

Social Media Marketing Strategies And Customer Engagement In Rwanda

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ABSTRACT

This paper assessed the social media marketing strategies on customer engagement with a particular focus on Mango Telecom Rwanda, Kigali. More specifically, this study is guided by four specific objectives of evaluating the Mango telecom social media online platforms on the customer engagement, investigating the contribution of Mango Telecom advertising campaigns on the customer engagement, ascertaining the effects of Mango Telecom promotions on the customer engagement, and examining influencer collaboration to maintain customer loyalty within Mango customer engagement. In establishing the theoretical foundation, the researcher will incorporate the theories of social exchange and Service-Dominant Logic (S-D Logic). To develop the research methodology, we will use a mixed-methods approach that integrates both quantitative and qualitative elements within a descriptive framework. More specifically, this study will employ three primary focal points including observational Analytics, a specific case study approach and qualitative data will be utilized, focusing on Mango Telecom in Kigali and surveys which will be conducted to gather quantitative data from a sample of respondents. The target population, the study will focus on the Mango Management Team as key informants' agents of Mango Telecom Rwanda and some other respondents. The total agents or Mango Telecom Rwanda in Kigali City are 300. For sampling, the basis for selecting 90 respondents from 300 Mango Telecom is that the researcher used purposive sampling technique. For the data collection procedure, the researcher will use a descriptive research design with a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative techniques like surveys, observations, and interviews. To analyze and present the data, SPSS will be used for descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation calculations. Inferential statistics, such as Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression analysis, will also be conducted.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing Strategies, Customer Engagement, Online Platforms, Advertising, Promotion, and Influencer Collaborations.

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims at assessing the strategies for using social platforms for marketing on customer participation with a particular focus on Mango Telecom.

The previous studies conducted by Smith (2015), on impact of social networks on customer engagement found that active customer participation, such as liking, sharing, and commenting on social media content, significantly increased brand engagement. For Ansari, *et al* (2019), the users who engaged with information on social networks were more likely to exhibit higher brand loyalty and positive brand attitudes. The researcher concluded and recommended that businesses should focus on fostering a vibrant and interactive online community to enhance customer engagement.

In a study carried out by Johnson *et al* (2018) on The Influence of Social Media Platforms on Customer Engagement, this study investigates the impact of various social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) on customer engagement across different industries. It examines how customer participation interacts with likes, shares, comments, and brand interactions vary depending

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on the platform used. By analyzing a diverse range of social media platforms, this study provides insights into which platforms are most effective for engaging customers in different contexts, which can help inform Mango Telecom's social media strategy.

In a study carried out by Khan, *et al* (2020), on Exploring Customer Engagement Strategies on Social Media, a Case Study of Telecom Companies in Developing Countries. This case study investigates the customer engagement strategies employed by telecom companies in developing countries through social media platforms. It examines how these companies utilize social media to interact with customers, address their concerns, and build brand loyalty. Aksoy, L. (2018), with this researcher, given its focus on telecom companies in developing countries, including potential similarities with Mango Telecom's operating environment, this study offers practical insights and strategies that can be applied to enhance customer engagement through social media.

Research conducted by Dominik. (2022), focused on the impact of promotions on customer engagement. The study found that promotions, such as contests and special offers, were effective in driving customer engagement. Customers exhibited a greater inclination to interact with a brand's content on digital networking platforms when promotions were included. The researcher concluded that promotions could serve as valuable tools for fostering customer interactions and building brand loyalty. As a recommendation, businesses were encouraged to incorporate promotions into their social media marketing strategies.

In a study by Martinez and Davis (2018), the researcher explored the role of influencer collaborations in customer engagement. The research found that influencer collaborations significantly increased customer engagement, especially when influencers had a genuine connection with the brand's target audience. The researcher concluded that leveraging influencer partnerships could effectively drive customer interactions and enhance brand visibility. As a recommendation, businesses were advised to carefully select influencers aligned with their brand values and audience.

The main project research was to assess the strategies for using social platforms for marketing on customer participation with a particular focus on Mango Telecom. Specifically, the study aimed at: (i) to evaluate the Mango telecom social media online platforms on the customer engagement; (ii) to investigate the contribution of Mango Telecom advertising campaigns on the customer engagement; (iii) to ascertain the effects of Mango Telecom promotions on the customer engagement; (iv) to examine influencer collaboration to maintain customer loyalty within Mango customer engagement. The interest of this study This study's significance extends beyond the academic realm. It has practical implications for businesses, informs policy decisions, empowers the community, and contributes to Rwanda's economic growth and sustainable development goals. This study holds great significance for enterprises within Rwanda's telecommunications and allied industries. For policymakers and regulatory bodies, the research offers valuable data and insights on the role of social media in the telecommunications industry. The study's findings and recommendations can play a crucial role in fostering economic growth, generating employment opportunities, and promoting innovation in the country.

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a conceptual framework that provides the theoretical foundation and structure for conducting research. It consists of a set of interconnected concepts, definitions, assumptions, and propositions that guide the study and help researchers understand the phenomena they are investigating. Theoretical frameworks are based on existing theories, models, or frameworks from relevant disciplines and literature, and they serve as a lens through which researchers analyze data, interpret findings, and draw conclusions.

Social Exchange Theory: This was developed by sociologists George Homans (1958) and Peter Blau (1964). It posits that social behavior is the result of an exchange process where individuals seek to maximize benefits and minimize costs in their interactions. Social Exchange Theory is a well-established theory in the field of social psychology. It posits that individuals engage in social

relationships and interactions based on the principle of reciprocity. In the context of this study, this theory suggests that users are more likely to engage with brands and content when they perceive a benefit or value in return for their interactions. This benefit can come in the form of informative content, entertainment, incentives, or acknowledgment (Homburg, 2010).

In relation to the topic under study, Social Exchange Theory is particularly relevant to understanding why individuals in the Rwandan context engage with social media marketing content. It explains that customers are motivated to engage with brands on social media when they perceive a value exchange. This theory can guide the development of social media marketing strategies that offer meaningful incentives and content to foster customer engagement.

Service-Dominant Logic (S-D Logic); This was proposed by Robert F. Lusch and Stephen L. Vargo in 2004. This theory suggests that value is co-created by both the provider and the consumer through interactions and relationships rather than being embedded in tangible products. Service-Dominant Logic (S-D Logic) is a marketing theory that shifts the focus from products to services and emphasizes the co-creation of value in the customer-provider relationship. In the context of customer engagement, S-D Logic suggests that customers actively participate in the co-creation of value with businesses. This co-creation occurs through interactions and engagements with the brand, where customers play an integral role in shaping their experiences and the perceived value (Dominik, 2022).

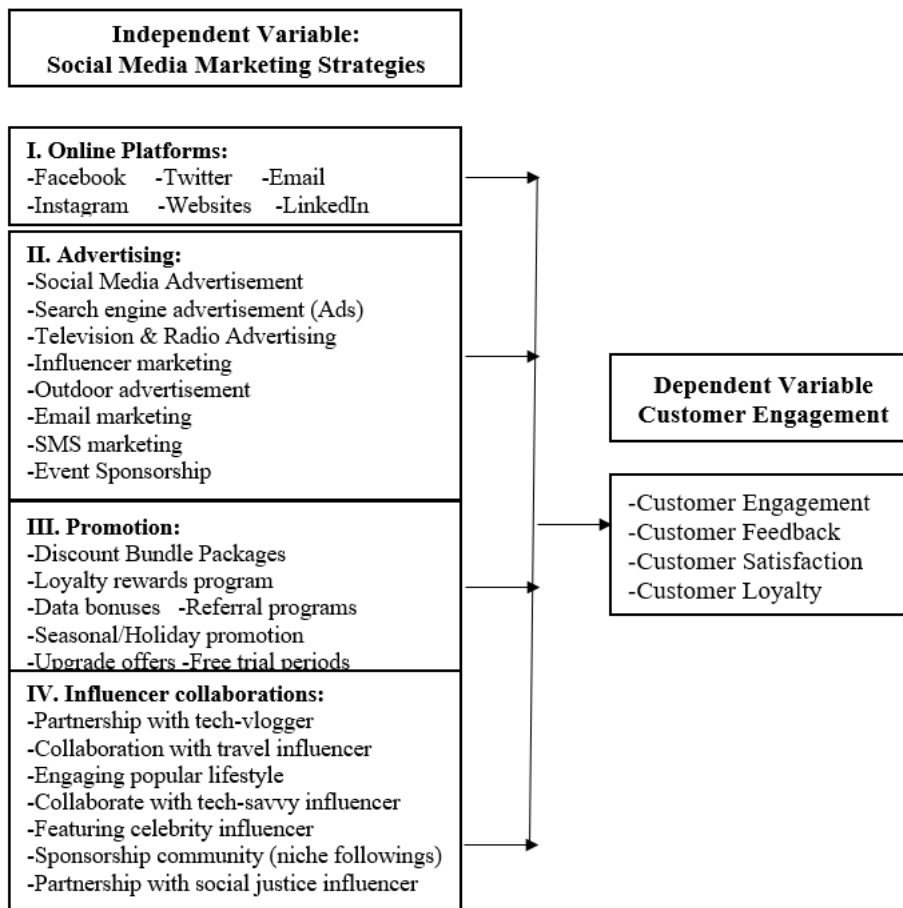
In relation to the topic under study, Service-Dominant Logic provides a foundational understanding of customer engagement, emphasizing that engagement is a collaborative process between customers and businesses. In the Rwandan context, understanding the customer participation on social networks is crucial for developing effective strategies that align with customers' needs and preferences.

In relation to the current study, Social Exchange Theory and Service-Dominant Logic Theory provide valuable perspectives for analyzing how social media marketing strategies impact customer engagement in Rwanda's telecommunications industry. Social Exchange Theory highlights the importance of balancing perceived benefits and costs to encourage customer engagement, while Service-Dominant Logic emphasizes the role of value co-creation through interactive and collaborative social media strategies. Understanding the interaction between these variables helps in designing effective social media marketing strategies that foster deeper customer engagement and drive brand loyalty for telecommunications companies like Mango Telecom.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework establishes a connection between the independent and dependent variables, illustrated as follows: The independent variable, in this instance, signifies the social media marketing strategies offered by Mango Telecom mainly online platforms, advertising, promotions and influencer collaborations. These Mango online platforms in turn contribute to the customer engagement in terms of feedback, satisfaction, and loyalty.

Conceptual Framework



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the methodological details, the research was conducted at Mango Telecom’s office in Kigali, Rwanda. Due to the nature and scale of the population, conducting a study on the entire population becomes impractical. Consequently, a sample of 96 agents chosen to serve as a representative of the entire population. According to Dushimimana, (2019), the researcher used statistical tests, including ANOVA, and regression analysis. Also, the researcher set significance level to determine the significance level (alpha level), typically set at 0.05, which represented the probability threshold for rejecting the null hypothesis. If the calculated p-value was less than the significance level, the null hypothesis was rejected. The researcher collected quantitative data from distributing questionnaires and qualitative data from interview. The research employed a purposive sampling technique. For data analysis, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 was utilized for data entry and analysis and the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was calculated to assess the relationship between variables, employing a simplified method.

Research Design

The choice of a mixed-methods research design for this study was justified by the need to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of social media marketing strategies on customer engagement in Rwanda’s telecommunications industry. This design combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches, allowing for a more robust analysis of the complex interactions between variables. The quantitative aspect of the research involved the use of surveys and statistical analysis to measure customer engagement metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and brand loyalty. This approach provides empirical data that can be analyzed to identify patterns, relationships, and the effectiveness of various social media marketing strategies. qualitative component included in-depth interviews and content analysis of social media interactions to explore customers' perceptions,

experiences, and the nuances of their engagement with Mango Telecom’s social media platforms. Qualitative data provides deeper insights into the context, motivations, and attitudes of customers towards social media interactions. This approach helps to understand the underlying reasons behind customer engagement behaviors, which cannot be captured through quantitative methods alone.

Target Population:

The population under consideration, represents the entirety units of analysis. In the context of this study, the target population encompasses the workers or agents of Mango elecom Rwanda. To facilitate the research process, a random sample of respondents will be selected from this larger target group to participate in the study. The total agents of Mango Telecom Rwanda in Kigali City are 320.

Sample Design: mixed-methods research design was chosen for this study to comprehensively evaluate the impact of social media marketing strategies on customer engagement in Rwanda’s telecommunications industry. This approach integrates quantitative methods, such as surveys and statistical analysis, to objectively measure customer engagement metrics, with qualitative methods, like in-depth interviews and content analysis, to gain deeper insights into customer perceptions and experiences. This combination allows for a robust analysis that captures both the measurable outcomes and the contextual factors influencing customer engagement, providing a more holistic understanding necessary for developing effective social media strategies tailored to the Rwandan market .Cluster random sampling is a sampling technique where the population is divided into groups or clusters, and then a random sample of clusters is selected for inclusion in the study. Within each selected cluster, all individuals or elements are typically included in the sample. This approach is often used when it is difficult or impractical to obtain a complete list of the population, so clusters serve as more manageable units for sampling (Dushimimana, 2019).

Cluster random sampling can be more cost-effective and logistically feasible than other sampling methods, especially when dealing with large populations spread across diverse geographic areas. However, it’s important to ensure that the clusters are representative of the population and that there is minimal variability within clusters to obtain accurate results.

Determination of Sample Size (SS): For the formula to calculate sample, the researcher used a basic formula used in research methodology for estimating sample size based on a desired percentage of the population to be included in the sample. This formula has been widely used and adapted by researchers over time. In determining the sample size for the research, where 30% of the sample is intended to represent the entire population, the researcher employed the formula for calculating the sample size.

Sample Size=

$$\frac{\text{Population Size} \times \text{Desired Sample Percentage}}{100}$$

Given:

Population Size = 320

Desired Sample Percentage = 30%

Substitute these values into the formula:

$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{320 \times 30}{100} = 96 \text{ respondents}$$

This formula is for calculating sample size using cluster random sampling method.

Table 3. 1:Classification of Sample Size

Sites of Mango workers	Total workers	Sample size	Sampling Technique
T2000 Building site	55	16	Cluster Random Sampling (CRS)
Gisementi (Remera) Headquarter	20	6	
Rwezamenyo Site	35	11	

Rubangura House	30	9	
UTC Center	40	12	
Kimironko market site	20	6	
Kimberly side	35	11	
Down Town Site	45	13	
Other Kigali sites	20	6	
Total	320	96	

Source: Author’s analysis, 2024

Sampling Techniques: The research employed a purposive sampling technique. This technique involves the selection of a random subset of the target population without any predefined pattern or division.

Data Collection Procedures : The methods for gathering data, encompassed the methods employed by the researcher to gather information from the participants. In this study, the researcher collected the quantitative and qualitative data from the sampled respondents. The questionnaires were distributed to all respondents and for the case of interview, the Manager was interviewed after the quantitative data is collected and the researcher proceeded with data analysis activity.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Social media online platforms and customer engagement

	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviations
Facebook	25.6	0.256	0.15305
Twitter	5.6	0.056	0.13522
Instagram	8.9	0.089	0.13498
Emails	15.6	0.156	0.12315
Websites	5.6	0.056	0.12315
LinkedIn	5.6	0.056	0.12315
All above	33.3	0.333	0.15715
Overall Mean		4.20	

Source: Primary data, (2024)

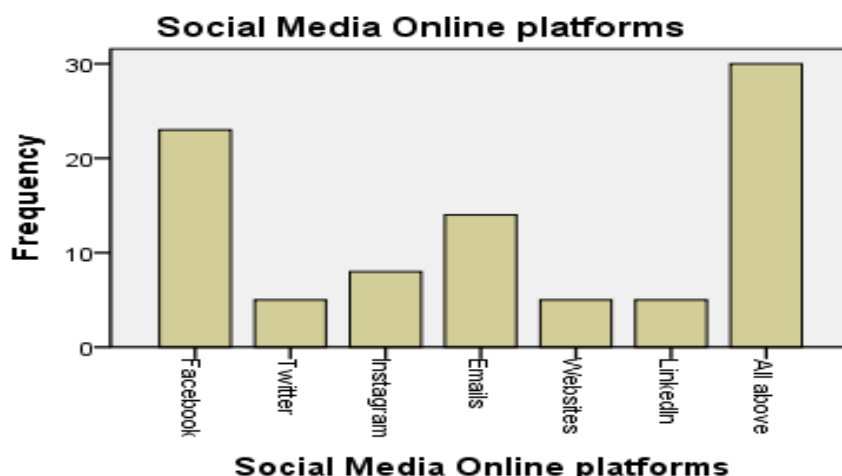


Figure 1: Social Media Online Platforms

Table 2: Correlation coefficients of social media online and customer engagement

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
(Constant)	3.169	.181		17.462	.000			
1 Social Media Online platforms	-.249	.037	-.579	-6.656	.000	-.579	-.579	-.579

a. Dependent Variable: Assessment of Customer Engagement

Source: Primary data, (2024)

Table 3: Advertising Campaigns conducted by Mango Telecom Rwanda

	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviations
Search Engine advertisement	7.8	0.078	0.036
TV & Radio advertisement	31.1	0.311	0.144
Influencer marketing	12.2	0.122	0.054
Valid Email marketing	17.8	0.178	0.066
SMS Marketing	25.6	0.256	0.079
Event sponsorship	5.6	0.056	0.027
Overall mean		3.39	

Source: Primary data, (2024)

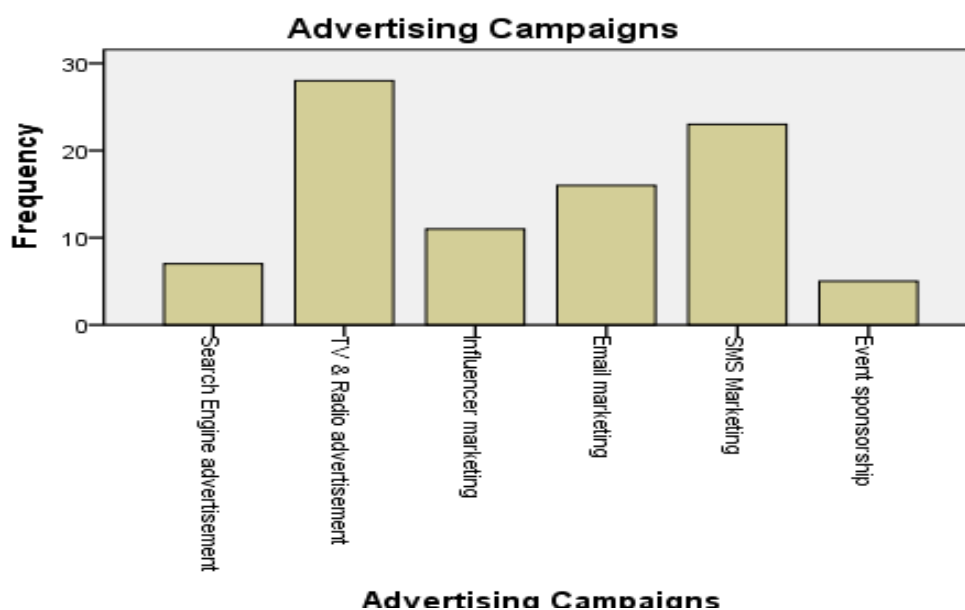


Table 4: Correlation of Coefficients between advertising campaigns and customer engagement

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
(Constant)	-.145	.090		-1.612	.111			
1 Advertising Campaigns	.669	.024	.946	27.472	.000	.946	.946	.946

a. Dependent Variable: Assessment of Customer Engagement

Source: Primary data, (2024)

Table 5: Effects of promotions on customer engagement

	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviations
Discount Bundle Packages	47.8	0.478	0.141
Loyalty rewards program	6.7	0.067	0.038
Data bonuses	26.7	0.267	0.089
Seasonal/Holiday promotions	18.9	0.189	0.071
Overall mean		2.17	

Source: Primary data, (2024)

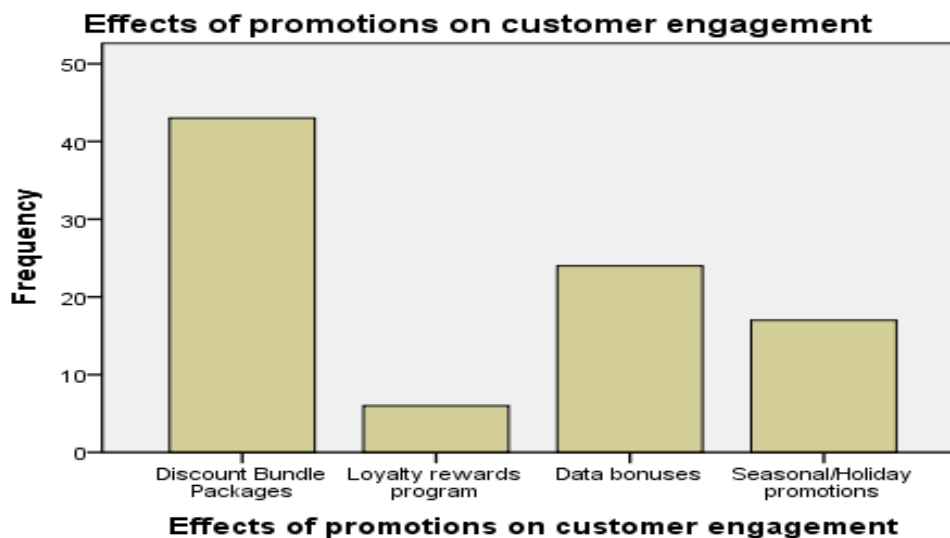


Figure 3: Effects of promotions

Table 6: Correlation Coefficients of promotions and customer engagement

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	
1	(Constant)	.403	.087		4.647	.000			
	Effects of promotions on customer engagement	.794	.035	.925	22.757	.000	.925	.925	.925

a. Dependent Variable: Assessment of Customer Engagement

Source: Primary data, (2024)

Table 7: Influencer Collaborations for customer maintenance

	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviations
Tech-Vlogger	23.3	0.233	0.099
Travel Influencer	6.7	0.067	0.031
Popular lifestyle	34.4	0.344	0.107
Celebrity	15.6	0.156	0.087
Niche followings	17.8	0.178	0.090
Social Justice	2.2	0.022	0.019
Overall Mean		3.04	

Source: Primary data, (2024)

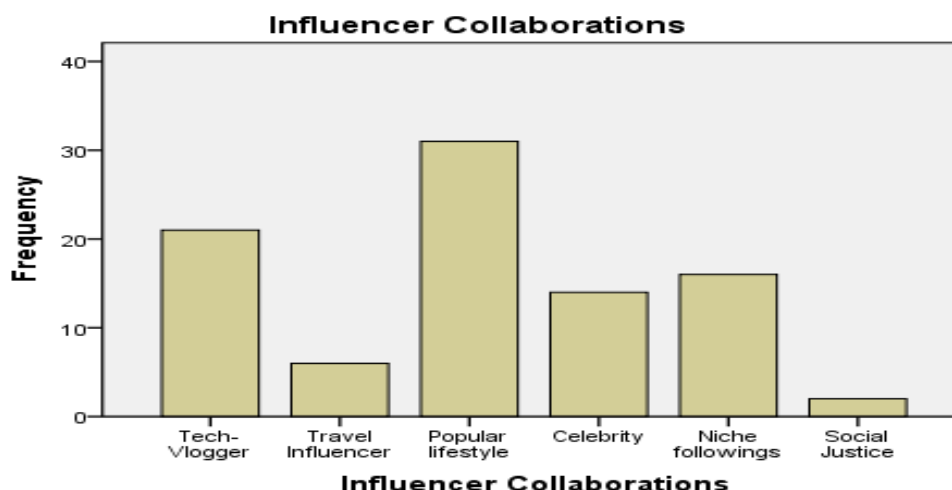


Figure 4: Influencer collaborations

Table 8: Correlational Coefficients^a between influencer collaborations and customer engagement

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1 (Constant)	.164	.120		1.368	.175			
1 Influencer Collaborations	.643	.036	.887	18.036	.000	.887	.887	.887

a. Dependent Variable: Assessment of Customer Engagement

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In light of the pre-determined objectives of the study, the author interprets data and draw conclusions. The broad meaning of these results is that Table 1,2 and figure 1 demonstrate the social media online platforms that there is variation in customer engagement levels across different social media platforms used by Mango Telecom Rwanda. Facebook has the highest standard deviation (0.15305), indicating relatively higher variability in customer engagement scores compared to other platforms. Twitter and Instagram also show significant variability in customer engagement scores, with standard deviations of 0.13522 and 0.1349846797 respectively. Emails, Websites, and LinkedIn have similar standard deviations (0.1231587692), suggesting relatively consistent levels of customer engagement across these platforms. The findings in table 4.5. demonstrate the coefficient for social media online platforms which indicates the improvement in customer engagement in social media usage.

The results in table 3,4 and figure 2 showed the coefficient for advertising campaigns which indicate the improvement in customer engagement in advertising efforts. Here’s what the coefficients and statistics mean. B (Coefficient): The coefficient indicates the improvement in customer engagement in advertising campaigns. The standard error shows the typical difference between the actual values and the predicted values. Beta coefficient represents the standardized coefficient, indicating the relative importance of the predictor variable. The t-value assesses the importance of the coefficient, where a larger absolute t-value signifies a stronger predictor. The low p-value (0.000) demonstrates that the coefficient for advertising campaigns is statistically significant.

The findings in table 5 and figure 3 showed the effects of promotions on customer engagement which showed the variability in customer engagement levels across different promotional strategies implemented by Mango Telecom Rwanda. Discount Bundle Packages have the highest standard deviation (0.141), indicating relatively higher variability in customer engagement scores compared to other promotional strategies. Loyalty rewards program has the lowest standard deviation (0.038), suggesting relatively consistent levels of customer engagement associated with this promotion. Data

bonuses and Seasonal/Holiday promotions also show moderate variability in customer engagement scores, with standard deviations of 0.089 and 0.071 respectively.

The results in table 6 showed the coefficient for promotions which indicates the improvement in customer engagement in promotion efforts. Here is what the coefficients and statistics mean: The coefficient indicates the improvement in customer engagement in promotions. The standard error measures how much the observed values typically deviate from the predicted ones. The beta coefficient is the standardized measure showing the predictor variable's relative importance. The t-value evaluates the coefficient's significance, where a larger absolute t-value means a more significant predictor. The low p-value (0.000) for the coefficient shows it is statistically significant.

The findings in table 7, 8 and figure 4 demonstrated the influencer collaborations for customer maintenance which showed the variability in customer engagement levels across different influencer collaborations undertaken by Mango Telecom Rwanda. Popular lifestyle has the highest standard deviation (0.107), indicating relatively higher variability in customer engagement scores compared to other influencer collaborations. Travel influencer has the lowest standard deviation (0.031), suggesting relatively consistent levels of customer engagement associated with this collaboration. Tech-Vlogger, Celebrity, SMS Niche followings, and Social Justice also show moderate variability in customer engagement scores, with standard deviations ranging from 0.019 to 0.099.

The future studies the results encourage include: (i) to segment Mango Telecom's customer based on demographic, psychographic, and behavioral factors to tailor marketing strategies and offerings to different customer segments effectively, (ii) to track changes in customer engagement metrics over time in response to different marketing initiatives, promotional campaigns, and external factors, providing insights into the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of customer engagement strategies.

In conclusion, Mango Telecom Rwanda can significantly enhance customer engagement by leveraging a combination of effective online platforms, targeted advertising campaigns, strategic promotional offers, and influencer collaborations. By implementing the recommendations provided and continuing to adapt to evolving customer needs and market trends, Mango Telecom can foster stronger connections with its customers and drive sustainable business growth in the dynamic telecommunications industry landscape.

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