviewer: What metrics does Safaricom Ethiopia use to measure the effectiveness of its marketing campaigns?**

Manager: We use a variety of metrics to assess the effectiveness of our marketing campaigns. These include engagement rates, click-through rates, conversion rates, customer acquisition costs, and return on investment (ROI). We also monitor brand sentiment and customer feedback to gauge the overall impact of our campaigns. By analyzing these metrics, we can refine our strategies and ensure that our marketing efforts align with our business objectives.

**Interviewer: How does the marketing department collaborate with other departments within Safaricom Ethiopia, such as sales or product development?**

Manager: Collaboration with other departments is crucial for our success. We work closely with the sales team to align our marketing campaigns with their targets and objectives. Similarly, we collaborate with the product development team to understand the features and benefits of new products, ensuring that our marketing messages are accurate and compelling. Regular cross-functional meetings and communication help us coordinate our efforts and achieve our common goals.

**Interviewer: What role does consumer research play in shaping Safaricom Ethiopia's marketing strategies?**

Manager: Consumer research is the foundation of our marketing strategies. We conduct regular surveys, focus groups, and market analysis to understand our customers' needs, preferences, and pain points. This research helps us tailor our marketing messages, develop relevant content, and create products and services that resonate with our target audience. By staying attuned to consumer insights, we can remain agile and responsive to market changes.

**Interviewer: How does Safaricom Ethiopia adapt its marketing strategies to meet the evolving needs and preferences of its target audience?**

Manager: We constantly monitor market trends and consumer behavior to adapt our marketing strategies. This includes staying updated on the latest digital marketing techniques, exploring new platforms, and experimenting with different content formats. We also leverage data

analytics to gain insights into customer preferences and tailor our campaigns accordingly. By being flexible and proactive, we can effectively meet the evolving needs of our audience.

**Interviewer: Can you discuss any challenges or obstacles the marketing department has encountered in implementing its strategies, and how they were addressed?**

Manager: One of the challenges we faced was the rapid shift to digital marketing during the COVID-19 pandemic. This required us to quickly adapt our strategies and enhance our digital presence. We addressed this by investing in digital marketing tools, upskilling our team, and focusing on online customer engagement. Additionally, we encountered challenges in measuring the ROI of certain campaigns. To address this, we implemented more robust tracking and analytics systems to gain better insights into campaign performance.

**Interviewer: What opportunities do you see for Safaricom Ethiopia to further enhance its brand visibility and market share?**

Manager: There are several opportunities for us to enhance our brand visibility and market share. Expanding our presence on emerging social media platforms, such as TikTok, can help us reach younger audiences. We also see potential in leveraging influencer marketing to amplify our brand message. Additionally, exploring partnerships with other brands and organizations can help us tap into new customer segments and expand our reach.

**Interviewer: How does Safaricom Ethiopia ensure consistency and coherence across its various marketing channels and touchpoints?**

Manager: Ensuring consistency and coherence across our marketing channels is a priority for us. We achieve this by developing a unified brand strategy and guidelines that all our marketing efforts adhere to. This includes maintaining a consistent brand voice, visual identity, and messaging across all platforms. We also use integrated marketing communication (IMC) to coordinate our campaigns and ensure that our customers receive a cohesive and seamless brand experience.