

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMERCE  
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT**



**THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON BRAND  
AWARENESS AT THE BANK OF ABYSSINIA**

**BY**

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**June 2024**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis  
Ababa University School of Commerce in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirement for the Award of Master of Arts in  
Marketing Management**

**June 2024**

**Addis Ababa**

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, prepared under the guidance of Beza Libeyesus (PhD). All sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or in full to any other higher learning institution to earn any degree.

Declared by: Rakeb Tadesse

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: June 27, 2024

## Endorsement

I confirm that this thesis has been produced as per the standards of higher institutions and submitted to Addis Ababa University for examination approvable as a university advisor.

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Date: June 27, 2021

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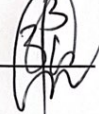
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## **Acknowledgment**

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to God for providing me with the strength and courage to complete this thesis work. I would like to sincerely thank my advisor, Dr. Beza Libeyesus, for her invaluable guidance, constructive feedback, and steadfast support throughout the preparation of this study. Her expertise and mentorship have been instrumental in shaping this work. I am also grateful to my family for their unwavering support and encouragement during the entire process. Their love and motivation have been a constant source of inspiration. Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge with deep appreciation the contributions of my friends and the branch staff of the Bank of Abyssinia. Their full cooperation and support in distributing the questionnaires during the survey process were essential to the successful completion of this research.

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## Abstract

This research aimed to examine the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness at the Bank of Abyssinia. A total of 362 customers of the bank who were social media users were selected using a convenience sampling method from 10 branches in Addis Ababa. Structured questionnaires were used to gather the data. The collected data were edited, and coded data cleaning was conducted and the data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Both the regression and correlation analysis indicated that the bank's social media marketing have been contributed to brand awareness. The study has found that most of the customers of the bank with an age range of 18-40 were users of social media regularly. The social media utilization habit of the adult working-age population can be an essential audience of the bank for its social media marketing. The adjusted  $R^2$  model indicated that the independent variables determine 47.3% of the variations in the brand awareness by customers in the bank was attributed by the combined effect of the predictor variables (Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, and Word of Mouth) and the model was significant at a p-value of 0.000. All the independent variables positively contributed for brand awareness: where customization being the largest predictor ( $\beta=0.308$ ) followed by entertainment ( $\beta=0.226$ ), trendiness ( $\beta=0.182$ ), and word of mouth ( $\beta=0.155$ ) and all were significant at 0.05 except interaction. The social media marketing that had the highest effect were customization, entertainment, trendiness, and word of mouth. The findings of the thesis indicate that Social media marketing can be an effective promotional channel for creating brand awareness for the Bank of Abyssinia.

Key Words: Social media, social media marketing and brand awareness

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Importance of Branding and the Rise of Social Media Marketing

Brands play an important role in the purchasing decision of a product or service. In today's competitive environment, branding is an important competitive factor that differentiates similar goods and services that are produced by different firms in the minds of consumers. In this regard, businesses that could be able to develop brand awareness have been differently categorized in terms of the goods and services they offer among other businesses, create a special position in consumers' minds, and build a business identity. The construction of this identity is directly proportional to the communication between the brand and the consumer (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004).

One of the most common channels of communication that companies have recently applied to their marketing activities is social media. The effect of social media on consumer behavior includes a wide spectrum of activities ranging from informing to sharing ideas and attitudes to acquiring awareness and understanding and imagining post-purchase behavior. According to Man Lai, Guilherme, and Philip (2021), social media marketing (SMM) is generally acknowledged to play a considerable role in influencing consumers' perceptions of brands. Currently, the accelerated change in communication technologies has influenced the way people interact with each other; one of the attractions of this change is the extensive use of social media and networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Telegram, YouTube, and Twitter.

The technological development in communication that led to globalization interested marketers in using social media as a communication channel for companies (Toros and Kalpaklioglu, 2011). How people communicate in today's world has completely changed as compared to the previous eras, i.e., in today's world, it has become easier for consumers to share experiences about products, brands, and services they use over the internet (Fischer et al., 2010). Practically, recent empirical studies reveal that companies from various industries are adopting SMM in their marketing strategies to enhance consumers' brand knowledge and purchase intentions.

The phenomenal rise of social media has sent business managers and marketers worldwide into a spin, trying to keep up with changes in consumer behavior as well as harness the potential of this new online channel. With the similarly rapid development and uptake of mobile technology, social media is now accessible anywhere and at any time. For marketers, social media has the power to achieve great results for very minimal cost and in less time (ANZMAC, 2010). In addition, with a very low cost, informing customers is very functional in terms of familiarity and brand awareness because products and brands of businesses appear on social networks where millions of users sign in. According to Yusuf (2018), marketers are aware of the opportunities that social media has presented as part of their marketing strategy. In research, it has been stated that social media marketing are significant parts of branding actions for businesses.

Businesses increasingly use social-media platforms to generate feedback, to obtain information about consumers' preferences, to perform brand-building activities and manage relationships with their customers (Thoring, 2011). Although marketers understand the potential superiority of social media, relative to traditional advertising and marketing efforts, in communicating with customers and in brand-building activities, SMM is still regarded as a relatively new marketing tool, and the understanding of SMM influences on brand awareness and brand image is still limited (Schulze et al., 2015).

Though social media marketing (SMM) has a lot of promise for advertising and marketing campaigns, it is still considered a relatively new marketing technique, and little is known about how SMM affects brand awareness and image (Huyen, 2021). The majority of research on social media to far has concentrated on the benefits of user-generated content for consumer behavior inside brand communities and platform engagement. Few research, notably in the financial sector, have examined the effects of SMM activities on Ethiopian consumers' brand awareness. In Ethiopia, not many studies are carried out in the country's major hotels, spas, or Coca-Cola businesses. Nevertheless, the social media marketing strategies suggested in this thesis—which has recently gained a lot of popularity—are the basis for these thesis papers. To the best of the researcher's knowledge and effort on review existing literatures, limited studies have been available on the effects of SMM on brand awareness in Ethiopian case. Therefore, this thesis paper examined the effect of SMM activities on brand awareness at the Bank of Abyssinia.

Bank of Abyssinia was established on February 15, 1996, under the Ethiopian commercial code, Licensing and Supervision of Banking Business Proclamation No. 84/1994. The bank started its operation with an authorized and paid-up capital of Birr 50 million, and Birr 17.8 million respectively, and with only 131 shareholders and 32 staff. In two decades since its establishment Bank of Abyssinia has registered a significant growth in paid-up capital and total assets.

Currently, the Bank of Abyssinia, running its banking business by modifying its vision to the choice bank for customers, employees, and shareholders, along with, a mission to provide customer-focused financial services through competent, motivated employees and modern technology to maximize value to all stakeholders. To accomplish its vision and mission the bank follows main core values like putting customers first, being committed to excellence, being honest and accountable, working together as a team, and caring for our community.

Through those years, the bank achieves many remarkable performances, such as profit, business growth, branch expansion, customer base expansion, and new product introduction. Regarding, the assets of the bank, it stood Birr 189.6 billion, the authorized and paid-up capital of the bank raised to Birr 11.8 billion, as of June 30, 2023, is respectively. The total deposit balance of Birr 158.5 billion and total loans and advances of Birr 152.2 billion, which in effect enhance the risk absorbing and the lending capacity of the Bank, are recorded. This performance indicates public confidence in the Bank and reliability and satisfaction with its services

Concerning Bank accessibility, the Bank of Abyssinia, which started banking services with only one branch in 1996, has now more than 849 branches. Still, the bank is striving to identify bankable areas every year and serve valuable customers by expanding its branch networks throughout the country. By using this branch expansion and accessibility the bank now has 10.3 million account holders as of 30 June 2023.

The digitalization strategic direction of the Bank of Abyssinia continued to bring breakthroughs in the banking industry of Ethiopia. These include virtual banking services in four selected locations in Addis, which are gaining momentum and popularity. The Bank is currently working on expanding virtual banking services in 20 locations in Addis Ababa and major regional cities. The payment gateway for e-commerce service is another new development that was successfully launched in 2021 (Bank of Abyssinia Annual Report 2024/23E.C). The bank also works with

known money transfer agents such as Western Union, Express Money, RIA International, Transfast, DAHABSHIL, MoneyGram, KAAH, and EZREMIT.

According to the report from the Bank of Abyssinia, the institution has focused on utilizing digital promotional platforms to communicate its services and sell products. The bank is employing social media marketing strategies in parallel with conventional marketing approaches to inform, educate, and promote its banking products and services. The report indicates that the objectives of the bank's social media marketing efforts fall into three key areas: the promotion of its services and products, providing customer service and care, and building brand awareness. The literature review section of the report is likely to provide more detailed insights into the bank's specific social media marketing platforms and their activities.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

It is evident that we are living in a globalized world with the accelerated growth of social media users. Social media is becoming a common channel of communication for firms, and they have recently engaged in their marketing through the use of social media. In today's highly competitive world, social media has a great influence in helping companies create awareness about them and their products (Johansson, 2010).

The research findings by Frida Johansson, Miranda Hiltula (2021), and ElAydi (2018) revealed that social media marketing can significantly impact brand awareness by creating brand associations and building brand image. Social media platforms provide an opportunity for businesses to engage with their audience, build relationships, and create brand awareness through various methods such as word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing, entertainment, interaction, trendiness, and customization. Social media marketing can also enhance brand loyalty and increase purchase intention, with consumers more likely to share positive experiences and engage with brands on social media.

Social media has become an essential instrument for companies and marketing in the dynamic world of current organizations (Yogesh et al., 2021). In this context, brand awareness is a critical component of social media marketing initiatives, which means that in order to maximize brand

visibility and recognition, these efforts must be carefully assessed. Through its social media marketing initiatives, Bank of Abyssinia, a financial institution that has significantly increased its accessibility in Ethiopia in recent years, has been actively putting a variety of promotional strategies into practice to boost its brand awareness and operational efficacy (Digital Road map of BOA, 2021).

Although more and more businesses, especially in Ethiopia's banking industry, are adopting social media marketing as a means of communication and promotion, there is still a significant knowledge vacuum regarding the full extent to which these initiatives affect the banking industry's brand recognition. The currently available research provides limited insights on the precise effect of social media marketing initiatives on brand awareness, especially concerning Bank of Abyssinia and the wider financial domain of Ethiopia. With a special emphasis on Bank of Abyssinia, the main goal of this thesis paper is to thoroughly evaluate the effects of social media marketing on brand recognition in the banking sector.

### 1.3 Basic Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of social media marketing on creating brand awareness at the Bank of Abyssinia?
2. To what extent are the social media marketing of Bank of Abyssinia entertaining to its customers?
3. To what extent are the social media marketing of the Bank of Abyssinia interactive with its audiences?
4. To what extent does the social media marketing of the Bank of Abyssinia have trendy content?
5. To what extent does social media marketing incorporate personalized content (customization) for the social media audience?
6. How far are the customers at Bank of Abyssinia engaged in word-of-mouth on social media?

## 1.4 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study was to assess the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness in the cases of Bank of Abyssinia. The specific objectives of the thesis were:

1. To investigate the relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness at the Bank of Abyssinia.
2. To assess the impact of entertaining social media marketing on brand awareness.
3. To examine the association between the level of customer interaction in social media marketing and brand awareness.
4. To evaluate the relationship between the trendiness of social media posts and brand awareness.
5. To assess the impact of customizing social media marketing posts to customer needs on brand awareness.
6. To examine the association between word-of-mouth in social media marketing and brand awareness.

## 1.5 Definition of Terms

- **Entertainment:** Experiences that were created by marketers on social media platforms, which are viewed by clients as exciting and vibrant, can be viewed as an entertaining element of SMM (Agichtein et al., 2008).
- **Interaction** can be defined as offering customers two-way interactions with brands as well as sharing information with other users (Kim and Ko, 2012).
- **Trendiness:** describes recent topics that attract huge interest or fashionable information that brands find related and exciting to deliver to their customers (Naaman et al., 2011).
- **Customization** is built through service collaboration among brands and individuals to increase customers' satisfaction by satisfying them based on their personal preferences (Seo and Park, 2018).

- **Word-of-mouth** is when consumer interests in the firm's product or service are reflected in their daily conversations. Basically, it is free promotion brought on by client experiences and, usually, something that goes beyond what they were expecting (Misner, 1999).
- **Brand awareness** is the ability for customers to identify or remember that a brand is part of a product category and reflects a consumer's ability to remember and recognize a brand in different environments (Bilgin, 2018). According to Mehreen et al. (2018), brand awareness has two properties, namely, brand recall and brand recognition.
- **Brand Recall:** Brand recall is the extent to which a brand name is recalled as a member of a brand, product, or service class, as distinct from brand recognition.
- **Brand recognition:** The term brand recognition refers to the ability of consumers to identify a specific brand by its attributes over another one.

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

The issue of the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness in the specific context of Bank of Abyssinia is of great importance to various stakeholders. Primarily, the findings of this study can offer valuable insights to marketing professionals and decision-makers within Bank of Abyssinia, enabling them to optimize their social media strategies for promoting the brand and engaging with customers. The digital marketing division in the bank will have a clearer understanding of the value of social media marketing, consumer preferences for online platforms, and how this can benefit the banking business in effectively communicating with existing and potential customers.

Furthermore, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on social media marketing in the banking industry, serving as a valuable resource for academics, researchers, and practitioners who aim to comprehend the intricacies of digital marketing within the financial services sector. This thesis work helps bridge the current knowledge gap and its effect on the banking industry in terms of social media marketing research focused on Ethiopia. Ultimately, the study aims to enhance the understanding of the relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness, thereby paving the way for informed strategies that enhance brand visibility and foster customer connections within the bank's target market. Additionally, the study provides

valuable information for researchers who wish to expand their knowledge and understanding of the influence of social media on brand awareness, identifying areas for further study.

### 1.7 Delimitation/Scope of the Study

This thesis paper specifically focused on examining the brand awareness of Bank of Abyssinia among its customers who are actively involved as subscribers to the bank's social media platforms. The research is delimited to investigating the various factors that affect the brand's recognition, particularly in relation to the social marketing initiatives undertaken by the bank. The scope of this study was carefully delimited to social media users who actively engage with Bank of Abyssinia's accounts on platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Telegram. By analyzing the interactions and responses of these individuals within the specified social media channels, this thesis aimed to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of BOA's social media marketing in enhancing brand awareness among its target audience. Moreover, the study delimited to customers of the banks in Addis Ababa city 10 branches selected randomly for the study.

### 1.8 Organization of the Study

This thesis is organized into five chapters. The first chapter presents the background of the study, the Background of the company, the statement of the problem and continues with the research questions, objective of the study, research hypothesis, and definition of terms, significance of the study, scope of the study and organization of the paper. The second chapter deals with the literature review which shows a review of related topics for the research. The third chapter is a research methodology that includes research design, Study Population and Sample selection, data collection procedure, data analysis, instrument validity, and reliability, and ethical consideration. The fourth chapter handles data analysis results and discussion. The fifth chapter discuss by summarizing the major findings, giving conclusions and recommendations, by listing the limitation of the study and by suggesting further study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to fulfill the crucial objective of conducting a comprehensive and detailed analysis of existing literature concerning the effect of social media marketing activity and brand awareness. Through a meticulous examination and synthesis of both theoretical frameworks and empirical studies, this chapter provides a concise yet enlightening overview of scholarly works in the realm of social media marketing and their influence on brand awareness. Notably, the chapter explores various facets of social media marketing endeavors, delving into their effect on cultivating and augmenting brand awareness among specific target audiences. Ultimately, the chapter concludes by formulating a conceptual framework that encapsulates the key findings and insights derived from the reviewed literature, supported by well-crafted hypotheses.

#### 2.1 Introduction to the Social Media Platforms

Social media platforms serve as interactive digital channels that prioritize the generation and dissemination of thoughts, ideas, and information through virtual networks. These platforms empower users to engage in social networking by producing content, expressing their opinions, engaging with other users' content through comments, and sharing it with others. In today's world, social media has become a widely utilized tool that not only facilitates communication between individuals but also keeps them informed about various situations or specific individuals or groups. The advent of social media has shifted the balance of power in the market, transforming consumers from passive recipients of market content to active participants in shaping brand messages. The interactive nature of social media has been found to influence various consumer behaviors, including purchasing decisions, information acquisition, and post-purchase interactions. Moreover, social media enables individuals to effortlessly communicate with hundreds or even thousands of like-minded product users in a more efficient manner.

According to Mangold and Faulds (2009), social media applications allow users to create personal profiles, extend invitations to others, establish connections with friends, associates, or guests, and engage in direct communication with other participants. These profiles typically feature videos, photographs, and blogs, as described by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010).

Social media is recommended to have a various form and operate on different platforms, including internet blogs, social blogs and networking, micro-blogs, wikis, podcasting, photography and video sharing, online score, and social bookmarking (Laroche M. et.al, 2013). Additionally, it suggests a virtual zone for the individuals to stay connected. Social media networks offers individuals new methods to enhance their social networks, by setting up and maintaining social communication, creating communication, information-sharing, writing a subject, and engaging in social activism through the cyberspace Furthermore, social media offers businesses an opportunity to share and exchange information with their customers (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). The major social media platforms focused in this thesis are discussed as follows with brief summary.

### **2.1.1 Facebook**

Facebook is one of the main social media platforms that allow users to create an account called a Facebook account, which can be used to share appropriate product information, post videos, and connect with other Facebook users. With an average user maintaining a robust network of around 130 friends and affiliations and 80 community pages, groups, and events, Facebook serves as a dynamic space for fostering relationships across various spheres, be they professional, personal, or communal. Supporting over 70 languages, the platform transcends cultural and linguistic barriers, facilitating global interaction and communication. Notably, Facebook's significance extends beyond social connectivity, positioning itself as a potent marketing tool in the contemporary digital landscape (David Kirkpatrick, 2010).

In a strategic move to bolster its advertising capabilities, Facebook introduced a groundbreaking service in April 2011, unveiling a dedicated online platform known as Portal. This innovative tool empowers marketers and creative agencies to craft compelling brand promotions within the Facebook ecosystem, effectively challenging industry giants like Google in the realm of online advertising. By enabling companies to create dynamic commercial graphics and advertisements, Facebook has emerged as a formidable force in the realm of digital marketing, offering unparalleled opportunities for brands to engage with a vast and diverse

### **2.1.2 Instagram**

Instagram is the most widely used social networking app in the world which allows users to share pictures and videos with their friends. Instagram, a highly popular and extensively utilized mobile application, provides users with the opportunity to share a myriad of photos and videos with their peers. Available on both iPhone and Android platforms, Instagram delivers a seamless and user-

friendly experience, simplifying the process of capturing, editing, and sharing visual content (Shelley Walsh, 2024).

Individuals leveraging Instagram can effortlessly upload their personal photos and videos onto the platform, distributing them to their followers or a designated group of friends. This functionality empowers users to exhibit their ingenuity, adventures, and viewpoints through the art of visual storytelling. Furthermore, users can actively engage with and express their admiration for posts shared by friends and other accounts they follow by engaging in conversations through comments and appreciating content by liking it.

Instagram's intuitively designed interface and user-friendly features have significantly contributed to its widespread acclaim. Serving as a central hub for visual inspiration, communication, and self-expression, Instagram magnetizes individuals from diverse backgrounds and interests. Whether it involves sharing snippets of everyday life, documenting cherished moments, or promoting artistic endeavors, Instagram serves as a versatile platform for users to exhibit their visual content and forge connections with like-minded individuals who share akin passions.

### **2.1.3 LinkedIn**

LinkedIn is a social networking platform renowned for its professional and business-oriented focus. It serves as a primary hub for professionals and job seekers to create employment-oriented profiles, while also being utilized by business enterprises, companies, business owners, and industries to showcase their brand and products for both B2B and B2C marketing purposes. As the go-to platform for business-to-business communication, LinkedIn presents a significant opportunity for consumer brands aiming to leverage its vast network. Despite this potential, it is surprising that only 4% of B2C marketers currently designate LinkedIn as their primary platform, indicating a substantial untapped opportunity for return on investment compared to other social media platforms.

LinkedIn's prowess in lead generation is evident in its impressive visitor-to-lead conversion rate, which surpasses that of popular platforms such as Facebook and Twitter by nearly 300%. Additionally, marketing efforts on LinkedIn yield conversion rates and engagement metrics that are on average 200% higher than those observed on other social media platforms. In terms of

advertising, LinkedIn stands out with a notable 200% to 300% increase in brand attributions and a remarkable 33% boost in purchase intent. These statistics highlight the exceptional value that LinkedIn offers to consumer brands seeking to enhance their online presence and drive business growth through targeted marketing strategies.

#### **2.1.4 Twitter**

Twitter is social-networking web service that allows the registered users to send and receive a brief post called tweets. By Twitter, businesses share information quickly to a wider audience using a simple tweet that has helped companies to market their products and services. Twitter has raised brands and enhance sales by reach out to the directly targeted audience. It is one of the most widely used social media platforms globally, serves as a virtual space where individuals, whether friends, family members, or colleagues, can easily connect and interact by sharing brief yet frequent messages. Users leverage this platform to post succinct updates known as Tweets, incorporating a diverse range of content like photos, videos, web links, and textual information (Twitter, 2024)

Once a user publishes a Tweet, it becomes a part of their public profile, visible to their followers, and is also searchable within the Twitter ecosystem. This functionality enables users not only to express their viewpoints, share news, or personal updates but also to engage with others by endorsing (liking), reposting (retweeting), or responding to their Tweets.

Twitter's distinctive real-time feature, coupled with the constraint of 280 characters per Tweet, fosters a culture of sharing concise thoughts and participating in lively discussions. This brevity cultivates a dynamic and fast-paced atmosphere where users can promptly articulate their opinions and stay abreast of current trends, breaking news, and societal events.

The platform's open structure empowers users to follow accounts aligned with their interests, including individuals, brands, celebrities, and public figures. By selecting specific accounts to follow, users can tailor their timeline, a personalized feed that showcases Tweets exclusively from the chosen accounts. This customization facilitates staying connected with the latest updates and viewpoints of the most pertinent personalities and entities.

### **2.1.5 Telegram**

It is a messenger App which use for individual and group message and information exchanging purpose. Telegram has been the driving force behind so many conversations about politics, entertainment and is a source of information. It is also served us a means for online sell, promotion of product and services.

Telegram has solidified its position as a leading messaging application globally, renowned for its emphasis on speed and security. Boasting a user-friendly interface and being easily accessible at no cost, Telegram has garnered immense popularity among users. A notable feature of Telegram is its capability to function seamlessly across multiple devices, ensuring that messages synchronize effortlessly across smartphones, tablets, and computers.

Having amassed a staggering user base of over 700 million monthly active users, Telegram proudly stands among the top 10 most downloaded applications worldwide. Its array of functionalities empowers users to not only send messages but also effortlessly share photos, videos, and files in various formats, including documents, compressed files, and audio files. Furthermore, Telegram offers the flexibility to create groups with membership capacities of up to 200,000 individuals or channels for broadcasting messages to unlimited audiences.

The simplicity of finding and connecting with others on Telegram adds to its appeal. Users can easily communicate with their phone contacts through messages and expand their network by searching for usernames. This amalgamation of features positions Telegram as a versatile platform that seamlessly blends the convenience of SMS and email, catering adeptly to both personal and business messaging requisites.

The unwavering commitment to security remains a cornerstone of Telegram's allure. By providing end-to-end encryption for voice and video calls, Telegram ensures that communication remains private and secure. Moreover, Telegram facilitates voice chats within groups, enabling thousands of participants to engage in interactive and dynamic conversations.

Through its core focus on speed, versatility, and security, Telegram has solidified its reputation as a dependable messaging application. The widespread popularity of Telegram is a testament to its

ability to cater comprehensively to the diverse needs of individuals and businesses alike. Whether engaging in personal conversations, coordinating professional endeavors, or sharing media files, Telegram serves as a holistic solution for all messaging requirements.

### 2.1.6 Youtube

**Youtube**, is an online platform that is used to upload, display, and share videos with information about the product features with others worldwide. Consumers’ visit Youtube often to see and share brand contents with friends. Mostly video pictures create a larger impact in the mind of consumers which gives Youtube to have a competitive advantage over other social marketing platforms. Companies which released a very good video promotions break-even mostly when the videos adverts have gone viral. Youtube creates awareness with the creativity of the brand adverts to inform and engage consumers in a more entertaining way to enable consumers share the videos with others on social media network.

### 2.1.7 Ethiopia Social Media Landscape

There were 6.35 million social media users in Ethiopia in January 2024. The number of social media users in Ethiopia at the start of 2024 was equivalent to 5.3 percent of the total population, but it’s important to note that social media users may not represent unique individual (Hootsuite, 2024).

<b>Social Media Platform</b>	<b>Number of Users</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Facebook	5.95million	At the start of 2024, 33.3 percent of Facebook’s ad audience in Ethiopia was female, while 66.7 percent was male. 3.2 million users located in Addis Ababa However, Facebook restricts the use of its platform to people aged 13 and above, so it’s also worth highlighting that 7.6 percent of the “eligible” audience in Ethiopia uses Facebook in 2024.

LinkedIn	700.0 thousand “members”	In early 2024, 30.1 percent of LinkedIn’s ad audience in Ethiopia was female, while 69.9 percent was male.  LinkedIn restricts the use of its platform to people aged 18 and above though, so it’s also helpful to know that 1.1 percent of the “eligible” audience in Ethiopia uses LinkedIn in 2024.
Instagram	606.5thousand.	In early 2024, 44.1 percent of Instagram’s ad audience in Ethiopia was female, while 55.9 percent was male.  Instagram restricts the use of its platform to people aged 13 and above, so it’s helpful to know that 0.8 percent of the “eligible” audience in Ethiopia uses Instagram in 2024.
Twitter	34.0 thousand users	, Twitter restricts the use of its platform to people aged 13 and above, so it may be helpful to know that 0.04 percent of the “eligible” audience in Ethiopia uses Twitter in 2024.
Telegram	Unknown	Ethiopia is the leading African country with the use of Telegram

Source: Hootsuite, 2024

## 2.2 Bank of Abyssinia's Social Media Marketing

The time is the era of information. Information through digitalization has been growing immensely in every industry. Taking this into account Bank of Abyssinia has been working on its online presence to structure the bank's image on various online platforms. Digital communication platforms are the social media channels used to reach Corporates, Young Aspirants, Sophisticated Elites, and, the Diaspora (Bank of Abyssinia Marketing Strategy, 2020).

The Bank has been active in social media marketing for the past three years on Facebook, Instagram telegram, and YouTube. According to a report from the bank’s digital marketing division, in 2021 the bank added LinkedIn and Twitter platforms to its social media marketing and became fully active on Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, and LinkedIn, and moderately active on

Twitter and YouTube. The social media status of the bank ranked among the top banks in Ethiopia with competitive follower numbers and quality content.

According to the report from the Bank of Abyssinia, the bank has focused on using digital promotional platforms to communicate its services and sell products. Hence, the bank is using social media marketing parallel to conventional marketing to inform, educate, and promote banking products and services. Hence, the objective of the bank's social media marketing falls on the promotion of services and products, customer service /care, and brand awareness.

One of the major social media marketing objectives/goals of the bank is creating and spreading brand awareness for wider audiences across the marketplace. Therefore, taking the digital direction into account, an aggressive social media marketing strategy has been deployed to hit the targeted goal (brand awareness), with the performance measurement or standard key performance indicator (KPI) of Reaching and Engagement of the audience, and also audience growth. The standard KPI for social media performance is reach: how many people (audience) see the content published by the bank and Engagement is how many people react to the published content i.e., like, share, and comment. This is an indication of the Bank's renewed interest in maximizing its presence on social media platforms as a communication outlet to improve its brand awareness and build brand image.

The bank currently has the following Social Media accounts, pages, channels, and website:

@ Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BoAeth>

@Telegram: <https://t.me/BoAEth>

@ Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/abyssinia\\_bank](https://www.instagram.com/abyssinia_bank)

@LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/bankofabyssinia/mycompany>

@Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AbyssiniaBank>

@YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/@abyssinia\\_bank](https://www.youtube.com/@abyssinia_bank)

@Website: <https://www.bankofabyssinia.com>

Figure statues of the Bank of Abyssinia social media platforms in 2024

Facebook follower: -570,000

Instagram followers: - 22,200

Telegram subscriber: 165,659

LinkedIn followers: - 44,581

YouTube subscriber: -8,900

Twitter followers: 3,030

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework on Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness

The effect of social media marketing (SMM) on consumers' brand perceptions is widely recognized in the field of marketing. Scholars like Keller (2009) have emphasized the significant influence of SMM activities, noting that they often surpass the effect of traditional marketing communications (Frank 2016). This shift can be attributed to the growing preference of modern consumers to seek product and brand information through various social media platforms. Research has indicated that a substantial majority, approximately 74%, of online consumers actively engage with social media, with more than half of them relying on brand pages for brand-related information (Ismail, 2017)

The measurement of Brand Awareness is considered a crucial factor in social media marketing strategies. In the modern marketing arena, the concept of a product is fundamental in determining the success of a brand in a competitive market. Branding is a strategic element that holds significant value for companies aiming to not only capture consumer attention but also establish a strong presence in their target markets (Seo and Park, 2018).

. Brand management is a key aspect of marketing theory and practice, serving as the foundation for a brand's journey towards prosperity. The key to a brand's success lies in creating a positive

and compelling brand image, ensuring its uniqueness, and cultivating a high level of brand awareness among consumers.

Consumer behavior is significantly impacted by the perception of a brand, which plays a crucial role in influencing purchasing decisions within the consumer goods industry. The popularity of a brand is closely tied to its acceptance and connection with consumers, ultimately determining its success in the market. As consumers become more satisfied with a brand, they are more likely to transition from being occasional buyers to loyal advocates, fostering brand loyalty and building a strong customer base Keller (2009).

Therefore, the success of branding efforts hinges on the careful development of brand awareness, the creation of a strong brand image, and the maintenance of long-lasting relationships with consumers. By focusing on these key elements, companies can achieve and sustain positive outcomes in their branding endeavors, ultimately leading to increased brand loyalty and a dedicated customer following. It is essential for businesses to prioritize these aspects in order to effectively engage with consumers and establish a strong presence in the competitive consumer goods market.

### **2.2.1 Social Media Marketing Models**

Companies can follow up their online brand activities via tools for data analysis and can get instant feedback from clients on their satisfaction about the products or services, as through the use of facebook, twitter, youtube, among others, consumers tend to share content between them and expand the reach of the customer beyond regions (Palmer; Lewis, 2009). Social media is interactive, enabling customers to communicate with companies (for example to ask questions and share comments), which helps organizations improve their services. With a strong social media presence, companies can establish brand recognition, drive traffic to their websites, and establish relationships with other companies that can reduce advertising costs and increase sales over time.

#### **2.2.1.1 Social Media Marketing Adoption**

Social media advertising and marketing is defined as a dynamic interplay in which customers or audiences begin the manner of spreading a few form of business, product, or service among them along with attractive with those promotional content or even learn from others in an effort to advantage themselves (Felipe and Eliane, 2018). The Internet has given an unparalleled scale and

reach, enabling organizations across the globe to communicate and do business from anywhere in the world around the clock.

In a global context, research has showcased the multifaceted benefits of social media marketing across various domains including social media advertising, digital marketing strategies, and enhancements in supply chain management processes. This demonstrates the substantial impact and potential of utilizing social media platforms for promotional activities and business growth in today's interconnected digital landscape (Abbasi et al., 2019). Conversely, in a worldwide setting, research has demonstrated the benefits of social media marketing in various domains such as advertising on social media, digital marketing as well as supply chain management.

### **2.2.1.2 Technology Adoption Theories**

There are three major approaches to research concerning the introduction of innovations in organizations: the individualist, structuralist, and interactive processes (Kautz and Nielsen, 2004) as cited in Felipe and Eliane (2018). The individualist approach focuses on understanding how individual actors within organizations influence the adoption of innovations. This standpoint places emphasis on the unique traits and characteristics of individuals and how they impact the adoption process. On the other hand, the structuralist approach examines how organizational structures and systems play a role in the adoption of innovations. It looks at how factors such as company size, hierarchy, and communication channels influence the uptake of new technologies or practices.

Previous research studies in the fields of organizational characteristics have primarily concentrated on various factors, such as individual attributes and company size, as emphasized by Felipe and Eliane (2018). By thoroughly examining these aspects, scholars have gained valuable insights into the underlying elements that either facilitate or hinder the adoption of innovative practices in organizational contexts. Expanding on the groundwork laid by these earlier studies, the present research endeavor takes an individualistic and structuralist approach as it explores how large corporations interact with and embrace social media platforms. By merging these two distinct yet complementary perspectives, the study aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced

understanding of how individual actors and organizational structures influence the integration of social media tools within corporate environments.

The examination of social media adoption by major companies is a key research area deeply rooted in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Drawing inspiration from the groundwork laid by Siamagka et al. (2015), the academic approach being employed seeks to embrace a theoretical framework that facilitates efficient empirical operationalization, with TAM emerging as a central point of focus in comparison to alternative theories such as the one put forth by Rogers (1995) as referenced in Felipe and Eliane (2018).

The concept of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) revolves around the idea that the intentions to use technology are the driving force behind its actual utilization within organizations. According to this model, individual attitudes towards a particular technology play a crucial role in influencing its adoption and subsequent usage. Consequently, TAM's sequence of belief-attitude-intention-behavior provides a foundation for predicting user acceptance of new technologies. The widespread use and simplicity of TAM have established it as the preferred model in numerous technology adoption studies conducted worldwide (Felipe and Eliane, 2018).

Although TAM remains a robust model for understanding technology adoption, scholars like Lee, Kozar, and Larsen (2003) argue for the inclusion of additional variables and the exploration of contextual boundaries. They emphasize the significance of gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to the perceived ease of use and usefulness of technology. Ongoing research efforts are therefore focused on examining various information systems and environments to expand the scope of analysis and enhance the model's applicability in different contexts.

### **2.2.1.3 Social Media Adoption Model**

Several researchers conducted a study on the factors influencing the integration of social media within B2B companies. For example, Lacka and Chong (2016) explored these factors within various industries in China by gathering data from 181 participants. They utilized the technology acceptance model alongside Nielsen's model of system acceptability attributes as the theoretical

foundation. Through the analysis conducted using SEM AMOS, the research revealed that perceived usability, perceived usefulness, and perceived utility have a positive impact on the adoption and utilization of social media among B2B marketing professionals. The study emphasized the importance of assessing the usability, usefulness, and utility of social media platforms in determining their suitability for marketing. The ability to effectively utilize social media for B2B marketing purposes is influenced by the learnability and memorability attributes of these platforms. This research sheds light on the significance of these factors in driving the adoption and successful implementation of social media strategies within B2B companies, particularly in the context of marketing activities.

A recent research conducted by Müller and colleagues in 2018 delved into the various factors that influence the utilization of social media platforms. Through the analysis of survey responses gathered from 100 Polish and 39 German sensor suppliers, the study revealed that factors such as buying frequency, the role of the buyer, the industry sector, and the country of origin do not have a significant impact on the adoption of social media within the realm of sensor technology in Poland and Germany.

In a study conducted by Buratti et al. (2018), the exploration of social media adoption within tanker shipping companies and ocean carriers involved an analysis of data obtained from 60 companies, yielding several key insights. The research revealed that LinkedIn stands out as the most widely utilized platform, boasting an impressive adoption rate of 93.3%. Moreover, the study identified firm size as a significant factor influencing the adoption of Twitter, with larger companies displaying a greater propensity towards its use. Interestingly, the country of origin was found to have minimal impact on adoption rates, although Asian firms exhibited a lower inclination to engage with social media tools such as Facebook (70%) and LinkedIn (86.7%), potentially attributable to internet restrictions enforced by the Chinese government.

Further analysis delved into external factors such as the core business activities, firm size, and geographic location, which appeared to influence the breadth of companies' social media networks. Notably, larger firms demonstrated a superior ability to establish extensive relational networks compared to their smaller counterparts. Geographically, the study highlighted contrasting levels

of social media activity, with Asian firms displaying notably lower engagement in comparison to European and North American counterparts.

Analyzing content feedback from sample companies, the study shows that text content is more powerful than visual media such as images and video. The choice of traditional communication methods shows in the analysis a good way for participants to participate in the business. Preliminary findings highlight the unique advertising approach taken by companies in the B2B market when using social media for business. Research shows the importance of passion and vision in using social media tools and emphasizes the need to establish good relationships with the overall communication and marketing goals to be achieved in the digital environment.

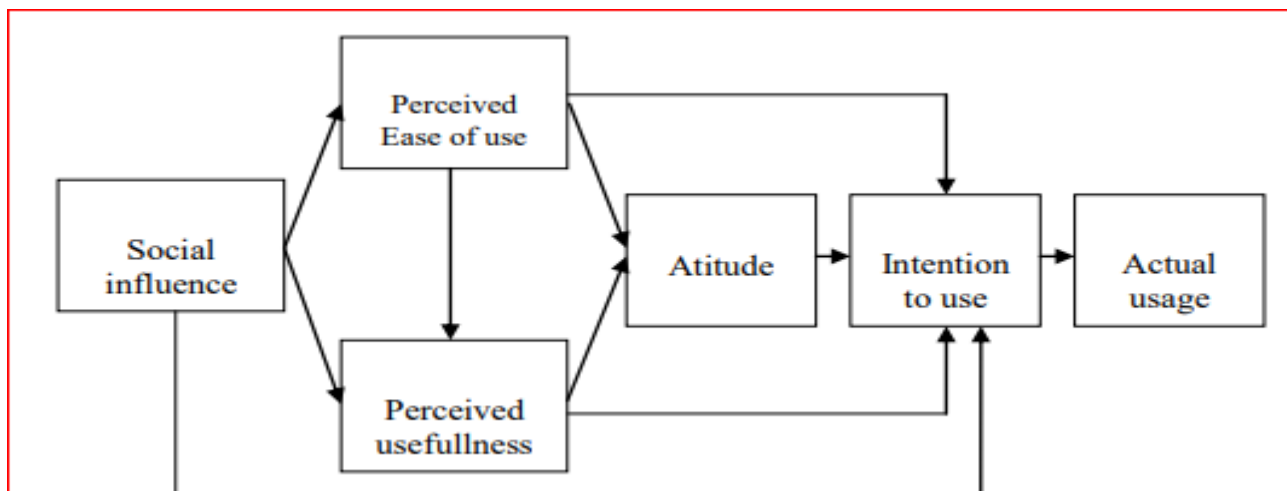
Social Impact is an important factor in the process of introducing new innovations to people and deciding whether to accept them. This effect arises from the hypocritical foreigners' curiosity about the new system and their belief that the elites in their society want them to accept the new development. In-group affiliation is a phenomenon in which people tend to align their emotions with those in their social environment. Especially when a large portion of a person's social network shares a particular view, that person will follow the collective behavior.

Many studies have looked into the intersection of social ties and technology, investigating areas like the utilization of inter-organizational computer-mediated communication infrastructure and the effectiveness of electronic connections for information dissemination. However, despite the wealth of research in this field, the exploration of social influence on technology acceptance remains relatively unexplored. Further investigation into the dynamics of social influence in the realm of technology adoption can provide valuable insights into how interpersonal relationships and societal norms shape individuals' decisions regarding the incorporation of new technological advancements in their lives.

Perceived usefulness describes the individual's "subjective probability, that using a specific application system, will increase his or her job performance within an organizational context. Researchers have used the constructs of perceived usefulness, perceived ease-of-use, to explain technology usage/acceptance for a variety of information systems. It is reported that perceived ease-of-use and perceived usefulness both have a significant and positive relationship with the amount of time students spent in the course.

In the context of user experience design, perceived ease of use (PEOU) relates to the level of effort the user expects to engage with a particular feature. The ease of use decision is important in influencing the user's opinion, which is important in the acceptance and adoption of a system. The effect of a simple understanding of the use of the target is twofold: First, it directly affects the target; secondly, it directly affects the target. Thirdly, it has a direct impact on thinking through its relationship with perceived value. Additionally, ease of use is the first hurdle users must overcome to facilitate acceptance, adoption, and use. Understanding these processes is important for designers and developers to create systems that are effective, engage with target users, and encourage interaction and usage.

Figure 1. Modified Model of Technology utilization.



Source: Afrizal TAHAR1, Hosam Alden RIYADH2, Hafiez SOFYANI3, Wahyu Eko PURNOMO4 (2020).

## 2.3 Social Media Attributes

### 2.3.1 Entertaining

The Saltwater Collective (2019) highlights the importance of enabling users to engage and engage with audiences in the digital landscape of collaborative marketing. In an intensely competitive environment, visual content has become important in attracting customers and leaving a lasting impression. Eye-catching designs and eye-catching visuals offer brands the opportunity to attract users' attention. Additionally, using humor and vulnerability as a tool not only attracts people but also creates positive emotions and encourages connection with users. Brands that value

authenticity and transparency can connect with their audience by sharing stories, personal experiences or genuine emotions.

Brands can leave an indelible mark on their target audience by offering interesting visuals, descriptions and new products. The combination of great design, excellent customer experience and effective communication forms the basis for attracting customers. According to a perspective shared by Pamela Vaughan (2013), brands can build trust and confidence and strengthen engagement with their audiences by providing timely and relevant content. ) identified four main motivations that drive engagement on Facebook, including socializing, entertainment, policy seeking, and information gathering.

Park and Lee (2014) expand on this and explain the main reasons for using Facebook, which is the basis of communication, self-expression, socialization and entertainment. More importantly, entertainment has emerged as a significant driver of platform engagement (Park et al., 2014). Additionally, Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) pointed out that participation and self-expression are social needs that drive Facebook use. (2017) presented various motivations that drive users to Facebook. These include simple relationship maintenance, information sharing, and entertainment in the minds of users. The platform is a hub where users show their gratitude by doing things like commenting on or liking posts, especially those containing humorous or gossipy content. Additionally, Facebook has proven to be a useful place to exchange ideas and information, encouraging interaction and connection between users (Lee et al., 2017).

### **2.3.2. Aspirational**

According to Saltwater Collective's 2019 predictions, organizations need to use product and social engagement strategies that carefully separate inspirational and emotional content. While inspirational content may be effective in temporarily influencing customer satisfaction, it needs to be supported by long-term motivation to generate interest and engagement in society. Therefore, the product must go beyond inspiration and create a path that empowers people to achieve important goals in line with their identity and purpose.

By using their influence, brands can encourage consumers to act responsibly, thereby promoting a culture of sustainability and demonstrating the quality of their choices. Other brands, by contrast,

will focus on improving health and creating a deeper connection with nature by encouraging people to escape everyday distractions (Rossiter, 2008). These motivational messages need to be based on core goals and values to create reality and connect with society. Brands can increase loyalty and engagement over time by consistently delivering content that suits customers' needs.

An impactful marketing message not only requires uniqueness but also demands strategic alignment with the organization's goals and target audience. Additionally, creativity plays a pivotal role in developing a compelling advertisement. As proposed by Rossiter in 2008, an advertisement should prominently showcase a primary benefit claim or a unique selling proposition, integrated with a creative concept that effectively encapsulates this claim to ensure both effectiveness and creativity.

A well-rounded communication plan is essential for articulating the advertising appeal and effectively communicating the brand message to the target audience. This message is then conveyed through an advertising appeal within a meticulously crafted executional frame. As per Belch and Belch in 2007, the executional style of an advertisement determines how the advertising appeal engages and resonates with the audience, ultimately striving to trigger a desired response as outlined by Koekemoer, 2004).

### **2.3.3. Interaction**

Consumers today are more connected to their favorite brands than ever before, thanks to the proliferation of social media platforms, newsletters, and catalogs. The proliferation of social media platforms, magazines and catalogs, consumers today are more connected than ever before with the brands they love. Increased connectivity has led to an increased need for effective customer engagement, dedicating their time and attention to the brands that engage with them. To be effective and maintain customer satisfaction, brands need to focus on delivering actionable content that motivates people to take actionable steps to achieve those goals. Such as timely product updates, beauty support, expert care tips or recommendations for careful product care. By providing this content, brands not only improve the overall customer experience but also strengthen their relationships with their target audiences. Additionally, brands can improve content quality by highlighting social media, creating educational content, and sharing insights from experts in their business.

The most important thing in the world of content marketing is to create effective content that resonates with your target audience. These terms go beyond just texting; It is designed to encourage readers to act on the information they obtain. Whether blog posts, newsletters, or multimedia content, effective content refers to the ability to create a positive impact and influence the customer. Molly Michieli (2016) states that the importance of successful content is its ability to meet readers' needs, offer solutions to their problems, or answer their burning questions. By creating shared content that resonates with their target audience, brands can expand their reach and build brand awareness and trust in used products. By focusing on the needs and preferences of their target audience, brands can customize their content, build relationships with customers, and increase engagement by relying on patience. Strategies such as team building, communication with stakeholders and management thinkers play a key role in building a strong brand, integrating user input and insight into target development.

#### **2.3.4. Joinable**

The concept of brand loyalty has transformed from traditional one-way communication to a more interactive community-based approach. Brands now need to focus on creating a participatory environment where consumers feel connected and valued. This can be achieved through activities like hosting events, supporting causes, and aligning with shared values, all of which help in building a sense of unity and camaraderie within the community. By endorsing causes that resonate with their audience and using hashtags effectively, brands can encourage engagement and empower consumers to share their experiences and connect with others.

According to Junco et al. (2010), social media encompasses a wide range of online platforms and behaviors that enable the formation of communities, collaboration, engagement, and content sharing. Andre (2010), as cited in Ghulam et al. (2014), defines social media as a collection of web-based applications that are built on the principles of connectivity, allowing users to create and exchange user-generated content. Shrestha Lucky (2013) further explains that social media acts as a channel for individuals to interact, share information, and exchange ideas within online communities and networks.

### **2.3.5. Pay Off**

Social media, in the context defined by the Saltwater collective in 2019, encompasses a diverse range of internet platforms, services, and practices aimed at fostering collaboration, community building, participation, and sharing among users. This digital landscape, deeply ingrained in both ideological principles and technological advancements, empowers individuals to create and exchange user-generated content, resulting in the formation of virtual communities and networks that facilitate the exchange of information and ideas. In response to the time and effort consumers invest in following and engaging with them, brands have evolved their strategies to go beyond traditional content and communication approaches. Through the provision of compelling incentives, brands aim to nurture a mutually beneficial relationship where consumers feel appreciated and rewarded for their attention and loyalty, ultimately increasing the likelihood of capturing and retaining the interest of their target audience.

Within the realm of social media interactions, individuals are primarily motivated by various communal or socializing incentives, as highlighted by Phua et al. (2017). Park et al. (2009) emphasized the crucial role of social media in fulfilling socializing needs, whether through self-promotion, relationship maintenance, social interaction, or information exchange to foster a sense of connection with others. The desire for community commitment, as proposed by Walsh et al. (2004), serves as a driving force behind users engaging with platforms like Facebook to build and maintain social connections, as further evidenced by Joinson (2008) and QuanHaase and Young (2010). Additionally, the inclination towards participating in collaborative endeavors, such as contributing to content creation alongside other users, is often fueled by the intrinsic desire for socializing, according to de Vries et al. (2017).

Tsai and Men (2013) emphasized the significance of social interaction and community identification in influencing customer engagement on social media. Through interpersonal connections and community bonds, individuals are motivated to participate in brand-related activities, such as collaborating with others in generating brand-focused content, as elaborated by de Vries et al. (2017). Chi (2011) further revealed that the establishment of bonding social capital through online interactions significantly impacts individuals' intention to engage in advertising activities on platforms like Facebook. The author delved into the impact of communal incentives

on users' inclination to share content, highlighting that the effects are contingent upon the nature of the content being shared.

## 2.4 Effect of Social Media

Some studies focus on the effect of social media for B2B companies, which include customer satisfaction, value creation, intention to buy and sales, building relationships with customers, brand awareness, knowledge creation, perceived corporate credibility, acquiring of new customers, salesperson performance, employee brand engagement, and sustainability

### 2.4.1 Customer Satisfaction

Several academic investigations have delved into the impact of social media utilization on customer satisfaction with notable studies by Agnihotri et al. (2016), Ancillai et al. (2019), and Rossmann and Stei (2015) shedding light on this phenomenon. Agnihotri et al. (2016), specifically focused on how the incorporation of social media tools by business-to-business (B2B) sales professionals influences consumer satisfaction levels. The concept of a salesperson's social media use was defined as the proficient application and integration of social media technologies in executing their professional responsibilities (Agnihotri et al. 2016). The research, drawing data from 111 sales experts engaged in B2B industrial transactions, sought to empirically examine the proposed hypotheses. The findings revealed a direct correlation between a salesperson's adeptness in utilizing social media platforms and the enhancement of information communication, consequently leading to elevated levels of customer satisfaction towards the sales force. Furthermore, the study highlighted that effective information communication positively correlates with responsiveness, a key determinant in shaping customer satisfaction within the B2B sales context.

A comprehensive study conducted by Rossmann and Stei (2015) looked into the factors that influence the use of social media among business-to-business (B2B) companies and its impact on customer relationships. The study examined a sample of 362 chief information officers from various B2B organizations and yielded significant findings. One key finding was that active participation of sales representatives on social media platforms directly correlates with higher levels of customer satisfaction. Interestingly, the study also revealed a notable trend related to age demographics within sales teams, showing a negative relationship between age and content

creation. Older sales professionals tend to take a more passive approach to social media, focusing primarily on customer interaction rather than generating original content.

### **2.4.2 Value Creation**

Research conducted in the business-to-business (B2B) landscape has emphasized the crucial role of social media in driving value for both customers and sales professionals. Agnihotri et al. (2012) introduced an extensive theoretical framework that elucidated how salespeople's utilization of social media can contribute to value creation. This framework also proposed a strategic approach to effectively harness social media for a competitive edge, drawing insights from established theories in relationship marketing, task-technology fit, and sales service behavior. The primary objective of this framework is to provide guidance to B2B sales organizations, particularly in their pursuit of relational selling goals, in developing a robust social media strategy.

Moreover, a subsequent study by Agnihotri et al. (2017) focused on the post-sale phase, exploring the pivotal role of sales professionals in sustaining the value creation continuum. Through an analysis of salesperson-customer interactions within the B2B domain, the researchers investigated the direct influence of sales-focused Customer Relationship Management (CRM) technology on post-sale service behaviors, such as diligence, information sharing, incentives, empathy, and sportsmanship. Additionally, the study examined the combined effects of integrating sales-oriented CRM technology with social media on these service behaviors.

The findings of the research revealed that sales-based CRM technology positively influences salesperson service behaviors, with those utilizing CRM technology in conjunction with social media demonstrating a propensity for higher levels of Service-Selling Behaviors (SSBs) compared to their peers with limited social media technology adoption.

### **2.4.3 Intention to Buy and Sales**

Research studies have delved into examining the impact of social media on sales levels and consumer purchase intention. A group of researchers including Ancillai et al. (2019), Itani et al. (2017), Salo (2017), Hsiao et al. (2020), and Mahrous (2013) have contributed to this area of study.

Itani et al. (2017) employed the theory of reasoned actions to construct a model aimed at investigating the factors influencing the utilization of social media by salespersons and its consequential effects. Moreover, it was observed that the active use of social media by salespersons positively correlated with the collection of competitive intelligence and adaptive selling behavior, consequently influencing sales performance.

On a related note, Ancillai et al. (2019) conducted in-depth interviews with professionals in social selling. These investigations revealed that the adoption of social media not only boosted sales figures but also played a significant role in enhancing relationships with customers, as evident in increased trust, customer satisfaction levels, and referrals. Moreover, the study highlighted improvements in organizational performance across dimensions such as organizational selling performance and brand performance.

Furthermore, the influence of social media on purchase intentions was explored by Hsiao et al. (2020) and Mahrous (2013). Notably, Mahrous (2013) synthesized findings from existing literature on both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) companies, ultimately concluding that social media exerts a substantial influence on consumer purchasing behavior.

#### **2.4.5 Customer Relationships**

Numerous studies have delved into the intricate relationship between social media and customer interactions, shedding light on various aspects of this dynamic. Bhattacharjya and Ellison (2015) ventured into exploring how companies cultivate connections with customers through responsive customer relationship management. Their examination centered on the customer relationship management endeavors of a Canadian company, Shopify, a B2B service provider, on Twitter. By engaging with small business customers and stakeholders on this platform, Shopify aimed to nurture lasting relationships. Building on this, Jussila et al. (2011) conducted a comprehensive review of literature to unveil the profound impact of social media on customer-centric practices. Their findings revealed that leveraging social media channels enhances customer focus, comprehension, service delivery, and reduces time-to-market.

In another scholarly pursuit, Gáti et al. (2018) concentrated their research on the utilization of social media for enhancing customer relationship performance, especially in B2B settings. Through a meticulous examination involving 112 salespeople from diverse industries, the study elucidated that greater technology adoption positively influences attitudes towards social media, subsequently enhancing its use. Notably, intensive technology engagement correlates with improved customer relationship performance, particularly in terms of customer retention, as evidenced by the application of PLS-SEM for analysis.

Meanwhile, Gruner and Power (2018) dedicated their investigation to evaluating the effectiveness of leveraging multiple social media platforms for customer communications. Analyzing data from 208 large Australian organizations, their study unveiled intriguing insights into the interplay between different social media platforms. Through regression analysis, they observed that extensive engagement on LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube can adversely affect a company's marketing on Facebook. Consequently, the research suggested that focusing on a specific social media platform could yield more fruitful outcomes for forging successful inter-organizational relationships with customers.

## 2.5 Brand Awareness

According to Kotler and Keller (2005, p.549), a brand is a comprehensive entity comprising a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a fusion of these components that functions as an identifier for the vendor of a product or service. The essence of a brand lies in its ability to differentiate a company's offerings from those of its rivals, embodying a blend of tangible and intangible attributes that constitute the foundation of its standing in the marketplace. It is imperative to recognize that a brand retains its existence regardless of the specific products or services it symbolizes. Unlike products or services, which may adapt to shifting market demands and trends to satisfy consumer expectations and desires, a brand remains a steadfast emblem of the organization.

Further elaborating on this concept, Doyle and Stern (2006) underscore the unique value that brands bring to a business distinct from the inherent value of the products themselves. The significance of a brand's value is particularly pronounced from the consumer's standpoint, influencing their deliberations and inclinations. This value can take on an intangible nature, contingent upon individual levels of contentment and personal interpretations. The positive

reputation associated with a brand is nurtured through a fusion of emotional and utilitarian interactions that consumers experience with the brand.

Branding is the cause of competition between firm brand and cultures which are sticky usually to which are sticky. Usually individuals are unwilling to leave brand culture conventions and business once they have adopted them as conventional wisdom. Brand awareness embodies the extent to which consumers recognize, accept, and remember a brand within a specific product category. It serves as a vital defense mechanism for businesses seeking to secure their market presence and ensure success by meeting and surpassing customer expectations relative to competing brands in the market. The concept of brand awareness is crucial in molding customers' perceptions and purchase decisions. It involves the potential customer's capacity to identify and retain a particular brand within a product category, ultimately cultivating brand loyalty. The various stages of brand awareness significantly impact the target market segment and contribute to the establishment of key brand attributes such as image, value, and loyalty. A strong brand awareness strategy leaves a lasting imprint on consumers' minds concerning products or services.

Building on the foundations of brand awareness, there exist distinct levels as outlined by Aaker in 1996, which encompass brand unawareness, brand recognition, brand recall, and top-of-mind awareness. Brand recognition materializes when consumers can acknowledge prior interactions with a product by recognizing the brand as a signal. It stems from memories based on past encounters or exposure to the brand. On the other hand, brand recall occurs when consumers can retrieve trademark information related to a specific brand based on the product category and their needs. This recall is fueled by saved information and past experiences surrounding the product. The top-of-mind perception is achieved when a brand occupies a prominent place in consumers' minds during the purchasing process, readily remembered and clear. This level of awareness is particularly crucial in low-involvement product categories.

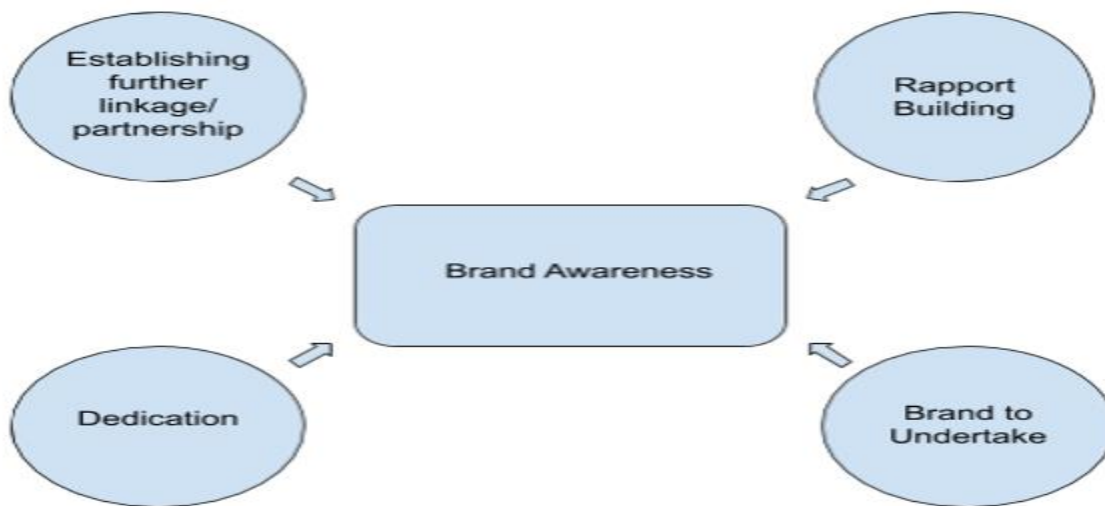
Some researchers argued that social media can influence brand awareness (Ancillai et al. 2019; Hsiao et al. 2020). For instance, Hsiao et al. (2020) investigated the effect of social media in the fashion industry. Companies utilize diverse metrics to gauge the level of brand awareness. Brand searches involve tracking the number of individuals seeking a company's brands online. Social

media metrics such as mentions and reach also offer valuable insights into brand awareness levels. Engagement rates on social media platforms, encompassing likes, comments, and shares, serve as indicators of consumer interaction with marketing content. Additionally, website traffic analysis through tools like Google Analytics enables companies to monitor the volume of consumers visiting their websites.

The impact of brand awareness transcends mere recognition and recall, exerting a profound influence on consumer behavior and market dynamics. Highly aware consumers are more inclined to exhibit brand loyalty, becoming loyal patrons and advocates for the brand. This loyalty confers a competitive edge, as committed customers are less likely to switch to rival brands and more inclined to endorse the brand to others. Furthermore, brand awareness shapes the overall perception of a brand's identity and value. A well-established brand enjoying high levels of awareness is perceived as credible, reliable, and trustworthy by consumers. This positive perception fosters increased customer preference and willingness to pay a premium for products or services associated with the brand, fortifying its market position and resilience against competitive pressures.

Jin and Villegas (2007) emphasize the intrinsic connection between a brand and its product, highlighting the critical role of brand awareness in enhancing consumer recognition and recall. By differentiating a brand from its competitors through strategic brand awareness initiatives, consumers are empowered to identify and remember a specific brand with ease. Expounding on factors that contribute to enhancing brand awareness, Jin and Villegas (2007) discuss various strategies such as establishing strategic linkages or partnerships, fostering strong rapport with consumers, demonstrating unwavering dedication to customer satisfaction, and ensuring consistent brand messaging and positioning. These efforts collectively elevate the brand to a "top-of-mind" status among customers, as highlighted by Gautam and Shrestha (2018), thereby increasing brand visibility, recall, and ultimately, consumer engagement and loyalty. In Figure 1, the factors that add value to brand awareness are illustrated.

Figure 2. Factors that add value to brand awareness



Adapted from Brand Awareness (Aaker, 1991)

## 2.6. Motives to Social Media Marketing

It is crucial for retailers and marketers to stay informed about the various factors influencing consumer attitudes and motivations in today's digital landscape. The paradigm shift where consumers are actively generating content about brands, a realm traditionally under the control of companies alone (Heinonen, 2011), underscores the importance of understanding these dynamics. Recent studies have delved into the nuances of how social media platforms impact consumer behaviors and perceptions.

In a study by Chu (2011), the relationship between participation in brand-related Facebook groups, responses to advertising, and psychological factors such as self-disclosure and attitudes was explored. The findings revealed that individuals who are members of Facebook groups tend to hold more positive views towards social media and advertising in general. Those with favorable attitudes towards advertising are more inclined to join brand or retailer groups on Facebook to access promotional content. Chu (2011) posited that there exists a direct connection between consumers' engagement with group features on social media platforms and their receptivity to advertising content.

Further insights from Chu (2011) suggest that the level of user engagement with group applications on social media platforms significantly impacts the efficacy and reach of advertising efforts, particularly on Facebook. Notably, Facebook's college-aged demographic exhibits the most favorable attitudes towards social media advertising and represents a rapidly expanding user segment. This trend underscores the potential of social media platforms as fertile ground for online advertising campaigns, particularly for businesses targeting a younger audience.

In a related study, Cox (2010) examined the interplay between age demographics and user attitudes towards various online advertising formats like blogs, videos, and brand channels. The research uncovered that preferences varied across age groups, with individuals aged 18-28 demonstrating strong positive inclinations towards ads presented in blogs, videos, and brand channels. This affinity stemmed from the perceived qualities of these formats as attention-grabbing, informative, and entertaining. Conversely, users in the 35-54 age bracket favored video and brand channel advertisements due to their visually compelling nature, informative content, and strategic placement within online layouts.

Overall, the research indicates that online advertising formats boasting positive attributes are generally well-received by users. However, ads perceived as disruptive or intrusive, such as pop-ups, expandable formats, or floating ads, tend to evoke aversion among social network users (Cox, 2010). Understanding these nuances in user preferences and behaviors towards online advertising is pivotal for crafting effective marketing strategies that resonate with target audiences across different age groups within the digital realm.

## 2.7 Review of Empirical Studies

### 2.7.1 Measuring Brand Awareness

When discussing a product and the brand that immediately springs to a consumer's mind, it signifies a high level of brand awareness within that specific category. This heightened awareness is a significant achievement in the consumer market, particularly in the midst of fierce competition. As noted by Jones (1999), establishing such brand recognition is a key goal for businesses striving to stand out amongst competitors. The impact of a strong brand on consumer perception and buying

behavior cannot be overstated, as consumers tend to favor products associated with well-established brands.

A positive brand image is a valuable asset for any business, as highlighted by Parment et al. (2016, 231). This initial level of brand awareness, often referred to as the first stage, enables consumers to differentiate a particular brand from others. As described by Aaker (1991), this stage signifies the ability of consumers to recall and distinguish a brand's name amidst similar products offered by different companies. Brand recall, a crucial aspect of brand awareness, reflects the ability of consumers to associate a specific brand with a product category when making daily purchase decisions. Walsh, Kim and Ross (2008) stress the importance of brand recall for consumers who seek out a particular brand within a product class. A positive brand presence in the market enhances brand equity and image, ultimately influencing product sales, as pointed out by Walsh et al. (2008).

Furthermore, consumers retaining a brand in their memory and being able to recall it amidst competitors within the same product class indicates a high level of awareness among consumers, as highlighted by Dauphine et al. (2013). Many popular brands leverage social media platforms like Twitter to maintain top-of-mind awareness among consumers and provide regular updates, as suggested by Weinberg and Pehlivan (2011). This strategic use of social media enables brands to stay connected with potential customers, reinforcing their brand positioning in the competitive market landscape.

### **2.7.2 Formulating Hypothesis from Empirical Studies**

Research conducted by Fasika Genzebe delving into the realm of capital hotels and spas has uncovered the significant role that social media marketing plays in shaping and fortifying a brand's image. Genzebe's study underscores how the various marketing elements deployed on social media platforms directly influence how a brand is perceived by consumers. Further reinforcing these findings, an evaluation of social media marketing strategies in the Ethiopian context highlighted the pivotal importance of cultivating a positive brand image, fostering brand recall, and nurturing connections with customers, all of which are fundamental to an organization's long-term growth and success.

In a separate study carried out by Chen in 2011, concrete evidence emerged regarding the profound impact of internet word of mouth on consumer attitudes toward products and brands. Building on

this, researchers have increasingly turned their attention to exploring the intricate interplay between social media activities and consumer behavior, product sales performance, and sales forecasts. Chen's research also unveiled that individuals who engage with brands through Facebook exhibit a more favorable disposition towards brand promotion and social media engagement. Notably, users with positive perceptions of a brand are more inclined to participate in the promotional initiatives and online discussions facilitated by the brand or its distributors.

In their seminal work, Mangold and Faulds (2009) contended that social media marketing represents one of the most effective means of fostering connections between businesses and their clientele. The utilization of social media by companies enables them to engage with consumers actively. These platforms encompass a vast array of online channels that serve as conduits for communication, such as business-sponsored forums, blogs, consumer-to-consumer email, chat rooms, product review websites, moblogs, Internet discussion boards, and various social media platforms, providing an extensive and informative landscape for interaction. Evidently, according to Kotler and Armstrong's study in 2018, 45% of internet users indicated their inclination to use social media networks to research brand information about products or services they intend to use, further emphasizing the significance of targeting specific audience segments (Hajli, 2015).

The burgeoning landscape of social media platforms, tailored to diverse demographics and interests, underscores the integral role that these platforms play in modern society, with a significant portion of the population incorporating social media into their daily routines. Notably, statistics from Shearer (2021) highlight the prevalence of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, with a substantial proportion of users accessing these platforms daily. Evans (2012) posited that personal social media sites, such as Facebook for personal networking and LinkedIn for professional purposes, wield considerable influence, reflecting the diverse functionalities and appeal of various platforms. The pervasiveness of social media in individual lives is further underscored by the substantial time spent on these platforms, with the average person dedicating 2 hours and 25 minutes daily to social media usage in 2020, a trend exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic (Hootsuite, We Are Social, 2021).

Given the undeniable impact of social media on consumer behavior and brand exposure, marketers are increasingly leveraging these platforms to cultivate relationships with their target audiences. Kotler and Armstrong (2018) emphasize the importance of enhancing brand presence and

engagement through social networks, presenting companies with the option of either participating in existing platforms or establishing their own. While joining established social media sites may offer a more straightforward entry point, it comes with inherent challenges, including the difficulty of quantifying results and the lack of control over content dissemination, which can lead to the rapid spread of negative information (Kotler and Armstrong, 2018).

To navigate these complexities and build enduring connections with consumers, marketers are encouraged to adopt a more interactive approach, engaging with customers as trusted confidants rather than relying solely on traditional one-way communication. Leading brands like Coca-Cola, Nike, and Dunkin' Donuts have exemplified this strategy by fostering dedicated online communities across multiple social media platforms, capitalizing on the cost-effective and efficient nature of social media marketing (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2021). Despite few researches are available in social media marketing, the existing researches discussed above indicate a positive outcome of social medial marketing on brand awareness. Thus, this leads to hypothesis Ha<sub>1</sub>:

**Ha<sub>1</sub>:** Social media marketing will have a positive effect on brand awareness in bank of Abyssinia.

**Entertainment:** as defined by Gaber and Tiu (2014), is a crucial element in the digital landscape, serving as a means for online platforms to captivate their audiences and elicit smiles through the use of humor. By fostering a jovial atmosphere, entertainment not only influences the attitudes of participants but also plays a significant role in ensuring their continued engagement, ultimately shaping positive perceptions of the associated brand. Oftentimes, the lighthearted content garners likes and shares from the online community, leading to an organic expansion of the brand's reach. It is important to note that while not every piece of content directly promotes the company's products or services, it serves to showcase a different facet of the brand's personality, thereby fostering stronger connections with the audience. When consumers enjoy the entertaining elements available on social media brand pages that excitement is useful in building links regarding positive experiences in their minds and, therefore, they are more likely to recognize the brand. To effectively leverage entertainment in marketing strategies, companies must strive to craft

compelling and engaging messages that not only delight viewers but also stimulate their imagination, as highlighted by Nguyen and Nguyen (2020).

Thus, this leads to hypothesis Ha<sub>2</sub>:

**Ha<sub>2</sub>:** Entertaining social media marketing will be positively associated with brand awareness.

**Interaction:** Social media has revolutionized the way in which companies engage with their clientele. The pervasive nature of social platforms has fostered an environment that is highly conducive to effective communication and interaction with customers (Gallaughar and Ransbotham, 2010). Interaction on social media occurs when users can communicate and exchange opinions or information easily with other users in online communities. The possibility of direct two-way interaction between users and service providers is very large. The relationship between brands and consumers can increase affinity and credibility. Marketers coordinate campaigns and activity on social media platforms, encourage consumers to submit consumer generated stories, post comments and reviews, and subscribe to brand pages. These interactions are influential in strengthening consumers' exposure to information about brands, strengthening consumers' ability to remember brands in their minds and, therefore, brand awareness. With a massive user base, social media facilitates diverse forms of user interaction, including likes, comments, tagging, messaging, and online chat, thereby promoting engagement among users. These interactions, when consistent, can significantly impact word-of-mouth marketing, encompassing elements of style and trendiness (Kim and Ko, 2011). As highlighted by Işoraité (2016), this increased engagement can enhance brand visibility, enabling companies to connect with their target audience and familiarize consumers with their offerings. By soliciting feedback and actively engaging with clients, businesses can gain valuable insights into customer needs and preferences (Ansari et al., 2019). Ansari also affirmed that consumer interaction on social media leads to heightened brand awareness, underscoring the pivotal role of social media platforms in modern marketing strategies. Thus, this leads to hypothesis Ha<sub>3</sub>:

**Ha<sub>3</sub>:** The interaction in social media marketing will be positively associated with brand awareness.

**Trendiness:** Trendiness refers to providing the latest social media news, and hot discussion topics. It encompasses a wide array of informative content related to businesses, product insights, upcoming trends, and more, all of which serve to enhance customer confidence and elevate brand awareness simultaneously (Godey et al., 2016). A key characteristic of trendiness is its ability to provide the most up-to-date information pertaining to a particular service or product. Companies have a diverse range of information categories to offer to their customers. Firstly, there are trend updates that are currently popular and spark debates among users, covering a range of themes such as social issues or entertainment trends. Secondly, there is brand-focused educational content that delves deeper into providing clients with additional information about product origins, manufacturing processes, environmentally-friendly initiatives that companies are undertaking, and more. Furthermore, customers often seek insights through product reviews and feedback from other users to gain multiple perspectives on a product. By keeping customers informed with the latest, most cutting-edge information, companies have the opportunity to elevate their standing and provide enhanced value (Godey et al., 2016). Trendiness not only streamlines the information search process for clients but also contributes to fostering positive feedback and strengthening brand perception. Thus, this leads to hypothesis Ha<sub>4</sub>:

**Ha<sub>4</sub>:** Trendiness of social media posts will be positively associated with brand awareness.

**Customization:** as a pivotal element in modern marketing strategies, is a collaborative effort between brands and consumers aimed at enhancing customer satisfaction by catering to individual preferences and tastes (Seo and Park, 2018). In essence, it represents the ability of brands to provide products and services tailored to the unique likes and requirements of each customer, thereby meeting their expectations and fostering loyalty (Seo and Park, 2018; Chan and Guillet, 2011). Scholars such as Martin and Todorov (2010) argue that this bespoke approach enables companies to establish closer connections with their target audience, resulting in heightened levels of trust and purchase intent. The customization dimension provides interesting information, social media also provides a place for users to find the information they need and can freely express their thoughts. It aims to offer appropriate information retrieval and provide customized services. Marketers use social media as a platform to provide consumers with customized brand-related information that matches consumer needs. Thus, when using social media platforms, marketers provide consumers with information to search for products and brands of their choice to meet their personal needs, including prices, product attributes and features. Moreover, customization can be

viewed as a means of delivering targeted messages to specific segments of consumers, enabling companies to emphasize individuality and personalization, which in turn cultivates brand recognition and fosters deeper relationships with users. This leads to hypothesis Ha<sub>5</sub>:

**Ha<sub>5</sub>:** Customization of social media marketing posts to customers need will be positively associated with brand awareness.

**Word of Mouth:** a form of communication used when providing a recommendation in the form of information on a product in the form of goods or services, to individuals, both individually and in groups. It is a crucial factor in social media marketing. It involves the transmission of individual experiences, thoughts, opinions, suggestions, and advice between users. This interconnectedness fosters relationships among customers and contributes to the creation of brand communities. Despite the abundant product information available on websites and social platforms, consumers often place greater trust in word-of-mouth recommendations due to their perceived reliability and credibility. With the advancement of social media, more and more consumers are evaluating brands and products based on WOM through social media platforms. In addition, the creation and sharing of WOM among consumers is influential in building a sense of closeness and emotional connection between brands and their consumers is considered influential in generating positive feelings among consumers

The exchange of word-of-mouth feedback not only broadens the relationship networks within brand communities but also plays a significant role in raising brand awareness and fostering brand loyalty among consumers. Research by Karjaluoto et al. (2014) suggests that the intention to purchase can be positively influenced when clients engage in sharing feedback in the form of word of mouth on digital platforms. This underscores the profound effect that interpersonal communication and peer recommendations can have on consumer behavior and brand perception in the realm of social media marketing. This leads to hypothesis Ha<sub>6</sub>:

**Ha<sub>6</sub>:** Word of Mouth in social media marketing will be positively associated with brand awareness.

For simplicity based on the above discussion and approaches followed, the student researcher examines empirically the following hypothesis:

Ha1: Social media marketing will have a positive effect on brand awareness in bank of Abyssinia.

Ha2: Entertaining social media marketing will be positively associated with brand awareness.

Ha3: The interaction in social media marketing will be positively associated with brand awareness.

Ha4: Trendiness of social media posts will be positively associated with brand awareness.

Ha5: Customization of social media marketing posts to customers need will be positively associated with brand awareness.

Ha6: Word of Mouth in social media marketing will be positively associated with brand awareness.

## 2.8 Conceptual Framework

The focus of this study is to analyze the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness within the context of Bank of Abyssinia. The researcher, in developing the study framework, has adopted the research model put forth by ElAydi, (2018) as illustrated in Figure 1 below. The investigation identifies social media marketing as the independent variable under scrutiny, hypothesizing a direct influence on the bank's brand awareness. The concept of brand awareness in this study encompasses two primary dimensions: brand recognition and brand recall. These facets are crucial in understanding the extent to which consumers are familiar with and able to recollect the Bank of Abyssinia brand. The conceptual framework of the study, delineating the relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness, is visually represented in Figure 1 for clarity and reference throughout the research process.

Figure 3. Social Media Marketing Conceptual Framework

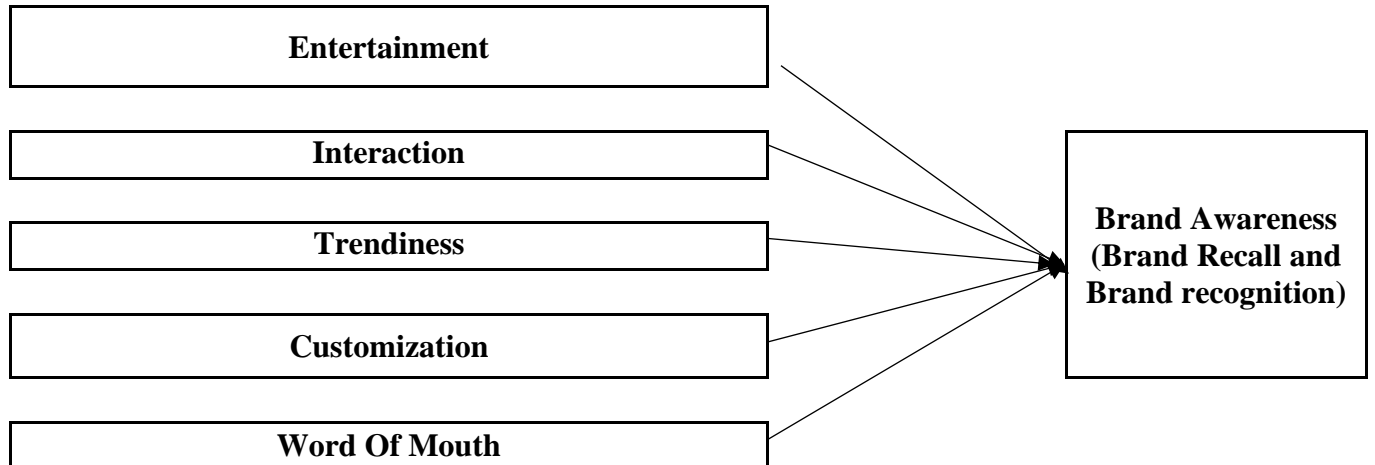


Figure 1: Research Model. Source: ElAydi (2018)

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research approach combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to comprehensively evaluate the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness specifically within the context of Bank of Abyssinia. The research utilized a survey method to gather extensive and detailed insights into the various facets of social media marketing and their effects on brand awareness. Following Yin's (2009) principles on case study research design as referenced in Birikt's (2013) work, the study acknowledges the limited control the researcher has over external events and emphasizes the exploration of contemporary phenomena within a practical, real-world setting. By adopting this approach, the research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how social media marketing influence brand awareness for Bank of Abyssinia, contributing valuable insights to both academic literature and practical marketing strategies in the banking sector.

#### 3.2 The Study Population

The target population of this study comprised customers of Bank of Abyssinia located in branches across Addis Ababa who actively engaged with social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Telegram, and Twitter. Due to limitations in accessing information about all users within this target group, the researcher opted for a convenience sampling approach to select customers of the bank who demonstrated a sufficient level of involvement with social media activities. The student researcher obtained the total customer of customers from the Bank's digital marketing department, showing a customer base of 5,514,008 in Addis Ababa as of the end of June 2023.

To identify potential participants for the study, the researcher personally visited a branch location and approached customers utilizing banking services to inquire about their social media subscriptions with the bank. Customers who confirmed their subscription were then invited to participate in the study and provided the questionnaire, providing valuable data for the research project.

### 3.3 Sampling Techniques

The researcher employed an appropriate methodology by randomly selecting 10 branches from the total of 368 branches located within the Addis Ababa Districts for inclusion in the study. This selection process was conducted with the assistance of IT technicians, who facilitated the lottery method of branch selection. Subsequently, a total of 385 individuals were contacted for the research project, utilizing convenience sampling methods specifically targeted at the 10 identified branches. This strategic approach ensured a representative sample from various branches across Addis Ababa city, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study's findings.

The sample size for the survey was determined using the formula method developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). This method allows for determining the sample size based on the level of confidence required and the amount of error that was tolerated therefore the sample size for the assessment is determined as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 N \cdot P(1-P)}{e^2(N-1) + Z^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where

- n = Sample size
- N = Population size = **5,514,008** customers as June, 2023.
- e = Margin of error that the researcher will tolerate (5% in this survey)
- P = Population proportion = 0.5, (the population proportion that provide the largest sample size is 0.5)
- Z = the standard normal value associated with the required confidence level. In this assessment 95% level of confidence is required for the estimate.

Based on this estimation technique, using the above formula the sample size was **385**.

### 3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher, after determining the total sample size required for the study, proceeded a visit to ten randomly selected branches. The researcher picked a respondent conveniently by asking from branches when they were at service. At each branch, respondents were selected using the convenience sampling method, ensuring that two specific conditions were met before including a

customer in the study as a respondent. The first condition necessitated that the customer should have been an active user of social media platforms. Subsequently, the second condition required was the customer to have encountered and engaged with social media posts published by the bank. Only customers who met both criteria were approached by the researcher and invited to participate in the questionnaire. Upon acceptance, the selected customer was handed a self-administered questionnaire to be completed at their convenience and returned to the branch.

The questionnaire utilized by the student researcher in this study was structured into two sections. The primary section was designed to gather biographical and demographic information from the respondents, encompassing details such as age, gender, population group, educational background, and the social media channels they frequent. The secondary section of the questionnaire features Likert scale statements formulated to assess various social media activities—such as entertainment, interaction, word of mouth, trendiness, customization, and promotion—and their impact on brand awareness within the banking sector, specifically in terms of both recognition and recall.

Furthermore, in addition to the customer responses, data was be collected from the digital marketing department to obtain insights into the challenges they encounter and the potential opportunities they foresee in social media marketing. A purposive sampling method was followed in choosing interview participants from the department based on their involvement in managing social media marketing strategies and communication platforms.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

The raw data collected from the survey undergoes editing, coding, and entry into statistical software SPSS 25 version for in-depth analysis. The analysis primarily used descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to draw meaningful insights.

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations are used to derive meaningful content both on the dependent and independent variables. Furthermore, the analysis delves into exploring correlations and conducting multiple regression analysis to unveil the relationships between the dependent and independent variables following the conceptual framework of the study. Particularly, the study focuses on assessing the effect of different social

media marketing like entertainment, customization, interaction, word of mouth, and trendiness on brand awareness.

### 3.6 Instrument Reliability

Reliability is a crucial aspect of measurement in research, as it assesses the internal consistency and stability of the instrument used to collect data. In this study, the student researcher gave attention to validate the reliability of the questionnaire items. For this reason a pilot test was conducted and also the questionnaire items were adopted from the works of ElAydi, 2018. As per the recommendation of the Advisor, the questionnaire was pilot tested on 30 samples. Cronbach’s Alpha was used as a measure of reliability of responses for the pilot respondents of 30 samples. The reliability was checked using the statistical measure “Cronbach Alpha” and the scale of the overall items was 0.74 and hence this test gave confidence that the questionnaire can be used as a reliable instrument for the purpose it was intended in the thesis work.

In the present study, the Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for various variables, revealing the following results: entertainment (0.751), interaction (0.789), trendiness (0.737), word of mouth (0.823), customization (0.725), brand awareness (0.864), and an overall score of 0.815 (Table 1). These coefficients, surpassing the 0.7 threshold, affirm that the responses collected were indeed reliable and can be confidently utilized for the study's analytical purposes. A high value of Cronbach's Alpha, typically above 0.7, is indicative of good reliability, signifying that the questionnaire items consistently measure the same underlying construct.

Table 1. Measure of Reliability of Instruments

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Entertainment	5	0.751
Interaction	5	0.789
Trendiness	4	0.737
Word of Mouth	4	0.823
Customization	3	0.725
Brand awareness	5	0.904
Overall	23	0.815

Source: Survey Data, 2024

Moreover, the questionnaires employed with some modifications and addition of some addition of questionnaire items in this research were largely drawn from prior studies, notably the research work of ElAydi, 2018. Consequently, the Alpha coefficient, which serves as an indicator of questionnaire item reliability, surpassed 0.7, validating the adequacy of the reliability measure. Noteworthy Cronbach's alpha values for the variables in the study were as follows: online communities (0.832), interaction (0.753), content sharing (0.866), accessibility (0.765), credibility (0.799), and brand awareness (0.856). Therefore, the reliability of the survey instrument is for acceptable and suitable for use without reservations.

### 3.7 Ethical Issues

Ethical issues refer to the factors associated with ethics and behaviors of the participants and respondent in a research work. In this regard for this suggested study, the researcher expects a certain number of issues which must fall under ethical considerations. First, the data to remain anonymous and confidentiality of respondents was ensured through the research period even after. Second, the researcher informed respondents before beginning data collection i.e., the researcher asked permission from Abyssinia bank officials to carry out this research in their organization. Third, a comfortable setting was created for respondents so that the participants of this study to feel free to share their opinions. Finally, participants were given/ tolled they have an opportunity to withdraw their opinion within any time of the study periods if they are not comfortable to participate in this study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the data analysis results and discussion on the results of the study. In addition, in this chapter the researcher also gives interpretation of those outputs from SPSS version 2005. Therefore, to present the findings of this study different forms of tables and qualitative analysis done in writing style.

#### 4.1 Response Rate

A total of 385 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents as part of the research study. Of these, 362 questionnaires were completed accurately by the participants and subsequently returned, resulting in a commendable response rate of 94%. However, 23 questionnaires were only partially filled out by respondents who discontinued the completion process. Consequently, these incomplete questionnaires excluded from the study dataset. As noted by Mugenda (2003), a response rate of at least 50% is considered statistically significant for analysis purposes. Notably, the achieved response rate of 94% in this study far exceeds this threshold, indicating a high level of engagement from the participants. The success in gathering such a high response rate can be attributed to the diligent efforts made to encourage and persuade the respondents to participate in the survey. Importantly, participation in the study was entirely voluntary, with respondents freely choosing to engage in the research process by their own will. This ensured that the data collected was reflective of the willingness of the participants, thereby enhancing the overall quality and reliability of the study findings.

Table 2. Response rate

	No of Questionnaire	Percent	Remark
<b>Completed</b>	362	94%	
<b>Not Completed</b>	23	6%	
<b>Total</b>	385	100%	

Source: Survey Data,2024

## 4.2 Respondent's Profile

In this study, the researcher described respondents' profile in terms of gender, age group, educational level, current employment status and marital status. To see the respondents' profile; respondents were asked to state their characteristics for purposes of classifying and comparing them thereafter. The study employed a closed ended questionnaire to categorize respondent's profiles and their responses were analyzed using frequencies and percentage distributions as shown in the following Table 2 below.

Table 3. Respondent's profile

Items	gender	Frequency	Percent
<b>What is your gender?</b>	Male	199	55.0
	Female	362	45.0
	Total	362	100.0
What is your age group?	18-25	81	22.4
	26-30	135	33.7
	31-35	105	29.0
	36-40	41	11.3
	Above 40	13	3.5
	Total	362	100.0
Level of Education	Secondary school complete	58	16.0
	Diploma	92	25.4
	First degree	142	39.2
	Master's Degree	70	19.3
	Total	362	100.0
Employment Status	Student	28	7.7
	Employee	194	53.6
	Freelancer/trader	113	31.2
	Unemployed	27	7.5
	Total	362	100.0
Marital status	Single	218	60.2
	Married	103	28.5
	Divorced and widowed	41	11.3
	Total	362	100.0

Source: Survey Data, 2024

The results in Table 3 above indicates males were the majority respondents as represented by 199 (or 55%) and female were the minority 362(or 45%) in this regard. The respondents biodata revealed that there is some gender imbalance in customers of Abyssinia bank who are using social media platforms.

Regarding respondents age bracket, 122 (33.7%) of respondents fall in the age bracket 26 to 30 Years, 105 (or 29%) of respondents fall in the age bracket 31 to 35 years and 81 (22.4%) in the age group 18-25Years, 41 (11.3%) of respondents fall in the age bracket 36-30 years and the remaining very few respondents 3.5 percent were above the age category of 40. Therefore, the study result in table-3 above indicates that respondents who are using a social media platform to follow Abyssinia bank are found at the start and middle of the working age i.e., from 18 to 40.

Concerning the education level of respondents of this research questioners, most of them have a qualification of first degree i.e., 58 (16%) were high school completes, 92 (25.4%) were diploma holders, 142 (39.2%) were BA/BSc degree holders and 70 (19.3%) of them have MSc/MA degree holders. Thus, this study results indicate that majority had a qualification with at list a first degree.

When we see the current employment status of this research finding; the majority i.e., 194 (53.6%) of them were employed or they have a paid job, 113(31.2%) of the respondents were either freelancers or traders, 27 (7.5%) were unemployed, 28 (7.7%) were students. Therefore, this finding indicates majority of them were salary/ wage dependents. As the samples were selected considering their social media engagement, employees can be major targets of social media marketing as they educated and exposed to information on technological developments.

Lastly, the profile of this research respondents were characterized by their marital status. The result in table 3 above indicates; 218 (60.2%) of them were single, 103(28.5%) were Married, 41(11.3%) of them were divorced or widowed. This indicates there has a growing utilization of social media regardless of marriage engagements indicating the possibilities to reach to wider communities.

#### 4.3 Respondents' Use of Social Media Platforms

Respondents of this study were asked about their social media platform use. The summary of their responses is presented in table 3 below. To assess how those respondents use the social media

platforms; they were asked the following to provide response for three questions; For how long you have been using social media Platforms? How often do you use Social Media Platforms? and on which social media platforms do you follow and/or interact with Bank of Abyssinia?

The participants of the research study were asked about their usage patterns on various social media platforms. The overall compilation of their responses has been summarized in the tabular format as exhibited in Table 3 below. In order to understand the manner in which these respondents engage with social media platforms, they were asked series of key queries. Firstly, they were requested to disclose the duration for which they have been actively using social media platforms and they were tasked with identifying the specific social media platforms through which they choose to follow and/or engage with Bank of Abyssinia. This structured approach enabled the researchers to gain insights into the nuanced behaviors and preferences of the respondents concerning their interactions on social media in relation to the mentioned financial institution.

**Table 4. Respondents’ use of social media Platforms**

		Frequency	Percent
how long you have been using social media Platforms	Less than a Year	20	5.5
	1-5 Years	39	10.8
	6-10 Years	186	51.4
	above 10 years	117	32.3
	Total	362	100.0
How often do you use Social Media Platforms	Hourly	68	18.8
	Daily	255	70.4
	Weekly	26	7.2
	Monthly	13	3.6
	Total	362	100.0
No of social media users by type		Frequency	Percent
Facebook		312	86.2
Instagram		138	38.1
LinkedIn		143	39.5
YouTube		42	11.6
Telegram		257	71.0

Source: Survey Data,2024

The results in table 4 above indicates; many respondents had experience of using social media platforms for a range between 6 to 10 Years i.e., they are counted as 186 (51.4%) of respondents. Nearly half of the respondents had above one year of experience in social medial platforms. Moreover, 117 (32.3%) of the respondents had experience of using social media for more than 10 year and the other 20 (5.5%) of the respondents had been using less than for a year. Moreover, 39 (10.8%) were using social media for a length of 1 to 5 years. Therefore, this result indicates most of this research respondents have more than 6 years of experience in using social media platforms.

In terms of frequency of utilization, the majority 255 (70.4%) of this research respondents use social media platforms on daily bases, 68(18.8% of the respondents used social media in hourly bases) and the remaining 39 (10.8%) use on weekly or monthly basis. Therefore, from this result we can say, most of respondents are a regular users of social media platforms on daily bases which have opportunities for digital marketers.

Based on the results obtained from the responses of the study participants, it was revealed that a significant majority, amounting to 86.2%, actively engaged with Facebook, indicating a robust presence of users on this particular social media platform. Following closely behind, 71% of the participants reported utilizing Telegram, showcasing a substantial user base on this platform as well. Moreover, 39.5% of the respondents, indicated their use of LinkedIn, highlighting a lesser but still notable presence on this professional networking site.

Furthermore, 38.1%, indicated that they use Instagram, highlighting the platform's popularity among some customers. Moreover, 11.7% of the participants mentioned being users of YouTube, indicating a smaller but noteworthy user base that should not be overlooked. These results imply that the bank's social media marketing efforts can effectively engage a large portion of its target customers by focusing on Facebook first, then Telegram, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube, in accordance with the user presence on each platform.

Table 5. Purpose of Social Media Engagement

Items	Frequency	Percent
finding interesting/entertainment, /educational content	327	90.3
staying up to date with current events and news	316	87.3
staying in touch with your friends and family	259	71.5
General networking with other people	215	59.4
Researching new products to buy	161	44.5
asking for products/services/places recommendations	127	35.1
filling up some spare time	115	31.8
Sharing photos or videos	78	21.5
sharing my opinion	46	12.7
Meeting new people	33	9.1

Source: Survey Data, 2024

The data presented in table 5 above illustrates the purposes behind the respondents' engagement with social media. Notably, 90.3% of the participants utilized social media to discover interesting, entertaining, and educational content, actively participating in the process. Additionally, 87.3% of the respondents utilized social media to stay updated with current events and news. Another prevalent online activity on social media platforms was staying connected with friends and family, with a participation rate of 71.5%. Furthermore, 59.4% of the respondents engaged in general networking with other individuals, while 44.5% utilized social media for researching new products to purchase. These findings offer a quantitative overview of the various online activities individuals partake in, highlighting the differing levels of participation across different social media activities.

#### 4.4 Descriptive Statistics for Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness Measures

To analyze the Likert scale responses, a mean score was calculated for every statement and the overall mean values are also indicated for every category in table. Mean values and standard deviation of the scores is shown in table 5 below. The standard deviation was nearly less than 1 indicating less dispersion between individual responses for Likert scales. For the purpose of assessing the social media marketing, the student research used Aynalem Getasew's recommendation for mean value interpretation of likert scores. Accordingly the following keys were used. Accordingly from 1 to 1.80 represents (strongly disagree); from 1.81 until 2.60

represents (do not agree); from 2.61 until 3.40 represents (true to some extent); from 3.41 until 4.20 represents (agree) and from 4.21 until 5.00 represents (strongly agree).

**Entertainment:** Based on this, the responses indicate that Respondents were asked to respond on the Entertainment nature of posts in banks social media. Accordingly the overall mean score for entertainment was 4.2 which indicates the consensus by most of the respondents on entertaining nature of social media engagement of the bank (Table 6). The overall level of agreement about the entertaining nature of social media activities was 85.5 percent. In the same fashion the details items for entertainment variables fall with range 3.8-4.2 which indicate the entertaining nature of social media engagements of the bank. This shows that the social media platforms by bank of Abyssinia can be considered enjoyable as perceived by the respondents. This can make the bank's social media marketing more enjoyable and might open the opportunities for creating brand awareness and selling products and services.

Furthermore, a significant 79.5% of the respondents have expressed a positive perception towards the social media activities of the bank, finding them enjoyable and engaging. A vast majority, 90.3% of the participants have confirmed that the contents shared on the bank's social media platforms are not only enjoyable but also interesting. Additionally, a sizable 86.2% of the respondents have acknowledged the value of the information provided on social media regarding the bank's products, finds them fascinating and relevant to their needs. Moreover, an impressive 86.4% of the respondents have indicated that they frequently derive pleasure from the posts shared by the bank on social media, highlighting the effectiveness of the content in capturing and maintaining their interest. This data underscores the positive effect of the bank's social media marketing in creating engaging and appealing content that engage the majority of its audience.

Table. 6. Entertaining Nature of Social Media posts

Entertaining nature of Social Media posts		Frequency	Percent	mean	Std. Deviation
The social media activities of the bank of Abyssinia are enjoyable.	Disagree	13	3.6	4.0	0.721
	Neutral	61	16.9		
	Agree	213	58.8		
	Strongly Agree	75	20.7		
	Total	362	100.0		
The contents on the bank of Abyssinia social media are interesting.	Strongly Disagree	15	4.1	3.8	0.705
	Disagree	7	1.9		
	Neutral	13	3.6		
	Agree	314	86.7		
	Strongly Agree	13	3.6		
	Total	362	100.0		
The information on social media about bank's products' are interesting to me.	Strongly Disagree	15	4.1	3.8	0.757
	Disagree	7	1.9		
	Neutral	28	7.7		
	Agree	286	79.0		
	Strongly Agree	26	7.2		
	Total	362	100.0		
I frequently enjoy the social media posts of the bank	Disagree	22	6.1	4.1	0.790
	Neutral	27	7.5		
	Agree	197	54.4		
	Strongly Agree	116	32.0		
	Total	362	100.0		
It is fun to collect service related information on BOA social media platforms.	Disagree	15	4.1	4.2	0.809
	Neutral	40	11.0		
	Agree	150	41.4		
	Strongly Agree	157	43.4		
	Total	362	100.0		
Overall level of agreement, mean and Std. deviation			85.5	4.2	0.808

**Social Media Interaction:** Interaction in Social Media marketing is achieved when consumers give their thoughts on social media platforms, and come across, exchange and argue with people with similar thinking about certain products or brands. Accordingly the survey data shown in Table 7 shows the banks of interactivity in social media is not optimum as the overall mean score was 2.4 out of the maximum scale 5. In terms of overall agreement, only 16.4 percent of the respondents confirmed the interactive nature of social media marketing of the bank. In the same way, the itemized mean scores for interactivity dimension ranges from 2.2 to 2.7. This show gaps on two-way interaction with social media administrators. Lower level of interaction means the amount of space provided by social media platforms to discuss and exchange ideas and

bidirectional interactions. This can be a constraint for brand awareness creation at the bank. Officers at digital marketing need to be active enough to social media interactions.

In analyzing the individual responses provided by the participants, it was revealed that a substantial 51.9 percent expressed skepticism regarding the feasibility of engaging in two-way interactions with administrators via the Bank of Abyssinia's social media channels. Similarly, an almost equivalent percentage of 51.7 indicated a lack of confidence in the bank's responsiveness to inquiries raised through social media platforms. Furthermore, a significant majority of 64.9 percent of the respondents conveyed a reluctance to engage in commenting on the social media posts published by Bank of Abyssinia. These findings underscore a notable level of apprehension and dissatisfaction among the survey participants regarding the interactive and responsive capabilities of the bank's social media presence.

Table 7. Interactivity nature of Social Media Activities

Items		Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
It is possible to have two-way interaction with administrators through bank of Abyssinia social media.	Strongly Disagree	55	15.2	2.6	1.078
	Disagree	133	36.7		
	Neutral	116	32.0		
	Agree	32	8.8		
	Strongly Agree	26	7.2		
	Total	362	100.0		
The bank responds to questions raised through social media platforms.	Strongly Disagree	84	23.2	2.4	0.985
	Disagree	103	28.5		
	Neutral	138	38.1		
	Agree	31	8.6		
	Strongly Agree	6	1.7		
	Total	362	100.0		
It is easy to convey my opinions or have conversations with other users through bank of Abyssinia social media.	Strongly Disagree	79	21.8	2.7	1.216
	Disagree	68	18.8		
	Neutral	120	33.1		
	Agree	67	18.5		
	Strongly Agree	28	7.7		
	Total	362	100.0		
I like to comment on social media posts of Bank of Abyssinia.	Strongly Disagree	112	30.9	2.3	1.282
	Disagree	123	34.0		
	Neutral	66	18.2		
	Agree	19	5.2		
	Strongly Agree	42	11.6		
	Total	362	100.0		
I enjoy sharing the Bank's post when I got interested in it.	Strongly Disagree	93	25.7	2.2	1.017
	Disagree	139	38.4		
	Neutral	84	23.2		

	Agree	39	10.8		
	Strongly Agree	7	1.9		
	Total	362	100.0		
over all			16.4	2.4	1.116

**Trendiness of the Social media Activities:** this concept is known for giving the latest information related to a service or a product. In this regard, the overall mean score for trendiness of the social media activities was 4.00 as well as the itemized scores range from 3.3 to 4.3 (Table 8). In overall terms, the level of agreement of respondents to trendiness of social media activities of the bank were 69.2 percent.

A significant majority of 88.7 percent of the respondents have indicated that the contents posted on the social media channels of Bank of Abyssinia are consistently kept up-to-date and reflect current trends. Additionally, an impressive 82.6 percent of the surveyed individuals have acknowledged that the bank effectively leverages prominent trends to enhance its presence and engagement across various social media platforms. However, the data also reveals that 68 percent of the participants remain neutral when assessing whether the bank's social media content frequently incorporates trending topics. This neutral stance suggests a potential oversight on the bank's part, as it may be missing out on the opportunity to capitalize on the user-generated interest and search behavior that tends to gravitate towards trending and hot topics. By aligning their content strategy more closely with trending themes, Bank of Abyssinia could potentially reduce the search efforts required by users, thereby increasing visibility and engagement on social media platforms.

Table 8. Trendiness of Social media Activities

		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
The contents I see on the bank’s social media are up-to-date and trendy.	Disagree	28	7.7	4.3	0.865
	Neutral	13	3.6		
	Agree	143	39.5		
	Strongly Agree	178	49.2		
	Total	362	100.0		
Bank of Abyssinia utilizes prominent trends for its activities on social media platforms	Neutral	63	17.4	3.9	0.493
	Agree	271	74.9		
	Strongly Agree	28	7.7		
	Total	362	100.0		
Social media content of the bank contain often trending topics.	Disagree	7	1.9	3.3	0.611
	Neutral	247	68.2		
	Agree	88	24.3		
	Strongly Agree	20	5.5		
	Total	362	100.0		
Bank of Abyssinia social media provide lively feed information.	Disagree	13	3.6	4.3	0.918
	Neutral	76	21.0		
	Agree	66	18.2		
	Strongly Agree	207	57.2		
	Total	362	100.0		
overall			69.2	4	0.64

**Customizations:** This concept in social media is used to define the extent to which services given are tailored to fulfil the consumers’ preferences. In this regards the overall mean score of respondents was 3.7 which show the certainty of for the customers with customizable nature of posts on the social media. Moreover, the overall level of agreement on the customized nature of posts on the banks social media were 75.2 percent. Most respondents perceive that the social media marketing were done with necessary customization to individual requests in service as well as in providing tailored information in social media activities of the bank (Table 9).

A significant majority of 72.8 percent of the surveyed respondents expressed their agreement with the fact that they consistently source their information from the official social media account of the bank. Furthermore, an overwhelming 79 percent of the respondents affirmed that the bank consistently delivers the necessary information to its customers through its various social media platforms. The study also revealed that a notable 73.8 percent of the participants perceive the bank as offering tailored information services through its social media channels. These statistics underscore the important role that social media plays in

disseminating information and providing customized services to customers in the banking sector.

Table 9. Customization of social media Activities

		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
The information that I need can be found on social media account of bank of Abyssinia	Strongly Disagree	26	7.2	3.8	1.242
	Disagree	41	11.3		
	Neutral	39	10.8		
	Agree	124	34.3		
	Strongly Agree	132	36.5		
	Total	362	100.0		
The social media of bank of Abyssinia provides the information that I need.	Strongly Disagree	26	7.2	3.8	0.927
	Neutral	43	11.9		
	Agree	245	67.7		
	Strongly Agree	48	13.3		
	Total	362	100.0		
Bank of Abyssinia's social media provides customized service.	Strongly Disagree	15	4.1	3.5	0.845
	Disagree	39	10.8		
	Neutral	41	11.3		
	Agree	267	73.8		
	Total	362	100.0		
overall			75.2	3.7	1.005

**Word of Mouth:** A series of recent studies have indicated that Word of Mouth (WOM) can hugely effect the interest of consumers in products or brands, which has a significant effect on brand awareness. In this regards the mean score of word of mouth is 3.6 which is favourable for brand awareness of the bank. In this regards, 62.3 percent the respondents confirmed that they got favourable word of mouth from social media about bank of Abyssinia. The average mean of the individual items fall with ranges of 3.1 to 3.8 indicating the bank's advantage to get use of word of mouth by social media users (Table 10).

70.5 percent of the respondents agreed that they recommend bank of Abyssinia to others through social media. In the same fashion, 72.1 percent of the respondents confirmed that they would like to pass along information on bank of Abyssinia's products and services from its

social media to their friends. Moreover, 66 percent of the respondents agreed that they got credible word of mouth on social media about bank of Abyssinia.

Table 10. Word of Mouth social media engagement

Items		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would recommend bank of Abyssinia to others through social media.	Strongly Disagree	20	5.5	3.8	1.019
	Disagree	15	4.1		
	Neutral	72	19.9		
	Agree	174	48.1		
	Strongly Agree	81	22.4		
	Total	362	100.0		
I would like to pass along information on bank of Abyssinia's products and services from its social media to my friends.	Disagree	35	9.7	3.8	0.876
	Neutral	66	18.2		
	Agree	181	50.0		
	Strongly Agree	80	22.1		
	Total	362	100.0		
I would like to upload contents from the social media of bank of Abyssinia on my social media pages.	Strongly Disagree	13	3.6	3.1	0.861
	Disagree	74	20.4		
	Neutral	127	35.1		
	Agree	148	40.9		
	Total	362	100.0		
I find credible word of mouth on social media about bank of Abyssinia.	Strongly Disagree	20	5.5	3.6	0.864
	Neutral	103	28.5		
	Agree	206	56.9		
	Strongly Agree	33	9.1		
	Total	362	100.0		
overall			62.3	3.6	0.905

**Brand awareness:** In the context of brand awareness, the collected data from respondents reflected a notable mean agreement score of 4.5, suggesting a commendable level of brand recognition amongst customers. The overall level of agreement by the respondents' about their brand awareness was 85.9 percent. The detailed analysis of itemized questions revealed a consistent range of responses between 4.3 and 4.6 on a scale of 5, further affirming the

establishment of brand awareness within the surveyed population (Table 11). The majority of participants expressed their confidence in distinguishing Bank of Abyssinia from its competitors, underscoring the brand's prominent position in their minds.

Looking deeper into customer perceptions, a substantial 80.9 percent affirmed their ability to identify Bank of Abyssinia amidst competing brands, with an even higher percentage of 84.5 acknowledging their awareness of the bank's brand presence. Worth mentioning was the magnificently large number 80.9 percent of the respondents attributed their brand awareness to the bank's social media marketing initiatives, indicating a successful implementation of strategies to enhance visibility and recognition among consumers.

Moreover, an impressive 84.5 percent of respondents reported a swift recall of Bank of Abyssinia's symbol or logo, showcasing the strength of visual association in brand retention. Additionally, an overwhelming 91.8 percent expressed ease in mentally conjuring the brand image, highlighting the brand's strong imprint in their cognitive perceptions.

Table 11. Brand Awareness

		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
I can recognize bank of Abyssinia among other competing brands	Strongly Disagree	15	4.1	4.3	1.211
	Disagree	41	11.3		
	Neutral	13	3.6		
	Agree	41	11.3		
	Strongly Agree	252	69.6		
	Total	362	100.0		
I am aware of the brand of bank of Abyssinia	Disagree	28	7.7	4.5	0.933
	Neutral	28	7.7		
	Agree	41	11.3		
	Strongly Agree	265	73.2		
	Total	362	100.0		
The social media market activities of bank contributed for my awareness about its brand.	Disagree	13	3.6	4.4	0.872
	Neutral	56	15.5		
	Agree	76	21.0		
	Strongly Agree	217	59.9		
	Total	362	100.0		
Some characteristics of the bank of Abyssinia brand come to my mind quickly.	Disagree	13	3.6	4.6	0.739
	Neutral	15	4.1		
	Agree	88	24.3		
	Strongly Agree	246	68.0		
	Total	362	100.0		
I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of bank of Abyssinia	Disagree	13	3.6	4.6	0.831
	Neutral	43	11.9		
	Agree	13	3.6		
	Strongly Agree	293	80.9		
	Total	362	100.0		
I have no difficulty in imagining the brand of bank of Abyssinia in my mind.	Disagree	15	4.1	4.5	0.764
	Neutral	15	4.1		
	Agree	103	28.5		
	Strongly Agree	229	63.3		
	Total	362	100.0		
Overall			85.8	4.5	0.892

Source: Survey Data,2024

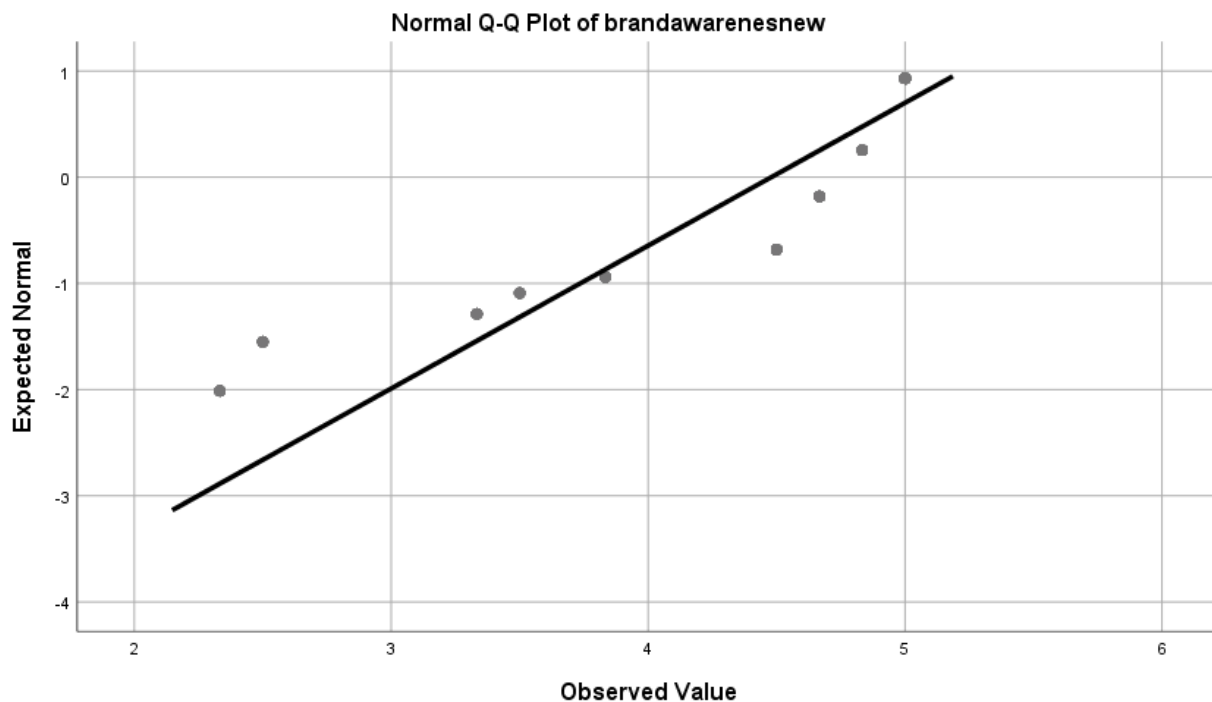
## 4.5 Regression and Correlation Analysis to Measure the Effect of Social Media Activities on Brand Awareness

In this research a regression analysis is used to see the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness in the case of bank of Abyssinia. But before doing the regression analysis, heteroscedasticity, Normality and multicollinearity tests were checked as follows.

### Test of Linearity

The Q-Q Plot shown below is an essential tool for validating the normality of residuals in the dataset. This visual representation confirms that the residuals follow a normal pattern around the center point of zero, which is crucial for ensuring the accuracy of statistical analyses. By adhering to this assumption, the student researcher confidently extrapolate the findings to the broader target population. The use of the Q-Q Plot as a diagnostic measure not only improves the interpretability of results but also strengthens the robustness and validity of the statistical inferences.

Figure 4. Test of linearity.



## Test of Multicollinearity

Since from the above test; we know that the data in this study met the needed criteria of normality for the regression model. Therefore, the next step is to determine whether there is similarity between the independent variables in a model this will be done using a multicollinearity test. The result in table 12 below indicated there is no multicollinearity symptoms, since the collinearity statistics obtained VIF for all independent variables lies between 1 to 10 which indicates there is no multicollinearity.

**Table 12. Test of Multicollinearity**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>			
Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Entertainment	.743	1.346
	Interaction	.353	2.831
	Trendiness	.470	2.128
	Customization	.148	6.751
	Word Of Mouth	.523	1.912

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Awareness

Source: Primary data 2024

### 4.5.1 Regression Analysis

In order to delve into the objectives of the thesis study, an analysis using Multiple Linear Regressions was conducted to explore the relationship between the dependent variable, Brand Awareness (Y), and the independent variables, namely Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, and Word of Mouth. In the findings presented in Table 13, the R-Square statistic is utilized as a measure of model fitness. This coefficient of determination indicates the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables collectively. In the context of this study, the results reveal that approximately 47.3% of the variations in brand awareness among customers of Bank of Abyssinia can be attributed to the

combined effect of the predictor variables (Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, and Word of Mouth). Consequently, the remaining 52.7% of the changes in Brand Awareness are influenced by factors not accounted for in the regression model.

**Table 13 :Model Summary**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.217 <sup>a</sup>	.473	.467	.4177

a. Predictors: (Constant), Entertainment, Trendiness, Word of Mouth, Interaction, Customization

**Source: Primary Data 2024**

The results displayed in ANOVA Table 14 reveal a highly significant P-value of 0.000, indicating that the regression model effectively predicts the effect of the six independent variables (Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, and Word of Mouth) on brand awareness in the context of Bank of Abyssinia. The F critical value at a 5% significance level stands at 12.218. With the P-value being less than the standard threshold of 0.05, it is evident that the model holds substantial significance in delineating the relationship between the aforementioned independent variables and their influence on brand awareness.

**Table 14. Anova Table**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.234	5	5.847	12.218	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	170.361	356	.479		
	Total	199.595	361			

a. Dependent Variable: brand awareness

**Source: Primary data 2024**

Table 15 below shows there is significant association between the independent variable entertainment, trendiness, customization and word of mouth and the dependent variable brand awareness in case of Bank of Abyssinia since those listed 5 independent variables have a P-value of less than 0.05 but one of the independent variables considered in this study (i.e., Interaction) is

insignificantly associated with the dependent variable since the P-Value is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the resulting regression equation for this study is as follows.

$$Y = 0.196 + 0.266 \beta_1 + 0.052\beta_2 + 0.182 \beta_3 + 0.308 \beta_4 + 0.155\beta_5 + e$$

Where  $Y =$  Brand Awareness,  $\beta_1 =$  Entertainment,  $\beta_2 =$  Interaction,  $\beta_3 =$  Trendiness,  $\beta_4 =$  Customization,  $\beta_5 =$  Word of Mouth, and  $e =$  the residual amount.

The regression equation presented above reveals the relationships between various social media activities and their effect on brand awareness. According to the  $\beta$  coefficients provided in Table 15, it is evident that change in social media features changes in brand awareness levels. A one-unit change in Entertainment corresponds to a notable increase of 0.226 units in brand awareness. Similarly, a one-unit adjustment in Interaction results in a 0.052 unit rise in brand awareness. Furthermore, a one-unit shift in Trendiness is associated with a 0.182 unit elevation in brand awareness, while a similar change in customization leads to a substantial 0.308 unit enhancement in brand awareness. Lastly, change in word of mouth by one unit are linked to a 0.155 unit improvement in brand awareness. These coefficients provide valuable insights into the effect of different social media marketing on brand awareness levels, emphasizing the importance of each variable in influencing consumer knowledge towards a brand.

**Table 15. Regression Coefficients**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error				
1	(Constant)	.196	.318			
	Entertainment	.233	.046	.266	5.046	.000
	Interaction	.035	.052	.052	.682	.496
	Trendiness	.187	.068	.182	2.745	.007
	Customization	.227	.087	.308	2.612	.010
	Word Of Mouth	.197	.080	.155	2.471	.015

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Awareness

### 4.5.2 Correlation Analysis

The results presented in Table 16 demonstrate the positive correlation between all six social media marketing (SMM) services, namely Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, Word of Mouth, and Promotion, and brand awareness. These correlations figures are statistically significant at a level of 0.000. However, it is noteworthy that the strength of these correlations falls within the medium range, with most values hovering around 0.5 except the correlation between the interactivity of social media activities and brand awareness which was 0.4 and the correlation between the trendiness of social media activities and brand awareness which stood at 0.258. These findings suggest that while there is a clear connection between social media marketing and brand awareness, yet the relationships are moderate or inclined to low correlation.

Table 16: Correlation result between social media marketing and brand Awareness

<b>Correlations</b>		Brand Awareness
Entertainment	Pearson Correlation	.553**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	362
Interaction	Pearson Correlation	.436**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	362
Trendiness	Pearson Correlation	.258**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	362
Customization	Pearson Correlation	.640**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	362
Word Of Mouth	Pearson Correlation	.570**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	362

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

**Source: Primary data 2024**

### 4.5.3 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

The discussions in the above showed hypothesis testing conducted on the standardized coefficients (beta values) and corresponding P-values. The main objective of this analysis was to determine whether the proposed hypotheses could be accepted or rejected within the predetermined significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The findings reveal that factors such as entertainment, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth exhibit a statistically significant positive influence on brand awareness. These factors not only contribute significantly to enhancing brand awareness but also play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences.

However, it was identified that the variable 'interaction' does not demonstrate a significant effect on brand awareness, as indicated by its relatively high P-value of 0.496, exceeding the defined significance value of 0.05. This suggests that the level of interaction does not have a substantial effect on the awareness of the brand among consumers, underscoring the need for further investigation into the dynamics of this particular variable in influencing brand perception.

**Table 16. Hypothesis testing**

Hypothesizes	Sig. test result	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Ho Rejected or Accepted
Ha1: Social media marketing will have a positive effect on brand awareness in bank of Abyssinia.	0.000	Social Media Marketing	Brand Awareness	Accepted
Ha2: Entertaining social media marketing will be positively associated with brand awareness.	0.000	Entertainment	Brand Awareness	Accepted
Ha3: The interaction in social media marketing will be positively associated with brand awareness.	0.496	Interaction	Brand Awareness	rejected
Ha4: Trendiness of social media posts will be positively associated with brand awareness.	0.007	Trendiness	Brand Awareness	Accepted
Ha5: Customization of social media marketing posts to customers need will be positively associated with brand awareness.	0.010	Word Of Mouth	Brand Awareness	Accepted
Ha6: Word of Mouth will be positively associated with brand awareness.	0.015	Customization	Brand Awareness	Accepted

Source: Own Survey, 2024

#### 4.6 Challenges and benefits of Social Media Marketing

As an integral component of the thesis study, a structured interview was conducted with a designated expert responsible for overseeing the social media initiatives of the bank. The primary objective of this interview was to gain insights into the challenges encountered by the bank in its endeavors to effectively engage with their audience across various social media platforms. Throughout the course of the interview, notable observations and key points were pointed out, encapsulating the intricacies and dilemmas faced by the bank in navigating the dynamic landscape of social media engagement. This analysis served to distill a comprehensive summary of the discourse, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of the bank's interactions in the digital sphere and clarifying the strategies required to overcome the hurdles inherent in managing social media channels effectively for better outcomes in the bank.

During the interview, detailed insights were obtained regarding the multifaceted challenges inherent in social media activities, which encompass a myriad of internal and external obstacles. The challenges identified during the interview encompass a variety of key areas that are crucial for successful social media marketing. Firstly, there is the issue of adapting to the evolving needs of the audience, which can pose a significant hurdle for brands aiming to stay relevant in a fast-paced digital landscape. Additionally, the task of distinguishing oneself amidst well-established competitors within the social sphere adds another layer of complexity to the equation. Moreover, the reluctance of certain stakeholders or executives to recognize the immediate benefits of investing in social media as a primary channel can impede progress and hinder the realization of the platform's full potential.

Furthermore, the dearth of innovative content ideas presents a fundamental obstacle to engaging with audiences in a meaningful and compelling manner. Without a steady stream of fresh and creative concepts, the bank's social media activity may struggle to capture and retain the attention of their target demographic. Moreover, the lack of a cohesive growth strategy or a clear direction

on how best to leverage social media for brand awareness and image-building purposes can result in a disjointed and ineffective marketing approach.

Lastly, the challenge of catering to the diverse language preferences of customers underscores the importance of linguistic inclusivity in social media communication. Failing to address this aspect can lead to alienation and missed opportunities for engagement with a broader and more varied audience base. Overall, addressing these multifaceted challenges is essential for enhancing the effectiveness and effect of social media marketing initiatives in today's competitive digital landscape.

From another perspective, during the interview, a question was posed to the expert regarding the advantages accrued from the bank's social media marketing endeavors. The expert emphasized that the bank's social media activities have played a pivotal role in enhancing brand awareness, introducing new products and services, and fostering direct communication channels with customers. By actively engaging with the bank's posts, users on social media platforms contribute to expanding the bank's audience through sharing with their social circles. The expert further highlighted that these social media initiatives have resulted in increased website traffic, lead generation, sales growth, heightened visibility for the bank, effective management of negative feedback concerning the bank's brand, and the provision of a valuable platform for gauging the sentiments of both existing and prospective customers. Moreover, the expert underscored that monitoring competitors through social media channels has equipped the bank with crucial insights for strategic decision-making.

#### 4.7 Discussion of Findings

Based on the analysis of this thesis, it has been found that most of the customers of the bank with age range of 18-40 were users of social media on a regular basis. The social media utilization habit of the adult working age population can be an essential audience of the bank for its social media marketing. This finding is also matches with the thesis work of Fasika Genzebe (2018) conducted on social media marketing in hospitality sector in Ethiopia. According to Nejat Mohammed (2018), companies especially those whose target customers coincide with this younger demographic society can benefit a great deal out of social media marketing which is the fastest

and cheapest form of promotional tool to communicate with their target customers and which also enable them to reach large number of consumers easily and in short period of time.

A significant portion of the research respondents, specifically 255 respondents comprising 70.4% of the total, engage with social media platforms on a daily basis. Moreover, 68 respondents, accounting for 18.8% of the total, utilize social media on an hourly basis, demonstrating consistent interaction with online platforms. The data also reveals that the remaining 39 participants, representing 10.8% of the respondent pool, engage with social media either on a weekly or monthly basis. This information underscores the prevalent trend of regular and frequent social media usage among the respondents, particularly daily engagement, which presents valuable opportunities for digital marketers to effectively reach and engage with their target audience through these widely utilized platforms.

Based on the results obtained from the responses of the study participants, it was revealed that a significant majority, amounting to 86.2%, engaged with Facebook, followed by 71% of Telegram users. Moreover, 39.5% of the respondents use LinkedIn which is known as a professional networking site. Additionally, 38.1% of the respondents reported being users of Instagram, emphasizing a considerable portion of individuals active on this visually-driven platform. Lastly, 11.7% of the participants identified as users of YouTube, underlining a portion that still warrants attention despite being comparatively lower than other platforms. The dominance of Facebook as a preferred social media platforms in this survey also matches the thesis work of Miskir (2015) where 82 % of the study participants were on Facebook. Yet with time, despite the continued dominance of Facebook, new social media platforms such as telegram, Instagram and LinkedIn are getting growing number of users.

The main purpose of utilizing social media by respondent were finding interesting/entertainment/educational content for 90.3% participation followed by getting up to date information for 87.3% engagement and getting connected with friends and family for 71.5% of respondents an participation and 44.5% of respondents use social media for researching new products to buy and others 35.1% of respondents confirmed that they use social media for asking for products/services/places. These research findings are supported with the thesis work of Nejat Mohammed (2018). In her study, she found that Therefore, 92% of the respondents use Social

Media to keep in touch with family and friends. Her finding also confirmed that respondents use social media for search for jobs and other available opportunities, to make professional and business contact (gain leads, customers) and to meet new people and share my experience about life.

This study was aimed to examine the relationship between Social media Activities focused on variables: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization and word of mouth on brand awareness. The thesis revealed that brand awareness was significantly predicted in the model by independent variables: entertainment, customization, word of mouth and trendiness. This study findings were in line with the findings of Oscarius, Wijayaa and Sulistiyanib (2021) where direct and positive relation was found between the independent variables and the independent variable under of this thesis. In the same manner Keller (2013) identified that social media marketing were highly associated with the brand to create a solid and favorable brand awareness in the mind of consumers.

The independent variables included in the regression model successfully accounted for 47.3% of the variance in brand awareness and demonstrated statistical significance at  $p=0.05$ . These results are consistent with the research conducted by Fasika Genzebe (2018) and Noorshella Che Nawi, Abdullah Al Mamun (2020). Among the predictors analyzed, the coefficient of determination indicated that customization of social media activities held the most significant influence ( $\beta = 0.308$ ), followed by Entertainment ( $\beta = 0.226$ ), trendiness ( $\beta = 0.182$ ), and word of mouth ( $\beta = 0.155$ ), all of which were statistically significant at the 0.05 level, except for interaction. These findings underscore the importance of social media marketing in exerting a substantial effect on brand awareness within the Bank of Abyssinia.

The research findings align with the study by Cho-I Park and Young Namkung (2024), focusing on Instagram as a social media platform, where customization, Entertainment, trendiness, and word of mouth were identified as significant factors in determining brand awareness levels, while interaction showed less effect. Conversely, interactive activities on social media platforms were highlighted as key determinants of brand awareness in studies conducted by Zhu, Chen, H.G (2015), Bowen, Bowen (2015), and Howe (2006). These results are further supported by the work of Marzouk (2016), illustrating the substantial influence of social media marketing on Face-book in enhancing brand awareness

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section deals with the summary of major findings, conclusions drawn from the findings and the recommendations forwarded for improvement of social media marketing practice to improve the brand awareness.

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

The data gathered from the structured questionnaire was assessed by Cronbach's alpha, which was commonly referred as internal consistency or reliability. The reliability test of the thesis data exceeded the minimum requirement of 0.7 which were highly reliable to do further analysis.

The majority of demographic data of social media users of the bank's customers were found from 18 to 40 ages. In terms of frequency of utilization, most of respondents were a regular users of social media platforms on daily or hourly basis which can be growing marketing channel for opportunities for digital marketers. This information underscores the prevalent trend of regular and frequent social media usage among the respondents, particularly daily engagement, which presents valuable opportunities for digital marketers to effectively reach and engage with their target audience through these widely utilized platforms. The social media utilization habit of the adult working age population can be an essential audience of the bank for its social media marketing.

The study found out that Facebook, Telegram and Instagram were the most commonly used social media platforms used by most of the customers respectively. Accordingly it was revealed that a significant majority 86.2% of respondents engaged with Facebook, followed by 71% of Telegram users. Moreover, 39.5% of the respondents use LinkedIn which is known as a professional networking site. Additionally, 38.1% of the respondents reported being users of Instagram, emphasizing a considerable portion of individuals active on this platform. Lastly, 11.7% of the participants identified as users of YouTube.

The research findings revealed that the average score for the perceived entertainment value of social media posts by bank customers was 4.2 out of scale 5, indicating a high level of consensus

among respondents regarding the engaging nature of the bank's social media presence. An impressive 85.5 percent of participants agreed on the entertaining aspect of the bank's social media activities. However, there was a noted deficiency in the interactivity of the bank's social media marketing endeavors, with an average score of 2.4 out of a possible 5 likert scale. Only 16.4 percent of respondents acknowledged the interactive nature of the bank's social media marketing initiatives.

On the positive side, the study highlighted that the bank's social media marketing posts were perceived as trendy, with an average rating of 4.00 out of 5 likert scale. A significant 69.2 percent of respondents agreed on the trendiness of the bank's social media efforts. Furthermore, the research indicated that the bank's social media posts are tailored to meet consumer preferences, as evidenced by an average score of 3.7 and an agreement rate of 75.2 percent on the customizable nature of the bank's social media contents.

The Bank of Abyssinia is capitalizing on the benefits of social media Word of Mouth, as participants gave a favorable average response score of 3.6, enhancing the bank's brand awareness. A noteworthy 62.3 percent of respondents confirmed receiving positive word of mouth about the bank's products and services through social media channels.

The bank's brand awareness level has been evaluated, showing an impressive average rating of 4.5 out of a possible score 5. In the same way a majority of survey participants expressed confidence in their ability to differentiate the Bank of Abyssinia from its competitors, emphasizing the bank's strong brand awareness in their minds. An overwhelming 85.9 percent of respondents agreed on their awareness of the Bank of Abyssinia brand. This indicates a significant competitive advantage, with the bank effectively standing out in the minds of consumers amidst the growing financial services landscape in the banking business.

The correlation test of all of the five social media marketing taken as independent variables (i.e., Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization and Word of Mouth) and brand awareness the dependent variable were positively correlated and statistically significant at 0.05. The correlation was relatively moderate for word of mouth, entertainment and customization.

The regression analysis of the study illustrate that social media activities of the bank had positively contributed for brand awareness. The adjusted  $R^2$  model indicated that the independent variables

determines 47.3% of the variations in the brand awareness with p-value of 0.000. The remaining 52.7% of the changes in the model attributed by other factors.

The coefficient of regression analysis shows that five of the independent variables had positively contributed to brand awareness in the bank: customization being the largest predictor ( $\beta=0.308$ ) followed by Entertainment ( $\beta=0.226$ ), trendiness ( $\beta=0.182$ ) and word of mouth ( $\beta=0.155$ ) and all are significant at 0.05 except interaction. The social media marketing that had the highest effect were customization, entertainment, trendiness and word of mouth.

From the thesis it was learned that the challenges of social media marketing were related to compliance issues, setting privacy issues, lack of expertise, diversified language requirement, basic knowledge on social media, managing the volume of traffic through social media and also difficulty in setting standards and guidelines on content and information that should be publicly broadcasted over various social media platforms, lack of creative content ideas and lack of growth, direction or strategy;

## 5.2 Conclusion

Social media has become a vital communication tool in the modern information age, helping consumers express their opinions, preferences, likes, and experiences with the different goods and services that companies provide. It is now integrated in everyday life. People actively engage with social media platforms on a regular basis, demonstrating the prevalent nature of social media use among both adult and younger generations in society. Because of the increased volume of social media interaction, digital marketers now have an excellent opportunity to build awareness of and interest in their brands. This thesis work and some previous studies clearly show a positive correlation between social media marketing and brand awareness. Particularly, research has highlighted the significant role played by social media activities in enhancing brand awareness in the bank of Abyssinia. Effective social media marketing strategies entail a strategic approach that involves tailoring content to resonate with target audiences, crafting engaging posts that blend entertainment and trending topics, and fostering brand advocacy through word-of-mouth recommendations. By leveraging these tactics, businesses can effectively bolster their brand presence and drive meaningful engagement through their social media endeavors.

### 5.3 Recommendations

The social media utilization habit of the adult age population can be an essential audience for social media marketing in relation to creating brand awareness. In a country where there is higher share of younger demographic society and growing level of the younger community daily engagement on social medias, companies such as Bank of Abyssinia can benefit a great deal social media marketing which is the fastest and cheapest form of promotional tool to communicate with its customers about its services and also build its brand awareness or image. The bank may focus its media activities on social Media which are used by most customers such as Facebook, telegram, Linked In and Instagram keeping the order of importance and also working on retaining existing customers and working on the potential followers retargeting with age, gender and more.

The social media space provides an opportunity for Bank of Abyssinia to receive customer opinions, perceptions, and feedback, which is crucial for creating brand awareness and fostering purchase intention. Therefore, the bank's social media marketing efforts need to be handled with care to facilitate interactivity. Its digital marketing team should actively engage with customers by responding to comments, retweeting, and sharing content across various social media networks.

Furthermore, the findings highlight key strategies the bank should leverage to effectively reach and engage its diverse customer base. These include tailoring content and messaging to cater to customers across gender, age, education, employment, and marital status; prioritizing engagement with the younger and middle-aged segments while also addressing the needs of older customers to foster loyalty; creating content that showcases the bank's expertise and innovative offerings to resonate with the highly educated customer profile; developing strategies to engage both the employed and salaried customers as well as smaller segments such as freelancers, traders, and students; and ensuring content and messaging cater to the diverse marital statuses of customers to create a sense of relevance for all segments. By implementing these strategies, Bank of Abyssinia can strengthen its brand awareness and position itself as a trusted financial institution in the market.

The results of the thesis demonstrated that the bank's social media should engage with customers by increasing individuals to like brand posts which drive content sharing and interaction. This will

lead to an increase in the number of users added to the bank's circle of influence which further contribute for brand awareness.

Moreover, the banks social media team need to focus on trendiness in order to increase the customers' awareness of the brand, products and services of the bank. For trendiness, further effort need to exert on providing more up-to-date content on different social media activities. In addition, the bank's social media activities need to be creative enough to derive more fun and entertaining content on different social media accounts, such as pictures and videos that could attract customers and engage them with bank's activities.

The interest of customer involvement through social media activities gives insight to the bank to give attention on quality of social media engagements by improving the capacity of the specialized team to work on social media activities and to further monitor the interaction of customers on social media platforms, aiming to refresh the bank's brand awareness.

The bank may facilitate social media engagement platform that encourages customized Communication. The communication and conversation might be either Brand Related or Unrelated which sought clarifying customers' ideas. Having this expected to be highly beneficial for the bank to create engaging content on social media and thereby facilitate brand awareness. In this regards, the bank's social media need to listen, engage, and share to create involving social media platforms for the bank.

#### 5.4 Limitation of the thesis

This thesis work is constrained by the lack of extensive research findings pertaining to Ethiopian social media marketing within available literature sources. Additionally, financial constraints limited the researcher's ability to include bank customers residing outside the Capital city in the study. Furthermore, the utilization of convenience sampling as the sampling method resulted in non-probabilistic sampling, thereby restricting the generalizability of the findings beyond the context of Bank of Abyssinia. It is evident that further exploration employing a more extensive sample within the Ethiopian Banking sector is imperative to elucidate and validate the outcomes obtained in this research

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Annex 1. Questionnaire

**Addis Ababa University**

**School of Commerce**

**Master of Art in Marketing Management**

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**Questionnaire on “The effect of social media marketing on brand awareness at bank of  
Abyssinia.”**

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**Dear Respondents,**

This questionnaire is designed to explore the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness in the case of bank of Abyssinia. This study is conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the master’s degree in Marketing Management at Addis Ababa University. Its main objective is assessing the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness in the cases of Bank of Abyssinia.

Your response is vital to the outcome of the study and you are requested to completely and objectively answer all questions. The research is going to be carried out based on your responses and other relevant data that could support it. It forms a major part of the research and the information you will enable the researcher to critically analyze the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness in the case of bank of Abyssinia.

Your cooperation to respond genuinely is very important to this study because it represents several other potential respondents of this study who are not included in the sample. Please answer all questions. Space is provided at the end of the questionnaire for you to add further explanations or comments. I would promise that all information you provide would be strictly confidential.

Please tick (✓) or provide your own answers where applicable.

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Thank you in advance for your indispensable cooperation to spare invaluable time and energy to complete these questionnaires Name: Rakeb Tadesse MA student at AAU.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section I: General characteristics of Respondents

1. What is your gender?

- Male                       Female

2. What is your age group?

- 18-25                       26-30                       31-35  
 36-40                       40-45                       Over 45 Years

3. What is your level of Education?

- Elementary school complete     Secondary school complete  
 Diploma                               First degree  
 Masters                              Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is your current employment status?

- Student                               Employed                       Freelancer  
 Unemployed                      Other, \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your marital status?

- Single                               Married                       Divorced  
 Widowed                               Not interested to mention

6. For how long you have been using social media Platforms?

- Less than a Year                       1-5 Years                       6-10 Years                       More than 10 Years

7. How often do you use Social Media Platforms

- Hourly                               Daily                               Weekly                               Monthly  
 When Necessary

8. On which social media platforms do you follow and/or interact with Bank of Abyssinia

- Facebook      Instagram      LinkedIn      YouTube  
Telegram      Other.....

9. What are your reasons for using social media platforms?

- staying in touch with your friends and family  
 staying up to date with current events and news  
 finding interesting/entertainment, /educational content  
 General networking with other people  
 Sharing photos or videos with others  
 filling up some spare time  
 Researching new products to buy  
 Meeting new people  
 sharing my opinion  
 asking for products/services/places recommendations  
 Other.....

**Section II: Social Media Marketing (SMM) and Brand Awareness**

Please give your opinion on the following statements according to this scale of agreement:

- 1- Strongly Disagree  
 2- Disagree  
 3- Neutral  
 4- Agree  
 5- Strongly Agree

No	Questions Social Media Marketing Activities (SMM)	1	2	3	4	5
Codes	Entertaining nature of social media Activities					

EN001	The social media activities of the bank of Abyssinia are enjoyable.					
EN002	The contents on the bank of Abyssinia social media are interesting.					
EN003	The information on social media about bank's products' are interesting to me.					
EN004	I frequently enjoy the social media posts of the bank					
EN005	It is fun to collect service related information on BOA social media platforms.					
Codes	<b>Concerning Interactivity</b>					
IN2002	It is possible to have two-way interaction with administrators through bank of Abyssinia social media.					
IN2002	The bank responds to questions raised through social media platforms.					
IN2003	It is easy to convey my opinions or have conversations with other users through bank of Abyssinia social media.					
IN2004	I like to comment on social media posts of Bank of Abyssinia.					
IN2005	I enjoy sharing the Bank's post when I got interested in it.					
Codes	<b>Concerning Trendiness</b>					
TA3001	The contents I see on the bank's social media are up-to-date and trendy.					
TA3002	Bank of Abyssinia utilizes prominent trends for its activities on social media platforms					
TA3003	Social media content of the bank contain often trending topics.					
TA3004	Bank of Abyssinia social media provide lively feed information.					
Codes	<b>Customization</b> of contents					
CU4001	The information that I need can be found on social media account of bank of Abyssinia					
CU4002	The social media of bank of Abyssinia provides the information that I need.					
CU4003	Bank of Abyssinia's social media provides customized service.					
Codes	<b>Word of mouth</b>					

WM5001	I would recommend bank of Abyssinia to others through social media.					
WM5002	I would like to pass along information on bank of Abyssinia's products and services from its social media to my friends.					
WM5003	I would like to upload contents from the social media of bank of Abyssinia on my social media pages.					
WM5004	I find credible word of mouth on social media about bank of Abyssinia.					
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Brand Awareness</b>					
BA6001	I can recognize bank of Abyssinia among other competing brands					
BA6002	I am aware of the brand of bank of Abyssinia					
BA6003	The social media market activities of bank contributed for my awareness about its brand.					
BA6004	Some characteristics of the bank of Abyssinia brand come to my mind quickly.					
BA6005	I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of bank of Abyssinia					
BA6006	I have difficulty in imagining the brand of bank of Abyssinia in my mind.					

## **Annex 2. Interview Guide Questions**

### **Section 1**

1. What is your position or title in the bank of Abyssinia and how long you have been working here?
2. What type of products and services does the bank of Abyssinia offer?

### **Section 2**

1. What are the major forms of social media marketing promotion that the bank use?
2. Since you have different social media pages, do you use social media marketing for brand awareness?
3. How long have you been using social media to create brand awareness?
4. What are the benefits you get by using social media for promoting Abyssinia bank's brands and products?
5. What challenges does the bank of Abyssinia face in using social media?
6. Have you ever encountered a negative comment(s) online about your company or products? If so, how did you deal with the situation?
7. What other ways have you used to minimize the impact of these challenges?
8. Do you find this social media marketing to be effective? If yes, please explain how?