A critical review of e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry of Botswana

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DECLARATIONS BY STUDENT

Please take note that most of the work in this study has been completed pre-COVID

I, Seth M. Mongwaketse (2488273), hereby confirm that this thesis with the registered title "A critical review of e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry in Botswana" is my own work. I further declare that:

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Promoter

ABSTRACT

The primary goal of this study was to critically review the e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry of Botswana with specific reference to Small Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs). The study envisages that e-marketing strategies can benefit SMTEs by helping them to reach global markets, increase interaction between SMTEs and their customers, help customers to find information faster and allow round-the-clock online payments. To fulfil the primary goal the following key objectives were put in place: the first objective was to analyse e-business strategies for harnessing the potential of tourism in stimulating socio-economic development, specifically in the case of Botswana; the second objective was to analyse the current marketing challenges, processes, successes of SMTEs in the developing tourism environment; the third objective was to analyse the adoption and extent of the use of e-business strategies by SMTEs with specific reference to e-marketing strategies in contributing to business success in the tourism industry; and the fourth objective was to develop the e-marketing strategy for tourism SMTEs based on the critical review.

The study adopted a mixed research methodology involving structured questionnaires for 199 SMTEs, 101 visitors to SMTEs and face-to-face interviews with 14 Botswana government officials dealing with SMTEs in their departments. Data from these three samples was collected from across Botswana. The use of qualitative and quantitative data sources helped the researcher to obtain richer data and have an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. A statistical package, IBM SPSS version 20.0, was used to analyse the quantitative data through frequency tables, graphs, and combination descriptive statistics. Thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data by identifying common themes and patterns in the data.

The key findings of the study were that the commonest tools used for advertising by SMTEs, and visitors were word-of-mouth and social media, although the use of social media was more prevalent. Whilst SMTEs were aware of the strengths and weaknesses of social media, they were not aware of the potential of this tool in terms of customer relationship management and its impact on quality-of-service delivery. Both SMTEs and visitors use Facebook and search engines as information search and dissemination tools, but the use of WhatsApp is almost twice for visitors compared to SMTEs. There is also significant potential for other less popular tools such as Instagram and Twitter. Both SMTEs and visitors confirmed that social media is a useful tool for

marketing purposes in terms of customer attraction, growth and expansion, communication, and searching for prospective tourist destinations.

The study revealed lack of time, insufficient resources, lack of skills capacity, lack of SMTE management support, slow penetration of the Internet across Botswana, security concerns, and inadequate knowledge as the major barriers to the adoption and implementation of social media by SMTEs. The other challenges were lack of websites, policies, and procedures that describe how and when e-marketing-related independent reviews are performed and insufficient government intervention strategies on the promotion of e-marketing in Botswana.

The study recommends that gaps in social media usage by SMTEs and visitors should be closed for greater effectiveness of the marketing effort by SMTEs and enhanced access to information by visitors. This is particularly true of tools like Facebook and WhatsApp, which are used at different levels and proportions by SMTEs and visitors. SMTEs should capitalise on social media's effectiveness on customer relationship management, which can attract and retain customers, thus generating revenue for a more extended period through repeat visits. The study proposes implementing the framework to improve social media use and application through a coordinated APP. The pooling of marketing services by SMTEs will contribute to economies of scale in terms of sharing of costs of /which are critical resources. There is also a need to train existing employees on how to effectively harness the marketing potential of social media so that there will be increased awareness about the tool. There is need for the Botswana government to improve Internet accessibility by setting up the proper infrastructure which connects the entire country. This study concludes that the web presence of SMTEs is very low, which can be attributed to poor internet infrastructure across Botswana. Most SMTEs do not have policies and guidelines to drive e-marketing and this challenge can be solved through greater intervention strategies by the Botswana government. Currently there is no significant efforts to implement existing ICT and e-business policies and guidelines formulated by the Botswana government more than 10 years ago. This study contributes to the literature by highlighting that social media usage by SMTEs should be trained and managed in a coordinated effort, especially in developing countries. Using social media as a business tool is different than using it for personal gain. The study's practical contribution highlights the importance of a tailor-make framework to improve the current usage of social media as an e-marketing tool. This application of this framework will contribute to the improvement of visitor numbers, higher levels of awareness of what Botswana can offer,

improvement of business skills and knowledge of SMTEs, and overall improve Botswana's image as a tourism destination.

Keywords: Tourism, Small Medium Tourism Enterprise (SMTE), e-marketing strategies, tourism industry, e-business strategies, social media.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AHP	Analytical Hierarchical Process
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AVE	Average Variance Extraction
B2B	Business to Business
BTA	Botswana Telecommunications Authority
BTC	Botswana Telecommunications Corporation
BTO	Botswana Tourism Organisation
BWP	Botswana Pula
C2C	Customer to Customer
CA	Cronbach's Alpha
CEDA	Citizen Enterprise Development Authority
CMO	Chief Marketing Officers
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HMR	Hierarchical Multiple Regression
HTML	Hypertext Mark-up Language
IBM	International Business Machines
ICT	Information Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
LEA	Local Enterprise Authority
MEWT	Ministry of Environment, Wildlife Conservation and Tourism
NWU	North West University
RSS	Really Simple Syndication
SEM	Search engine Marketing
SEO	Search engine Optimisation
SME	Small to Medium Enterprise
SMTE	Small to Medium Tourism Enterprise
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
WTO	World Tourism Organisation
WTTC	Word Travel & Tourism Council
WWF	Worldwide Fund
YFF	Young Farmers Fun

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The adoption of information communication technologies (ICT) by businesses has brought about several benefits to the tourism industry such as greater access to knowledge about tourism destinations, more efficient payment systems for aspects such as flight bookings and payments for tours and accommodation and lower costs of conducting these transactions (Goodmen, 2016). However, according to Aramendia-Muneta and Lopez (2013), to a large extent, it is only the major tourism players such as multinational companies which have experienced real benefits from ICT because smaller businesses do not always have the capital to purchase the equipment needed to go digital. In some instances, they also lack the skills to enhance the marketing of their business unlike their bigger multinational counterparts (Temtime & Pansiri, 2012). In a study done in Tanzania it was found that websites are the preferred platform used by SMEs to advertise their products and their mobile technology as used to a great extent. Challenges in this regard are due to lack of support (Kabanda & Brown, 2017). In rural areas where small and medium-sized enterprises dominate, there are less creativity in terms of information technology (Cosma et al., 2014). Very often SMEs find it difficult to build their value proposition in a digital environment (Lara et al., 2017).

The use of electronic business (e-business) has helped to boost and increase revenue figures in various sectors of Botswana's economy, such as retail and manufacturing (Rocha & Snow, 2013). One branch of e-business information technology that has the potential to drive the tourism industry is e-marketing. According to Davis *et al.* (2016), electronic marketing (e-marketing) uses the internet as its backbone to allow businesses and consumers, suppliers, and buyers to integrate and conduct business transactions in one large virtual environment. Findings by Khan (2016) reveal that governments, businesses, and individuals can formulate strategies to harness the potential of e-marketing in empowering and boosting their business processes. Such effort will result in what is called an e-marketing strategy. Gopal *et al.* (2016) further posit that it is worth noting that any strategy formulated is dynamic and needs constant reviewing for it to remain viable. Technology, by its nature, is constantly changing. This implies that any organisation that adopts an e-marketing strategy runs the risk of being replaced by another organisation with newer technology if such an organisation does not revise its e-marketing strategy regularly (Davis *et al.,* 2016).

There are approximately 50,000 SMEs in Botswana compared to about 13,000 medium and large enterprises (Gwebu, 2015). Out of the 50,000 SMEs, less than 5% are using some form of e-

business such as e-commerce, social networks such as Facebook and websites (Follit, 2012). This thesis critically reviews e-marketing strategies in developing countries, in this case Botswana, with the aim of offering direction to small and medium enterprises in the tourism industry in Botswana so that they can best leverage the benefits of e-marketing strategies.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on critically reviewing e-marketing strategies used by small to medium enterprises (SME's) in the tourism sector in Botswana and how the sector can benefit more significantly from using these types of strategies. An SME is defined as a business with less than six workers and with a turnover of less than BWP60,000.00 (Nakisani & Chicho-Matenge, 2013). Most of these SMEs are dominated by one person, with the owner or manager making all major decisions. Herget *et al.* (2015) define an SME as a business controlled by one individual. In many cases, especially in the tourism industry, the owner has limited formal education and even though they have devices such as phones they have little or no access to the use of the latest technology, market information, lacks government support and has weak management skills, thus restraining the development of the business (Herget *et al.,* 2015). Subsequent sections of this background further expand the literature on e-business strategies by presenting and explaining information on e-business strategies, e-marketing, tourism in Botswana and a brief critical review of e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry of Botswana.

1.2.1 E-business Strategies

Mooradian *et al.* (2012) define "a strategy as a plan, a well-articulated vision of where a business seeks to go and how it expects to get there. It is the form by which a business communicates its goals." It is important that the plan take the market forces, customer preferences and the capabilities of the organisation into account. Market forces create a competitive situation for the business to which they need to react. On the other hand, "customer demands comprise the wants and needs of individuals and companies who purchase the products and services available in the marketplace." All this must be managed according to the organisational capabilities, which include the skills and experience that give the corporation a currency that can add value in the marketplace (Cortes *et al.,* 2014). An e-business strategy includes the logic, the data, and other evidence that support a value proposition for the customer. It also takes into account revenues and the cost necessary to deliver the value (Lucas, 2014).

In short, it is about the benefit a company offer and deliver to customers, the organisation to do this and how it will capture a portion of the value that it delivers. An effective e-business strategy provides significant value to the customer and ensure the collection of revenues (Birkner, 2012).

Chang (2012) argues that a successful business strategy cannot guarantee a competitive advantage. The gross elements of e-business strategies are often quite transparent and easy to imitate when implemented. Other businesses imitate within a matter of years, if not months. In practice, successful e-business strategies very often become, to some degree, shared by multiple competitors.

E-business strategies, therefore, include business-to-business (b2b), brand consolidation, revenue, viral marketing, product-based marketing, web marketing, and customer-based marketing. A business adopts a specific e-business strategy after introspecting on its products and services together with the market that it is operating in. Competitor strategies also determine the nature of the e-business strategy a company may adopt (Chang, 2012). The importance, therefore, cannot be ignored, and even small businesses should consider the benefits thereof. Various efforts have been made to stimulate e-commerce and e-business strategies in developing countries but the success thereof is questioned (Kabanda & Brown, 2017). The existence of e-business strategies is clear but the uptake and effectiveness thereof for SMEs is unknown.

1.2.2 E-marketing Strategies

Studies have shown that e-marketing has been in existence since the advent of the internet and e-commerce in the 1990s. According to Rodgers *et al.* (2012), e-marketing is defined "as the application of marketing principles and techniques through the internet to target potential and current customers so that business objectives are fulfilled." Businesses are currently using e-marketing to reach out to millions of clients every year and this technology has redefined the way businesses interact with their customers. The nature of the internet means that businesses can reach out to all corners of the globe (Glavas & Matthews, 2014), does not matter the size of the business.

The popularity and potential of e-marketing technology can be explained in the ever-rapidly increasing internet usage globally. According to Lee and Lin (2015:161), internet usage has increased from 16 million in 1995 to 2,749 billion in 2014, and the figures are still growing. With technology improving in terms of complexity and speed, together with cheap and readily available devices to access the internet, this means that e-marketing has a place within the internet for a long time into the future (Doz & Kosonen, 2014) and that it creates opportunities even for small businesses. According to the Chief Marketing Officers (CMO) Council (2018), 71% of internet users are more likely to purchase from a brand linked to tools such as Twitter and Facebook. Most marketers (59%) currently spend 6 hours or more each week on social media. In addition, internet marketing realises as much as three times as many leads as traditional outbound marketing but costs 62% less. The potential of this medium is visible.

Typical e-marketing strategies which are used by the tourism organisations include email, search engine optimisation, customer relationship management (CRM), blogs, simple syndication (RSS) feeds, desktop and mobile websites, social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and public relations campaigns using websites (Jocumsen, 2009). These e-marketing strategies have the potential to drive profits upwards and develop an intensive internet presence for companies which embrace them (Kumar *et al.,* 2015). Travel apps are also popular and are (can be) used by SMEs in the lodging industry in Botswana to help tourists and other stakeholders to streamline their decisions, select destinations, check flights, prices, and travel schedules. A platform such as WhatsApp creates opportunities to do marketing for previous visitors.

Search engine marketing products are developed from market research to identify target market segments and present search information in a universally acceptable format to the market segment. Companies within the tourism industry can share information by syndicating it on partner websites using RSS. The advantage of this strategy is that customers have up-to-date information on the most attractive and cost-effective destinations on the fly (Dabholkaret *et al.,* 2013).

Podcasts and online videos, on the other hand, give tourist operators the opportunity to market time-sensitive offers, hotel updates, local attractions and events, and destination-specific news and events (Diagne & Ossebi, 2016). Most customers currently have access to internet technologies via their smartphones, and the tourism industry has taken advantage of this development by designing mobile websites to market their products and services. Most importantly, customers can make bookings and payments directly from their smartphones, thus increasing revenue and maintaining a competitive advantage over their rivals who do not use e-marketing strategies (Diagne & Ossebi, 2016). The smaller businesses not utilising the technology are losing out on these opportunities.

Despite the current surge in popularity of e-marketing, traditional communication, and marketing channels such as word-of-mouth remain popular with both customers and marketers (Naz, 2014; van Scheers & Prinsloo, 2014). According to Naz (2014), word-of-mouth is a tool that is currently being used in the online community to share information about products and services either offline, through face-to-face interaction, or online through tools such as online chats via Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and other related platforms. Van Scheers and Prinsloo (2014) further reveal that word-of-mouth is quite influential that it can influence whether a company creates a competitive advantage or not. Most consumers trust word-of-mouth from family and friends better than other forms of marketing and advertising media (Van Scheers & Prinsloo, 2014). These scholars recommend the use of word-of-mouth together with online e-marketing tools as means

of strategically positioning a business within the market. Again, the success and availability of e-marketing strategies are clear but the uptake and success thereof for SMEs are questioned.

1.2.3 Tourism in Botswana

Tourism continues to be recognised as the fastest-growing industry in the world (UNWTO, 2019). According to the UNWTO (2020a) 1.5 billion international tourist arrivals were recorded in 2019 globally. A growth or 3-4% was predicted for 2020 however, due to the COVID pandemic, these figures did not realise. According to a policy brief by the UNWTO (2020b), as many as 100 million direct tourism jobs are at risk, with small businesses (80% of global tourism) particularly vulnerable.

Botswana's tourism industry also experienced favourable growth, before COVID 19, both in terms of arrivals and receipts during the above-mentioned period. The number of tourists to Botswana has increased from 940 000 in 1998 to 1.83 million in 2018 (World Data Atlas, 2018). Locally, tourism plays a significant role in the national economy of Botswana, accounting for approximately 3.9% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (direct contribution) and 10.9% (total contribution) in 2016 (UNWTO, 2020a). The tourism sector supported 84 000 jobs, or 8.9% of the country's total employment in 2018 (DeVere Acuma, 2019). This sector is Botswana's second-highest diversification driver from diamond mining and agriculture, with a potential for further growth (National Development Plan 9, 2014). The tourism sector in Botswana, on average, contributes about $573.5mn to the GDP per annum, and these figures are steadily increasing. However, challenges still exist within the sector.

Tourism plays a significant role in contributing to Botswana's GDP, creating employment, and helping the country diversify it offering away from over-reliance on diamond mining. Botswana tourism is growing steadily taking the country's small population size into account (Botswana Tourism Organisation, 2012). In today's global environment, the management and sustainable utilisation of natural resources is a major challenge facing governments and their national economies, which is also the case in Botswana.

In this regard, countries worldwide, including Botswana, realised the important of resources and several measures have been implemented to ensure sustainable utilisation (Diagne & Ossebi, 2016). The effective management of wildlife has been a major attraction for international tourists to Botswana, making this industry one of the major foreign exchange earners for the country and an important socio-economic growth sector (Botswana Tourism Organisation, 2014). There is ample evidence to conclude that e-marketing strategies have been widely embraced by large multinational tourism corporations and other medium-to-large-scale enterprises in Botswana (Lee

& Lin, 2015). However, there is limited evidence to suggest that e-marketing strategies have been adopted by SMTEs to the same level within the Botswana tourism industry. In Table 1.1 previous studies related to SMEs in Botswana is shown.

Table 1-1: Previous studies related to the current study

AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE
ROGERSON	2007	Reviewing Africa in the global tourism economy.
ROGERSON	2008	Developing small tourism businesses in Southern Africa.
SHEMI & PROCTER	2013a	Challenges of e-commerce adoption in SMEs: an interpretive case study of Botswana.
SHEMI & PROCTER	2013b	Explaining contextual factors affecting e-commerce adoption progression in selected SMEs: evidence from Botswana.
PANSIRI	2013	Collaboration and partnership in tourism: The experience of Botswana.
KHANDA & DOSS	2018	SME cloud adoption in Botswana: Its challenges and successes.
SECHELE & PRINSLOO	2019	Competitiveness of Botswana as a Tourist Destination.

In these studies, the economy was reviewed, and a closer look was taken at the challenges facing SME's regarding e-commerce and information technology in general. Previous studies in Botswana indicated that SMEs have adopted information technology by using mobile phones, fax, telephone and email and this is mostly done by the manager (Shemi & Procter (2013b) – therefore adoption is still limited and there is a high level of dependence on word-of-mouth as marketing tool. The slow speed of the internet and customer preferences are also considered as challenges (Nkwe, 2012). In most of the studies reference was made to SME's in general with very few studies directly focused on the SME's in the tourism industry and more specifically on e-marketing strategies indicating a gap that needs to be filled with research.

SMTEs participating in Botswana's tourism industry may be losing out on business to their more innovative competitors because they are taking much longer to adapt and apply e-marketing strategies to promote and market their enterprises (Lee & Lin, 2015). A critical review of their current practices, identifying the gaps for progress, and a well-developed e-marketing strategy is needed to take tourism forward in Botswana. This information will directly contribute to the

development of SMEs in the tourism industry and growing the number of small businesses to become more successful.

1.2.4 A critical review of e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry in Botswana

This study focuses on e-marketing strategies within the small businesses in the tourism industry in Botswana. E-marketing has been documented as having the potential to transform the characteristics of small to medium enterprises in both developed and developing countries (Shemi & Procter, 2013b). Since e-marketing services are not restricted by physical and time-related barriers, they have gained acceptance within small to medium enterprises since they have managed to expand their market reach rapidly and increase their competitiveness (Dlodlo & Dhurup, 2013). The tourism industry has not been spared by this e-marketing phenomenon. Some small and medium tourism enterprises (SMTEs) have harnessed the benefits of e-marketing strategies to leverage their business processes such as destination searches, flight bookings, accommodation bookings, marketing of their businesses, online payments, and to obtain customer feedback and ratings (Shemi & Procter, 2018).

Despite the merits which accompany the implementation of e-marketing strategies in SMTEs, the technology has also been offset by several shortcomings. The IT infrastructure in Botswana and most developing countries are still weak (Nkwe, 2012). Since e-marketing tools function using the internet as their main platform, adopting e-marketing strategies in Botswana has faced some serious challenges. A significant section of SMTE owners has little knowledge about both the internet and e-marketing strategies which they can use to improve the competitiveness of their businesses (Okurut & Ama, 2013). There are also concerns over security and privacy when sensitive information is shared, and transactions are conducted over the internet. Issues have been raised over financial losses because of hacked online accounts and the publishing of sensitive customer personal details by malicious hackers (Magaya *et al.,* 2012).

The implementation and use of e-marketing strategies also suffer from untrained employees within the IT industry (Shemi & Procter, 2013b). The hiring of consultants is expensive and unreliable, especially considering the high turnover of IT personnel in Botswana (Esichaikul & Thampanitchawong, 2015). Attitudes towards the use of electronic media have still not changed, especially amongst SMEs who still prefer to use word-of-mouth and print media for marketing their businesses (Jonathan & Tarigan, 2016; Qashou & Saleh, 2018). In some cases, management support for the adoption and implementation of e-marketing strategies lacks because management considers the use of e-marketing tools as a waste of money. Botswana, as a country, still lags in the formulation of clear policies, guidelines, and strategies to promote

and guide the implementation of e-marketing strategies (Shemi & Procter, 2018). SMEs also lack strategic partnerships with larger enterprises and the government, which could help to drive the adoption of e-marketing strategies amongst SMEs. SMEs face financial challenges to grow and expand their businesses, and the adoption of e-marketing strategies is considered an unwanted expense within their budgets (Tatnall, 2015).

Given the gaps that exist in implementing e-marketing, even with the availability of resources, this study critically reviews the current implementation of e-marketing strategies in small and medium enterprises, especially SMTEs in Botswana with reference to challenges, marketing strategies, the utilisation of e-marketing and legal compliance matters. The study explores the extent to which SMTEs in Botswana has adopted and implemented e-marketing strategies to promote all the functions across their business processes.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is evidence that Botswana's tourism industry is growing (WTTC, 2015; Statistics Botswana, 2014). Recent developments in the sector indicate that the industry has overtaken all other sectors, except agriculture and diamond mining, to become a significant contributor to Botswana's GDP. However, Bird (2016) stated that small tourism firms represent over 95 percent of enterprises in the South African tourism economy, and in Botswana, 50 000 businesses are small (as per definition provided). Lammenet (2014) stated that in South Africa, these small and medium enterprises face challenges such as access to resources and even marketing expertise. This might also be the case in other developing countries such as Botswana. Researchers such as Dickinson and Lumsdon (2012) and Hsu and Ting (2013) concluded that e-marketing strategies have been applied in other sectors, such as retail and manufacturing, it contributed to the creation of customer value for many companies and governments, to the increase of profits and thus create a competitive advantage in Botswana. Despite the perceived growth of tourism in Botswana, statistics indicate that Botswana is losing significant market share to some of its main competitors such as South Africa and Kenya which has stymied the growth of the sector in the country (Botswana Tourism Organisation Annual Report, 2012). It might even be worse post-COVID 19. It is evident that measures are needed to assist the sector to gain a significant market share of tourists and add value to the economic development of Botswana. It has been stated that the tourism industry could play a significant role in Africa's economic performance in the post-COVID-19 era as restrictions ease (Ekeocha, Ogbuabor, Orji & Kalu, 2021).

Given the above, the following two problems necessitated the study on how specific e-marketing strategies can be optimised to boost the tourism industry in Botswana, specifically from a small and medium enterprise perspective (Okurut *et al.,* 2012).

Firstly, given the prolific growth of the tourism sector in Botswana, currently, there is a lack of adequate e-marketing strategies to foster that growth. There is also a lack of exposure to e-marketing strategies in the tourism industry, especially amongst small and medium business enterprises (Temtime & Pansiri, 2012). These enterprises might have access to but not necessarily the knowledge, skills or willingness, infrastructure, capital, enough human resources to develop and utilise e-marketing strategies effectively (Esichaikul & Thampanitchawong, 2015; Peresadko, 2011). The study will thus investigate the role that e-marketing strategies can play to speed up the growth of Botswana's tourism sector based on the successes of these strategies in industries such as retail and manufacturing.

Secondly, the over-reliance of the economy on diamond mining as a main contributor to the GDP is problematic since the fluctuating prices of diamonds and the global economy's volatility is negatively impacting Botswana (Esichaikul & Thampanitchawong, 2015). Botswana needs to diversify from the diamond mining industry and stimulate socio-economic growth in other sectors as well. With the tourism resources available in Botswana, the tourism industry can drive diversification. The study will explore the extent to which emerging technologies such as e-marketing can be used to boost the operations of small to medium tourism enterprises and add to the growth and stability of the economy.

SMTEs have also been mooted as the best strategy which developing countries can implement to create employment and generate wealth, especially when fast-growing sectors such as tourism are considered (Temtime & Pansiri, 2012). Botswana also stands to gain by encouraging SMTEs to embrace e-marketing strategies because it may help the country diversify from diamond mining (Poon, 2013).

The critical review will give attention to aspects such as assessing the strategies for harnessing the potential of tourism in stimulating socio-economic development and evaluating the current marketing challenges. The critical review will also assess the processes, successes of SMTE’s in the developing tourism environment and analyse the potential of e-business strategies with specific reference to e-marketing strategies in contributing to business success in the tourism industry. Another area of focus in this study was to determine the adoption and extent of the use of e-marketing strategies by SMTEs in Botswana's tourism industry and to develop an e-marketing strategy for SMTEs in the tourism industry of Botswana. This study is positioned to narrowing that gap and add value to other developing countries experiencing the same challenges. The critical review will be done according to 1) challenges facing SMTEs, 2) marketing strategies, 3) social media utilisation, 4) e-marketing and legal compliance, and 5) government

intervention strategies to promote SMTEs. The question remains to what extent have small and medium tourism enterprises implemented e-marketing strategies in Botswana?

1.4 GOAL OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Goal

The main goal of the study is to critically review e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry of Botswana.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study

Objective 1

To analyse e-business strategies with specific reference to e-marketing strategies in contributing to business success in the tourism industry be means of a literature review.

Objective 2

To analyse the current challenges, processes, successes of SMTEs in the developing tourism environment through an in-depth literature review.

Objective 3

To determine the adoption and the extent of the use of e-marketing strategies by SMTEs in the tourism industry of Botswana by means of an empirical study based on challenges, marketing strategies, social media utilisation, e-marketing, and legal compliance, and government intervention strategies to promote SMTEs.

Objective 4

To inform the development of an e-marketing strategy for tourism SMTEs in Botswana.

Objective 5

To make conclusions and recommendations regarding the critical review of e-marketing strategies and the implementation of the strategy.

1.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework in Figure 1.1, is based on the study's objectives and the main challenges discussed in the problem statement. This framework will inform the research going forward as critical review criteria.

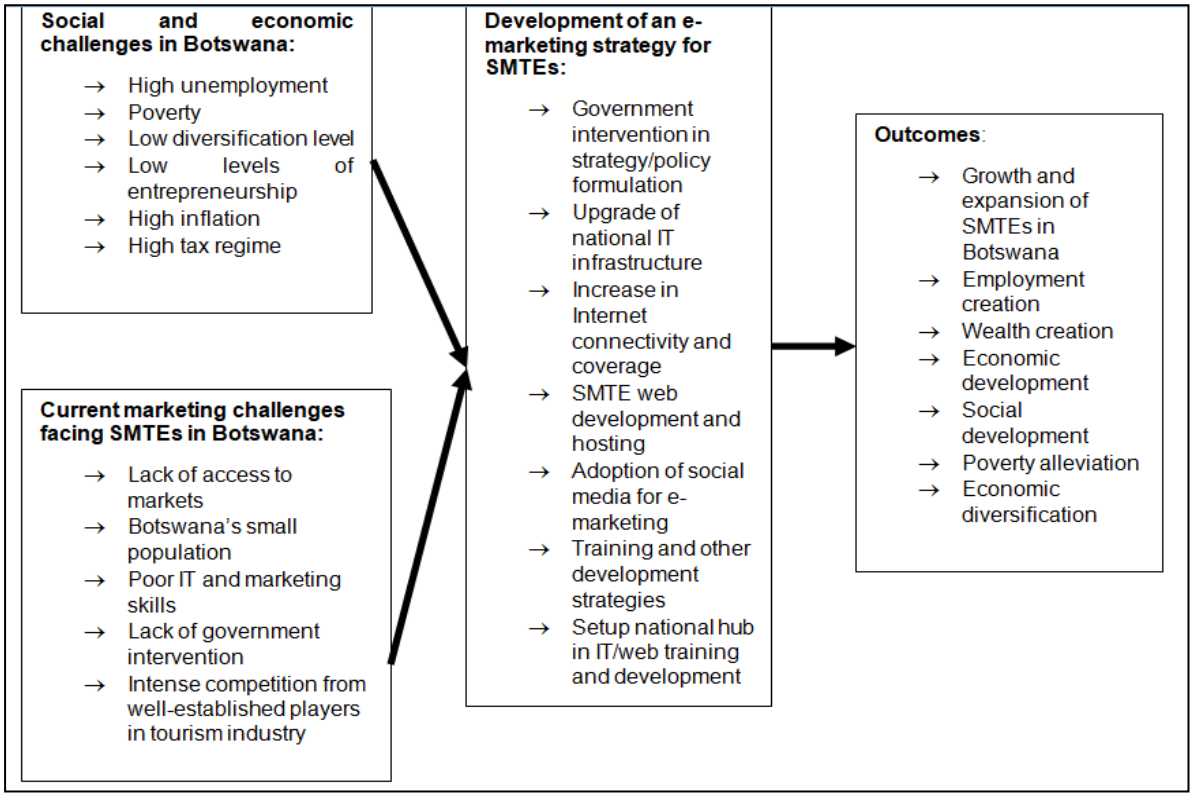

Figure 1-1: ***Conceptual Framework of the Study***

Source: Adapted from Okurut and Ama (2013), Shemi and Procter (2018)

The conceptual framework assumes that the economic and social challenges affecting Botswana can be partly solved by embracing a comprehensive e-marketing strategy for SMTEs in the country. Small and medium businesses are key drivers of economic and social development across the globe, and the government of Botswana has also shown a keen interest in SMEs (including SMTEs) by promoting and investing money in the endeavour of these enterprises to grow and develop and contribute to the economy of the country (Nkwe, 2012; Shemi & Procter, 2013b). Despite these efforts, these small businesses are afflicted by several challenges, as shown in the above model. This study focuses on the marketing perspective of SMTEs and assumes that if e-marketing solutions are implemented in the marketing effort of these businesses, then positive outcomes such as growth and expansion of these SMTEs together with

employment and wealth creation, poverty alleviation and economic diversification will be realised. The study's objectives also aligned with the above model.

1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH

This section presents an abbreviated version of the process of developing the research methods of the current study. The section provides introductory details of the various stages of the methodology used in this study. This includes a discussion of the philosophical background of the research method chosen. The method of research is twofold, firstly an-in depth literature review was conducted, followed by empirical research. This is discussed in more detail in chapter four (4).

1.6.1 Philosophical perspective

Creswell (2013) defines research philosophy as a belief about how data about a phenomenon should be gathered, analysed, and used. The following are worldviews which are compatible with missed methods: postpositivism, constructivism, transformative and pragmatism. The latter is oriented to solving real world problems. Pragmatism does not enter into the choice of mixed methods nor justify its use (Feilzer, 2010; Hall, 2013). The current study follows a pragmatic view based on the challenges experienced by SMTEs. The current study aims to critically review the state of e-marketing strategies among Small Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs) in Botswana. To identify a relationship between e-marketing and beneficial business outcomes, theories were used to answer the research questions.

1.6.2 Literature study

To gather the relevant research, an expanded search was done through the NWU's digital library, which included sources on the Internet, published journal articles, textbooks, and other reviewed academic sources. Databases such as Ebsco Host, Science Direct, Emerald, JStor and Google Scholar were utilised. The keywords focus on e-business, e-marketing, business strategy, tourism, SMTE's and Botswana tourism.

1.6.3 Empirical survey

1.6.3.1 Research design and method of collecting data

Goodmen (2016:127) defines research as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct the research. It is about what type of study one will be conducting and whether it will provide the best answer for the questions that have been formulated. Creswell (2013) stated that research

approaches are plans and procedures. This include making broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. It is not easy to decide which approach will be used or best since certain decisions need to be made which is informed by the philosophical assumptions of the study (Creswell 2013). One need to decide on the research design, the research data collection methods, the analysis of the data and lastly the interpretation. The nature of the research problem should direct the research approach or it can also be directed by the issue being addressed, the experiences of the researcher or the audience (Guetterman, 2015; Lewis, 2015; Creswell, 2013.

This study follows a mixed method design where both quantitative and qualitative methods was used for this study. More specifically triangulation design was followed to obtain complementary data on the same topic – both the qualitative and quantitative results are used in the same time frame and with equal weight (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2017). Lewis (2015) stated that qualitative and quantitative research differs in terms of numbers versus words and close-ended versus open-ended questions. A quantitative research method is a “formal, objective, systematic process for obtaining quantifiable information about the world, presented in numerical form and analysed using statistics” (Green, 2014).

On the other hand, Denzig and Lincoln (2012:414) posit that a qualitative research method is a naturalistic approach where the researcher investigates the day-to-day life of people in their natural settings. According to Domegan and Fleming (2014:133), when little is known about the problem and more in-depth information is required qualitative research can solve these issues.

This design is used to “describe and test relationships and to examine the cause and effect of relationships. The objective of quantitative research is to develop and employ mathematical models, theories, and hypotheses pertaining to natural phenomena” (Burns & Grove, 2005:113). Quantitative research shows the relationship between data and observation and therefore it should be measured. The objective of qualitative research is to reveal the depth of understanding and richness of detail and the researcher searches for categories and groupings in the data (Myers, 2009:251). Thus, in this research project, both qualitative and quantitative analysis were used to utilise both methods' advantages in realising the objectives of this study.

1.6.3.2Sampling

1.6.3.2.1 Population and Sample Description

A population is defined by Goodmen (2016:115), as the sum of all the cases that meet the definition of unit of analysis. Two groups were important for the quantitative research namely the

tourists and the licensed operators which fall under the SME category in the Botswana tourism industry. From Table 1.2 it is clear that the population for the licensed operators included: Tour operators, Hotels, Guest houses, Lodges, ICT firms and Travel Agencies. The tourists included both national and international tourists. For the qualitative research the Government departments i.e. Department of Tourism under the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism and Botswana Gambling Authority were selected. At the time of the study, the estimated total of all licensed operators in Botswana stood at five hundred and ninety-one (591). This is a cross-sectional study within Botswana, and thus the researcher could not cover all the licensed properties and operators. Due to the scope of the study, it was necessary to use a selected sample of the population and still obtain representative results.

For the quantitative section a sample of respondents at different management and non-management levels with more than two year's exposure to the enterprises' e-marketing strategy was selected for this study purposively selected. This criterion of inclusion ensured that only respondents with a comprehensive understanding of the e-marketing strategy were exposed to the process and selected. In this study, purposive sampling was used to select the sample of SMTEs for the quantitative research.

In the case of the tourists, convenience sampling was done which refers to a situation where respondents participate by chance since no lists were available for representative selection. The results can thus not be generalised to the industry but provided insights into e-marketing strategies in Botswana. This was therefore applied to the sampling for the tourists where different tourism enterprises were involved in selecting respondents for this part of the project. The tourists, both national and international, visiting or making used of the services of these SMTEs were targeted. The sample was selected from the following districts selected at national level – Ngamiland, Chobe, Tuli Block, Kgalagadi, Ghanzi Western, Ghanzi South, and South East (including Gaborone City) due to the number of respondents and financial reasons. It is generally acknowledged that for a population (*N*) of 1 000 000, the recommended sample (*n*) size should be 384 (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970:608). Following, this recommendation, the sample size for this study was predetermined at N=380 respondents.

For the qualitative research purposive sampling was done. According to Powell and Connaway (2015:385), a purposive sample is any sample that is deliberately chosen by the researcher in accordance with predetermined non-probability criteria. A purposive sample increases the likelihood that variability common in any social phenomenon will be presented in the data. According to Strauss and Corbin (2014), the main disadvantage of purposive sampling is that it is highly prone to researcher bias as compared to probability sampling methods that have been

created to reduce bias. In this study, purposive sampling was used to select employees from the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism. A population of 41 participants are possible but the sample size of 20 can be seen as acceptable – if saturation is reached before that the research will stop. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) found that saturation occurred in the first twelve interviews.

Table 1-2: *Study Sample (Licensed Operators)*

Participant	Research method	Data collection method	Population size	Sample size	Sampling method
Employees of the Ministry of Environment Wildlife & Tourism	Qualitative research	Face-to-face interviews	41	20	Purposive
			41	**20**	
SMTEs: Managers (hotels, lodges, guest houses)	Quantitative research	Questionnaire	36	20	Purposive
SMTEs: Tour operators and employees of tour operators	Quantitative research	Questionnaire	351	150	Purposive
SMTEs: Directors and employees of ICT firms	Quantitative research	Questionnaire	41	30	Purposive
SMTEs: Director and employees of travel agencies	Quantitative research	Questionnaire	163	100	Purposive
			591	**300**	
Tourists visiting SMTEs	Quantitative research	Questionnaire	----	300	Convenience sampling

1.6.3.3 Development of the measuring instruments

For the quantitative phase of this research, two questionnaires were developed. The order of the questions for the questionnaire was drawn from the objectives of the study. The questionnaire for the visitors consisted of two sections. Section A included biographical details and information related to the use of media and social media. Section B focused on the use of e-marketing by visitors with reference to the internet and making bookings. The critical review aspects for the demand side were analysed in this instrument. The questionnaire for the SMTEs consisted of four sections. Section A included questions related to attitude and understanding of Social Media, Section B focused on the importance and degree of use of Social Media, Section C focused on e-marketing security and legal compliance and Section D focused on e-marketing challenges and

solutions. For both questionnaires a mix of open and close-ended questions as well as Likert Scale questions were used.

The questions were adapted from technology adoption models with quantitative questions using Likert-like scales (Albaum, 1997; Dakduk *et al.,* 2017). The questionnaire for the SMTEs was pre-tested by administering it to a few local operators; ten (10) properties to be precise to ensure they all understand what is required of them. Slight changes were made to adapt the questionnaire to the nature of the business. Two (2) of the Enumerators also answered the questionnaire to ensure the understanding is the same (See Annexure 1 and 2).

For the qualitative phase, the same type of questions was asked in the interview schedule; however, this was done in an open format where the aim was to gain more depth about the challenges and questions at hand (See Annexure 3) as part of the critical review. Section A focused on information related to staff department, location and details of the enumerator. Section B included questions related to the understanding of e-marketing.

1.6.3.4 Data collection

As indicated, data was gathered through semi-structured interviews and self-administered questionnaires which developed in advance, along with prepared probes as advocated by Smith and Narayan (2016:288). In the case of qualitative research, this approach works when the phenomenon being studied is known to the interviewer, but his or her knowledge is not enough to anticipate the answers. Appointments were made with the Government Representatives at their offices after which the face-to-face interviews were held. These were recorded using a pen and paper method, and all participants were asked the same questions, although not necessarily in the same order. This was done anonymously. The interviews took on average 45 minutes to complete. A total of fourteen (14) interviews were completed in Gaborone.

For the quantitative research, questionnaires were distributed to respondents at their duty posts and office or place of work. They were requested to participate in the research and complete the questionnaire over a period of five (5) working days. The researcher made follow-ups and returned to collect the completed questionnaires after five (5) working days. A team of ten (10) enumerators was employed and trained (approaching the respondent; assisting the respondent; explaining the purpose of the research etc.) to collect the data and administer the questionnaires throughout the selected areas of Botswana. A total of 199 questionnaires were collected. Both the qualitative and the quantitative research was done over a period of three (3) months (May-July 2018).

1.6.3.5 Data Analysis

According to Goodmen (2016:172), analysing data refers to the resolution of dividing a complex whole into parts. The analysis of the research data involves the summarising of the data after which the results should be presented so that the most important findings are communicated.

1.6.3.5.1Analysis of quantitative data

Data analysis is a very important stage in any research work because it enables a researcher to interpret data. The first data processing stage of this study was data coding. Coding is the process of converting all the responses to the questions asked during the data collection process into numerical values. All survey responses were coded, but the coding of open questions was a different process (Green, 2014:418). In the case of closed questions, as used in the current study, coding simply involves assigning a numerical value to each response (for example, Yes = 1, No = 2) since the range of available response options are already known. This allows for more effective data entry and analysis. This process required careful attention, and the coded data was entered by hand. Although manual data entry can be subject to inputter error, the specialist package, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (Version 20, SPSS) was used to reduce the scope for error. Additionally, Green (2014) recommends that a researcher should clean the data, in other words, look for and correct any errors in the data set before carrying out any work on it. In the context of this study, this involved running a few basic checks by looking out for duplicates in any variables which should be unique.

The researcher, therefore, analysed the raw data generated by means of Statistical Package Social Sciences (SPSS IBM, 2017) version 20.0 to perform the statistical analysis. The SPSS package was chosen because it offers a variety of data formats and data analysis programs. According to Pickard (2014) the IBM-SPSS has become the standard analytical tool for most quantitative researchers in social sciences. Besides, the researcher used descriptive characteristics of e-business and frequencies for categorical scaled variables and as means and standard deviations. In the context of the study, the analysis of quantitative research involved the analysis of frequencies of variables, analysis of differences between variables, and statistical tests designed to estimate the significance of the results and the probability that they did not occur by chance.

1.6.3.5.2 Analysis of qualitative data

On the other hand, qualitative data collected through the interviews were analysed using a process called thematic analysis. In thematic analysis, data was analysed through two steps,

namely, reducing data to manageable proportions from the wealth of collected information and then identifying patterns and themes in such data (Dutton & Jeffreys, 2015:173). This process enabled the researcher to break down, examine, compare, conceptualize, and categorize the data collected. According to Dutton and Jeffreys (2015:173), “this thematic analysis approach should help to determine whether data collected supports, extends, or disconfirms the various aspects of the literature review.” Each interview transcript was perused to establish concepts related to the respective subthemes to review the e-marketing strategies critically. The responses were analysed, thus helping the researcher to identify patterns from which findings and conclusions could be drawn and appropriate recommendations made.

1.6.3.6 Trustworthiness and reliability

The researcher ensured the trustworthiness of the data gathering process using triangulation. With triangulation, multiple methods are used at the same time to increase validity and reliability (Straub, 2015:228). Typical strategies include collecting data at different times or through different methods such as questionnaires and face-to-face interviews or using more than one methodology such as quantitative and qualitative approaches together in one study (Yin, 2014:79). In this study, the researcher triangulated both the data and the methodology to improve the trustworthiness of the research findings.

Reliability was ensured by designing the research instruments in such a way that what they measure will yield the same result if they are administered on the same individual again (Sekaran, 2013:220). Another way to ensure reliability was to let different researchers use the same instruments (for example, assistant researchers during face-to-face interviews) and assess whether they produce the same results. Finally, the researcher ensured reliability by also ensuring that all items of the same measure are internally consistent (that is, the correlation coefficient of all responses is significantly high for the findings to be called reliable) (Williams & Colomb, 2013:148).

1.6.3.7 Ethical considerations

The researcher ensured the integrity of the entire process by abiding by the following ethical considerations:

1.6.3.7.1 Ensuring participants give informed consent

The researcher ensured that participants gave informed consent by explaining the nature of the research, the topic and content under study and their role in the study. The researcher assured participants that they would not be coerced into participating in this study.

1.6.3.7.2 Ensuring no harm comes to participants

The researcher ensured that no harm, injury, or discomfort came to the participants by considering any health and safety issues during the course of the data gathering process. While the researcher took measures, this study did not involve any stages which were of any physical or psychological threat to the participants.

1.6.3.7.3 Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity

The researcher ensured that participants' identity was protected by restricting access to all raw data, storing raw data securely, and reporting in a manner that will not expose the identity of the participants.

1.6.3.7.4 Ensuring that permission was obtained

The researcher ensured that all official channels were consulted and cleared before conducting the study. This was done through seeking permission letters to conduct the study and negotiating access to respondents. This study also served at the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences and the following number was issued: NWU-00426-18-A4.

1.6.3.7.5 Storage and destruction

The data is the property of the North-West University and is stored for a period of five (5) years as part of the data library of Tourism Research in Economics, Environs, and Society.

1.7 DEFINING THE CONCEPTS

The purpose of this section is to define the key terms and concepts as they are used in the study and how the researcher wants the reader to understand and interpret these terms.

1.7.1 E-business strategy

E-business strategy is based on a technology breakthrough. However, any organisation that adopts an e-business strategy runs the risk of being replaced by another organisation with newer technology. To ensure the long-term survival of the business a strategy should be developed to have access to the more recent technologies (Jewitt & Brown, 2014). E-business strategies share much with corporate, business, and marketing strategies. They are based on current market practices, and they define how organisations meet their strategic goals. An e-business strategy gives management the opportunity to efficiently allocate resources to deserving areas within a business for key organisational goals to be completed. Lastly, an e-business strategy provides a long-term strategy for the development of the organisation. Through the development of an appropriate positioning strategy a value proposition can be delivered, and the organisation can gain a competitive advantage (Brzozowska & Bubel, 2015).

1.7.2 E-marketing

E-marketing is defined as the management of the customer's online experience of the goods and services, from the moment the customer interacts with the online company to deliver the products and beyond. It is imperative for e-marketers to carefully consider the experiences of the online customer because the experience impacts the customer's perception of the products. Companies that host websites can collect marketing statistics from customers, for example, click-throughs, so that they can tailor-make their marketing strategies and leverage against their rivals for maximum competitive gain (Mahmood, 2013).

According to Sawhney (2016:116) the focus of e-marketing is on the utilisation of the web and other mediums to build its brand and attract the attention of customers so that the marketing goals are reached. Three main operational areas that exist in e-marketing are they are customer acquisition, customer conversion and customer retention and growth (Sheikh & Basti, 2015). Customer acquisition is attracting visitors to a website or promoting a brand through reaching them via search engines or advertising on other sites. Customer conversion is engaging site visitors to achieve the outcomes the site owner seeks, such as leads, sales, or browsing of other content. Developing a satisfactory customer experience is vital to this. Customer retention and growth is encouraging repeat usage of digital channels and, for transactional sites, repeat sales (Sawhney, 2016).

1.7.3 E-marketing strategy

An e-marketing strategy is a sub-set of the marketing strategy. For an e-marketing strategy to be developed, goals should be set and defined, together with the target group which will receive the marketing information (Sergeant & West, 2011). There is also a need for the selection of parameters for evaluating the e-marketing strategy, together with the selection of appropriate tools, media, and services to drive the strategy. Before developing an e-marketing strategy, it is important for management to justify why the strategy must be developed in the first place. It is also important for management to identify, in advance, the group that will design and implement the strategy and tools and techniques to deploy the e-marketing tools and services (Schwarzl & Grabowska, 2015).

Typical tools used to deliver an e-marketing strategy include customer relationship management (CRM), enterprise website, search engine optimisation (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), pay-per-click search advertising, google analytics, email marketing, web browsers, cookies, viral marketing, affiliate marketing and social networking (Ali *et al.,* 2015).

1.7.4 Small to Medium Tourist Enterprises (SMTE)

There is no universally agreed definition of an SMTE. However, definitions are widely based on the number of employees, assets, nature of management, and sales or loan size. The most common criterion is the number of employees within the SMTE. In Botswana, an SMTE is defined as an entity employing less than 25 employees and having an annual turnover of between P60,000 and P1,500,000 (Okurut *et al.,* 2012). Economic diversification is one of the main policies of the government of Botswana, and SMTEs have been receiving support from this government because it views SMTEs as an avenue for economic diversification, employment creation and poverty alleviation (Mwobobia, 2012).

Despite their potential to uplift the livelihoods of most low-income earners, SMTEs face several challenges which impact on their survival (Sentsho *et al.,* 2012). According to Sentsho *et al.* (2012) SMTEs in Botswana are affected by challenges such as lack of access to finance and low levels of entrepreneurial skills. Other challenges are lack of business start-up training, excessive government regulation, lack of marketing skills on the part of the SME owners, and lack of information on government assistance programmes. For the purpose of this study and SMTE is considered as a small business enterprise in the tourism sector providing services to guests.

1.8 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

This study is divided into seven (7) chapters which are outlined as follows:

1.8.1 Chapter One: Introduction and background

This chapter focuses on the introduction and overview of the study. Aspects discussed are the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, and questions, and the significance of the study. These form a foundation for the research and the overall investigation.

1.8.2 Chapter Two: Understanding the tourism industry and SMEs in this industry

This chapter mainly deals with literature review based on the distinguished opinions and views from various sources and from different researchers and authors whose work is significant in this research field. Bickman and Rog (2014) indicate that a literature review is often a separate chapter in a research report in which the researcher synthesizes the literature on his/her topic and engages critically with it. The chapter interrogates the tourism industry from a global, regional and local perspective. The second part of this chapter focuses on small and medium-scale enterprises.

1.8.3 Chapter Three: Understanding e-marketing and related strategies

This chapter contextualises the findings and links of e-marketing strategies as observed by different academics. In the first instance, e-business should be understood, which is followed by e-commerce as a business strategy for SMEs. Thereafter e-marketing and e-marketing strategies are analysed in-depth. The theoretical framework for SMTEs to adopt e-marketing strategies is discussed, which guides the rest of the study.

1.8.4 Chapter Four: Research Methodology

This chapter concentrates on the methodology applied in the study. The chapter articulates the research paradigm and the research design for the study. Data collection instruments and processes are presented in this chapter. The study used questionnaires and structured interviews, and the justifications for such choices are provided. In this chapter, the population and study location, as well as the sampling techniques, are discussed. This chapter proceeds to provide justifications for the choice of the methodology used, and it concludes by providing the ethical considerations for the research.

1.8.5 Chapter Five: Presentation of Findings

Data analysis, interpretation, and discussion are outlined in Chapter Five where they are broken down into three sub-headings, the first being the findings of the research. The second part focuses on the data analysis of both the questionnaires and the interviews. Lastly, a discussion is presented, which summarises the results of the research and provides answers to the research questions. Bickman and Rog (2014) state that before one begins with analysis, data needs to be transcribed, which means that text from interviews, observational notes, or memos are typed into word processing documents. This chapter also contextualizes the findings and links them to empirical literature discussed in the literature review section of the current study.

1.8.6 Chapter Six: Critical Review of E-marketing Strategies used by SMTEs in Botswana

The focus of this chapter is to present and critique e-marketing strategies used by SMTEs in Botswana, the challenges that they face, their utilisation of social media, e-marketing legal compliance, and the intervention strategies by the government of Botswana to promote SMTEs. The chapter compares these findings with literature and examples from other similar situations to enrich the discussions presented.

1.8.7 Chapter Seven: Conclusions and Recommendations

This is the last chapter, and it outlines the conclusions and recommendations. This chapter is categorised into five (5) sub-headings, namely the introduction, summary of findings, the conclusion, the contribution of the study, the limitations of the research, and the recommendations. Jocumsen (2009) states that this section may begin with a summary of the main findings. The agreement or disagreement with the conclusions of the previous research projects should be discussed. The concluding chapter contains recommendations as to how shortcomings, if any, can be rectified, gives pointers to areas where action of some kind should be taken, and provides an indication of areas for further research in the field (Crotty, 2014).

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the topic under investigation – a critical review of the state of e-marketing among SMTEs in Botswana, together with a background and problem statement of the thesis. The chapter also stated the objectives and research questions and discussed the contribution of the study to different disciplines, and limitations and delimitations. The chapter gives significant emphasis on the contribution of SMTEs to national development and how SMTEs in the tourism

sector may benefit from adopting e-marketing strategies. The next chapter, Chapter 2, focuses on the first part of the literature review.

CHAPTER 2: UNDERSTANDING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AND SMES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the review of relevant literature. This literature review of the study consists of the theoretical background and other relevant information about various concepts of small and medium enterprises, e-business, e-commerce, and e-marketing. This chapter explains the significance of tourism to individuals who travel to destinations and to global economies which thrive from activities associated with tourism. Rising earnings, the desire to move to attractive destinations, and the need to take breaks from stressful working environments are some of the drivers of the tourism industry at an individual level.

Tourism has also created employment and improved the economic well-being of households related to the tourism industry. A host of other secondary activities have also sprung up because of tourism. For example, tourism has resulted in the transportation and hotel industries. New tourism trends have also emerged, with countries such as China and India also becoming significant players in both local and global tourism. The availability of more disposable income has resulted in individuals travelling to international destinations to spend their money (Pike & Page, 2014).

Despite the significant gains made from tourism, there have also been several setbacks to the tourist sector. The global financial crisis of late 2000 has resulted in less disposable income for prospective individuals who wanted to undertake trips to tourist sites. Concerns from environmental pressure groups and politicians have led to the reduction of tourism in certain destinations. The issue of international terrorism has also led to some destinations becoming unattractive. Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic means that the industry was idle for long periods of time between March 2020 and December 2020 (Segomotso & Segomotso, 2020).

2.2 UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

For this study, it is important to understand the importance and relevance of the tourism industry followed by a global, regional, and local perspective on this topic.

2.2.1 Tourism as an interdisciplinary activity

Inkson and Minnaert (2018) explained that the term *tour* is the root of the word tourism which is a collection or a combination of various elements. There are several supporting elements to the word tour. These include accommodation, transportation, meals, attraction, entertainment, and

sightseeing activities. As a word, tourism can be interpreted as a form of activity undertaken by people from their homes to do some activities, such as vacations, visiting somewhere, recreation, sightseeing, business, or visiting their families (Holloway, Humphreys & Davidson, 2009). Another study by Boniface *et al.* (2016) concluded that tourism is a temporary activity undertaken by individuals to some destinations as they leave their homes and jobs. Edgell (2015) stated that tourism happens when people travel and stay outside their residential areas for participation in business, leisure, recreation etc. but this should be for less than a year. In the recent past, tourism has become an industry.

Cook, Inkson, and Minnaert (2018) defined tourism as a travel business, travel undertaken by persons or activities to promote or to inform and manage the journey. Furthermore, Edgell (2015) stated that the tourism industry continues to grow and can be seen as one of the largest industries in the world. There are several sectors involved in this industry which include hotels, restaurants, meetings, incentives, conferences, events and many more.

Travellers are the core of businesses engaged in leisure and these businesses depend on their visitors (Camilleri, 2018). Camilleri (2018) stated that the service industry is growing and it plays an important role in the business of hospitality and the global economy. Ramukumba and Ferreira (2016) also stated that the tourism industry is a collection of governmental organisations and business enterprises that provides services and infrastructure for tourists. The tourism industry refers to businesses engaged in services that includes hotels, resorts, motels, restaurants, transportation services such as travel agents, and rental cars, but it is also theme parks or recreation areas and various other attractions. In the tourism industry, there are several organisations that help this industry, for instance, travel research, development agencies, publications, and advertising (Giaoutzi, 2017). This shows the multi-disciplinary nature of this industry.

The tourism industry has developed as a major player in the economy globally. Historical data indicates an upwards trend with regard to the number of tourists and the revenue generated (Inkson & Minnaert, 2018). A major strategic imperative for tourism organisations is to create product development and marketing strategies that are informed by, and aligned with, the expectations of prospective travellers from their key target markets.

Furthermore, Wall and Mathieson (1989), cited by Iwayan *et al.* (2018), identify three elements of tourism system; (1) a dynamic element that involves travel to a selected destination; (2) a static element that involves the stay at the destination; and (3) a consequential element resulting from the two preceding elements which are concerned with effects on the economic, physical, and social subsystems. Iwayan *et al.* (2018) posit that the dynamic element of tourism is the demand

of all forms of tourism. Tourism has now become highly dynamic because of the effects of globalisation of commerce and trade, the rapid changing of customer behaviour, the development of accommodation and transportation services in the tourism industry, the improvement of basic hygiene and sanitation at points of destination, and information technologies that have a significant impact on the industry (Okharedia, 2017). The static elements are the characteristics of the destination and what the tourist consumes or experiences at the destination. These include political, environmental, and economic influences, the type of activity, and the characteristics of the length of stay at the destination.

The consequential element of tourism covers the impacts of the tourism system and includes the physical, social, and economic impacts of tourism which should be controlled by comprehensive management and planning activities (Lamont & Ferreira, 2015). Some external variables such as rising earnings, mobility increase, level of education increase, and desire to escape from the pressure of day-to-day urban living generate effective demands on tourism which stimulate the rise of various forms of tourism such as agriculture as agro-tourism, religion as religious tourism, recreation as recreational tourism, culture as cultural tourism, health as health tourism, conference as conference tourism, history as historical tourism, ecology as eco-tourism, among others (Okharedia, 2017).

2.2.2 Global Perspective of Tourism

Tourism has a significant impact on various sectors across the globe, including transportation systems, which have made remote and previously inaccessible tourist destinations to be easily accessible. Tourism has also helped develop other support industries such as airports, hotels, resorts, and other intervention measures by the government to facilitate easy processing and transportation of tourists to their various destinations (Knox, 2014).

At the turn of the twenty-first century, new systems were also developed which simplified and defragmented tourist production systems and widened the global reach of tourist marketing, and the outsourcing of non-core tourist activities so that industry players in global tourism could make maximum leverage to what these new tourist trends were offering them (Caber & Albayrak, 2016).

The marketing and commercialization of tourism helped expand the tourism industry from the predominantly large group of Western consumers to previously unknown destinations in non-Western countries. These trends helped to create significant uniformity in global tourist attractions, especially the accelerated growth of airports, hotels, and other support systems, which helped in the mass movement of tourists across global destinations (Sawhney, 2016).

The expansion and growing influence of the middle class across the world in terms of income and disposable income has helped to propel the level of tourism to greater heights not only in the Western World but also in other non-Western countries such as China, India, Malaysia, and Thailand where tourist numbers to global destinations have reached hundreds of millions of annual visitors (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013). Governments across the world have responded to this increased spending and higher tourist arrivals by building more luxurious tourist facilities and offering more services. To the wealthy middle class across the globe, tourism has become a peak form of consumerism and a symbol of consumer culture (Gârbea, 2013). Tourism is, however, no more treated as a luxury but an extension of everyday leisure life with new forms of tourism such as medical tourism, educational tourism, and volunteer tourism adding to the current list of tourist attractions available. Some authors have postulated an end to tourism as we currently know it, not that tourism will become extinct but that it will lose its current form of distinctiveness (Yang *et al*., 2013).

The rise of tourism in other parts of the globe has been propelled by the emergence of the global financial crisis of the 2000s, which mainly affected Western economies, thus changing spending habits of the middle-class in the West (Tribe, 2014). As noted earlier, new tourism trends have emerged in Asian markets such as China and India, targeting countries such as Australia and New Zealand since the United States of America and European countries seem to have restrictions towards Asian visitors. The impact of tourism across the globe has seen the booming of destination economies and the creation of different forms of employment that directly and indirectly support the tourist industry (Pike, 2016).

According to Pike and Page (2014), another development in tourism worldwide has been the expansion of tourism and tourist services within non-Western countries. Countries like China, Thailand, Malaysia, South-East Asian countries, and Middle East countries have expanded their tourist facilities to feed regional and local tourists. Domestic tourism has also developed as more citizens are attracted to destinations within their national geographic boundaries. These developments have helped to make these countries attractive tourist destinations to visitors from across the globe (Valente *et al.,* 2015). Such notable destinations include Bali, Dubai, the Great Wall of China, and medical resorts in India.

The cessation of wars and other forms of hostilities in Latin America has also led to the spawning of new tourist destinations in countries such as Brazil, Cuba, and Chile where tourists are attracted to the region's diverse history, annual festivals, and the opportunity to leave their busy work schedules for the serene environments in these destinations (Richards & Palmer, 2014). Another driver to global tourism has been the rapid urbanization of several economies and the

introduction of five-day working weeks, allowing individuals to make weekend trips to various tourist attractions (Mak *et al.,* 2012). These major economic changes have led to the development of resorts in the countryside's promoting to attract more domestic tourists rather than foreign visitors. Domestic tourism across the globe is thus becoming a dominant component of the tourism industry, and this has helped to sell more sites as possible attractions to untapped visitor markets in specific countries (Muganda *et al.,* 2013).

Despite the growth of tourism across the globe, several crises have recently affected the industry, especially at the turn of the twenty-first century. The proliferation of environmental, political, and financial crisis over the last 10 to 20 years has posed some serious challenges to the growth and expansion of tourism in various countries and has threatened to reverse the gains from tourism (Chaperon & Bramwell, 2013). Scholars have suggested that the financial crisis has posed the greatest threat to the growth of tourism. The collapse of financial markets has been attributed to severe indebtedness at personal levels and the high sovereign debts of The United States government and many European countries. These challenges have had a ripple effect on the economies of Asian countries, which significantly contributed to tourism (Kessides, 2012).

Another hindrance to the growth and expansion of tourism has been the obstacles imposed to the mobility of tourists. Governments across the globe have generally relaxed the entry of visitors via their borders, and this arrangement, while seemingly giving advantages to tourists, has also had several negative effects (Strauss & Frost, 2014). New challenges of human trafficking, illegal national labour migration from poor to wealthy countries, refugees fleeing from conflict zones, and terrorism have emerged due to the relaxation of border controls in most countries, particularly in the West. In response to these challenges, most Western countries have reintroduced strict border controls, and this has negatively impacted tourist arrivals to these countries. These countermeasures have also restricted the movement of goods and ideas, which were secondary industries fed by tourism (Lionetti & Gonzalez, 2012).

The threats of terrorist attacks have brought the most severe impact on the free movement of tourists, especially from Asia and other selected countries across the globe. Most Western countries have visas and introduced greater screening of tourist arrivals, and this has affected the tourism industry (Lai & Vinh, 2013). The screening mechanisms introduced because of visa requirements, the long waiting periods, and the high rejection rate of prospective new arrivals to European countries and the United States have resulted in fewer tourist arrivals and reduced the prospects of individuals seeking the West as a tourist destination. Nationalism in Europe has also encouraged governments to create legislation barring the entry of people from selected countries, and this has reversed the gains made in tourism (Kaushal, 2019). In the case of Botswana the

country has been relatively visa-friendly with visitors from Commonwealth countries not requiring a visa to enter. The adds to the accessibility of this country.

Despite the above challenges, the tourism market seems to be responding and adjusting to ensure that the industry does not decline and become extinct. Most countries have responded to the threats to tourism by segmenting the industry to cater to different tourist tastes (Goodmen, 2016). For example, most non-Western countries are encouraging home-grown tourism where locals visit sites within their national borders. Medical, religious, and volunteer tourism have also been promoted to encourage specific groups of individuals to visit unique destinations where their needs are served. Eco-tourism has also been another form of tourism that has been added to also promote additional diversity to the tourist industry (Gwebu, 2015).

A new trend in tourism has been the promotion of different forms of tourism in both Western and non-Western countries. These include simple rural holidays, guest houses, small resorts, and natural settings which are far from major tourist attractions (Richards & Palmer, 2014). The noted advantages of these forms of tourism are that they are cheaper to set up and attractive to both low- and high-income earners. Growing Western trends for health and wellness have also helped to promote new forms of tourism where individuals might be attracted to local and remote spas and medical centres in both developed and developing nations, thus giving the tourism industry a new boost (Li, 2015). Countries across the globe are also devising new forms of tourism which do not cause destruction, exploitation, and unsustainable management of tourist attractions with the purpose of fending off pressure concerned local groups and international organisations which fear that the current trends in tourism are decimating the population of wild animals and destroying and polluting the natural environment in tourist sites (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013).

More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic caused massive loss of human lives and imposing of travel restrictions. According to Stone, Mogomotsi and Mogomotsi (2020) these travel restrictions have severely impacted the tourism industry, which relies on travelling to destinations by tourists. The tourism industry came to a total standstill following the announcement of the travel restrictions in March 2020 (UNWTO,2020). Communities which relied on the tourism industry suffered financial losses because of lost tourist and millions of people who worked in the tourism industry lost their jobs. Estimates suggest that more than 121 million jobs were lost in the tourism industry since the outbreak of the pandemic. An estimated US$3.4 trillion in global GDP was lost because of COVID-19 (World Tourism Council, 2020).

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, global leaders within the tourism industry remain positive, with the sector seeking safer travel for tourists and offering more support to affected employees and communities (Molefe, 2020). The COVID-19 crisis has led global leaders within

the tourism industry to rethink the prospects and benefits of inclusive and sustainable tourism. Molefe (2020) further notes that policies and guidelines have also been formulated to ensure that tourism remains a viable option for individuals who want to take a break from their busy and intense schedules to visit destinations across the globe. New technologies and partnerships with both the public and private sectors have also been formulated to rebuild and boost the confidence of travellers.

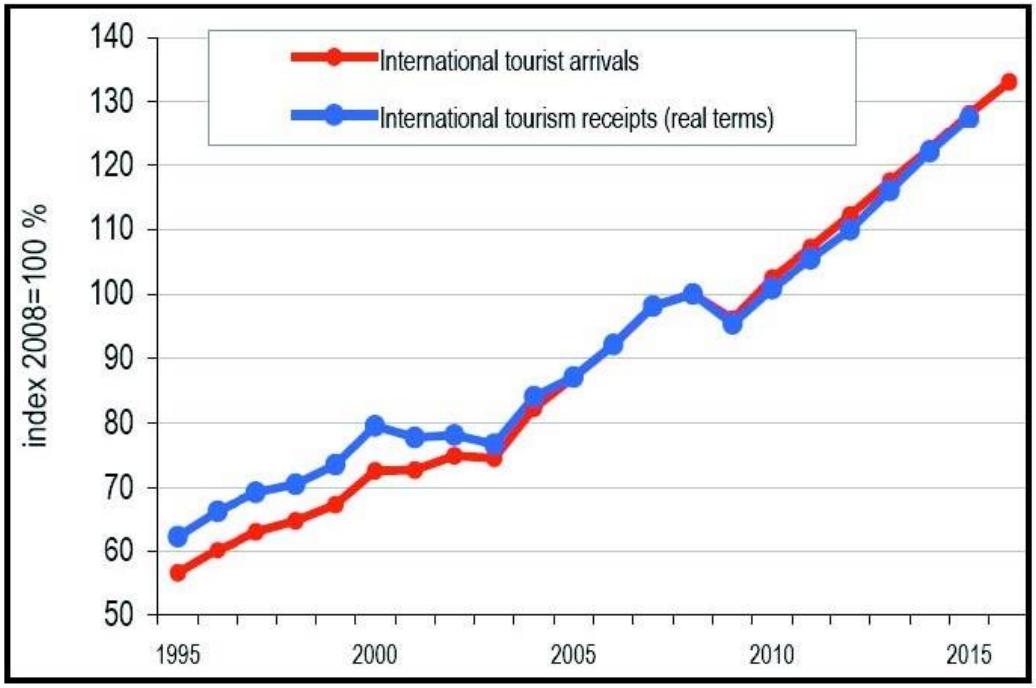

Figure 2-1: ***Global Tourist Arrivals from 1995 to 2015***

Source: Cornelissen (2017)

Tourism has experienced continuous and phenomenal growth to become one of the largest and fastest-growing economic sectors in the world. Tourist arrivals have continued to grow across the globe despite occasional shocks, with tourist numbers increasing from a mere 25 million in 1950 to 277 million in 1980 and 953 million in 2010. The World Tourism Organisation (2018) puts the latest figures of arrivals at 1.323 billion worldwide.

According to Crose (2018) the key drivers to the growth of global tourism in the twentieth century have been improved living conditions and technology. The availability of more disposable income has enabled more individuals to have greater access to tourism services to satisfy their needs.

Hampton, Jeyacheya and Long (2018) further explain that the improvements which have occurred in the transportation industry have increased human mobility since faster and cheaper modes of transport are now available to move people from one point to another. With an increase in tourist

movements, there has also been an increase in product diversification, and the emergence of new media has helped tourism destinations to gain a competitive advantage over their rivals and the effects have spawned to secondary industries connected to tourism (Crose, 2018).

Hildebrandt and Isaac (2015) note that the tight competition amongst destinations has resulted in infrastructural developments and product innovation and helped to make tourist travel a more fulfilling experience. According to Liang, Schuckert, Law, and Masiero (2017) there is ample evidence to suggest that the tourism industry has not yet reached its saturation point, and there is room for further growth in the industry. Whist current growth is much slower because of the global financial crisis of the late 2000 and recently, the COVID-19 pandemic; forecasters predict that the number of international travellers will increase by 3% annually by to reach 1.8 billion by 2030, a figure which is nearly double the figure for 2011.

In conclusion, whilst the tourism industry has grown significantly over the last 50 years, recent developments have threatened the gains observed in the industry. The global financial crises, the free movement of people, terrorism and nationalism, and the COVID-19 pandemic have severely impacted the gains made from tourism over the last half-century. Countries across the globe have taken measures such as diversification of the tourism industry and adoption of new measures of tourism which do not cause harm to animals and the environment to ensure that the industry survived and benefits both visitors and the populations of destination countries through employment and sustenance of industries which directly and indirectly support the tourist industry**.**

2.2.3 Regional Perspective of Tourism

A review of the literature confirms that the African continent has enormous potential for tourism development (Gandara *et al.,* 2013). Further research articulated by Xia *et al.* (2012) point to the "new tourism" and global trends towards non-traditional destinations and long-haul travel. The traveller is changing in terms of destination experience and this creates opportunities for African destinations. Unfortunately, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2011), the continent appears to be performing below its potential. An inquisitive mind would want to question the causes of the under-performance. Visser (2017) accounts for under-performance by pointing out poor infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, and water supplies; insufficient accommodation; unsatisfactory public health services; poor telecommunication facilities; and, in several cases, security problems. Visser (2017) stated that the slow application of more efficient management systems and the continuation of practices that impede the competitiveness of African destinations is hampering the development of the tourism industry. However, articulating further into the underperformance of the tourism industry falls outside the scope of the current study.

Nevertheless, Gandara *et al.* (2013) observe that Africa's population doubled to 700 million in the post-independence period, thereby placing tremendous stress on all aspects of economic, social, cultural, environmental, and political development. In this context, Lwoga and Asubisye (2018) argue that rapid growth of the tourism sector is an important instrument of poverty alleviation and job creation. The United Nations (UN) and the Economic Commission of Africa (ECA) have elevated tourism for the role it can play in the social and economic development of Africa (ECA, 1999). Even through Africa are hampered by several constraints there is data that showcase the importance of this industry to Africa which supports this industry going forward. For instance, the Tourism Vision 2020 Report of the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) envisaged an estimated average annual rise of 5.5 percent in the international arrivals in Africa between 1995 and 2020. A similar rate of growth was forecast for intra-African tourism.

However, Lwoga and Asubisye (2018) demonstrate the flipside of tourism. This complex industry is often driven by the private sector and the benefits do not reach the local economies. Without the necessary injection into the local economy, the communities and the environment suffer. It is such conflicting arguments that have produced advocates of a strategic framework. Vainikka (2015) argues tourism becomes intricate as it develops, and this process should be managed in a strategic manner. It becomes more important to develop forecasting models that can assist in predicting the development of the industry so that the benefits can be maximised and the negative impacts minimised. In this way development will conform to national policy objectives.

Similarly, Saha and Su (2017) focused on the strategic framework for conservation. The study used situation analysis to devise a strategic framework to link related initiatives that were being undertaken in the region by national governments and international agencies. This included the Eastern African Eco-region strategic framework, which focuses on coastal and marine conservation issues. Sidinga (2018) looked at tourism in Kenya between 1963 and 1982. The study concentrated on the variable that tourism was one of the top three domestic exports during the period, aimed at influencing tourism demand and policy makers in planning growth strategies. The results of the study indicated multivariable regression analysis has limited usefulness in identifying the significant factors which influence tourist's decisions. Sidinga (2018) notes that data problems and multi-collinearity caused unsuitable results in one case, while model specification appears to be a problem in another. The author concludes that quantitative studies should be supplemented by qualitative analysis for Kenyan policymakers to make optimal decisions.

Belhabib *et al*. (2018) posit that the increasing importance of sustainable tourism has become imperative to West Africa as a regional economic community. A review of the literature focuses

on the factors that explain growth. For example, models developed by Song *et al.* (2012) introduced the concept of "conditional convergence" and allow the analyst to consider differences among countries, such as the state of technology. Belhabib (2018) note that most of the empirical studies have used a cross-sectional analysis, although with growing availability of panel data, and the development of econometric techniques, it has been used widely to prove hypotheses.

In conclusion, the African continent, Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, has exceeded the performance of other countries across the globe in terms of tourism receipts and arrivals (World Economic Forum, 2019). This is even though the Sub-Saharan African region has perennially suffered from the effects of lower levels of economic development, sub-standard health and hygiene, and poor infrastructure. The entire African continent has displayed great potential in terms of untapped natural tourism, Information Communication Technology (ICT) readiness, international openings, and price competitiveness. Specific countries which have been on steady growth in terms of visitor numbers and receipts include South Africa and economies in the West African region. Tourism has brought much-needed economic growth and job creation to the Sub-Saharan Africa region, especially to those countries which invest in tourism and are politically stable (WTTC, 2013). Figure 2.2 shows tourist arrivals and receipts for Africa from 1995 to 2014. Both values of arrivals and receipts have been on a steady rise since 1995.

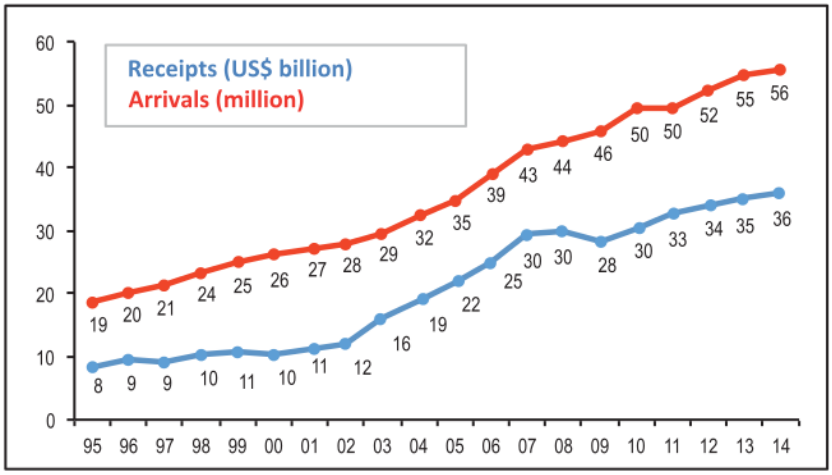

Figure 2-2: ***Africa Tourist Arrivals from 1995 to 2014***

Source: Sindiga (2018)

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in unprecedented pressure on the global tourism and hospitality industry. The pandemic brought severe consequences on Botswana tourism industry. Both the supply and demand sides of the industry were affected, and tourism revenue significantly declined because of the closure of accommodation facilities, catering and leisure services, and tourists had to deal with travel restrictions (OECD, 2020). Even though Botswana is a middle-income country with stable macroeconomic fundamentals, its economy declined by 13.1% in 2020

due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A further 32.2% decline was experienced specifically in the trade, hotel, and restaurant sector was also reported in 2020 (United Nations Botswana, 2020). Additional challenges of unemployment within the industry were also witnessed.

Despite the negative consequences of COVID-19 on the economy of Botswana in general and tourism specifically, the government of Botswana responded swiftly and closed international borders and restricted movement inside the country through the issuance of zonal permits (United Nations Botswana, 2020). In July and August 2020, Botswana started the process of re-opening its borders to domestic tourism (Botswana Tourism Organisation, 2020). In November 2020, the country also started reopening its tourist attractions to international travellers with the opening of Sir Seretse Khama International Airport in Gaborone, Kasane International Airport, and Maun International Airport from November 2020 (Daily Newspaper, 2020).

2.2.4 Determinants and Obstacles to Tourism Growth in Africa

Martins *et al*. (2017) indicate that responsiveness of demand for international travel varies, depending upon the tourist's nationality and the specific destination involved. Thus, demand elasticity for international tourism varies by country-of-origin and country-of-destination. In a follow-up study, Saayman and Saayman (2018) concluded that the demand for tourism is a function of the tourist's country of origin since cultural differences affect travel behaviour.

Santana-Gallego (2016) indicates that "there are many financial, perceptual, cultural, social and environmental factors that could be used to try and explain international tourism flows". The study was mainly based on tourism demand in developed countries, with little reference to developing countries and no African countries. In addition, Morupisi and Mokgalo (2017) put forward the view that the greatest obstacle to Africa's tourism sector growth is its lack of price and quality competitiveness. Kester (2003) argues that the major obstacles to tourism arrivals in Africa are insufficient air transport, a deficiency in facilities and accommodation, lack of image and poor perceptions, poverty, disease, and conflict. Like Kester (2003), Visser (2017) stated that this would include obstacles to tourism underdeveloped public health services and fear of personal safety.

Cui *et al.* (2016) find that political risks have a significant impact on tourism demand in both developed and developing countries. The factors identified by the three immediate sources above range from infrastructural variables to institutional factors. This points to the fact that many factors contribute to both the failure and success of tourism. Furthermore, Song *et al.* (2012) make the identification that, given the challenges facing Africa and the need for sound policy advice for

promoting tourism, it seems more appropriate to identify the long-run determinants of tourist arrivals.

2.2.5 Local Perspective of Tourism

Current global and local events have presented Botswana tourism with both opportunities and challenges, which can be used to rethink the tourism strategy in the country (BTO, 2016). Tourism in Botswana has a lot of potential (BTO, 2016), not only for the tourists who come to view the pristine natural wildlife and wilderness that the country offers but also for the local economy which has largely been driven by diamonds. Botswana has abundant wildlife and natural resources, including the famous Okavango Delta and Chobe River Plains. These are sought-after destinations by global tourists who prefer to view these places in their natural state. Tourism contributes about 5% to Botswana's GDP and has the potential to significantly supplement the diamond mining sector in terms of revenue and employment creation (Statistics Botswana, 2016). The country has many untapped natural tourist attractions whose development may add more value to the tourism sector in Botswana.

According to BTO (2016), Botswana's competitive advantage includes its unique and abundant natural wildlife, the significant reduction of unemployment by the tourism sector, and the employment of many locals employed within the tourism industry. The current workforce possesses basic skills to serve tourist arrivals from across different parts of the globe. There exist low barriers for entry in the industry, with new entrants requiring very little capital to set up a business. Also, the local tourism industry does not need any external inputs to thrive effectively, with the rewards derived from tourism being spread and shared across various regions across the country (BTO, 2016). Despite its advantages and contribution to national economies, the tourism industry also has disadvantages. Current global and local events have presented Botswana tourism with both challenges and opportunities, which can be used to rethink the tourism strategy in the country.

The above-mentioned challenges can be offset if the government of Botswana devises strategies to change the country’s tourism fortunes. There is a need for the government of Botswana, through the Botswana Tourism Organisation (BTO), to create and implement a clear, market-driven strategy to drive the tourism agenda. This agenda should help foster the development of key tourist infrastructure, increase the diversification effort, and expand the marketing effort of Botswana to the global tourist market. Botswana still has a lot of untapped sites which can be further developed and marketed as unique tourist attractions, and this includes remote wilderness, resorts, and sanctuaries. Existing strategies have not helped the country's tourism industry to win the market for additional tourist arrivals (BTO, 2015).

The new marketing strategy should focus on the global market, which has the potential to bring in much-needed high-paying tourists. This outward market-oriented drive could help the country to create awareness of Botswana to potential global tourists as a tourist destination of choice. According to Morupisi and Mokgalo (2017), such a marketing strategy should incorporate ways of dealing with the current global economic challenges the world is facing. The Botswana government has not been doing much as far as direct involvement in tourism, and there is a need for a greater rethink in this direction. Greater government involvement would also help to create more employment, improve the economic situation in the country and increase the diversification effort.

Botswana's infrastructure is not fully developed, and the existing tourist attractions such as Chobe and Okavango are congested, thus causing steady degradation of these sites (Morupisi & Mokgalo, 2017). For example, the number of day visitors to Chobe National Park has increased by more than 360% between 2007 and 2014, from 4 333 to 15 587. There is a need for increased budgetary allocation towards tourism so that infrastructure is expanded and new tourist attractions are developed to ease pressure on key sites. There is also a need for improvements in air transport between Botswana and South Africa. Currently, there is only one direct route between the two countries, which is from Gaborone to Johannesburg, with other flight connections between these two destinations. It is envisaged that increasing the number of direct flights can improve access to additional tourist attracts in Botswana (Morupisi & Mokgalo, 2017).

The opening up of geographical, cultural, economic, and financial boundaries through globalisation should also be used as an opportunity by the government of Botswana and other stakeholders who partner with the government to increase awareness of the country's tourist attractions (Morupisi & Mokgalo, 2017). Globalization has helped create a common and unified global market of the world's goods and services, and technologies such as the internet and e-business have great potential in uplifting Botswana's fortunes as far as employment creation, diversification, and poverty eradication are concerned (Ramukumba & Ferreira, 2016).

Several gaps remain to be filled in this effort of harnessing the benefits of globalization in Botswana tourism. The country has not implemented a clear strategy to market its tourism and is behind regional leaders such as South Africa and Kenya (Okurut & Ama, 2013). Technologies such as the internet and e-business have not cascaded downwards to all the various components of the tourism industry such as travel and tour operators, marketing agents, private and public partners, politicians, local communities living in tourist attractions and BTO itself (Okurut & Ama, 2013). Figure 2.2 is a summary of tourist arrivals in Botswana during the period from 1995 to

2015. While there has been a steady increase in tourist arrivals from 1995 the figures dipped from around 2014.

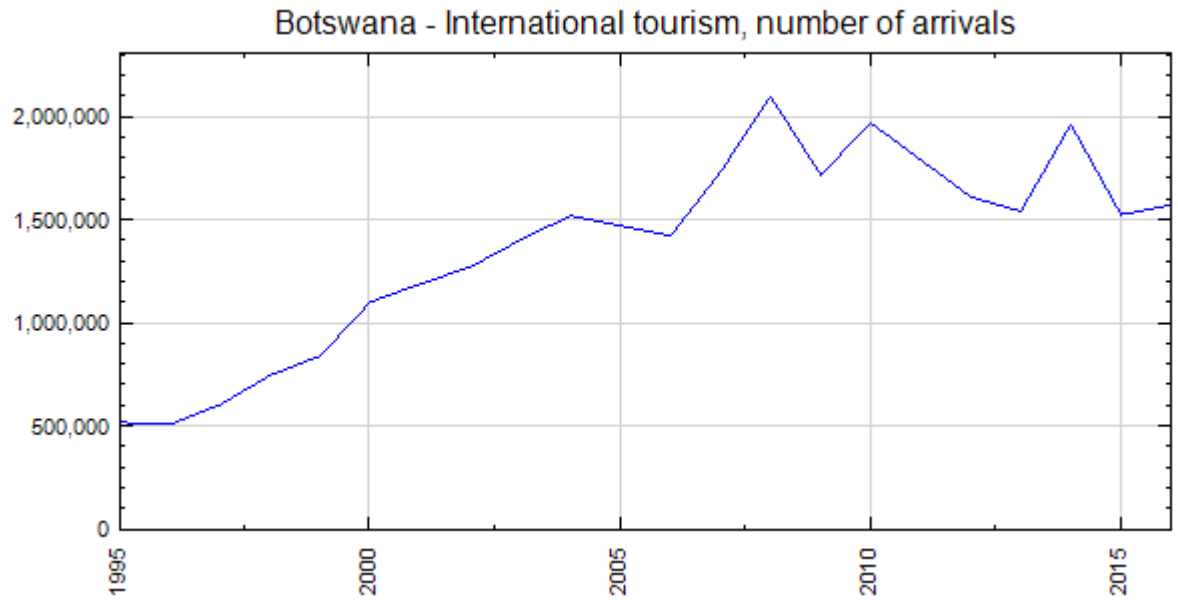

Figure 2-3: ***Botswana Tourist Arrivals from 1995 to 2015***

Source: Buthali (2017)

In summary, Botswana's tourism has significant potential for growth despite some of the above stated challenges. The development of a clear and effective marketing strategy is bound to increase greater awareness of the country as a tourist destination of choice.

2.3 CONCEPTUALIZING SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES

The term Small Medium Enterprises (SME) has different meanings in different places. In the United States, for example, O'Brien (2015) defines an SME as a business organisation that has 500 employees or less. Knorr (2017) differs slightly and contends that whereas in wholesale trades it is typically 100 employees or less, Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction, a business involved in Copper ore and Nickel ore mining can have up to 1,500 employees and still be considered an SME, while a business involved in Silver ore mining can only have up to 250 employees. The overall point of what an SME is in the United States is, is based on the workforce.

Similarly, the term SME is used to refer to businesses with fewer than 500 employees while classifying firms with 500 or more employees as large businesses in Canada (William, 2016). Breaking down the SME definition in Canada, Moore (2012) defines a small business as having fewer than 100 employees if the business is goods-producing, or fewer than 50 employees if the

business is a service-based business. Both definitions from Canada agree. A firm that has employees fewer than 500 overall is classified as an SME.

Members of the European Union (EU) have a uniform definition of what an SME is. McNeil (2017) asserts that in the EU, an SME is defined as a business with a headcount of fewer than 250 employees. His study further breaks it down to classify businesses as medium-sized (250 employees); a business with a headcount of fewer than 50 as small; and a business with a headcount of fewer than ten considered a micro-business. The European system also considers a business's turnover rate and its balance sheet. In China also, SMEs are said to be business establishments that have a workforce of not more than 100 (Liu, 2017). This is defined using the average number of employees calculated according to China's National Industrial Census (Wang & Yao, 2000). In this definition, SMEs are those with fewer than 100 employees. In most African countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, and Ethiopia, the definition of an SME is not contested. However, most of them have included financial turnover in defining what an SME is. Nevertheless, there is a consensus of belief that SMEs are one of the principal driving forces in economic development. Maduh and Maduh (2014) argue that this sector has been recognized as a growth engine around the globe, as it contributes to high and sustainable economic growth.

Kwensah (2012) posits that SMEs encourage private ownership and entrepreneurial skills, and they are flexible and can adapt quickly to changing market demand and supply situations. Consistent with the foregoing thought, Harold (2015) asserts SMEs provide employment opportunities to the masses, help diversify economic activity; and make a significant contribution to exports, thereby increasing foreign trade. According to Bonarnd (2019), SMEs are dominant in numbers in most European economies, representing 99.8% of all EU enterprises and employing more than 74 million people. No doubt, these enterprises are a source of employment, innovation, entrepreneurship, and growth to their host countries.

In developed countries like the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK), small enterprises play an important role in the economy, accounting for an estimated one-third of industrial employment and a lower percentage of output (Rwigema & Karungu, 2009). According to the World Trade Organisation (WTO, 2017), in Austria, there are 150,657 enterprises; from those however, only 400 employ more than 500 people. And this constitutes scarcely 30% of persons employed.

SME prosperity are more important in developing countries where these businesses dominate economically active enterprises (Rwigema & Karungu, 2009). According to Rogerson (2011), SMEs in Africa are of vital importance for the promotion of economic growth, job creation, and the mitigation of poverty. However, Mead and Liedholm's (2018) SME study on Africa indicated that

more SMEs close their doors than expand their businesses, with approximately only 1% of micro-enterprises growing from five or less employees to ten or more. It has long been argued by Rwigema and Karungu, (1999) that SMEs are pivotal to employment creation and economic growth, particularly in countries such as South Africa that have a high unemployment rate, and both Friedrich (2004) and Watson (2004) concur with this. Suffice to state that SMEs are fundamental in economic growth and development in Africa.

To aid in the facilitation of the SME environment, the Botswana Government has provided equal standing to SMEs through the establishment of empowerment funds for local SMEs. It is estimated by Mpete (2018) that 90% of all formal businesses in Botswana are small, medium, or micro-enterprises. For example, the vital role the SME sector plays in the Botswana economy in addressing sustainable development was highlighted not only by the 2013 Human Development Report as presented in UNDP (2013) but also by Walso and Emerson (2014). Evidently, the SME sector is a large contributor to the growth of the Botswana economy. One, therefore, sees how important SMEs are in the contemporary Botswana economy.

Upgrading the roles of the SME sector in the Botswana economy to improve economic growth through increased competitiveness and by generating employment and re-distributing income has been the focus of new development policies post the global economic recession and the national digital migration. This view of SMEs situates its relevance in both socio-economic and technological contexts. However, the current study articulates it as a core e-business concept.

The explanation of size categories is visible in Table 2.1. These organisations face different challenges and play a different role in the developing economy. Micro firms often struggle with fluctuating revenues, red tape complexity, lack of necessary technical and business management skills and relevant competencies (Temtime & Pansiri, 2012). Medium-sized firms need to deal with access to enough amounts of risk capital, technology, and stable electricity supply which might be even more challenging (Okurut *et al.,* 2012). This study primarily devotes attention to the small and medium size categories.

Table 2-1*: SMEs: Definitions and typical numbers*

SMEs contains:
Micro firms: 1-9 employees
Small firms: 10-50 employees
Medium firms: 50-250 employees
Patterns in a representative economy:

Category:	Share of all firms	Share of employees
Micro	90%	30%
Small	8%	20%
Large	1.5%	10%
Medium	0.5%	40%

Source: Quartey et al. (2017)

The development of SMEs in Botswana is a major challenge and has been the subject of growing research interest. Even then, the challenges SMEs encounter remain. Below are some of the major difficulties and constraints that hamper the success of SMEs.

2.3.1 Problems and Challenges of Small and Medium-size Enterprises

The problems and challenges that SMEs face would be better understood within the context of the nature and role of the business environment. According to Gautam (2005), environment refers to all internal and external factors that influence the functioning of a business. A business runs in an open system with many other open systems and uses various resources. According to Gautum (2005), the business environment is a set of all affecting factors to the business which can be seen as threats and opportunities.

Consequently, to explore the factors that influence SMEs, the current study analysed previous studies where various researchers have identified critical factors affecting SMEs. For example, Stoke (2010:4) identified some factors he referred to as “a matter of life and death of small firms.” Stoke classified the factors into external and internal factors. Consistent with Stoke’s (2010) classifications, the current study examines the problems and challenges of SMEs in terms of internal factors, which revolve around the characteristics and behaviour of the entrepreneur; and external factors, which are largely beyond the control of the entrepreneur.

Both Kazooba (2006) and Okpara (2007) concur that the “combination of less controllable, external factors, together with controllable, internal factors, arising from personal attributes, management competencies, and behaviour of the entrepreneur are some of which influence the start-up or survival of small businesses.” In the light of the foregoing, the following sub-section examines the internal factors that constitute problems and challenges for SMEs.

2.3.1.1 Internal Challenges of Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises

Studies have identified internal factors as the major cause of the failure of small businesses in developing countries. For example, Kazooba (2006) revealed that poor record-keeping, lack of

basic business management experience and skill was the major contributors to the collapse of SMEs in East Africa. He further identified inadequate managerial skills, inexperience in the field of business, lack of planning, technical knowledge, and market research. Both Okpara (2007) and Barclays Bank Business Bulletin (2006) believe the high failure of small businesses is a result of the economic cycle or the external environment of a given country (Not necessarily the case of Botswana).

The study investigated SMEs that existed prior to, during, and after the year 2000, which they argued, overall, was a year with relative economic prosperity, there was a high rate of small business survival. In Adelaja (2006), one of the problems that have bedeviled SMEs, in recent times is a lack of or poor managerial skills. Watson (2004) stated that a lack of managerial skills directly influences the success of SMEs. In addition, Naicker (2006) argues that a lack of experience and lack of organisational culture present as an impediment to SMEs growth. Similarly, ownership or management characteristics can also act as a barrier to growth in that the personality, managerial skills, and style, including the entrepreneur's management's negative attitude towards change, can negatively influence the SME (Leopoulos, 2006).

Furthermore, related to poor managerial skills is the lack of human capital. Human capital is a critical factor in SME existence. As a result, a lack thereof threatens the growth and development of the SMEs. Watt (2007) avers in a study conducted on selected African SMEs, that inadequate human capital brings about high turnover rate, inadequately trained employees, low productivity, and difficulties in recruiting quality staff. The study, therefore, concludes that there are impediments to SME success. Whereas the foregoing problems militating against SMEs could be perceived to be internal, such factor as labour market has been identified in the literature as a remote problem to SMEs. For example, Naicker (2006) argued that the role of labour markets and skills levels are the most important factors contributing to small, medium enterprises growth. The basis of the argument is that if the labour market does not offer SMEs the relevant skills for their growth, they go defunct. Put differently, and skills mismatch is a problem for SMEs. For SME owner-managers, it is important to identify the most problematic areas in managing their small enterprises. By identifying the problem areas, owner-managers can address problems through education, training, and information gathering activities (Huang & Brown, 1999). The other side of the problems and challenges of SMEs are the external factors, and the following sub-sections focus on these external factors.

In the case of SMEs in the Botswana tourism industry lack of training, slow internet, limited funding, little knowledge about the Internet, slow adoption of e-business strategies and certain

attitudes towards information technology have been indicated as reasons for the slow development thereof (Khanda & Doss, 2018; Shemi & Procter, 2013a; Shemi & Procer, 2013b).

2.3.1.2 External Factors Facing Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises

According to Hall (2005), the external environment is the pattern of all the external conditions that influence and relates to development. The studies on SMEs in developing countries have identified various external factors that are related to SME survival and growth such as the legal system, institutions, and financing. Aggrey (2015) reports that firm growth is determined by legal institutions, corruption, and financing, and small firms are affected most.

Faultless or impeccable legal systems facilitate firm growth, while corruption and lack of finance adversely affect firms' survival and growth (Liu & Pang, 2003). Liu and Pang (2003) stated that it is critical to review the financing environment where there are problems especially in developing countries and legal systems should aim at reducing corruption so that small businesses can operate and grow. After an examination of eight African countries, Liedholm and Mead (1998) confirmed that firm age and firm size are important in analysing the enterprise survival. Also macroeconomic factors such as location, composition of activities, labour force and national income should be considered.

Another external factor that constitutes a challenge to the existence of SMEs is technology. These are related to knowledge applied in the production process, innovations, machines, and materials used for producing goods and services. Technology is the way things are done; technological change influences how an organisation carries out its operations (Nnamani, 2010). Ajayi (2000) believes that "technology is having a significant impact on the operation of SMEs, and it is claimed to be essential for the survival and growth of economies in general." After studying SMEs in several countries in Africa, Thandeka (2008) concludes that SMEs in Africa are not adapting to the dynamics of technology. The study, therefore, recommends that SMEs need to be pro-active in their approach and anticipate technological changes. The changes, Thandeka (2008) argues, can influence the demand for products and the availability and willingness of individuals to work.

Wadhwani (1986), argues that changes in the level of inflation can affect the volatility of cash flow and reduces the firm's ability to pay interest on its debts in the case of high inflation, thus threatening the viability of many SMEs. Liedholm and Mead (1998) stated that economic fluctuation relates to business survival/performance, including that of SMEs. Gonzalez (2002) found that economic development and efficient financial systems are positively correlated with the growth of SMEs. He also looks at the relationship between SME's growth and such factors as bank control, corporate and bankruptcy laws, accounting standards, and fair market competition.

It was clear that an effective legal environment protects investors interests, help growing firms raise equity capital from the market and influence the financial market development. This facilitates growth. The study argues that the absence of an enabling environment brings about a threat and consequent collapse of SMEs.

From the foregoing reviews, various factors have accounted for the low survival rate of small businesses in developing countries. Entrepreneurs should take note of these factors since that might lead to survival. Given the uncontrollable nature of external factors, managers and entrepreneurs should anticipate the various indicators and continually adjust the internal factors to bring alignment to the business environment or guide the way in which the business is operated.

2.4 CONCLUSION

It was the purpose of this chapter to analyse the current challenges, processes, successes of SMTEs in the developing tourism environment through an in-depth literature review. This chapter presented information on the empirical literature review on the tourism industry and small-to-medium enterprises. The literature review was presented from global, regional, and local perspectives. The chapter also highlighted the challenges that the tourism industry faces in Africa. This study focuses on SMEs in the tourism industry, and this chapter also provided a background to SMEs, together with the challenges they face in their day-to-day operations. The next chapter, Chapter 3, focuses on e-marketing and related strategies.

CHAPTER 3: UNDERSTANDING E-MARKETING AND RELATED STRATEGIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is to provide an in-depth analysis of the literature review on e-marketing and related strategies. Since the thesis is based on a critical review on e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry in Botswana, it is imperative to explain the theoretical position of e-marketing in terms helping organisations to target and gain market share in the industries that they are operating in using the Internet. This chapter explains the position of e-marketing with respect to e-commerce and e-business. Different forms of e-marketing are also presented together with the benefits and shortcomings of using e-marketing as a tool to reach out to prospective and existing customers. The role of e-marketing in the tourism industry is extensively discussed, together with the recent influence of social media marketing. The chapter concludes by presenting adoption strategies that can be used by tourist organisations to implement their marketing strategies, including success stories on some organisations which have done so.

3.2 UNDERSTANDING E-BUSINESS

E-business is an abbreviation for electronic business. The term e-business is defined as the support for any kind of business transaction over a digital infrastructure (Akter & Wamba, 2016; Srivastava & Panigrahi, 2016; Chen & Holsapple, 2013). Jerome (2016) contends that e-business means business transactions that take place online with the help of the internet. In this setting, the buyer and the seller do not meet personally. This phenomenon is simultaneously legitimizing the internet as a mainstream communication medium and revolutionizing a new commercial business reality. M'raiji (2019) maintains that e-business is the use of information technology to improve the productivity and profitability of a business.

According to Chaffey and Smith (2008), e-business refers to a broader definition of e-commerce, not just the buying and selling of goods and services, but also servicing customers, collaborating with business partners, and conducting electronic transactions within an organisation. This definition is critical to the current study in two different ways. Firstly, it articulates e-business beyond the idea of monetary transactions. It suggests that e-business involves such secondary activities as collaboration and customer services. The use of the word *secondary* is apt because it is unconventional for businesses to include the elements in their online transactions. Secondly, it sees e-business as an umbrella term for other business activities. In other words, some other

electronic-based business activities are embedded in e-business. In the section that follows, this study explores the sub-concept of e-commerce.

Moreover, e-business provides a global platform for individuals and organisations to interact, communicate, collaborate and obtain information. Currie and Parikh (2016) stated that e-business web-based systems have undergone changes but creates a competitive advantage for companies. “Online businesses provide an information-rich environment by which competitors can identify, match, and improve product innovation” (Singh, 2020). From whatever perspective e-business is articulated, the bottom line is that e-business applications provide a means of carrying out traditional business functions faster, cheaper, by using Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

This notion of e-business seems more relevant to organisations and implies the use of computer networks and internet technology for communications and transactions between various groups of stakeholders (Adolphs & Winkelmann, 2010), emphasizing the central role of electronic networking (Shahjee, 2016). Consumer markets were the first to experience the pressures of e-business. The computing and communication capabilities of the internet offer high-speed information transfer and high levels of interaction (Kabugumila, Lushakuzi & Mtui, 2016; Shahriari, Shahriari & Gheiji, 2015; Sahu, 2016). New information products and new applications are also some of the capabilities of e-business (Dimkota, 2012). These capabilities, in turn, offer attractive potentials for businesses operating in consumer markets (Chaffey, 2012; Sheikh & Basti, 2015; Khuja & Mohamed, 2016) such as a new marketing channel, automated service delivery, and lower marketing costs, elimination of physical space and time limitations, one-to-one marketing, mass customisation, and real-time pricing and increased control of the channel and better customer relationship management.

Marketers have identified additional benefits of e-business such as opportunities to transcend local markets into regional, national, and global markets; the emergence of new business models (for example, electronic auctions); and disintermediation or opportunities for electronic intermediation (Ahmad *et al.,* 2015). Coupled with e-business are different types of e-business models. A business model is a set of planned activities (sometimes referred to as business processes) designed to result in a profit in a marketplace. The business model is at the centre of the business plan, which describes a firm’s business model. An e-commerce business model aims to use and leverage the internet's unique qualities and the World Wide Web (Mazzarol, 2015). For this to be effective, an e-business model should address the following eight elements as depicted in Table 3.1.

Figure 3-1*: Conceptualized elements of an e-business model*

Source: Adapted from Laudon & Laudon (2007:59)

Various types of business models exist including business-to-consumer (B2C), business-to-business (B2B), consumer-to-consumer (C2C) and mobile-commerce (m-commerce). However, one interesting thing about the model presented above is that each e-marketing variable has a key question that helps the e-marketer to navigate the marketing space. For example, the term value proposition is guided by: Why should the customer buy from the business? Revenue model: How will the business earn money? Market opportunity: What market space does the business intend to serve, and what is its size? Competitive environment: Who else occupies the business's intended market space? Competitive advantage: What special advantages does the business bring to the market space? Market strategy: How does the business plan to promote its products or services to attract its target audience? Organisational development: What types of organisational structures within the firm are necessary to carry out the business plan, and Management team: What kinds of experiences and background are important for the company's leaders to have?

Looking at the definitions of e-business articulated at the outset of this section, e-business includes transactions carried out in electronic markets, services to consumers, collaboration with business partners and intra-organisational relationships. No doubt, e-business is part of a broader economic context that is responsible for radical transformations in business and encompasses digital networks and communication infrastructure. As Kogger (2017:71) puts it: "*e-business*

provides a global platform where individuals and organisations interact, communicate, collaborate and obtain information."

An SME must develop a strategic plan for it to improve its organisational e-business capabilities. Affang and Umeh (2018) suggest that success in a global market depends on more agile and flexible business structures. This is imperative because the dynamic nature of today's market brings about changes regarding competitors, work, suppliers, and regulations. Organisations are more effective in reaching their customers at a compensatory cost. Businesses went from mass production and mass distribution to mass customization with faster product development, production, pricing, and delivery. Therefore, SMEs must be highly market-oriented and use new Internet-based technologies to strengthen this process.

A summed observation of the impact of the Internet on transactions among selected organisations and consumers in Africa is reported in Amusi (2017). He indicated that there were significant changes in value chains, leading to the restructuring of operations with businesses and other partners. On the contrary, many e-businesses fail because they have taken the plunge into the internet without considering some critical factors for their strategic and operational success. The solution, according to Amusi (2017), is to exploit internet technologies to get benefits for their business, considering them as strategic options in a continuous process of market adaptation.

E-business is an unparalleled tool that can grow the existing market share, identify new markets, creating alliances with new business partners and building relationships with customers like never seen before (Kambobe, 2014). E-business is revolutionizing the way business is conducted. However, there is more to the growth and development of SMEs than e-business. It was articulated earlier in this discussion that e-business is an umbrella term that covers e-commerce. Whereas e-business is broad and broad in scope, e-commerce is rather more specific and narrowed. In the light of the foregoing, the section that follows discusses the concept of e-commerce, especially in the realm of SMEs.

3.3 E-COMMERCE AS A BUSINESS STRATEGY FOR SMES

According to Walker and Walker (2014), e-commerce is using computer networks to trade products or services. This can also be done via mobile commerce and electronic transfers. One may note that this definition is loaded with several activities that are associated with e-commerce. However, it should be highlighted that e-commerce is primarily about the trading of goods and services. The immense popularity of the internet in recent years has been mainly fuelled by the prospect of performing business online.

E-commerce refers primarily to the buying and selling activities over the internet, which includes transactions such as placing orders, making payments, and tracking the delivery of orders on the Internet (Rodgers, 2012; Yeng, 2018) People firstly think of consumer retail purchases from companies such as Amazon (Ghandi, 2018). However, e-commerce refers to both financial and information electronically mediated transactions between an organisation and any third party it deals with (Yeng, 2018).

Further, Denver (2017) does not only support the view that e-commerce is an online service offered to customers to support their shopping experience over the internet but also maintained that it is exponentially increasing the availability of information, giving customers access to more knowledge, of better quality and faster than before. As in the case of e-business, technological advancement was responsible for the development of e-commerce which was driven by the internet and the World Wide Web (WWW). Put differently; they are making electronic commerce much more accessible.

E-commerce is used nearly everywhere in everyday life. Nowadays, it is utilised for virtually everything from credit card authorization, travel reservations, wire fund transfers across the world, point of sale (POS) transactions in retailing, and electronic banking, among others. It helps in generating demand for the products and services and improves order management, payment, and other support functions (Ahmed, 2016). E-commerce decreases the cost of creating, processing, distributing, and retrieving paper-based information and it facilitates the benefits such as improved image and customer service, simplified processes to name a few (Idris & Idris, 2015).

Moreover, e-commerce is not just about buying and selling, as it is also about electronically communicating, collaborating, and discovering information (Ahmed, 2016). It can involve the internet, groupware programs and public e-mail networks (Idris & Idris, 2015). Today it is associated with mobile telephones and digital television (U'cherie, 2019). E-commerce means convenience to customers and is considered an imperative and not an alternative (Denver, 2017). E-commerce focuses mainly on financial transactions and e-services which can include the electronic trading of physical goods or intangibles such as services offered in the tourism sector.

So far, this discussion has articulated two (2) interrelated concepts that have perhaps revolutionized the global business landscape. These are e-business and e-commerce. As much as this discussion has earlier articulated the distinction between the two (2) concepts, it is also imperative to point out that the relationship between them, and in the following section, this study will succinctly articulate that correlation.

3.3.1 Relationship between e-business and e-commerce

Whereas e-business is the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in support of all the business activities, e-commerce constitutes the exchange of products and services between businesses, groups and individuals and can be one of the essential activities of any business. E-business is a broad term used to express business conduct such as buying and selling, servicing customers, and collaborating with partners through the internet (Cheng, 2013). The point is that the scope of e-business is much broader than that of e-commerce.

E-commerce uses the web to connect customers with firms, whereas e-business includes the web as well as other means necessary to interconnect information systems and data streams. Both internal and external forms of e-commerce require human interaction for form-filling during the purchasing process. However, e-business allows many processes to be fully automated, thus improving the efficiency of business processes and removing the error of human interfaces (Uheh, 2017). The notable similarities between the two are that both e-business and e-commerce solutions include newly developed web technology into organisational and business processes and that the use of web technology results in improved efficiency.

The less complex e-business solution is e-commerce and organisations should first start with e-commerce in the business (Klacko & Vosser, 2015). Once a firm has successfully implemented its e-commerce functions, then it may begin to work on e-business with the e-commerce infrastructure. This simply means that without e-commerce infrastructure first, it will be difficult for firms to integrate all the e-business functions. Moreover, if a firm decides to skip the e-commerce part and jump directly to e-business, the project or work would be much costlier and time-consuming. In a nutshell, e-business is a more general term than e-commerce. E-commerce has a degree of overlap with e-business but remains a sub-set of e-business. However, the term e-commerce obviously is more popular than the term e-business. Therefore, a firm must create an e-commerce capability before it pursues e-business solutions.

3.4 E-MARKETING AND E-MARKETING STRATEGIES

Studies have shown that e-marketing has been in existence since the advent of the internet and e-commerce in the 1990s. According to Rodgers (2012:184) e-marketing is defined as the application of marketing principles and techniques through the internet to target potential and current customers so that business objectives are fulfilled.

3.4.1 The concept of E-marketing

It is important to begin this section by clearly defining the concept of e-marketing. This is a vital task because to be able to fully understand how e-marketing affects businesses and their customers; it is important that the notion of e-marketing is first adequately defined. Lee (2014) opines that e-marketing is a general term used to denote a wide array of different internet-related activities. Lee's study includes such activities as website building, promotion, consumer communications, e-mail marketing, and newsgroup advertising. Pride (2010) also asserts that the term e-marketing has developed enormously, and it encompasses a far wider range of activities, and one of the most important of these is the use of social media to advertise online. Pride (2010) settles on an altogether more comprehensive definition of e-marketing, stating that he understands the concept to refer to the "strategic process of creating, distributing, promoting and pricing of products for targeted customers in the virtual environment of the Internet" (Pride, 2010:70).

Furthermore, e-marketing is best understood as a broad concept and one that has gained additional platforms in recent years with the advent of smartphones and tablets such as the iPad (Fisher, 2016). The notion is defined most clearly when it is understood as "referring to the creation, distribution, promotion, pricing, and communication of products across the entirety of the internet and the wide variety of platforms that constitute the internet in a modern context." Anyaele, Uwah, and Odeh (2015) defined e-marketing as the application of marketing standards and techniques through electronic media, especially the internet. This definition is interesting because it has expanded the scope of understanding of e-marketing to include marketing activities conducted through wireless media and emails.

Additionally, Scott (2012) acknowledges that e-marketing generally implies the promotion of goods and services over the internet. Other studies such as McBow (2017) and Ferrow (2014) have included aspects such as digital customer data and electronic customer relationship management systems. Thus e-marketing includes development, advertising, design and sales which is the technical and creative aspects of the internet.

Consistent with Chaffey (2016), e-marketing can be viewed as a new philosophy and a modern business practice. It involves the marketing of goods, services, information, and ideas via the internet and other electronic means. Through the revision of the relevant literature, it is observed there are several definitions of e-marketing with different perspectives. Hull (2011) defines it as achieving marketing objectives through applying digital technologies whilst Mahmoud (2015) states that it is the use of electronic data and applications for planning and executing the

conception, distribution, and pricing of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational goals.

Even through increasing the quality of products and services are important there is always a need for marketing strategies that can promote these products in the market. A business is developed from its acquaintance in the market and how the customers engage their attitude towards it. Marketing is an essential tool in business that addresses a company's existence and activities. As Yu and Leng (2017) contend, e-marketing is a strategy where organisations or brands do not only digitally communicate with the customers but also get thorough information regarding products of their choice. Advertisements create opportunities to share the details of the products and make the market award of discounts, new features, services etc.

In modern times, there has been an increased use of the internet for many different purposes. This has created an avenue for customers to be able to access different products and services from different businesses located nationally or in other parts of the globe. The business also can access different classes of customers through various digital communications and reach the target market with an online public relations strategy. The benefits are that digital infrastructure allows for actual-time assessment of products and services. Some internet platforms also promote a community of customers to interact, thus forming data that can be used for gauging the level of customer expectations, satisfaction, and improvement of products and services. One critical question that needs to be answered is: How does e-marketing help businesses reach their customers? The answer to this question is the focus of the sub-section that follows.

3.4.2 The role of e-marketing in reaching customers

E-marketing helps businesses to reach customers in a wide variety of ways. Meeleh and Forcheh (2014) maintain that the internet offers businesses the chance to reach their customers in several unique ways of which global research is one of the most important ones In the view of Meeleh and Forcheh (2014:521), "the net eliminates geographic protections and limitations of local businesses, and it gives smaller firms a wider audience."

It is for this reason that the internet is often seen as being inextricably linked to the broader force of business transformation. According to Malik (2018), the ability to reach customers connected to the internet anywhere in the world is seen as an enormous benefit to businesses. It makes it easier and more effective to reach, attract and retain customers. This creates opportunities to reach consumer bases.

Malik (2018) asserts that it is the extent to which it can further personalize marketing. This allows businesses to create products that “meet customer specifications and in recent years, the advance of this type of marketing has been perhaps the most significant long-term development in e-marketing” (Malik, 2018:14). Using social media, for example, business analysts believe that corporations may harness enough information to tailor products and services in such a way that consumers will automatically be attracted to them. This is because the products and services shown will be of interest either to them personally or to their close friends on social networking websites.

Nevertheless, e-marketing offers other important ways for businesses to reach their customers, through interactive marketing and integrated marketing. Interactive marketing refers to an advertising process that is driven by buyer-seller communication and where the “customer controls the amount and type of information received from the marketer” (Butler, 2014:106). Integrated marketing refers to a type of marketing strategy in which all promotional and communication efforts are combined to create a unified and consumer-centric promotion campaign (Butler, 2014). E-marketing offers different ways to effectively reach current and potential consumers. In this section, this discussion has critically looked at how e-marketing has been and can be used to reach the clientele. The section that follows presents a discussion on the merits and the demerits that are associated with e-marketing.

3.4.3 Advantages and disadvantages of e-marketing for businesses

E-marketing has several important advantages. Logically, the advantages make the adoption of e-marketing approaches and strategies worthwhile for businesses. One can highlight the importance of the cost and speed of this approach to marketing, and this differentiates it from other marketing approaches (Aziza, 2015). “There is much evidence that makes a case for marketing electronically because of the cost-benefit ratio and the speed-to-market advantage” (Uttah, 2017:11).

Data gathering and analysis constitute huge opportunities. Gupta (2018) argues that the increased ability to garner data and to analyse it in relation to consumers is something that offers businesses many valuable opportunities. The opportunities are not only in marketing campaigns but also in business strategies. Isson (2015) argues that in some instances e-marketing has developed to such an extent that certain businesses are able to make vast profits by offering comparisons between different websites, which are commonly referred to as comparison websites. Organisations do not have discernible products of their own. Instead, they offer a service in which they “are uniquely equipped with product listings, consumer reviews, store ratings, and personal shopping lists that offer creative shopping options to consumers on the

internet" (Isson, 2015:47). The rationale behind pointing out this in the foregoing discussion is because comparison websites are, in one sense, one of the purest examples of e-marketing. The business models used therein rely almost exclusively upon effective e-marketing to target customers.

E-marketing offers further important advantages. Among the advantages, William (2017) includes the ability to reduce costs by automation and software programs, which also allows marketers and consumers to interact in a much faster fashion than would be the case when using traditional means of communication. Be that as it may, the analysis above has already touched upon significant advantages of e-marketing that have great potential to evolve substantially in the future. Another advantage of e-marketing is that it contributes to the growth of social media platforms. The use of social networking and social media offers enormous potential to marketers and opens the door to revolutionary changes in the way customers and businesses interact with one another (Mensah, 2017). The use of Facebook and Twitter over the last few years have shown the impact thereof. Ajegunle and Aremu (2014) stated that a different type of internet developed with the customer driving the communication process which should be user-friendly in order to be effective.

Despite the numerous advantages of e-marketing, business organisations must know e-marketing also presents businesses with several potential pitfalls. Certain businesses rely completely upon the internet to the extent that without technology, they would have no business. Clearly, the internet will not go away; however, the dependency upon technology is something that can cause internet-centric businesses major problems and make them vulnerable to a wide range of different cyber-attacks (Gupta, 2017). Another disadvantage of e-marketing is inextricably connected with the rise of social media. Whilst social media has the potential to offer many e-marketing benefits, and businesses must also beware of the danger that poor reviews and poor customer service can have upon their operations. The opinions of one disgruntled customer can go viral at the speed of lightning. This might, therefore, irrevocably undermine a business, product, or service in an instant. This type of increased transparency also manifests itself in other ways and leads to a situation in which consumers are empowered to search for the lowest prices from a wide range of different online businesses.

Thus far, the discussion on e-marketing has demonstrated that online marketing is central to e-marketing practice. And this aspect of e-marketing has been articulated in the literature. The section that follows presents a discussion of this aspect of e-marketing. The objective of this discussion is to further buttress the centrality of the concept of e-marketing in the current study.

3.4.4 Online Marketing

According to Stegemann and Sutton-Brady (2012), online marketing is the practice of leveraging web-based channels to spread a message about a company's brand, products, or services to its potential customers. The methods and techniques used for online marketing include email, social media, display advertising, search engine optimisation, Google AdWords, and more. The objective of marketing is to reach potential customers through the channels where they spend their time reading, searching, shopping, and socialising online. Various organisational authorities find it fruitful to take hold of online activities related to marketing to reach the maximum number of potential customers. People nowadays extensively use social media, email and they come across several websites every day for their personal purpose. Online marketing is strategised to be focused on various websites, social networking sites, emails where people can get close to the informational demonstrations issued by various companies and organisations (Tankosić & Trnavčevič, 2011). They can get access to their desired material anytime they wish. To execute sales promotion and expect customer attraction, the companies need to arrange attractive prizes and convenient discounts. The organisations plan sales promotions with the objective of expanding the product and service acquaintance to the customers. Online marketing has facilitated the business contexts to make faster and hassle-free transactions.

Eggerson (2019) opines that organisations implement the idea of e-business, e-commerce, and e-marketing that can benefit the overall business. Numerous factors account for why the activities related to the web have been accelerated, and the overall interest and awareness amongst the customers have risen. A key benefit of using online channels for marketing a business or product is the ability to measure the impact of any given channel, as well as how visitors, acquired through different channels, interact with a website or landing page experience. Online marketing has the most important aspect of issuing advertisements for various products and services.

3.4.5 Social Media Marketing

It has been highlighted earlier that social media play a pivotal role in the acceleration of e-marketing. According to Neti (2011), social media marketing is the ability to convince consumers that the products and services are worth investing in by using online networks, blog communities, amongst others. According to O'riel (2019), a recent study funded by the University of Maryland School of Business posits that different businesses have been adopting social media marketing and using it also to communicate easier and faster with their customers. In Cook (2018), another funded study this time by Duke University's Fuqua School of Business and the American Marketing Association, the key finding of the research demonstrates that social media marketing has continued to rise over the years, and businesses currently allocate 6% of their marketing

budgets to social media, an allotment they expect to increase to 10% during the next year and 18% over the next five years.

Additionally, Vinerean (2013) explains that social media marketing has offered immense possibilities for brands to have a relationship with their consumers and improved the performance of advertisements regarding clicking on the advert and generating positive reactions towards it. Hull (2016) did a study to evaluate the impact of social connections on business transactions. The results showed that although users perform few transactions with their friends on the social network, transactions between partners connected on the social network resulted in significantly higher user satisfaction. On the effect of social media on online marketing behaviour, Hull (2016) concludes that with the influence of social media marketing, there is a higher probability or chance on users' online behaviour such as visit and purchase intention.

In descriptive research by Neti (2011), a breakdown of social media marketing was analysed and how it has tremendously improved sales and marketing over the years. The study showed that social media has been able to create an avenue for both established companies and start-ups. When compared with traditional marketing, markets might spend millions to locate their target market, but with social media marketing, Neti (2011) posits that companies can search for fan pages, groups to find out who is interested in their products without paying large sums on market research. Social media interaction ties have been proved to affect knowledge exchange and sharing positively. In a social network group, people with more links easily get more knowledge, causing informational social influence (Malik, 2012).

Furthermore, Hassan and Haruna (2014) identified four different types of social media consumers, namely: Engagers, Expressers and Informers, Networkers and Watchers, and Listeners. Hypotheses were established in the study to determine the students' underlying characteristics in terms of social media engagement. Also, the different behaviours of these consumers online were monitored in relation to social media marketing, and even influential variables were analysed. The findings showed that although different consumers come online for various reasons, their activities have enhanced positive reactions to social media marketing and online advertisement. From Hassan and Haruna's study, it is evident that social media commitment affects informational social influence positively.

Moreover, the diversity of social media marketing can also be said to be a positive influence on e-marketing. So many organisations and individuals have started to embrace this means of marketing, and the topic is now being discussed in homes, small businesses, corporate boardrooms, and extending its reach into the non-profit, education, and health sectors (Neti, 2011). Not only that, but social media marketing has also been seen to improve online consumer

behaviour (Hassan & Haruna, 2014). People are becoming more interested in visiting marketing sites either through recommendations, reviews, or the influence of their friends. As mentioned before, social media affects getting information and knowledge transfer, which in turn enhances the influence of the information or knowledge, and finally influences online shopping behaviour. Informational social influence is transferred from a social media context to the wider e-marketing context.

3.4.6 E-Mail Marketing

This strategy means contacting customers directly through e-mails. It is a very popular strategy because of its cost-saving. The e-mail is usually personalised, and it consists of the company's brand, a message, and a link that guides the customer to the company website. Lemmenett (2014) asserts that more common are e-mails which also show one or more pictures about the promoted product and a connection to the company's Facebook page to support social media marketing as well. DeGraff (2014) opines that e-mail marketing is one kind of direct marketing tactic in terms of using electronic devices to enhance the quality of service, increase customers' attention and awareness, which with no doubt brings more return for the firms and businesses in gaining profit.

Internet users send and receive most e-mails daily or log on to chat with their friends or with selected groups of people with common interests over the internet. Garriger (2014) asserts that people also use the internet to web-surf or gather information, but the issue that all managers should know is that e-mail is the most functional medium on the internet environment. The potential of e-mail in the marketing space is not hidden, and firms always try to prepare a list with their customer. According to Jackson and DeCormier (2019), e-mail marketing is the most cost-effective tool in internet marketing; and the high rate of response from this tool has made this tool largely effective. In the year 2017, 61% of global organisations used e-mail as a tool in terms of marketing tactics and estimated that this amount gets higher daily (Jackson & DeCormier, 2019).

E-mail marketing delivers commercial messages to users and customers. This is one of the oldest and the most effective tactic in e-marketing. Minimizing expenses with maximizing sales is a unique fortune that can exist through this tool. Based on the findings of Salehi and Mirzaei (2014), recruiting a good e-mail marketing message can be helpful in raising sale communications and conversations between firms and customers; create expense decreasing in repetition sales. This means by using mail as a marketing tool firms, can reduce their costs in sale time and no need to pay again for customers' notification. Read (2012) maintains that e-mail marketing introduces and creates notifications about new products and services for customers, helps firms in achieving feedback from the customers easily; and pushes customers to make offline purchases.

Read (2012) contends that e-mail, as a marketing tool, gets an increasing and rapid push for the businesses to explore this option in their marketing selection and advertisement attributes. The study explores e-mail marketing as an exclusive way for marketing which is cheap to enroll, easy to access, and as a paramount dimension introduced that as the most effective way to gain return for firms by internet marketers. Peppers and Rodgers (2018) assert that e-mail marketing is an invaluable tool in e-marketing given its high response rate and low cost in distribution. Others believe e-mail marketing can be useful to achieve or maintain benefits for firms (Rettie, 2002).

This direct marketing phenomenon provides an occasion for both customers in terms of being a marketed volunteer besides for firms and companies; this fortune makes the process of direct marketing easy to have a better understanding of the individual interest and personal characteristic of their customers.

3.5 E-MARKETING STRATEGIES IN CONTEMPORARY ORGANISATIONS

Businesses are currently using e-marketing to reach out to millions of clients every year and this technology has redefined the way businesses interact with their customers. The nature of the internet means that businesses can reach out to all corners of the globe (Glavas & Matthews, 2014).

The popularity and potential of e-marketing technology can be explained in the ever-rapidly increasing usage of the internet globally. According to Lee and Lin (2015:161), internet usage has increased from 16 million in 1995 to 2,749 billion in 2014, and the figures are still increasing. The improvement of technology in terms of complexity and speed, together with cheap and readily available devices to access the internet, means that e-marketing has a place within the internet for a long time into the future (Doz & Kosonen, 2014:370) and that it can be utilized by smaller businesses. A study by Chaffey (2016) concluded that consumers spend a significant amount of their time on the Internet. Data from 2016 reveal that 67% of Internet users were also active social media users, equating to 2.3 billion people. These findings are concurred by Mander (2016), who observed that users spend 30% of the time online, on social media. While the largest proportion of social media users is still in the 18 to 29 years age group, there is evidence to suggest that the usage by adults aged 65 years and above has tripled since 2010. Statistics also reveal that 80% of Facebook users access the platform through their mobile devices (Pew Research Center, 2015).

Typical e-marketing strategies which are used by the tourism organisations include email, search engine optimization, customer relationship management (CRM), blogs, simple syndication (RSS) feeds, desktop and mobile websites, social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and

public relations campaigns using websites (Jocumsen, 2009:310). These e-marketing strategies have the potential to drive profits upwards and develop an intensive internet presence for companies that embrace them (Kumar, Kumar & Mishra, 2015: 2). Travel apps can be used by SMEs in the lodging industry in Botswana to help tourists and other stakeholders to streamline their destinations and check flights, prices, and travel times.

Improvements in e-marketing have been enhanced by the rapid development of the internet and related infrastructure (Mastorakis *et al.,* 2013). According to Mastorakis *et al.* (2013) the number of global online customers is increasing annually, and this is boosting business and creating a competitive advantage, especially for those companies which can attract and retain these online customers. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) can be explained as a revolving process where organisations interact with their customers to create, summarise, analyse customer information, and use the analyzed results for marketing and service purposes (Nwokah, 2015).

Web presence can be an effective e-marketing strategy for an enterprise. According to Ruel, Novabosa, Matiasa, and Mena (2015), a website is a collection of hypertext markup language (HTML) pages that enable viewers to consume content such as text, pictures, audio, and video. Viewers can also complete inquiry or registration forms, make online payments using their credit or debit cards, or send emails from the same websites (RuelNovabosa, Matiasa & Mena, 2015). Websites can work with several other e-marketing strategies what are known as hyperlinks which direct users to specific websites (Luna-Nevarez & Hyman, 2012). Search engine marketing products are developed from market research to identify target market segments and present search information in a universally acceptable format to the market segment. Companies within the tourism industry can share information by syndicating it on partner websites using RSS. The advantage of this strategy is that customers have up-to-date information on the most attractive and cost-effective destinations at the click of a button (Dabholkar *et al.,* 2013). Podcasts and online videos, on the other hand, give tourist operators the opportunity to market time-sensitive offers, hotel updates, local attractions and events, and destination-specific news and events (Diagne & Ossebi, 2016).

Most customers currently have access to Internet technologies via their smartphones, and the tourism industry has taken advantage of this development by designing mobile websites to market their products and services. Search Engine optimization (SEO) is an e-marketing tool that enables a user to optimize or structure websites to attain the highest rankings on search engines when users type in certain key phrases (Irish National Tourism Development Authority, 2012).

SEO involves what is known as organic or natural optimization to make changes to the HTML code, content, and layout behind the website, and this, in turn, makes the website more accessible

to users. This method is a cost-effective means for a business to attract new customers to a corporate website. The process of SEO is a continuous process whereby marketers are constantly modifying the optimization algorithms to keep a specific top ranking within search engine queries (Irish National Tourism Development Authority, 2012).

Social networking is one of the latest technologies which can be used by businesses for marketing purposes. This technology provides highly targeted advertising to niche and social groups and personalized information that the user voluntarily supplies through sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram (Musina, Zanna & Gao, 2016; Tafveez, 2017). Users can interact with social networking sites either from their desktops, laptops, or mobile phones. The wide availability of mobile phones has also driven the demand and increased the popularity of social networking sites to both marketers and customers. Both marketers and customers can easily share and access information with relative ease (Musina, Zanna & Gao, 2016; Tafveez, 2017). Marketers can target a wider audience across the globe compared to other traditional media, which are only available to locally targeted groups. Marketers can also interact with customers in real-time through processes such as inquiries, bookings, payments from their mobile phones, or similar technology (Musina, Zanna & Gao, 2016; Tafveez, 2017).

Most importantly, customers can make bookings and payments directly from their smartphones, thus increasing revenue and maintaining a competitive advantage over their rivals who do not use e-marketing strategies (Diagne & Ossebi, 2016:118). Therefore, smaller businesses not utilizing technology are losing out on these opportunities.

3.6 MARKETING STRATEGIES IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

The tourism sector significantly contributes to the global economy. With global receipts at roughly US$1 trillion per year, global tourism is ranked as the fourth largest economic activity after fuels, chemicals, and automotive products (McGill 2018). The availability of cheaper and faster transportation systems has also opened tourist attractions in developing countries and helped to boost the economies of developing countries. The developing countries have become an international contributor to the tourism sector, with foreign exchange from tourism in some countries standing at 83%.

Tourism has several advantages over other economic activities. Chingarande and Saayman (2018) posit that tourism is consumed at the point of product, and this directly helps the communities that surround tourist destinations. The uniqueness of tourist attractions through their rich culture, history, and heritage allows communities to gain a competitive advantage over other communities without tourism through income generation activities because of tourist visits.

Hampton, Jeyacheya and Long (2018) further reveal that the tourism sector has also resulted in the spawning of several other different operations such as hotels and restaurants, adventure sports providers, and food suppliers. Supply chains are formed in the process, and they support the labour markets for a variety of jobs. The presence of the tourism sector also leads to infrastructural development, especially in regions where tourists visit. These infrastructural developments benefit local communities and include roads, healthcare facilities, sports centres, hotels, and restaurants.

A study by Magno and Cassia (2018) concluded that traditional approaches to marketing in the tourism sector have put emphasis on mass media techniques where customers have access to massive amounts of information about brands, products, and companies and in which social networks do well. However, e-marketing has changed the marketing environment and is essential for the growth and development of tourism (Koo, Mendes-Filho & Buhalis, 2019). E-marketing strategy cannot be achieved by a single person but requires the assistance of other professionals. To be at the top of the game, companies need to invest in e-marketing, and if they offer a well-positioned and high-quality product, they will not have to wait long to reap the rewards of their investment.

According to Buhalis and Law (2008), the Internet is perceived as a powerful and effective marketing tool in tourism. It is consistently accepted as a valuable tool for distributing information and communication. Maintaining a corporate website is vital for the maintenance of relationships established between companies. This has been achieved by strengthening relationships with the public, and especially with customers, thus capturing a larger market segment (Law, 2010).

Tourism organisations have seen e-marketing as a factor in developing competitiveness, sustainability, and economical communication strategies (Thorpe, 2017). In a strategic way, organisations and destinations have promoted an active dialogue with the different stakeholder groups and the entire clientele (Jensen & Sandtström, 2011). It goes without saying that the internet has dramatically changed the way tourists and travellers communicate with each other, exchange views about their holidays, interact with the tourism industry in general as they organize their trips (pre-trip), or comment on services offered at hotels, restaurants, etc. On the contrary, Botswana, which is highly rich in tourism resources, is lacking behind in the use of e-marketing for promotion of tourism attractions and other itineraries. The current study seeks to explore the benefits of using e-marketing for the destination image building and promotion of tourism in Botswana.

3.6.1 The Impact of E-Marketing on Tourism

This section of the study interrogates the impact of e-marketing on the tourism industry. The impact of e-marketing and the succeeding spread of information sharing has been studied by many tourism researchers. Both Buhalis and Law (2008); Buhalis, Leung, and Law (2011) agree that advances in technology and the development of the tourism sector dominate common ground both as socio-economic phenomena and as systems where the provision of services is critical.

Pawlicz (2019) explores how e-marketing impacts tourism and argues that the internet tends to be an indispensable tool of modern tourism promotion. According to him, the internet is broadly used by restaurants, transport firms, hotels, and other tourism enterprises. The tourism enterprises create websites on which they update information regarding the availability and nature of travel destinations. Through the websites, they also provide information about the tourism structures available in certain parts of the world. The indispensability of the internet as a tool for modern tourism is elaborated by other literature that indicate that many tourism firms in various countries now exploit networks and clusters by embracing the use of new technologies (Luar & Chen, 2016).

The impact of e-marketing on tourism has also been experienced with respect to costs. Alvarez (2016) and Ratu (2019) concluded that an appropriately planned and efficiently targeted e-marketing campaign could assist tourism businesses to reach target clients at a much lower cost when compared to the traditional marketing approaches. This is evidenced by the various performance reports of many tourism firms that have experienced increased profitability due to e-marketing strategies (Nykeil, 2017). Again, this can be linked to the fact that the internet has enabled firms to deal directly with their customers without the constraints of geographical borders (Rana, 2009). Many authors have also alluded to this fact through their extensive writings about e-marketing and tourism (Rana, 2009; Dann & Dann 2011).

Studies have identified different types of social media platforms that have been used by different tourism firms. The first type includes social networks, which imply the use of personal online pages (Kim & Morrison, 2003). Personal pages allow friends and relatives to share information and contents and communicate with one another. Examples of social media include Facebook and MySpace. Another type that has been mentioned in various journals and other literature includes blogs. Blogs are online journals that are used to keep track of events (Kim & Morrison, 2003). The overall impact of social media is that it has enabled tourism organisations to interact with customers on personal levels. Consequently, this has resulted in gaining more customers.

Studies have also found out that Rich Site Summary feeds have significantly impacted the tourism industry in terms of marketing (Sangpikul, 2010). According to scholars, Rich Site Summary feeds have empowered the sharing of comparable data and information among tour and travel agencies, airlines, and hotels throughout the world (Sangpikul, 2010). This claim is justifiable since the tourism industry is very complex; it is complex because the players in the industry depend on one another for business sustenance (Sangpikul, 2010). For instance, tourism service providers need to liaise with hoteliers, transport companies, and accommodation service providers to provide a wholesome package of services (Sangpikul, 2010).

Importantly, Destination Management Systems represent another important dimension of e-marketing of tourism products. Evidence reveals that the development of Destination Management Systems enhances the competitiveness of tourism firms, especially the small-scale tourism enterprises (Pyo, Uysal & Chang, 2012). Further analysis of the available information shows that Destination Management Systems have been used as links between, on one hand, tourism products, offers, and suppliers with, on the other side, consumers, and intermediaries to allow easy access in relation to destination information and final purchase of tourism products. Pyo, Uysal, and Chang (2012) have stated that a vital constituent of a website as a marketing medium is that it is the client who enthusiastically looks for information about tourism products of interest. In this case, it is possible for tourism service providers to pre-screen the clients who visit their websites.

In conclusion, the immense contribution of the tourism sector has led policymakers, SMTEs, and other stakeholders to devise strategies to market the tourism industry in their respective countries. The emergence of e-marketing, especially social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, has led to the rapid expansion of the tourism sector through the creation of awareness of destinations near and far. The use of online tools for marketing purposes has also enabled prospective tourists to seek information about destinations from their smartphones with relative ease. Software apps have been devised, ranging from flight and accommodation books, advertising and marketing of destinations, and specific information and news about these destinations.

3.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section builds theoretical arguments for the use of specific processes and frameworks to sell tourism destinations to prospective tourists using e-marketing strategies. Scholars have proposed that customers are attracted to specific destinations when the right tools and techniques are available and used in a certain way. The internal and external factors within a system are also

important in helping customers to determine how best to consume the available tourist facilities. These frameworks are presented in the following sections.

3.7.1 SMTE Adoption of e-Marketing Strategies

With the global expansion of the Internet and its related tools such as websites, email and social media, more tourist organisations, especially within the small-to-medium enterprise category are getting attracted to the benefits that come with these tools to promote their businesses (Qian *et al.* 2015). Although there are many studies that have been conducted on the benefits of e-marketing strategies, there has been noticeable understanding by businesses on the potential benefits of this new technology (Qashou & Saleh, 2018).

Tourist visitors have also shown an interest in consuming the tools which are used by SMTEs to market and promote their businesses, to increase visitor numbers, and to create a competitive advantage in the process. One of the most important developments which have been brought by the advent of the internet has been the presence of social media which helps users to generate and share content. According to Lakshmi, Mahboob, and Choudhary (2017), the emergence of social media has helped to boost the marketing strategies of businesses across the entire spectrum from small to large businesses by enabling individuals to make purchasing decisions based on recommendations from peer reviews. The use of social media, together with traditional tools such as word-of-mouth, print, and electronic media, has helped to increase the marketing effort of businesses in different markets (Jonathan & Tarigan, 2016; Qashou & Saleh, 2018).

Studies have shown that, despite the apparent benefits of social media and other tools which come with the internet, SMEs have generally struggled to adopt and implement new technologies (Mizrachi & Sellito, 2015). This can also be verified by the limited literature on technology adoption by small businesses. Scholars have generally found it challenging to invent ways in which SMEs can harness the tools which come together with the internet so that SMEs can generate more sales and be competitive (Mizrachi & Sellito, 2015). This study proposes a theoretical framework for the adoption of e-business strategies by SMTEs within the tourist industry (See Figure 3.2).

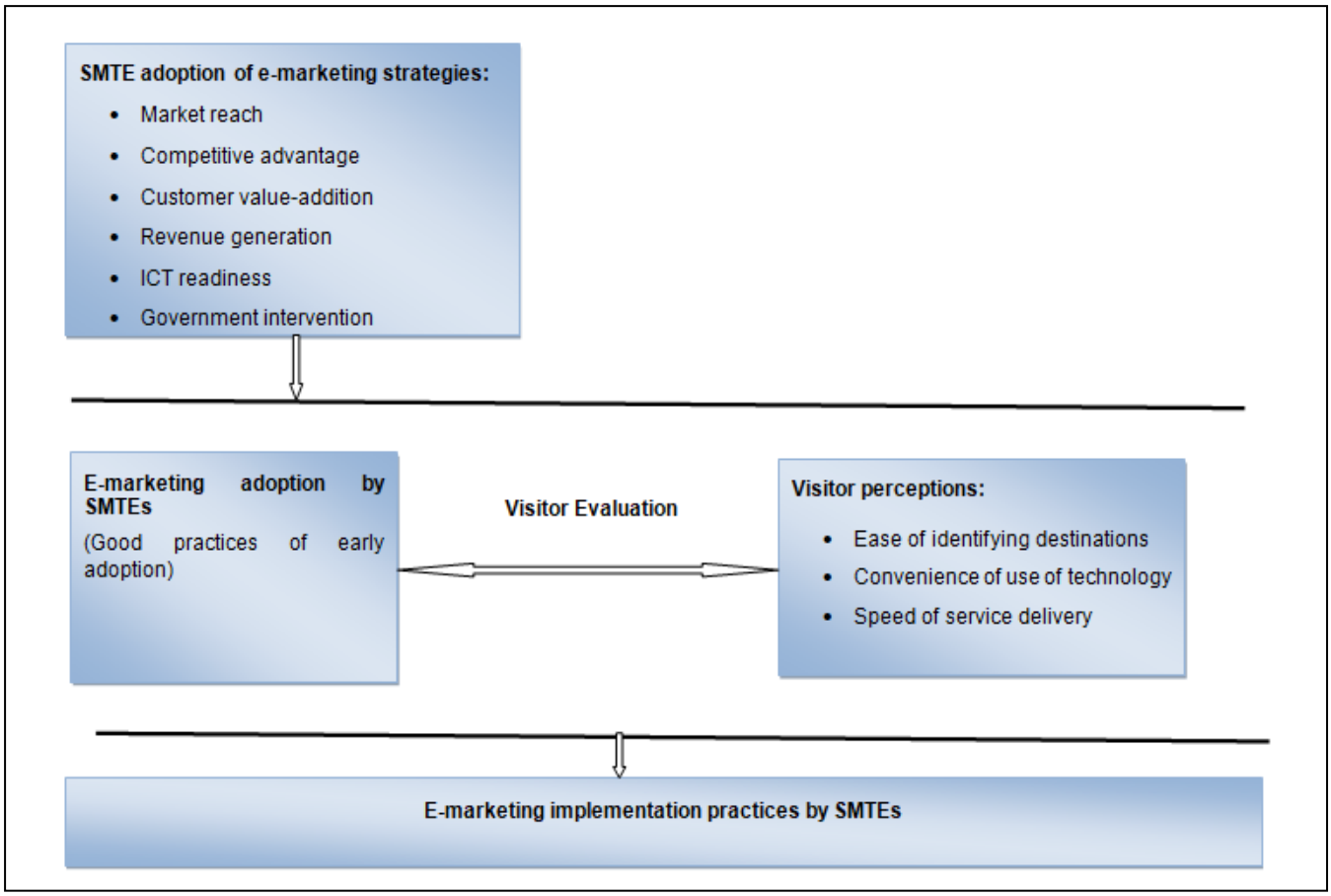

Figure 3-2*: A Theoretical Framework for the Adoption of E-Marketing Strategies by SMTEs*

Source: Adapted from Mizrachi and Sellitio (2015:2)

This framework helps to complement the Conceptual Model proposed in Chapter 1 (See Figure 1.1). Whilst the Conceptual Model discusses the study based on the economic and social value of e-marketing strategies, the Theoretical Framework discussed here expands and discusses the specific technological tools which are used to support both SMTEs and visitors when consuming e-marketing tools.

Various theories have been employed by scholars to explain why and how individual scholars adopt and consume specific technological tools in different circumstances. This section discusses three popular technology adoption models which may be applied to SMTEs industry – Diffusion of Innovation (DoI) Theory, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Technology-Organisation-Environment (TOE) Theory. This is important as one needs to understand why SMTEs make certain decision to either adapt to the new technology and embrace it or not.

3.7.2 Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DoI)

DOI has played an important role in helping in the understanding of the process of social and technical change. This theory assumes that many IT initiatives fail because of inefficient implementation rather than the innovation itself (Robertson, Sorbello, & Unsworth, 2011). Diffusion of innovation was observed to occur over a certain period using specific channels of communication (See Figure 3.3).

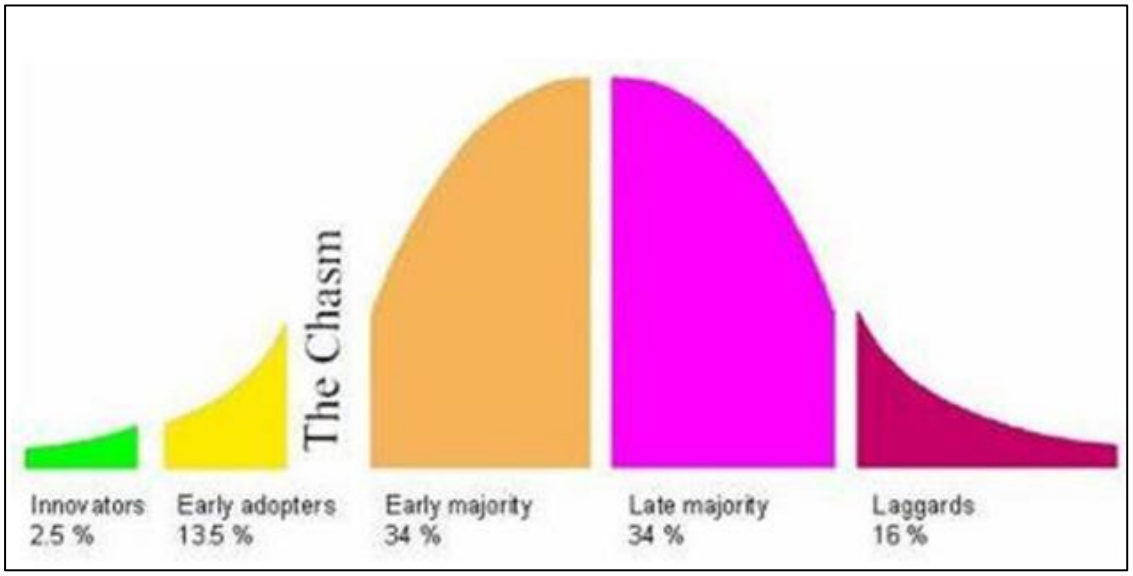

Figure 3-3*: Diffusion of Innovation Theory Model*

Source: Rodgers (1995)

DOI theory sees innovations as being communicated through certain channels over time and within a particular social system (Rogers, 1995). Individuals are possessing different degrees of willingness to adopt innovations, and thus it is generally observed that the portion of the population adopting innovation is approximately normally distributed over time (Rogers, 1995). Breaking this normal distribution into segments leads to the segregation of individuals into the following five categories of individual innovativeness (from earliest to latest adopters): innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, laggards (Rogers, 1995). Members of each category typically possess certain distinguishing characteristics.

Innovators are venturesome, educated, and use multiple information sources to acquire knowledge. Early adaptors are social leaders, popular, and educated. The early majority are individuals who deliberate and have many informal social contacts. Late majority adaptors are individuals who are skeptical, traditional, and of lower socioeconomic status. Lastly, laggards are

individuals who trail behind and mainly use neighbours and friends as their primary information sources. They are afraid of investing in new technology (Rogers, 1995).

When applied to e-marketing strategies in tourism, the DOI theory assumes that SMTEs and individuals who seek tourist destinations understand the various technological tools at a different pace, and it takes some time for the technology to be fully acceptable amongst users of technology. When the right communication channels are deployed, it is possible to increase both awareness and adoption of e-marketing strategies and related tools such as social networks, web pages, and search engines among users in the shortest, cheapest, and most affordable manner. However, the theory still states that there will be some individuals who will still wait and lag whilst others are embracing the new technology, and this is also true in tourism e-marketing strategies. It is unknown whether this is the case in Botswana.

3.7.3 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a simple tool that is used to predict and explain system usage behaviour. The model (See Figure 3.4) uses simple measures to explore the use of technology in the form of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness (Davis, 1989).

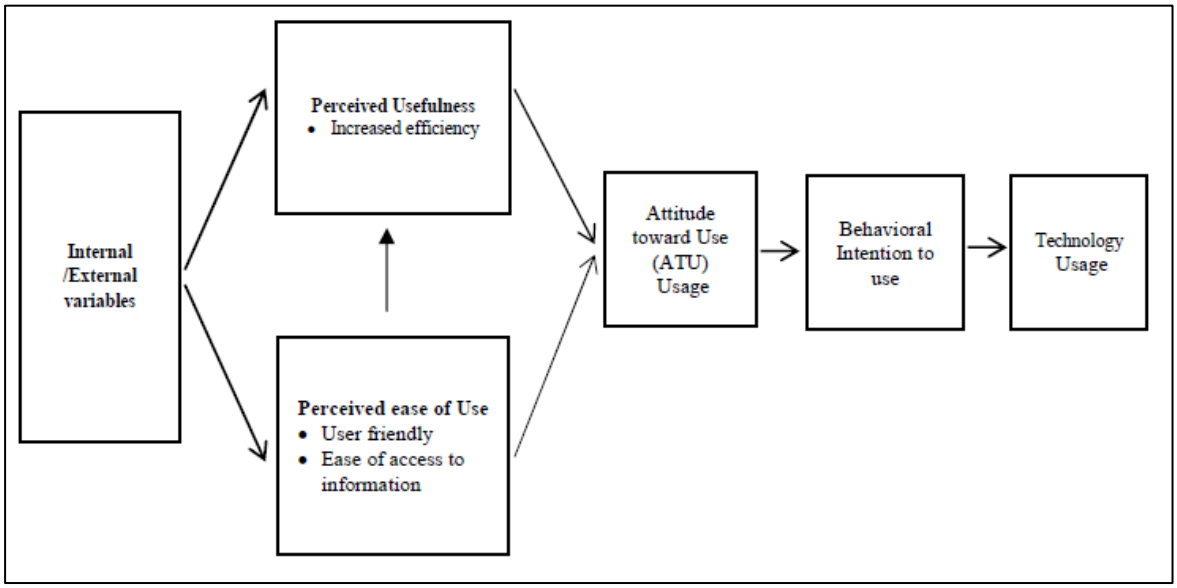

Figure 3-4:Technology acceptance model

Source: Davis (1989)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) explains how new technology and the various aspects of it are received and used by the user. Though many models have been proposed previously in the field of Information Systems to describe the relationship, it is this model which has been widely

acclaimed and used. The model was proposed by Fred Davis and Richard Bagozzi (1985) by developing the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which was formulated by Fishbein and Ajzen (1984). According to the model, the acceptance of new technology by a user is based on two factors: Perceived Usefulness, which refers to how much the user believes that the technology will help to improve the performance/efficiency; and Perceived Ease of Use, which refers to the extent the user is comfortable using the features of the technology (Davis, 1989). These two factors then determine the attitude of the user towards using the technology. The model also goes on to say that the Perceived Usefulness will also influence the behavioural intention to use. The attitude determines the behaviour, which in turn affects the actual acceptance (Davis, 1989).

In terms of applicability to e-marketing strategies in the tourism sector, TAM has been extensively researched on tools like web pages, e-commerce, Internet banking, mobile learning, and wireless local area networks, all of which are applications widely used in the tourism sector (Ahmad & Khan, 2017; Tam & Oliveira, 2017). Again the information captured in TAM is known but not in the context of SMTEs in Botswana.

3.7.4 Technology-Organisation-Environment (TOE)

The process by which a firm adopts and implements technological innovations is influenced by the technological context, the organisational context, and the environmental context (Depietro, Wiarda & Fleischer, 1990). The technological context includes the internal and external technologies that are relevant to the firm. Technologies may include both equipment as well as processes. The organisational context refers to the characteristics and resources of the firm, including the firm's size, degree of centralization, degree of formalization, managerial structure, human resources, number of slack resources, and linkages among employees. The environmental context includes the size and structure of the industry, the firm's competitors, the macro-economic context, and the regulatory environment (Depietro, Wiarda & Fleischer, 1990). These three elements present "both constraints and opportunities for technological innovation" (Depietro, Wiarda & Fleischer, 1990). Thus, these three elements influence the way a firm sees the need for, searches for, and adopts new technology.

3.7.5 Applicability of the three models

Whilst the diffusion of innovation model offers a simplified way of explaining complex issues related to how societies, cultures, and economic systems adapt to technology, and the model draws its limitations from its simplification of technology adaptation since systems are by nature quite complex and dynamic. The model does not consider other factors which may force society to adapt or reject technology altogether (Tuncalp, 2014). The TAM is a broader model compared

to the diffusion of innovation model, and this theory has received substantial empirical support for predicting behaviour in information systems and other domains (Fathema *et al.,* 2014). However, TAM has been criticized because there is no understanding of why a variable influences the adoption of technology. The model has also been tweaked several times but without any systematic coordination to the various versions (Fathema *et al.,* 2014).

The TOE model has been widely used to investigate the adoption of technology in SMEs (Li, 2015; Want *et al*., 2016) and has been found to be fit in explaining these systems because it assesses an organisation from all three perspectives of technology and organisational readiness, perceived benefits of technology adoption, and the environmental and external pressures (Li, 2015). Unlike the other two models, which focus on distribution channels of technology adoption and the variables causing technology adoption, TOE covers the adoption of technology from an organisational perspective and focuses on top management involvement, the competitive environment, internal organisational factors, and the nature of the technology itself. This model best fits within the framework of this study (Li, 2015). Similar studies on SMEs have been conducted, and they used the TOE model (Wang *et al.,* 2016). This study, therefore, adopts the TOE model as part of the critical review of e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry of Botswana.

3.8 CONCLUSION

It was the purpose of this chapter to give an in-depth overview of e-marketing strategies and to also determine their adoption and the extent of these strategies by SMTEs in the tourism industry through a literature review. The literature review focused on challenges, marketing strategies, social media utilisation in the sector. The literature review also presented and explained various technology adoption models which can be applied to tourism sector e-marketing strategies.

This literature has explored the concepts of SME, e-business, e-commerce, and e-marketing. It has articulated the extent to which these electronic-based ways of doing business have revolutionized contemporary organisations, especially in the tourism sector. This is evident in the way certain businesses market their products and services. This discussion has evaluated the impact of electronic-based activities. This has been achieved through clear definitions of the concept of the variables that make up the subject matter.

The relationship that exists between e-business and e-commerce is articulated, and it was concluded that e-business is a rather broad term to articulate. Consequently, they settled for e-commerce. Following an extended interrogation of e-commerce, the study discovered that e-marketing as an offshoot of e-commerce is helpful in addressing the objectives of the current

study. As a result, the literature review stretches to discuss e-marketing helps businesses to reach their customers. It also highlighted some of the important advantages and disadvantages of e-marketing. The current discussion argues that the impact of e-marketing upon businesses has been largely positive and that despite several potential problems, e-marketing offers exciting new opportunities for business growth and development.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology is a systematic way to solve a research problem scientifically, and it "encompasses research methods as well as the logic behind the chosen methods of the study" (Kumar, 2019). According to Saunders *et al*. (2018) and Simon (2018) the purpose of research is to answer the research questions by applying scientific methods. Research helps scholars to discover hidden truth which has not yet been revealed. Specifically, scholars undertake research to obtain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon and gather new insights about the phenomenon. Scholars also undertake research to accurately portray the properties of a particular individual or group of individuals. The other reason why research is important is for scholars to test the hypothesis of a causal relationship between variables (Saunders *et al*., 2018; Simon, 2018).

This chapter discusses the methods and procedures that were adopted for the present study under the following sub-headings: research paradigm, research design, the population of the study, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability of the instrument, data collection procedure, method of data analysis, and ethical considerations. The Research Onion (Saunders *et al.,* 2016) is used to guide the discussions in this chapter.

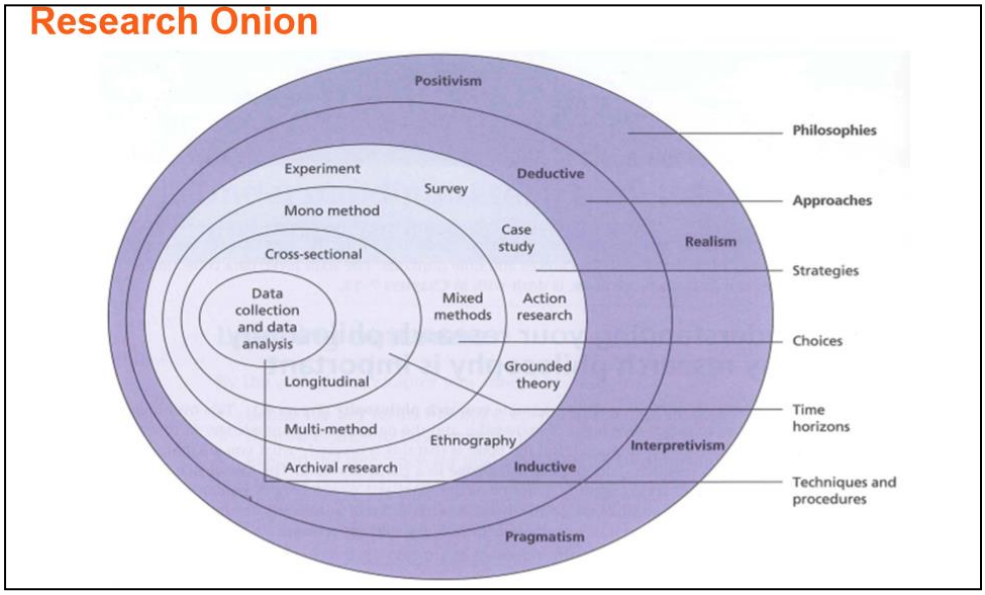

Figure 4.1: ***Research Onion Model***

Source: Adapted from Saunders et al. (2016)

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM AND METHODOLOGY

4.2.1 Understanding the research paradigm of the study

A research paradigm or worldview is the philosophical assumption taken by the researcher that provides a basic set of beliefs that guides action. The philosophical assumption is mainly subdivided into two categories: Positivism and Interpretivism. According to Creswell and Clark (2017), the philosophy of social science deals with questions of ontology, epistemology, rhetoric, and methodology. Besides, Venkatesh *et al.* (2016) observe an additional concept called axiology to complement the above-mentioned concepts. Ontology is a concept that explains reality or a thing that exists in the world or the nature of existence.

Epistemology is about the nature, origin, and scope of knowledge and beliefs that people hold. Rhetoric is about the language of research. Methodology explains procedures or methods used to conduct research, while axiology as a concept describes the value (ethic). According to Creswell and Clarke (2017), the reality is stable and can be observed and described from an objective viewpoint in positivism. Nevertheless, the research paradigm could be analysed using the five dimensions: ontology, epistemology, axiology, rhetoric, and methodology.

The Positivists believe that societies have a concrete existence and pursue a certain order. These assumptions lead to the existence of an objective that can be measured and which is value-free. It is established that research can be conducted objectively and value-free with a reality that can be measured (Stage & Manning, 2015). This assumption can generate true explanatory and predictive knowledge of the reality as shown in the present research for being correlation research with two forms of research designs: explanation and prediction. In positivism, findings can be generalised from the study sample to the larger target population. Its belief in a deductive reasoning approach allows the assumption to be based on the cause-and-effect relationships that can be tested (theory or model testing) and linked with the hypothesis testing approach (Harley & Cornelissen, 2019).

In interpretive studies, the research is subjective and value bound (researchers own value). Furthermore, there are multiple realities (different views) that are continually changing, and they can be studied but cannot be predicted. In addition, the cause-and-effect relationships cannot be tested. This implies that theory can only be built by synthesizing data through an inductive reasoning approach. The choice between these two philosophical beliefs should be based on the research objectives and types of research questions of the study (Creswell & Clarke, 2017). In line with the stated objectives and research questions in Chapter one, this study required an objective examination of the phenomenon in a large sample.

Thus, the present study conforms to the Positivist paradigm because it involves testing a model. Positivism is concerned with revealing truth and presenting it by empirical means (Matusov *et al.,* 2019). To a Positivist, the world works according to the fixed laws of cause and effect. Scientific thinking is used to test theories about these laws and either rejects or provisionally accepts them. The survey approach is mostly associated with the philosophical paradigm of Positivism (Hamlin, 2015). In line with the research problem and in support of the position of Creswell and Clarke (2017) and Hamlin (2015), the paradigm of research that was adopted for the current study is positivism.

A mixed-method design was followed namely triangulation design where qualitative and quantitative methods were applied and they carry the same weight to the critical review. In the present study semi-structured questionnaires and structured interviews were combined. This approach is referred to as methodological triangulation. The choice of the Positivist approach was based on the need to quantify objective reality through critical questions as outlined in Chapter 1. The following sections discuss the two methods – quantitative and qualitative and how they can be used in the same study to improve the quality of the findings.

4.2.2 Understanding the research methods used in the study

As stated in the previous sections, using mixed methods has several advantages to both the researcher and the findings of the study. With a combined research strategy, the weaknesses of one method are offset by the strengths of the other method (Saunders & Thornhill, 2016). For example, since a quantitative approach does not give a complete insight into human behaviour and perceptions, this limitation is covered by the simultaneous use of a qualitative method that can extract more detailed information on human behaviour and perceptions (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). The use of mixed methods, or data triangulation, also ensures that the researcher can obtain a rich picture of the findings. The findings are more reliable than when a single method was used.

Despite the strengths of mixed methods, this approach also has weaknesses. The use of mixed methods is time-consuming and expensive (Vogt, Gardner & Haeffele, 2012). The use of mixed methods also requires detailed expertise due to the complexity of the various stages involved in the research (Rahman, 2017). The researcher opted to use both methods in this study because of the size of the geographical location of places where the data was captured, the number of respondents per group, and the occupational positions of the respondents in the study.

Gerrikagoitiaa *et al.* (2014) conducted a study on trends of intelligent e-marketing based on web mining for SME e-shops based in Spain. A mixed methodology was used and involved a

structured questionnaire which was distributed to 86 e-shop owners and 4 follow-up interviews from four randomly selected e-shop owners from the same sample. Applying a mixed methodology help the researchers to gather large amounts of data, and this helped to increase the reliability and validity of the findings. The in-depth interviews helped the researchers to obtain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. In another study, Shemi and Procter (2018) conducted a study on the adoption of e-commerce on a Botswana-based SME which focused on exporting arts and crafts to the United States of America. The methodology used involved was a face-to-face semi-structured interview and a structured interview with the company's manager as a means of obtaining in-depth information. Further information was gathered through the firm's website analysis and document analysis. The study was conducted over a period of eight (8) weeks, and this helped the researchers to also uncover new information to give a rich picture of the findings. A study conducted by Maduku *et al.* (2016) on IT adoption on selected hotels in Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe employed a semi-structured interview of 60 hotel owners and managers. Secondary data was obtained from personal and environmental characteristics of the owner/manager and hotel premises. The purpose of using combined research strategies in this study was to obtain detailed information about the topic under investigation and to critique available theories on the topic of IT adoption in the tourism industry with reference to SMTE's.

It is evident that the use of mixed methodologies in the above studies was to allow for obtaining a richer picture of the phenomenon under investigation. Using a mixed methodology in the above studies also helped to ensure that the weaknesses of one method are covered by the strengths of the other method used in the same study. In-depth interviews and observations also helped the researchers to uncover salient information which could otherwise not have been obtained if only questionnaires were used. Table 4.1 shows the summary of the two major paradigms of research and the integration of the mixed-method approach.

Table 4-1*: Summary of the Positivist and Interpretive Paradigms*

Positivist Paradigm	**Interpretive Paradigm**
There is a single reality that can be measured	There are multiple realities that can be studied only and cannot be controlled or predicted
Research can be conducted objectively and is value free	Research is subjective and value bound
Quantitative method	Qualitative method
Findings of research can be generalised from the study to the larger target population	Findings cannot be generalised beyond study sample

Cause and effect relationship can be tested	Cause and effect relationship cannot be tested because there are multiple realities that are continually changing
The language of research is formal with specific terms. Such as validity, reliability, generalisability	The language of research is informal. Such as conformability, transferability, credibility, dependability
The researcher and respondent remain independent and not influence one another	The researcher and research participant cannot remain separated or independent. They interact and influence one another
Private privacy informed consent and confidentiality encouraged	Equal treatment for both respondent and researcher on ethical issue

Sources: Creswell and Clarke (2017); Venkatesh et al. (2016)

In summary, the research methods employed by quantitative researchers include randomisation, highly structured protocols, and administered surveys. Normally, the sample size collected is larger than that used for qualitative research. To determine whether the predictive generalisations of the findings hold true, it is important to understand these philosophical assumptions because they provide direction for the research design in all stages of the present study. As stated, the present study adopted a dominantly Positivist paradigm and applied methodological triangulation. The justification for the choice of both quantitative and qualitative arises from the fact that, in recent times, the value of the combination is realised. The principle behind the variety of research methods under a single paradigm is the situationist and pragmatist that oppose the purists' position that assumes a paradigm must strictly be aligned to bipolar of either positivist or interpretive and adopt quantitative or qualitative approaches, but not a combination of methods (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015).

According to Lyons and Coyle (2016), the situationalist and pragmatists belong to the school of thought that indicates that the situation will determine the use of a method under a particular paradigm. The positions of both situationalist and pragmatists are similar. They both believe that various methods can be combined with either Positivist or Interpretive paradigms. Antwi and Hamza (2015) established that combining quantitative and qualitative methods is valid and often used in social science research. The mode of the combination depends on the scope and the necessity for one method to complement the other. Hence, the above account justifies the adoption and use of both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection in the present study.

4.2.2.1 Quantitative research

In a quantitative research study, the focus is on extracting numeric data using instruments like questionnaires and then using statistical techniques during the data analysis (Saunders & Thornhill, 2016). Objects like frequency tables, graphs in the form of bar and pie charts, and statistics like means, standard deviation, and correlation analysis can be used to support the discussion of the findings pending the objectives to be achieved. Quantitative research supports a Positivist research strategy where the researcher takes an objective stance when investigating a phenomenon (Antwi & Hamza, 2015).

The advantage of using quantitative research is that the researcher can gather large amounts of data within a short period of time, and the findings can be generalised to similar studies. The degree of validity and reliability is usually high due to the large amounts of data collected and the researcher's ability to adjust the degree of accuracy statistics (Vogt, Gardner & Haeffele, 2012). The strength of the survey method is also evident in its ability to study, describe, and analyse the relationship among geographically scattered subjects as applicable to the present study where the population is geographically dispersed. Rahman (2017) stated that "survey research is probably the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data for a population too large to observe directly." Similarly, Bell *et al.* (2018) note that a sample survey is good for a study that involves many people participating in the study.

The main disadvantage of quantitative research is that the method does not give a complete insight into the complexity of human experience and perception. The other drawback is that the method may provide a false impression about homogeneity in a sample when it is absent (Avella, 2016). Participants' willingness to participate may be affected by the length of the questionnaire, the number of questions, and time taken to complete it (Cunningham *et al.,* 2015).

The quantitative research section of the study, which collected the largest amount of data in this research, involved distributing an open-ended questionnaire to small and medium tourism enterprises as well as visitors to these enterprises. These participants included respondents across tourist attractions such as lodges, hotels, guest houses, and self-catering apartments across Botswana.

The survey research design has been successfully used in research like this study. For example, Massaro and Othman (2017); Baro (2016); Obuh and Bozimo (2012); and Mammo and Ngulube (2013) all used the survey research approach. The questionnaire contains standardised questions which are intended to provide answers to the research objectives.

4.2.2.2 Qualitative research

In qualitative research, the focus is on extracting textual and other forms of non-numeric data (audio, video, and personal cues and gestures) before the gathered data can be analysed using techniques such as thematic analysis and even frequency tables or rankings, and graphs. The discussions are mainly descriptive and enable the researcher to obtain in-depth information about the phenomenon being investigated (Rahman, 2017). A qualitative research method supports a phenomenological or interpretivist approach where the researcher takes a subjective approach to gather data as the study progresses. While the researcher takes a neutral/external position in a quantitative study, the researcher influences the flow or direction of the study in a qualitative study (Nardi, 2018) but needs to remain objective.

A qualitative study has the advantage of uncovering new theory and new ideas and can also be used to support or contrast existing theories. The other advantage is that the researcher can observe the subjects within their natural setting or context, and this helps to obtain a detailed understanding of their behaviour (Patten, 2016). The main disadvantage of qualitative research is that it cannot be generalised mainly due to the small sample size and the subjective nature of the research. The other disadvantage is that reliability is compromised in qualitative studies since different results can be obtained with different subjects or different times and other settings (Burns, Bush & Sinha, 2014), and therefore careful planning is needed to improve its success.

The qualitative data was collected from small and medium tourism enterprises as well as selected government officials through face-to-face interviews.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a comprehensive plan for data collection in an empirical research study. It is a “blueprint” for empirical research aimed at least three processes: (1) the instrument development process, (2) the sampling process, and (3) the data collection process (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Research design is a plan of action or specification for collecting information or data necessary and suitable for testing hypotheses. It provides answers to research questions under specified conditions. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) and Avella (2016) have identified five specific questions that a researcher could ask when planning a research design. These include:

1. What is the data needed for?
2. Where is the data located?
3. How will the data be collected?

4. How will the data be analysed?
5. How will the data be interpreted?

This study follows a mixed method design where both quantitative and qualitative methods was used for this study. More specifically triangulation design was followed to obtain complementary data on the same topic – both the qualitative and quantitative results are used in the same time frame and with equal weight (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2017).

4.4 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING METHODS

This section discusses the sampling methods which were used in the study and the justification for the choice of these methods.

4.4.1 Population (s) of the study

A population is defined by Vogt *et al.* (2012) as the sum of all the cases that meet the definition of unit of analysis.

4.4.1.1 For the quantitative study

The quantitative study was directed at two different populations, namely: visitors to SMTEs in Botswana and SMTEs in Botswana. The SMTEs included travel agents, ICT firms, tour operators, hotels, lodges, casinos, and guesthouses. In the case of SMTEs the study focused on the licensed operators who fall under the SMTE category in the Botswana tourism industry.

Based on the information received from Botswana tourism, the total population at the time of the study was 591 SMTEs (Statistics Botswana, 2018). These were all licensed operators in Botswana and had to have a minimum of one year of operation in their industry.

The number of tourists visiting, specifically SMTEs, were unknown. However, Botswana has been visited by 1.83 million tourists in 2018 (Statistics Botswana, 2018).

4.4.1.2 For the qualitative study

The qualitative study was directed at Government Departments with reference to the Department of Tourism under the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism. At the time of the study, the population size was 41 (Republic of Botswana, 2016).

Due to the scope of the study, it was, however, necessary to use a selected sample of the populations for both the qualitative and quantitative phases to obtain representative results.

4.4.2 Sampling and sampling procedures

This section discusses the different types of sampling and motivates the different sampling techniques used in this study. There are two main types of sampling, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is seen as a sampling category where the likelihood of any element being selected towards the sample is known, and it is possible to answer research questions and to realise objectives that require the researcher to statistically estimate the population characteristics. The following methods are relevant to probability sampling – simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling (Saunders *et al.,* 2018).

On the other hand, with non-probability sampling, it is not possible for the researcher to ascertain the likelihood of selecting any element from the population. It is, therefore, not possible to answer research questions or to address research objectives that require the researcher to make statistical inferences about the characteristics of the population. The following methods are relevant to non-probability sampling – convenience sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling (Saunders *et al.,* 2018).

4.4.2.1 For the quantitative study

For the sampling of the SMTEs (N=591), a non-probability sampling method, purposive sampling was used. According to Bell *et al*. (2018), a purposive sample refers to any sample which is deliberately chosen by the researcher in accordance with predetermined non-probability criteria. According to Strauss and Corbin (2014), the main disadvantage of purposive sampling is that it is highly prone to researcher bias as compared to probability sampling methods that have been created to reduce bias. SMTEs were selected based on the criteria set for this study and their willingness to distribute the questionnaire in the next section to their visitors. More specifically, the sample was selected from the following districts selected at the national level – Ngamiland, Chobe, Tuli Block, Kgalagadi, Ghanzi Western, Ghanzi South, and South East (including Gaborone City) to improve the representativeness of the study. This resulted in 199 SMTEs that participated in the study, and that completed the questionnaire.

For the sampling of the visitors, a non-probability sampling method, namely convenience sampling, was implemented. In convenience sampling, respondents participate by chance since no lists are available for representative selection for visitors to these SMTEs. The researcher, therefore, requested the owners/managers of the SMTEs to share the questionnaire with their visitors. This resulted in 101 completed questionnaires.

4.4.2.2 For the qualitative study

For the sampling of the participants at the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism, purposive sampling was done. Only officials who have been involved with the development of SMTEs in Botswana were selected to participate in the study, which resulted in 14 participants. The final study sample is shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 below.

Table 4-2*: Realised Study Sample*

Participant	Research method	Data collection method	Population size	Sample size expected and realised	Sampling method
SMTEs	Quantitative research	Self-administered Questionnaire	591	Expected: 100 Realised: 199	Purposive Sampling
Visitors of SMTEs	Quantitative research	Self-administered Questionnaire	Unknown	Expected: 250 Realised: 101	Convenience sampling
Ministry of Environment Wildlife & Tourism	Qualitative research	Face-to-face interviews	41	Expected: 10 Realised: 14	Purposive Sampling

Table 4-3*: Composition of Government Key Informants*

Government Department	Number of Respondents
Department of Tourism	3
Botswana Tourism Authority	3
Tourism Licencing and Inspection	2
Department of Environmental Affairs	2
Department of Wildlife and Parks	1
Department of Forestry	1
Department of Waste Management	1
Department of Information Technology	1
Total	**14**

4.5 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The following data collection instruments were developed:

4.5.1 Quantitative study

A survey questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument for the SMTE's. It is inexpensive, less time-consuming, and has the ability to provide both quantitative scale and qualitative data from a large research sample (Yin, 2014). Surveys are best suited for gathering data from human participants and producing statistics about their opinions or experiences concerning subjects being researched (Fowler *et al.,* 2017). The questionnaire is important as a research instrument as Burns *et al.* (2014) and Patten (2016) note that it encourages frank and reliable answers; that is when information is needed, as was in this study.

The design of the questionnaire was guided by the literature review, previous survey questionnaires used in similar studies, the research objectives, and questions. Questionnaires for this study were thus adapted from previous studies on e-business and e-marketing strategies analysed in the literature review. Through the questionnaires, the researcher collected a large amount of data in a relatively short period of time. Generally, then, the objective of using a questionnaire in this present study was to find out what the selected participants did, thought, or felt about optimising and use of e-marketing strategies in the tourism industry of Botswana.

As said, the choice of a questionnaire for the collection of data was informed by the previous studies on adoption and use of E-business strategies that used questionnaires for data collection. For instance, studies such as that of Massoro and Othman (2017), Baro (2016), and Khalili and Singh (2012) were used to guide the development of the questionnaire. Moreover, the user's adoption and user behaviour were measured through questionnaire scales such as the Likert Scale (Venkatesh *et al.,* 2012). Items in the questionnaire were rated on a 4-point Likert scale: "1" Strongly Disagree, "2" Disagree, "3" Agree, and "4" Strongly Agree as recommended by Yin (2014). The wording of the questionnaire reflected the research context and background information.

The closed questions used limited individual responses to multiple-choice answers. In closed or structured questions, the respondents were provided with alternative answers from which they selected one or more answers depending on the way the questions were structured (Pattern, 2016). Also, it refers respondents to a checklist of possible replies or a scale indicating various degrees of a particular response.

The structure of the final visitor questionnaire was as follows (see Annexure 1) (Shemi & Procter, 2013b).

Section A: In the first part of Section A (Questions 1-6), biographical details of participants were gathered, such as gender, age, marital status, the highest level of education, employment status, and country of residence. In the second part of Section A (Questions 7-10), information related to the use of media and, more specifically, social media were analysed. Closed and open questions, as well as Likert-scale questions, were included.

Section B: This section gathered information related to the use of e-marketing by visitors with reference to the use of the internet and making of bookings (Question 11-15). Closed and open questions, as well as Likert-scale questions, were included.

The structure of the final SMTE questionnaire was as follows (see Annexure 2) (Shemi & Procter, 2013b).

Section A: In this section, information related communication channels and the activities related to social media marketing were assessed. Closed and open questions, as well as Likert-scale questions, were included.

Section B: The purpose of this section was to gather data from respondents related to the importance and degree of use of social media and websites. Closed and open questions, as well as Likert-scale questions, were included.

Section C: This section focused on e-marketing security and legal compliance matters. Mostly closed questions were used.

Section D: This section analysed e-marketing challenges and solutions. Mostly open questions were used.

4.5.2 Qualitative study

Another instrument, namely an interview guide, was developed in this study to collect data specifically from government employees based in the literature review. The researcher used interviews to complement the questionnaire for data collection in the present study. The staff were selected for the interview because they are the custodians of organisational policies, and they make decisions on business and marketing strategies. They are thus knowledgeable about the policies on strategies that enhance the business environment. The researcher thus, scheduled sessions with these participants focusing on a semi-structured interview (See Annexure 3).

The interview guide was structured as follows (Brod *et* al., 2009; Lasch et al., 2010; Shemi & Procter, 2013b).

Section A: This section gathered general information about the name of staff department, the location of staff department, and details about the enumerator.

Section B: This section consisted of 9 questions covering the research questions. Question 1 solicited staff understanding of e-marketing. Question 2 solicited staff views on the importance of e-marketing strategy in the tourism industry. Question 3 solicited staff views on how e-marketing is benefitting the SMTEs in Botswana. Question 4 solicited staff views on how SMTEs should increase the use of an e-marketing approach in their day-to-day operations. Question 5 sought staff views on what they considered as the most effective way for SMTEs in Botswana to promote their business. Question 6 sought staff views on whether the Botswana government has an e-marketing strategy for the tourism industry in the country. Question 7 solicited staff views on whether the government e-marketing strategy has been implemented. Question 8 sought staff views on the challenges that are encountered in respect to the implementation of the e-marketing strategy. Question 9 sought general comments from staff on the subject matter of e-marketing strategies.

4.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

4.6.1 Validity

Validity in the context of research refers to the extent to which data gathered accurately portrays the realities of the natural settings (Bolarinwa, 2015). Content validity appraises the representativeness of the sample of questions included in an instrument. If the instrument will be able to solicit the information the study wanted to measure and achieve the objectives of the study, then it is valid. The questionnaires for SMTEs and visitors used in this study have been very effective in eliciting all the required information. According to Leung (2015), validity is the accuracy and appropriateness of data as applied to a research process. Because inaccuracies can occur at any point of the research, the concepts of validity can be applied throughout the study or in separate stages of the study. Reliability refers to the consistency and reliability of a research tool (Yilmaz, 2013). Both validity and reliability are discussed in this section.

4.6.1.1 Face validity

The judgment that an instrument is measuring what it is supposed to be primarily based upon the logical link between the questions and the objectives of the study. Hence, one of the main advantages of this type of validity is that it is easy to apply. Each question or item on the research instrument must have a logical link with an objective. The establishment of this link is called face validity (Di Nuovo & Castellano, 2016).

To test for face validity, the instrument was scrutinised by two academic experts in the field of study. Face validation was done by looking at the contents of the instruments at face value and content validation by checking whether the instrument contains all aspects of the research items covered (Di Nuovo & Castellano, 2016) based on the in-depth literature review. Through the face validation process, the validity of the instrument was established against the background of the study, its objectives, the research questions, and the conceptual model. The experts were expected to read through the item with proper evaluation of the instrument and make several comments and suggestions. The interview guide was also validated. The researcher had incorporated all observations on the instrument by rephrasing and modifying the affected items of the questionnaire.

4.6.1.2 Content validity

It is equally important that the items and questions cover the full range of the issue or attitude being measured. Assessment of the items of an instrument in this respect is called content validity (Di Nuovo & Castellano, 2016). The judgment and assessment of the experts, as well as the thorough literature review, assisted in determining the extent to which the items accurately cover the desired domain of the study. This action addressed the content validity of the present study.

- **Criterion validity**

According to Carey *et al.* (2017), criterion validity is a more complicated procedure for determining the validity of a research instrument. It is centred on statistical procedures. It is calculated by determining the input of each construct to the sum of variances observed in a phenomenon.

4.6.2 Reliability for the quantitative instrument

The instruments that were used in the collection of data were reliable and according to Gwet (2014), research is reliable when the findings are repeatable. Reliability is the degree of consistency that the instrument or procedure demonstrates (Aggio *et al.,* 2016). It shows whether the instrument and its contents can be relied upon (dependability). Reliability test, such as Cronbach's Alpha, therefore, focuses on determining the consistency of the test instrument (questionnaire). The reliability of the instrument for the present study was determined by using the split-half reliability procedure. This procedure requires only one administration of the instrument. The split-half reliability method is preferred because it helps to eliminate some errors of measurement like differences in conditions, which may occur if the test and re-test reliability method was used (Aggio *et al.,* 2016).

4.6.3 Truthfulness and credibility of the qualitative instrument

It is important for the qualitative research to adhere to credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility focuses on the believability of the findings and this is improved by choosing well-established research methods, a fitting research design and a clear theoretical underpinning. Well defined, purposive sampling also adds to the credibility of the research (Maree, 2016). Secondly, transferability does not involve generalised claims, but conclusions are made based on the connection between the elements of a study and the experience of the researcher. In this regard it is important to provide as much information as possible to the participants. Dependability is visible in the research design and its implementation, the operational detail of data gathering and the reflective appraisal of the project. It is important that other people understand the decisions made in the research and how one went about the analysis and interpretations. Lastly, confirmability refers to the degree of neutrality and strategies such as triangulation assist in this regard. The researcher should remain unbiased as far as possible in the research process (Maree, 2016; Bryman & Bell, 2017).

4.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

This section discusses the data collection procedure, distribution of the questionnaire, and interview administration. Data collection was commenced as soon as approval was given by the ethics committee of North-West University.

4.7.1 Data collection procedure for the quantitative study

Data was collected from SMTEs and visitors through a questionnaire. The administration of the questionnaire was done by the researcher and selected fieldworkers during working hours. It was expected that this kind of arrangement would enable many respondents to return the completed questionnaire. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the selected respondents in their respective locations and offices. Respondents were given ample time for the completion in situations where the immediate collection was impossible. The researcher gave a maximum of one week for the return of the completed questionnaire. The services of research assistants were also engaged for the distribution and collection of the questionnaires from the respondents. These research assistants were trained in administering the questionnaires.

4.7.2 Data collection procedure to the qualitative study

An interview is a structured conversation between an agent (interviewer) and a participant. In-depth interviews were conducted with key government participants. The first step was to seek consent from the relevant authorities which was completed by the researcher after numerous visits.

Secondly, the researcher had to set up the interviews which was done either through e-mail or telephonic conversations. This was done by drawing a timetable to indicate the date and time for meeting participants for the interviews. The interviews were done in the afternoons as per appointments with the potential participants. Face-to-face interviews (45 minutes on average) were conducted with relevant management in the selected organisations for the purpose of clarifying types of strategies for optimising e-marketing within the tourism industry in Botswana. Permission was asked from the participants to conduct the study and it was indicated tot the participant that he/she can stop at any time – all other ethical considerations were followed. The data was recorded by hand. All the data was collected from May – July 2018.

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical analysis was completed through three stages which are data preparation, data coding, and data analysis. They are discussed as follows:

4.8.1 For the quantitative study

4.8.1.1 Data preparation

After the administration of the instrument, the questionnaires were collected and numbered. The questionnaire items were coded in preparation for data capturing. Besides, demographic variables were scored and coded. In the next stage, the researcher carried out the coding of data.

4.8.1.2 Data coding

Coding is the process of converting all the responses to the questions asked during the data collection process into number values (Venkatesh *et al.,* 2016). To enhance quantitative data analysis, the researcher coded all data into numbers. In the first stage, the researcher created a codebook by listing out all the variables of the study and naming them. Also, the alternative values of each variable were assigned a numeric code. The operational definitions of the demographic variables were done for ease of reference at the analysis stage. This categorisation and coding

were done by the researcher for the purpose of data analysis and easy interpretation of the results.

4.8.1.3 Data analysis

Data analysis is a very important stage in any research work because it enables a researcher to interpret data (Jewitt & Brown, 2013). The researcher analysed the raw data generated using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM-SPSS) version 20.0 to perform statistical analyses. The SPSS package was chosen because it offers a variety of data formats and data analysis programmes. According to Ho (2013), the IBM-SPSS has become the standard analytical tool for most quantitative researchers.

Firstly, the descriptive characteristics were described by means of frequencies for categorical scaled variables and as means and standard deviations (Gorman & Clayton, 2015). It showed how many respondents tick each individual option in a specified question, what percentage for the overall group of the frequency counts, and how many times each of the variables specified has a particular value. That is, it produced a list of numbered responses in each value in the specified variables. Graphs like bar and pie charts were also used to support the data in frequency tables. Statistics in the form of means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha were used to add statistical rigour to the findings.

4.8.2 For the qualitative study

4.8.2.1 Data preparation

The information generated from the interviews was used to confirm information derived from open-ended questions. Familiarisation with the data involved reading and re-reading the data, to become immersed and intimately familiar with its content.

4.8.2.2 Data coding

Coding involved the generation of succinct labels (or codes) that identify important data features that might be relevant to answering the research questions. It involved coding the entire dataset, and after that, collating all the codes and all relevant data extracts together for later stages of analysis.

4.8.2.3 Data analysis

The responses from interview schedules were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative data analysis method. It is one of a cluster of methods that focus on identifying patterned meaning across a dataset. The purpose of the thematic analysis was to identify patterns of meaning across a dataset that provide an answer to the research questions being addressed. Patterns were identified through a rigorous process of data familiarisation, data coding, and theme development and revision. Thematic analysis can be developed through six major steps which are described as follows (Price *et al.,* 2013; Nowell *et al.,* 2017; Braun *et al.,* 2019).

Searching for themes involved examining the codes and collated data to identify significant broader patterns of meaning (that is, potential themes). Themes were identified based on the number of times a certain aspect was mentioned and the motivation thereof in relation to the objective of the study. It then involved collating data relevant to each theme, so that one can work with the data and review the viability of each theme. Given the vast amount of data available it was challenging to group the information under the identified themes. Reviewing of themes involved checking the themes against the dataset to determine that they tell a convincing story of the data and one that answers the research question. In this phase, themes are typically refined, which sometimes involves them being split, combined, or discarded. A detailed analysis was done on each theme, working out the scope and focus of each theme, determining the 'story' of each. It also involved deciding on an informative name for each theme. The final phase involved weaving together the analytic narrative and data extracts and contextualising the analysis in relation to existing literature.

4.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Golder *et al.* (2017) describe ethics as "norms that are expected to be followed and may also be referred to as principles of good behaviour". According to Resnik (2011) fabrication and falsification of data, copyright violation and plagiarism, and double publishing are among the unethical issues in research that a researcher should avoid. Besides, Bell and Bryman (2018) explained three categories of ethical issues that are applicable to research: informing respondents, protecting respondents, and the responsibilities of the interviewer. Privacy and confidentiality are principal concerns when obtaining data from the target population. Survey answers were not linked to identifiable respondents.

The research was approved by the ethics committee of North-West University under the following number: NWU-00426-18-A4. An official letter of introduction and a request to conduct the

research was obtained from the project supervisor for the management of the selected organisations of the study.

In both the quantitative and qualitative research, the following was done:

Ensuring participants give informed consent

A covering letter was prepared and given to each participant before data could be captured from them. The researcher and assistant enumerators explained the purpose of the research to participants. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their role in the entire research process. Participants were informed that their participation is voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any point and time, and no questions would be asked about their reasons for the withdrawal. Participants could also withdraw together with the data that they had given.

Ensuring no harm comes to participants

The researcher and assistant enumerators assured participants that they would not be exposed to any physical, emotional, or psychological harm. The environment where the data collection from participants took place was also free from noise, excessive sunlight or darkness, and obstruction from third parties. Questions asked to participants were also designed in such a way that they would not result in the coercion of responses from participants and make them feel uncomfortable.

Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity

The researcher and research assistants also made sure that the identities of participants were not written on the instruments, which were not captured in such a way as to expose their real identities. Questionnaires only captured biographical details without actual names, phone numbers, email addresses, postal and physical addresses which could expose the real identities of participants.

Ensuring that permission is obtained

The researcher obtained letters of introduction from the project supervisor at North-West University soliciting support for the researcher in the study area. These letters were given out to the management of the selected organisations for approval. The researcher also discussed the research with the management of the selected organisations, and this helped in developing a sense of trust between the two parties. The researcher did schedule his visit to the organisations

in such a way that it did not interfere with the normal operations. Good timing is very important in this regard (Venkatesh *et al.,* 2016). This study served at the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences and the following number was issued: NWU-00426-18-A4.

Storage and Destruction

The data is the property of North West University and is stored for a period of five (5) years as part of the data library of Tourism Research in Economics, Environs, and Society. In the introduction to the questionnaire and the interviews, the purpose of the study was explained, and ability of the respondent to halt participation at any time during the process was emphasised. The researcher did not use any form of dishonesty at any time. Confidentiality was guaranteed to all. Based on recommendations of Creswell and Clarke (2017), language that is biased against a person because of gender, sexual orientation, racial, tribe, or ethnic group disability, or age were not used in this study. The results are reported objectively without any manipulation.

Official letters of consent were sought from participating organisations. However, the researcher accepted verbal authorisation as sufficient approval as well. In addition to the letter, the researcher explained to the respondents the main purpose of the research. The respondents were assured that their participation is not mandatory but voluntarily and declining to participate will not attract any victimisation. The participants were also assured that they would incur no risk in participating in the research and that their responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

4.10 CONCLUSION

It was the purpose of this chapter to present, explain and justify the methods which were used to collect, analyse, and report the findings of the research. This was achieved by applying the Research Onion Model (Saunders *et al.,* 2018) to the different stages of the research, from research philosophy through to techniques and procedures. The research philosophy used in this research was the Positivist paradigm. The research design was both descriptive and exploratory and the methods both quantitative and qualitative. The paradigm of research included in this discussion are two major philosophical assumptions - positivist and interpretive. The philosophical foundation of research was highlighted based on the five (5) main concepts: ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology, and rhetorical. The data collection instruments were questionnaires and an interview guide. The sampling techniques were purposive and simple random sampling. The population of the study was tour operators, to employees and management staff purposely selected because of their proximity to major tourist attractions in Botswana and their knowledge related to e-marketing.

Also, the validity and reliability, piloting, data collection procedure, and method of data analysis were discussed. In addition, the discussion was extended to data preparation and data coding. Finally, several ethical issues adhered to by the researcher during the research process were discussed. Such ethical considerations are consent information, privacy and confidentiality. The next chapter, chapter 4, focuses on the presentation and discussion of the study's findings.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present and analyse the data collected from tourism enterprises, visitors to small-to-medium tourism enterprises (SMTE), and selected government officials. A total of 199 SMTEs participated in the study by completing the structured questionnaire, a total of 101 visitors participated by completing a structured questionnaire, and 14 representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism also participated in the face-to-face interviews. For the quantitative research IBM SPSS (version 20) was used to analyse the data, and for the qualitative research, Microsoft Excel was used to analyse the data and identify themes.

Descriptive statistics in the form of mean, median, inter-quartile range, and cross-tabulations were used in the discussion to add statistical rigor to the findings. Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient (*rs)* was also used to determine the strength and direction of monotonic relationship between two ordinal variables and, in most cases, Likert scale variables. The discussion of these findings begins with SMTEs, followed by visitors and interviews with selected representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife, and Tourism.

5.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS FROM SMTEs

A total of 199 SMTEs participated in the study, and the following is a presentation and discussion of the findings based on their views.

5.2.1 Demographic profile of participating SMTEs

The following is a breakdown of the SMTEs which participated in the study.

Table 5-1*: Demographic details of SMTEs*

Types of SMTEs Industry		
Industry	**Frequency**	**Percentage Frequency**
Tour operator	14	7.0
Hotel	10	5.0
Lodge	49	24.6
Casino	16	8.0
Guest house	87	43.7

Travel agent	15	7.5
ICT firm	8	4.0
Total	**199**	**100.0%**
Location of SMTE		
Location	**Frequency**	**Percentage Frequency**
Chobe	30	15.1
Kgalagadi	34	17.1
Ghanzi South	33	16.6
Ghanzi West	26	13.1
Ngamiland	48	24.1
South Eastern	16	8.0
Tuli Block	12	6.0
Total	**199**	**100.0%**
Number of years in business		
1 – 2 years	35	17.6
3 – 4 years	51	25.6
5 – 6 years	39	19.6
7 – 8 years	34	17.1
9 - 10 years	16	8.0
11 years and above	24	12.1
Total	**199**	**100.0%**

The findings in Table 5.1 reveal that guesthouses (43.7%) dominated the types of SMTE industry, followed by lodges at 24.6%. The majority of SMTEs were in Ngamiland (24.1%) followed by Kgalagadi at 17.1%; about 25.6% of SMTEs have been in the industry for between 2 to 4 years, followed by 19.6% who have been in the industry for between 4 to 6 years.

5.2.2 Attitude and understanding of social media and social marketing networks amongst SMTEs in Botswana

This section of the data seeks to examine the degree of knowledge, misconception, adoption, and use of e-marketing among SMTEs in Botswana. It provides information on the various types of social network marketing used by STMEs along with their perceived value in respect to growing the SMTEs. This is critical since the study focuses on how e-marketing strategies influence the way SMTEs market their business to travellers in their respective regions.

5.2.3 Type of media or communication channels used to advertise by SMTE

SMTEs gave the following responses on the types of media or communication channels which they use for advertising their business.

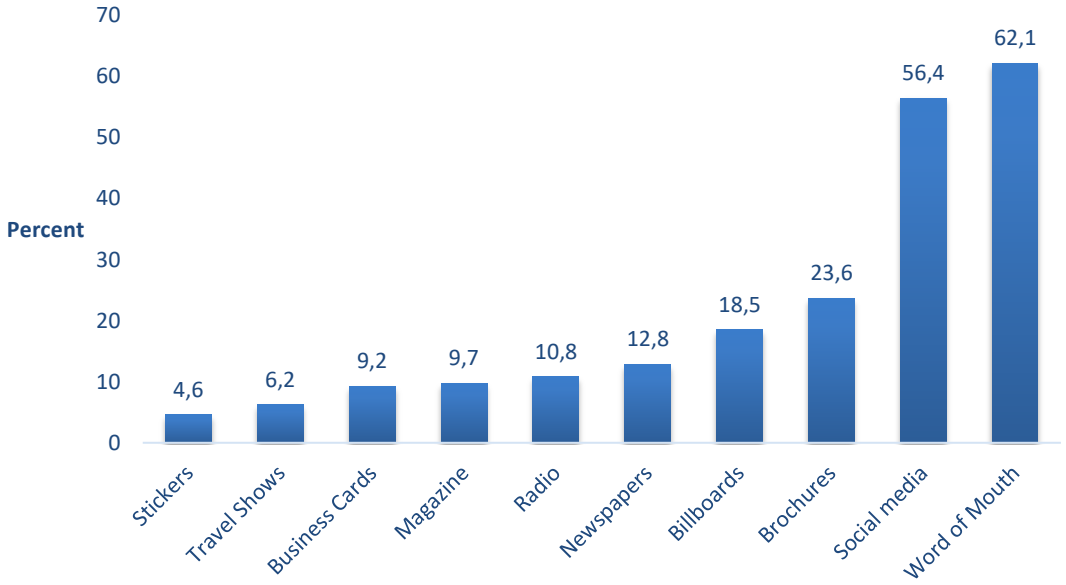

Figure 5-1*: Advertising channels for SMTEs*

Figure 5.1 above generally suggests that traditional media (word-of-mouth, brochure, billboard and newspapers) dominate as the most common mode of advertising among SMTEs in Botswana, with word-of-mouth perched at the top with 62.1%. Brochures came in third place below social media with 23.6%, followed by billboards and newspapers with 18.5% and 12.8%, respectively. It is, however, important to note that although traditional media cumulatively outweigh social media, social media accounts for more than half (56.4%) of the advertising slots for SMTEs, a clear sign that social network marketing is barely gaining recognition among SMTEs in Botswana.

5.2.4 The use of social network marketing

Table 5.1 below provides a summary of the outcome of an assessment of the use of social media marketing by SMTEs. Generally, slightly over 50% of SMTEs agreed with the statements that were used to test their understanding, as evident from the high median (Mdn) values and small interquartile ranges (IQR). Ideally, this position would be held by respondents who have

knowledge and understanding of social network marketing because all the statements were correct in so far as social network marketing and its utility or benefits is concerned.

Table 5-2: Understanding Social network marketing

Social Media or Network Marketing	Level of Agreement (%)					Central Tendency and Dispersion	
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor	Agree	Strongly Agree	Median (Mdn)	Inter Quartile Range
Customer relation	10.6%	23.2%	29.8%	27.3%	9.1%	3	2
Businesses identify and	3.1%	13.2%	18.3%	51.3%	14.2%	4	1
Quality service delivery	3.5%	13.6%	33.8%	28.3%		3	1
Social network marketing	5.1%	12.6%	29.8%	40.4%	12.1%	4	1
Marketing landscape -	3.0%	13.6%	25.8%	40.9%	16.7%	4	1
Feedback directly from	5.1%	15.7%	25.9%	36.5%	16.8%	4	1
Analyse competition	0.5%	19.7%	26.8%	40.9%	12.1%	4	1
Social media effectiveness	3.0%	9.6%	30.8%	29.8%	26.8%	4	2

The first statement in Table 5.2 above wanted to know if SMTEs agreed with the assertion that social network marketing is about customer relationship management. SMTEs tend to be polarised in terms of their position on this statement, with 36.4% of SMTEs having indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with this assertion. On the flip side, a roughly equal proportion (33.8%) of SMTEs had expressed strong disagreement or disagreement with the statement. Apart from this statement, SMTEs expressed consensus on all the observations made in relation to social network marketing and its utility or benefits. They generally agreed with all the statements, including the one which asserted that social network marketing makes it easy for businesses to identify and interact with target markets (Mdn=4, IQR=1). The median value of 4 merely corroborates the SMTEs position as alluded above. The IQR of 1, on the other hand, suggests consensus among SMTEs regarding their position on this statement.

The majority (49%) of SMTEs had further indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with the observation that social network marketing reinforces messages on quality service delivery and helps it to go viral (Mdn=3, IQR=1). Regarding their position on the potential value of social network marketing in so far as projecting SMTEs brand's image is concerned, most (52.5%) of the SMTEs indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with this observation. When further asked if they believed social network marketing had transformed the marketing landscape by making it possible for consumers and businesses to interact instantly and with ease, the majority (57.6%) of SMTEs strongly agreed or agreed with this observation, and more than anything, the fact that the instant interaction helps businesses gain feedback directly from customers (Mdn=4, RQR= 1). All in all, this suggests some certain degree of knowledge about social network marketing and its utility on the part of SMTEs. The knowledge is, however, still wanting, if not somewhat enough, because on many occasions, the proportion of SMTEs who answered in the affirmative, as would be expected in the case of a respondent who has knowledge about social network marketing, could not exceed sixty percent.

5.2.5 Misconceptions around social media

Social media is a relatively new concept that had swiftly found its way into contemporary societal and business settings. Just like any other new concept which is still trying to find its feet in society, social media is not spared from misconceptions, and usually, there is a thin line between misconception and lack of knowledge on a particular subject matter. It is therefore pertinent to determine the degree of misconception about social network marketing among the SMTEs with a view to dispel it and promote usage because, by its nature, misconception would negatively affect usage. For this, a list of ten statements was directed to SMTEs, and for the most part of this list, as illustrated in Table 5.3 below, the majority of SMTEs disagreed with the observations made by these statements as would be the case in a setup where misconception and lack of knowledge about social media is not a challenge. The low median values and IQRs corroborate this observation.

Table 5-3*: **Misconceptions around social media***

Social Media or Network Marketing	Level of Agreement (%)					Measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion	
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Median (Mdn)	Inter Quartile Range
Requires short messages not good for	21.20%	26.80%	17.20%	24.20%	10.60%	3	2
Content shared not trustworthy	8.10%	26.80%	40.40%	17.20%	7.60%	3	1
No need to use different social media platforms	24.20%	45.50%	13.10%	14.10%	3.00%	2	1
Social media targets younger generations only	9.60%	43.90%	26.80%	14.10%	5.60%	2	1
Social media can tarnish our brand image.	8.60%	21.20%	41.40%	18.70%	10.10%	3	2
Social media is too difficult to use.	19.70%	48.00%	9.10%	19.70%	3.50%	2	1
Social media is too expensive to use.	21.70%	33.80%	13.10%	26.30%	5.10%	2	2
It is difficult to connect to social media sites.	22.70%	44.40%	13.60%	14.60%	4.50%	2	1
Social media negatively affects productivity.	9.10%	28.30%	35.90%	13.60%	13.10%	3	2
Social media violates company privacy	8.10%	31.80%	39.40%	11.10%	9.60%	3	1

According to Table 5.3, most SMTEs (48%) did not believe that the brief nature of social media messages renders the tool immaterial with respect to marketing purposes. It is, however, important to note that 34.8% of the SMTEs had dismissed social media as immaterial for marketing purposes because of the brief nature of its messages. This constitutes a misconception or lack of knowledge on their part because not all social media networks were designed to accommodate short messages wholly. Moreover, brief messages should not be viewed as a deterring factor but rather a mere limitation that could always be manipulated to get the best out of this marketing tool, given the availability of expertise. Regarding the credibility of social media content, SMTEs tend to be undecided on this aspect, with the majority (40.4%) of them having neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement that social media is not trustworthy (Mdn=3, IRQ=1). However, the proportion (34.9%) of SMTEs who were opposed to this observation was higher than 24.8% of those who agreed with it.

SMTEs dismissed another statement to the effect that social media platforms are the same and therefore not ideal for marketing purposes. Almost seventy percent (69.7%) of the SMTEs strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement, and with a low median value (2), this categorically confirms the divergent views held by the SMTEs. The small IQR (1), on the other hand, indicates that the SMTE responses were clustered together, suggesting consensus on their position. SMTEs also differed with the statement that social media only targeted the younger generation and misses the older generations. Most (53.5%) of the SMTEs dismissed this as a myth. However, it is quite evident from Table 5.3 that almost twenty percent (19.7%) of the SMTEs subscribed to this myth while the remainder (26.8%) were undecided. The majority of SMTEs (41.2%) also neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement that social media can tarnish their brand image. The rest were equally divided, pulling in opposite directions, with 29.8% and 28.8% of the SMTEs disagreeing and agreeing with the statement, respectively.

Table 5.3 further suggests that SMTEs do not buy into the perception that social media is too difficult and expensive to use. Almost sixty-eight percent (67.7%) differed from the statement that social media is not user-friendly, not to mention that over fifty percent (55.5%) were not convinced that it was expensive to use. On the issue of connectivity, most SMTEs (67.1%) did not agree that social media sites are too difficult to connect. They further express disbelief regarding the productivity issue, with most of them indicating that SMTEs (37.1%) disagreed that social media can negatively affect productivity.

In summary, most SMTEs had dismissed most of the misconceptions around social media, and this generally suggests that, to some degree, SMTEs have knowledge about the use of social media and its potential business value.

5.2.6 The importance and degree of use of social media among SMTE

Having demonstrated some degree of knowledge in social media and its business value as discussed above, now the question is, do SMTEs utilise this tool for marketing purposes, and if so, do they perceive it as being helpful.

5.2.6.1 Use of social media for marketing purposes

Social media is an effective marketing tool in a modern-day society where the use of technology is rampant. It is therefore pertinent to determine to what degree the local SMTEs had adopted this marketing approach.

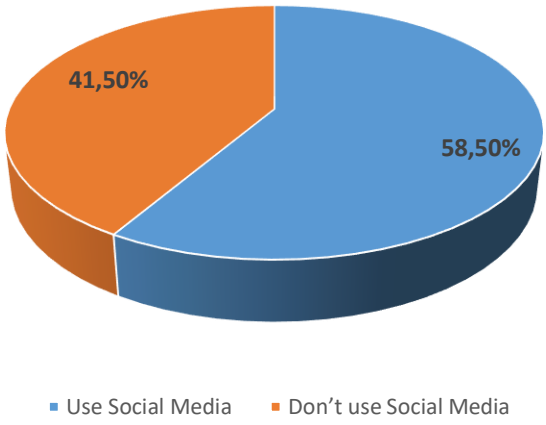

Figure 5-2*: Use of social media for marketing in SMTEs*

Figure 5.2 above indicates that almost sixty percent (58.5%) of SMTEs use social media for marketing purposes. The remainder (41.5%) reported to have not adopted this tool in their marketing functions. This is an indication of a significant proportion of SMTEs which is still untapped in terms of social media utilisation.

5.2.6.2 Types of social media in use

Facebook is the most common type of social media among SMTEs. Figure 5.3 shows that of the 60% that use social media, most SMTEs (79.6%) use Facebook for marketing purposes. WhatsApp is the second most utilised type of platform with 41.6%, followed by Instagram and e-mail with 35.4% and 31.9%, respectively to communicate with previous clients. Twitter came in fifth place, just below e-mail, with 29.2%. YouTube sits in sixth place while LinkedIn trailed behind with 8.8%.

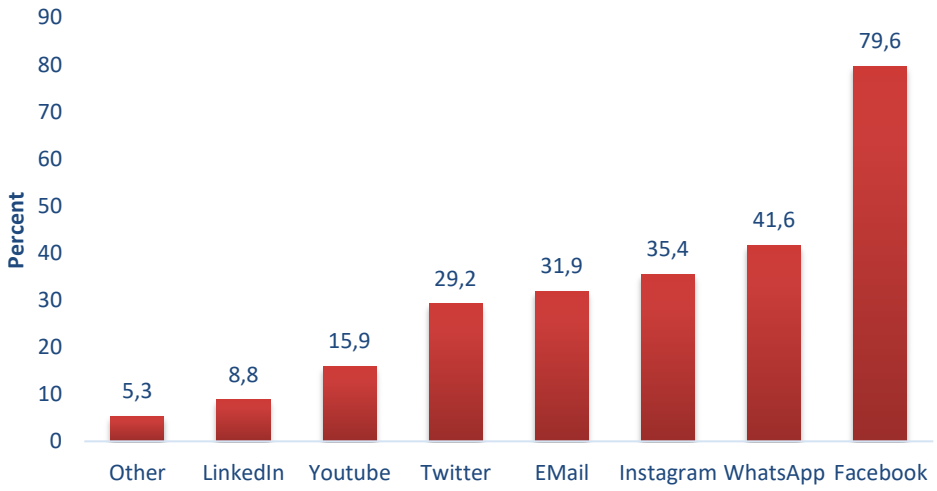

Figure 5-3*: Types of social media used*

5.2.6.3 Time spent on social media for marketing purposes

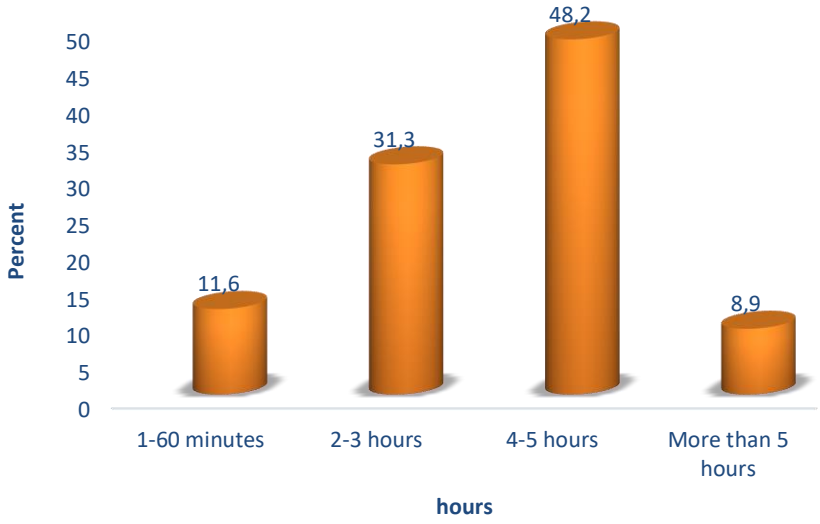

Figure 5-4*: Time spent on social media for marketing purposes*

Regarding the length of time spent on the social media sites, Figure 5.4 above shows that, in a week, the majority (47.8%) of the SMTEs would spend 4 to 5 hours on social media marketing their products, and this is inconsistent with the observation made above that most marketers (59%) currently spend 6 hours or more each week on social media. With only 8.9% of the SMTEs having matched this time, it is quite clear that this segment of the industry is falling behind in respect to the utilisation of social media for marketing purposes.

5.2.6.4 Usefulness of social media for SMTE business

The above section had revealed that almost sixty percent of SMTEs use social media for marketing purposes. It is therefore only suitable that further analysis is carried out to examine and understand the usefulness of social media on SMTEs in respect to marketing purposes. The results are presented in Figure 5.5, Table 5.4 through to Figure 5.6 below:

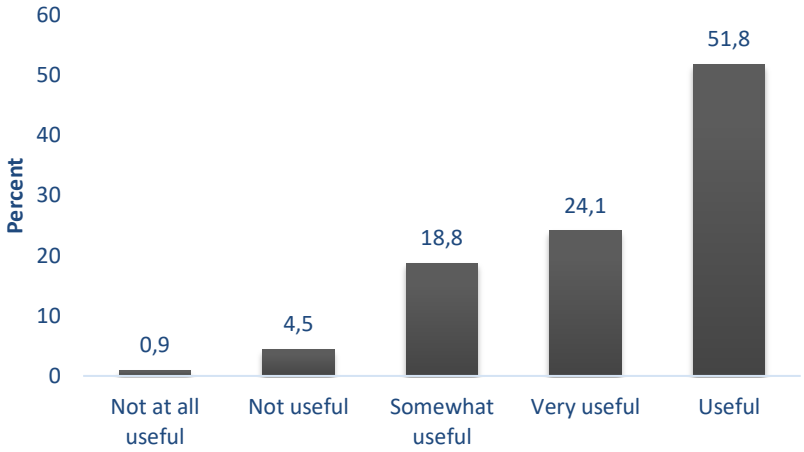

Figure 5-5*: Usefulness of social media among SMTEs*

Generally, SMTEs recognise the value of social media in relation to marketing purposes. According to Figure 5.5 above, the majority (75.9%) of SMTEs that had reported to have used social media for marketing purposes found social media to be useful to their business. The high median value (4) succinctly projects the positive stand held by SMTEs as alluded to above and the low interquartile range (0) suggests consensus on this position. With a negligible proportion (5.4%) of SMTEs holding an opposite view, as evident from Figure 5.5 above, social media is a useful tool for SMTEs.

A further analysis was carried out to identify and examine specific areas where social media had proved helpful. Several areas were identified, and the results are presented in Table 5.4 below.

Table 5-4: The usefulness of social media to SMTEs

Usefulness of SMTEs	Number of SMTEs	Percent
Social media reaches everywhere at any time	7	8.8
Social media is fast and convenient.	7	8.8
Social media has helped me to attract many customers	26	32.5
I have made a lot of profit and generated more sales because of social media	4	5.0
Business has received growth and exposure as a result of social media	12	15.0
Social media has helped to improved communication with customers	11	13.8
Productivity has increased because of social media	3	3.8
I have managed to attract investors to my business using social media	3	3.8
Competitor analysis and customer feedback are possible using social media	4	5.0
Social media has helped to increase competition	3	3.8
Total	**80**	**100.0**

According to Table 5.4, social media was helpful to SMTEs in many ways. However, of all the identified plethora of assistance, the majority (32.5%) of SMTEs were of the view that social media was more helpful in attracting and expanding their clientele base. It had also helped their business to grow, with 15% of the SMTEs attributing their growth to the use of social media. Other visible areas where social media had proved helpful include customer relations and the general performance of SMTEs. Almost fourteen percent (13.8%) of the businesses had reported having made headway in terms of improving communication with customers.

On the performance aspect, nine percent (8.8%) of the SMTEs believed social media can reach out to many places at any time, while the other nine percent (8.8%) averred that social media is fast and convenient. This is a testimony by SMTEs, acknowledging the vital role played by social media in their marketing functions. Regarding the financial returns, five percent (5%) of the SMTEs had experienced improvements in profits and sales. Based on their experience using social media, SMTEs were asked if they would recommend this tool to others with a view to further

gain an understanding of the SMTEs perception in respect to the value of social media as a marketing tool. Figure 5.6 below provides the findings.

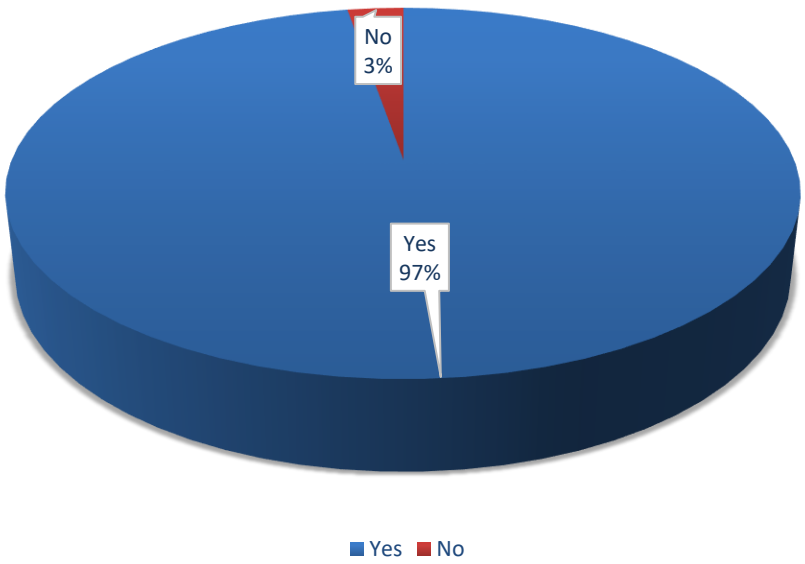

Figure 5-6*: Recommendation of social media use to other businesses*

The above indicates that (97%) of SMTEs who use social media (60%) stated that they used social media for marketing purposes and would recommend the tool to other organisations for marketing products/services. This is a clear sign that social media was somewhat instrumental in improving not only the marketing function but also the general performance of SMTEs who had used it. It is, therefore in the hands of the SMTEs in question to emulate these SMTEs and adopt this initiative to ramp up its marketing function and by extending the general performance of their businesses. The relevant government departments should also come on board and mobilise SMTEs to adopt the e-marketing approach and turn around the current state of SMTEs.

5.2.7 Challenges affecting the use of social media among SMTEs

Almost forty-two percent (41.5%) of the SMTEs had reported previously that they did not use social media for marketing purposes, and this is worrisome given the potential benefits of this tool for small/medium enterprises. It is, therefore, essential to identify these challenges and propose the best possible measures to address them.

Day-to-day operations

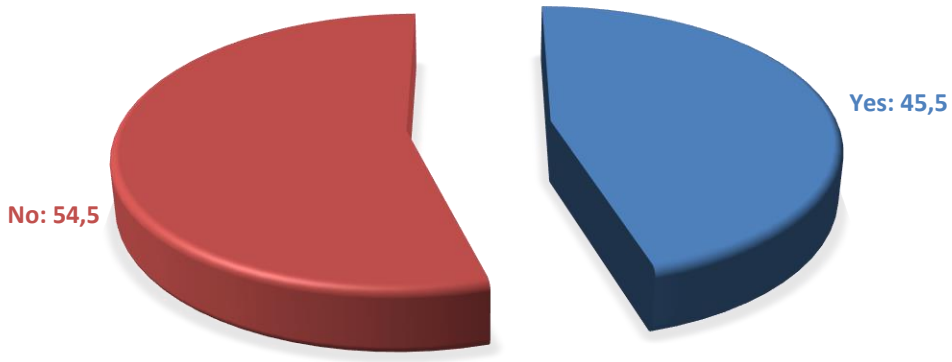

Figure 5-7: SMTEs' use of social media in day-to-day operations

Almost forty-six (45.5%) of the SMTEs had expressed dissatisfaction at the degree of utilisation of social media in their day-to-day operation. As a result, they would want the use of social media to be increased. This is a clear indication that some SMTEs would have wished to use social media to a greater extent, but this could not be possible due to several challenges discussed in Table 5.5 below.

5.2.8 Challenges affecting the used of social media

To help address these challenges, the study came up with a list of remedial measures outlined in Table 5.5 below. The SMTEs were asked to express their position regarding the extent to which these factors can be helpful in promoting utilisation of social media in their businesses.

Table 5-5*: Challenges that affect the use of social media among SMTEs*

	Number of SMTEs	Percent	Percent of Cases
Other reason(s)	1	0.6	1.2
Not Useful	27	15.6	33.3
Insufficient Knowledge	40	23.1	49.4

Insufficient Resources	50	28.9	61.7
Not Enough Time	55	31.8	67.9
Total	**173**	**100.0**	**213.6**

5.2.8.1 Contributing factors to improved utilisation of social media

The most common factors that negatively affect the use of social media among SMTEs include time, resources and knowledge or misconceptions. Most (67.9%) SMTEs believed that they did not have enough time to spend on social media, and this borders on a lack of knowledge about the use and benefits of social media because social media is very efficient. Relative to other marketing tools, social media require less billable time and labour to reach out to many customers within a short space of time.

Almost sixty-two percent (61.7%) of SMTEs had failed to utilise social media on account of insufficient resource capacity adequately. Insufficient knowledge both on the use and benefits of social media, as previously mentioned also posed a major challenge, with over forty-nine percent (49.4%) of SMTEs blaming inadequate usage of social media on insufficient knowledge. It is quite evident from Table 5.5 that 33.3% of SMTEs believe social media is useless, and this points back to a lack of knowledge and misconceptions around this concept.

Table 5-6*: Extent to which the following factors contribute to better utilisation of social media for SMTEs business*

Factors	**Level of Contribution (%)**					**Measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion**	
	To a small extent	**To some extent**	**To a moderate extent**	**To a great extent**	**To a very great extent**	**Media (Mdn)**	**Interquartile Range (IQR)**
Improved knowledge about social media	12.8%	27.7%	26.2%	24.1%	9.2%	3	2
Training in social media marketing	15.4%	25.6%	29.7%	18.5%	10.8%	3	2

Combined efforts to market a group of businesses	7.7%	30.8%	32.3%	21.0%	8.2%	3	2
Dedicated staff working with social media	15.4%	20.0%	23.6%	23.1%	17.9%	3	2
Better internet services	3.6%	11.8%	17.4%	29.2%	37.9%	4	2

Table 5.6 above suggests that SMTEs acknowledge the fact that increasing knowledge on the use and business benefits of social media would be helpful in increasing the utilisation of social media; however, they do not believe that this should be a priority because, as stated above SMTEs already had some certain degree of knowledge on the use and business benefits of social media. For instance, Table 5.6 shows that the majority (27.7%) of SMTEs believed that improved knowledge about social media would contribute to better utilisation of social media among themselves to some degree. On the other hand, thirty-three percent (33.3%) of the SMTEs believed that improving knowledge about social media would promote the usage of this marketing tool among SMTEs to a great extent or to a very great extent.

Regarding training on social media marketing, most (29.7%) SMTEs believed that this would be helpful. It would bring about a moderate positive impact on the use of social media among SMTEs. Combined marketing efforts also would not yield significant results in respect to promoting utilisation of social media. The majority (32.3%) of SMTEs are hopeful for a moderate outcome, should the promotion of combined marketing efforts take centre stage in accelerating the adoption of social media among SMTEs. SMTEs also suggest that, to improve utilisation of social media, organisations should engage dedicated staff for this portfolio. The majority (23.6%) of SMTEs believed this would contribute to better utilisation of social media to a moderate extent. On the other hand, a roughly equal proportion (23.1%) of SMTEs was optimistic, hoping that the current state of social media utilisation would improve to a great extent.

According to Table 5.6, improvement of internet services should form part of the key priority areas in promoting utilisation of social media among SMTEs. Most (37.9%) of the SMTEs believed that this would contribute to better utilisation of social media to a very great extent. In a nutshell, poor internet service constitutes a major setback on the utilisation of social media among SMTEs and as such better services should be put in place.

5.2.9 Internet Service

This section of the data narrows its focus into the internet and related factors to explore its contribution in relation to the current state of utilisation of social media among SMTEs.

5.2.9.1 Internet Access

All types of social media networks covered by the study depend on the internet to function correctly and deliver accordingly. It is therefore pertinent to examine the degree of access to internet services and how it affects the utilisation of social media among the SMTEs.

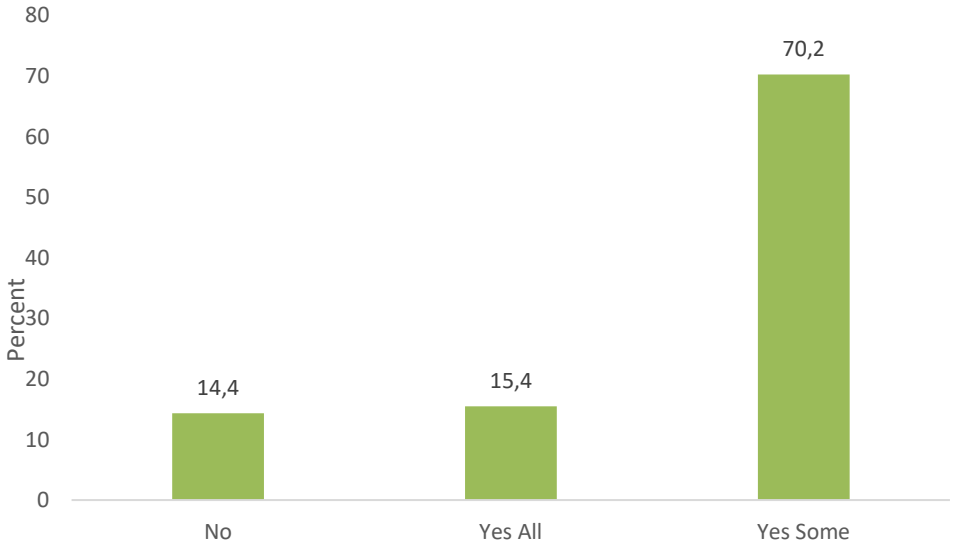

Figure 5-8*: Employees with portable devices*

Figure 5.8 above provides a pictorial view of the state of the SMTEs readiness to adopt social media to run their marketing functions. According to this figure, most (70.2%) of the SMTEs had indicated that some of their employees had portable devices that would allow a mobile connection to the internet for business use and with fifteen percent (15.4%) of the SMTEs having reported to have had staff who are in possession of such devices, the internet could be easily accessible to employees in this type of setup, had it been available. In this case, portable devices are not viewed as part of the major underlying factor in the current state of utilisation of social media among SMTEs.

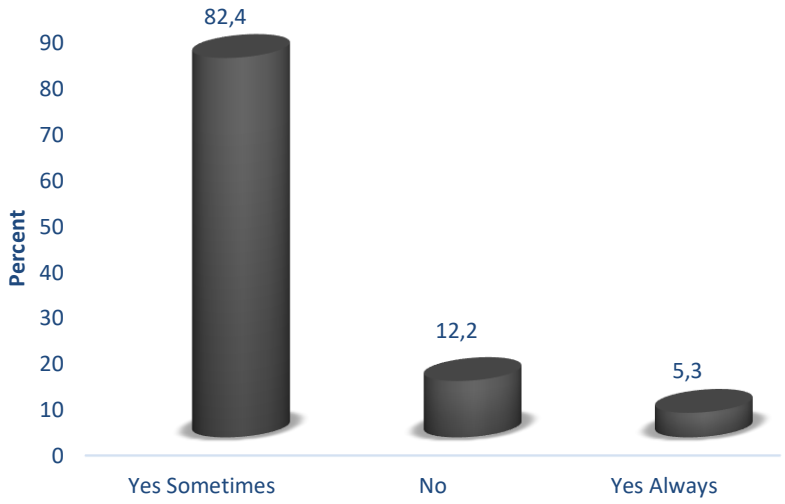

Figure 5-9: Use of internet to obtain information from public authorities

Internet communication has evolved over time to virtually replace traditional communication forms in running the daily business operations, including internal and inter-business communication and relations. According to Figure 5.9, this is not the norm among SMTEs. Only 5.3% of the SMTEs reported to have always used the internet to obtain information from public authorities, and this suggests a possible reluctance on the part of the SMTEs to recognise and adopt the internet as an effective and efficient business operation tool.

5.2.9.2 Website Presence

SMTEs were asked several questions on the availability of the website and its features to understand how the presence or absence thereof affects their capacity to deliver on their e-marketing functions.

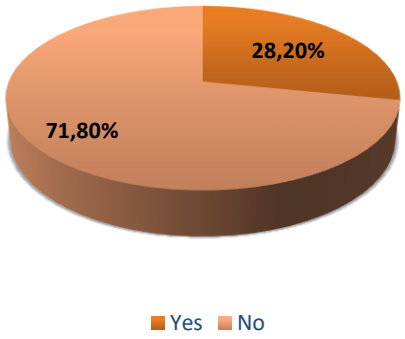

Figure 5-10: Website availability

It is evident from Figure 5.10 above that well over seventy percent (71.8%) of the SMTEs do not have websites. Even when it comes to those who had websites, 13.2% did not have an online ordering/reservation/booking, which is not business worthy. Some websites were also found to be deficient in terms of their capability to promote products, with over eleven percent (11.3%) of the SMTEs who reported to have had websites indicating that the websites in question do not have product catalogues or price list for customers. Regarding safety, around 19% of the SMTEs that had websites indicated that they did not have a privacy policy statement/seal/certification, which may insinuate that the safety of such websites is compromised.

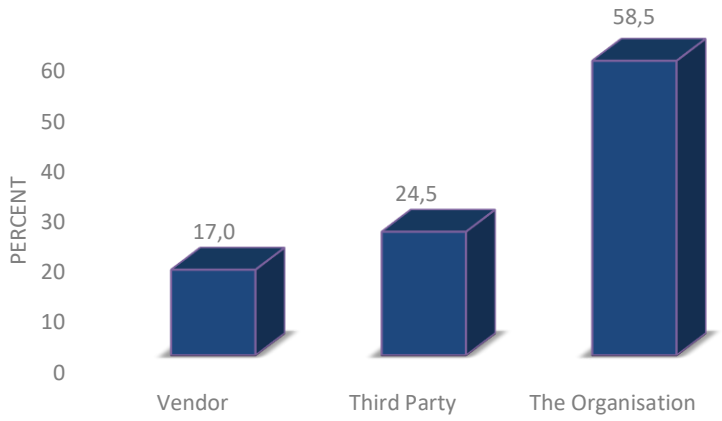

Figure 5-11*: Website host*

Figure 5.11 above shows that most 58.5% SMTEs host their own websites. Almost twenty-four percent (24.5%) of them use a third party to host their website, while the remainder (17.0%) use a vendor as a host. It was further discovered that 57.7% of the SMTEs developed all the contents of their websites. Thirty-three percent (32.7%) of the SMTEs had reported having developed some of the contents while the rest were developed elsewhere and possibly by the vendor or third party because Table 5.7 below shows that in an instance where none of the contents or not all the contents were developed by the organisation, the organisation was less likely to be the host and the inverse was true in an instance where all the contents were developed by the organisation. This was found to be statistically significant at p-value of 0.004.

Table 5-7: Website host by content developer

Website Host	Is the Website Content Developed by the Organisation			Total
	Yes, All the Contents	Yes, Some of the Contents	No	
The Organisation	24	4	2	30
	80.0%	13.3%	6.7%	100.0%
Vendor	3	5	1	9
	33.3%	55.6%	11.1%	100.0%
Third Party	3	8	2	13
	23.1%	61.5%	15.4%	100.0%
Total	30	17	5	52
	57.7%	32.7%	9.6%	100.0%

Regarding the actual e-marketing activities that were carried out on the websites, it is clear from Figure 5.12 that most (50%) SMTEs undertook promotional campaigns monthly. This implies that there exist significant efforts by SMTEs to promote their activities, but there is still a lot of room for improvement when one looks at the other 50.0%, which combines weekly, quarterly, and annual promotions.

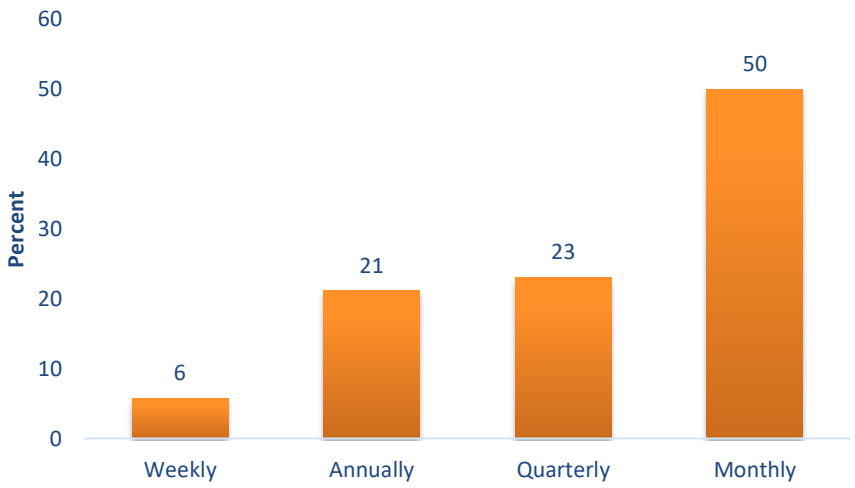

Figure 5-12: Frequency of promotional campaigns

Product or price updating is also carried out monthly for the most part of the SMTEs, as is evident from Figure 5.12 above. Generally, this suggests that the websites are not lively in terms of marketing activities. Most websites seldom run these activities, a problematic situation particularly

in the modern-day commercial sphere where the internet has taken a centre stage in terms of selling company products. For the SMTEs to be relevant, more competitive, and more than anything that thrives in the modern commercial world, they should be encouraged to adopt e-marketing and harness the business opportunities that comes with this tool. The websites should be active and abuzz with marketing activities, running and changing ads more frequently.

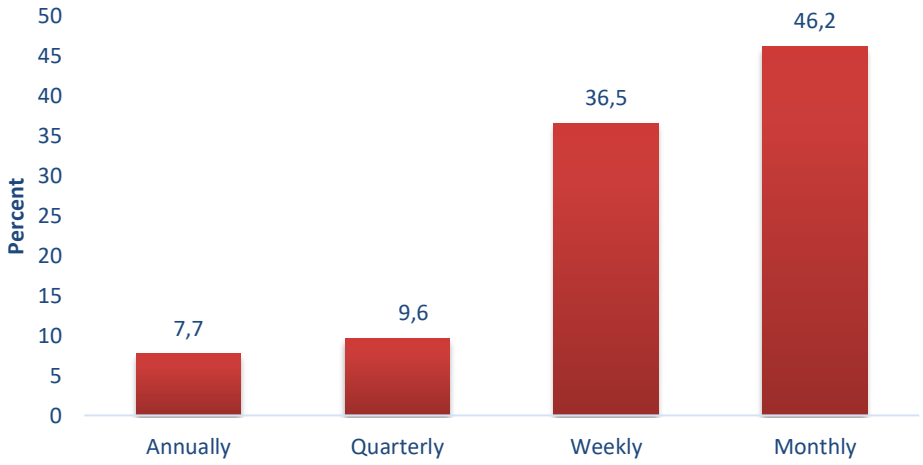

Figure 5-13: Frequency of product /price updating on the website

5.2.10 Government's Efforts Towards Promoting Utilisation of E-marketing Among SMTEs

Generally, the utilisation of social media for marketing purposes among SMTEs is barely impressive. However, the majority of SMTEs who had used social media for marketing purposes had acknowledged the marketing value of this tool and would prefer others to run with it in their pursuit for improved performance. Given this positive attitude, one would wonder what the government is doing to leverage this attitude and grow these businesses. This section, therefore, delves into understanding the degree of government's efforts in relation to promoting e-marketing among SMTEs in Botswana with a view to growing these businesses. Further analysis would be carried out to determine if there is any glimmer of hope in relation to these efforts.

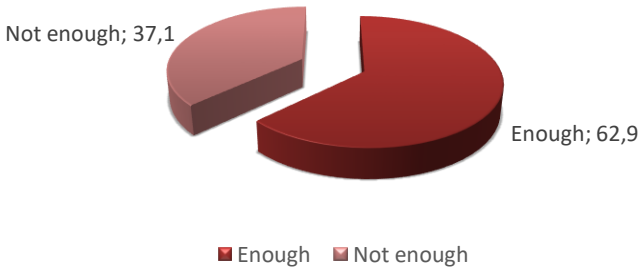

Figure 5-14: Degree of government efforts towards e-marketing promotion

Figure 5.14 indicates that over sixty percent (62.9%) of the SMTEs believed that the Botswana Government is doing enough to promote e-marketing among SMTEs. It is, however, important to note that 37.1% of the SMTEs held an opposite view. The key informant component of the study would shed more light on this matter.

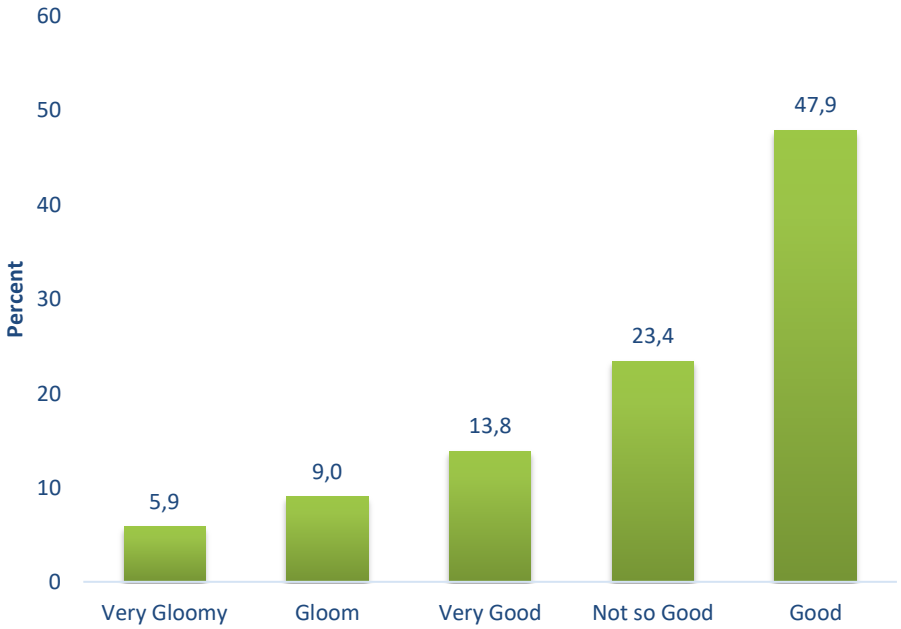

Figure 5-15: The future of e-marketing in Botswana

Figure 5.15 above suggests that the future of e-marketing in the country is generally looking good, and this is consistent with the observations made in Figure 5.15 above that government is generally doing enough to promote the use of e-marketing. In other words, hopes are high among the SMTEs because the government is doing enough to promote the use of e-marketing. According to Figure 5.15, the majority (47.9%) of SMTEs believed that the future of e-marketing in the country looks promising.

Those who believed that the future was not so good came in second place with 23.4%, followed by those who held a firm belief that it looked glimmer with 13.8%. Despite the pessimistic views from the rest of the SMTEs, the general outlook of e-marketing is positive as substantiated by the high median value of 4 and low interquartile range (1), which generally shows that the SMTEs have consensus on the positive outlook of e-marketing in Botswana.

5.3 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS FROM VISITORS TO SMTEs

A total of 101 visitors at various small-medium-sized accommodation facilities across the country were part of the survey. As part of the SMTEs, accommodation facilities should understand and keep pace with the ever-evolving market needs. This component of the study, therefore, seeks to gain in-depth knowledge about the state of the utilisation of social media among clients of small-medium-sized accommodation facilities. The study had to narrow its scope to clients of small-medium-sized accommodation facilities due to limited resources. These clients would therefore serve as a proxy for the SMTE clients and hence the use of the phrase ‘clients of SMTEs’ in the findings.

5.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Clients of SMTEs

This section of the data provides the demographic characteristics of clients who completed the questionnaire along with the places within the country where such data were captured. According to Table 5.8 below, many clients (21) completed the questionnaire at accommodation facilities that were based within various places in the Central District, followed by the capital city with 16 participants. Kweneng district came in third place with 14 participants. Kgalagadi district accounted for the smallest share of the sample size with only one participant. Of the 101 respondents, 50% were females while the other 50% were males.

Table 5-8: Number of Visitors by Place of Questionnaire Administration

District	Visitors
Kgalagadi	1
Southern	2
Ghanzi	2
Northeast	3
Kgatleng	3
Chobe	4
Boteti	4
Francistown	9
Southeast	10
Northwest	12
Kweneng	14
Gaborone	16
Central	21
Total	101

Table 5.9 below shows that the vast majority (80%) of visitors came from Botswana while the remainder (20%) travelled from outside the country and largely South Africa.

Table 5-9: Number of Visitors by Country of Residence

Country	Number of Visitors	Visitors (%)	Visitors (Valid %)
Botswana	80	79.2	80.0
South Africa	9	8.9	9.0
Zambia	2	2.0	2.0
Zimbabwe	1	1.0	1.0
Swaziland	1	1.0	1.0
Kenya	1	1.0	1.0
Malawi	1	1.0	1.0
Ghana	1	1.0	1.0

Uganda	1	1.0	1.0
Congo	2	2.0	2.0
Nigeria	1	1.0	1.0
Total	**100**	**99.0**	**100**
Not Stated	1	1.0	-
Total	**101**	**100**	-

The further analysis had revealed that an overwhelming majority of residents were also visitors not only at accommodation facilities but also in the localities where these facilities were domiciled. Table 5.9 above shows that out of a total of hundred (100) visitors who completed the questionnaire at accommodation facilities, eighty (80) came from Botswana. Of the eighty visitors, only two (2) visitors had failed to provide information on their place of residence. Be that as it may, it was discovered that of the seventy-eight (96.2%) domestic visitors who gave information on their place of residence, the vast majority (75) came from various places outside the location of facilities where the questionnaires were administered. Only three (3) visitors at these facilities were found to be domiciled in the same location as the facilities where they lodged.

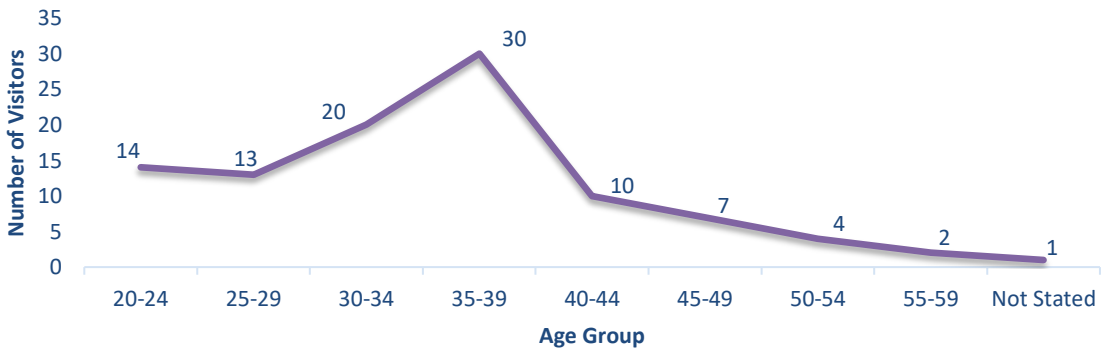

Figure 5-16: Number of clients by age group

Figure 5.16 generally suggests that the SMTEs are attractive to young people. The clientele base of the SMTEs is largely composed of young people in the age range 20 to 39 years, and the average age is 35 years. The number of visitors at SMTEs increases with an increase in age from age-group 20-24 years until it reaches a peak at age-group 35-39 years, after which a decrease

with an increase in age is observed. Young people who were aged 18 years at the time of the survey were not included in the sample because the research code of conduct would have required the study to seek parental consent ahead of the completion of the questionnaire. Coincidentally, the study never came across such individuals during the data collection. Even those aged 19 years were never spotted at the selected accommodation facilities. Perhaps economic factors are at play here because these people are too young and economically dependent to the point that they cannot afford accommodation fees.

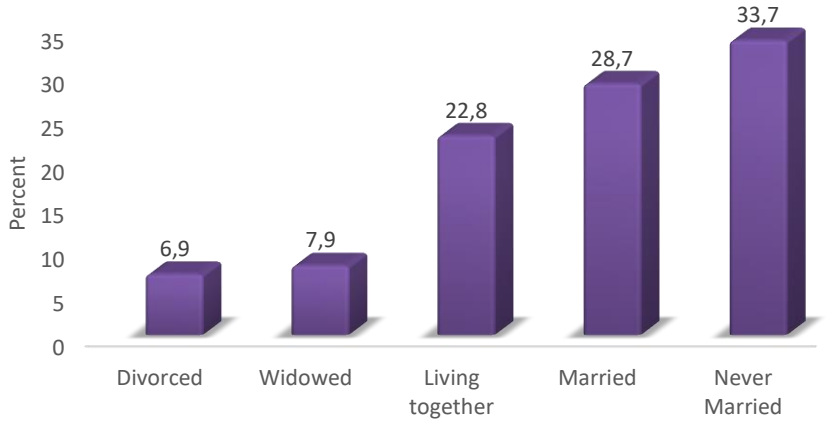

Figure 5-17: Marital status of respondents

Figure 5.17 shows that most (33.7%) clients were never married. Those who were married constituted 28.7% of visitors who completed the questionnaire.

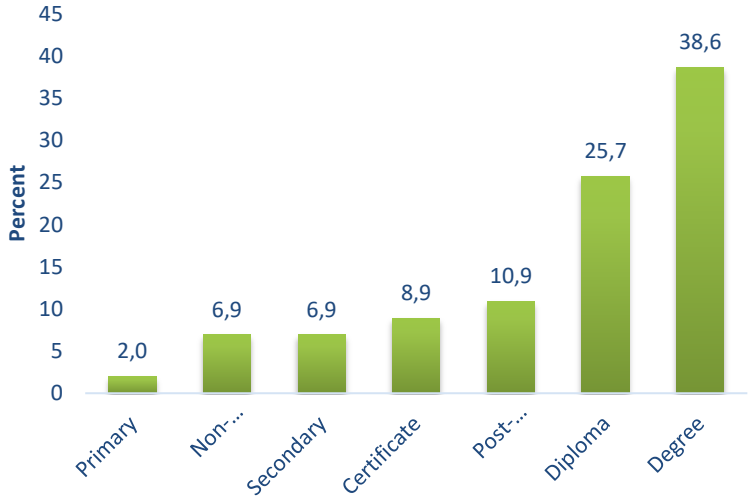

Figure 5-18: Educational status of respondents

According to Figure 5.18 above, the majority (38.6%) of clients who completed the questionnaire were graduates. Clients who held a diploma accounted for the second most share of the sample size with 25.7%, followed by post-graduates with 10.9%. Generally, people in this category earn more income than those with certificates and a basic education level.

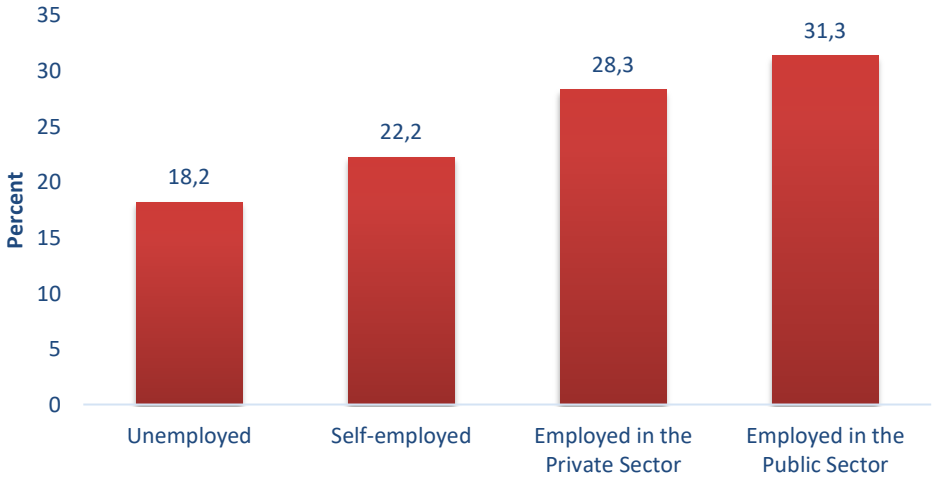

Figure 5-19: Employment status of respondents

Almost all (81.8%) clients who completed the questionnaire were employed, as is evident from Figure 5.19. Although the majority (31.3%) of clients were employed in public service, a roughly equal proportion (28.3%) came from the private sector. The self-employed category constituted 22.2% of the sample size.

5.3.2 Main Purpose of Visit at various Localities

All clients of facilities who identified themselves as visitors at various localities where the questionnaire was administered were further requested to provide reasons why they visited such places with a view to gain an understanding of the type of customers that lodged at these facilities.

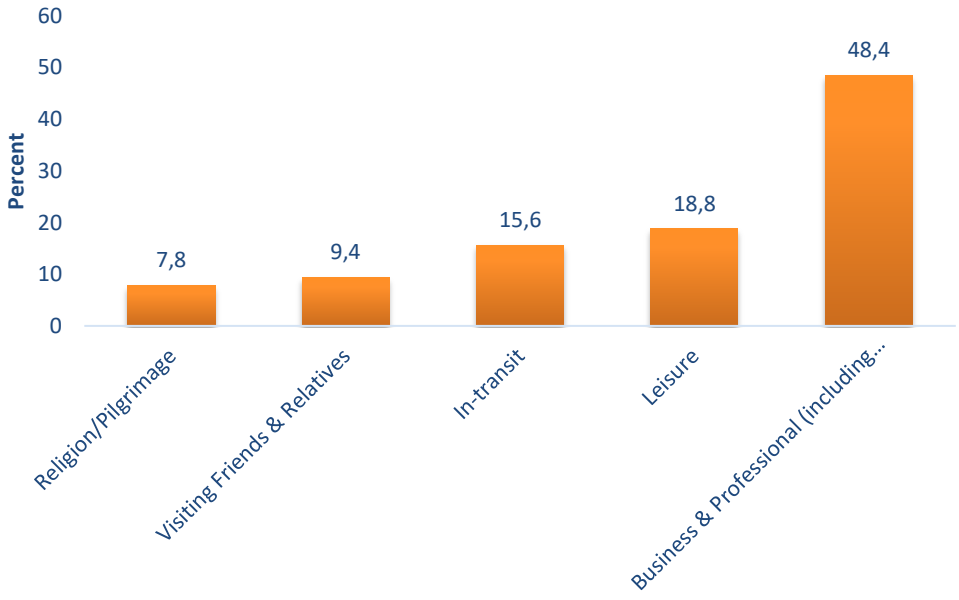

Figure 5-20: Purpose of visit by respondents

According to Figure 5.20 above, most (48.4%) visitors were on professional, or business trips at various localities where they were given the questionnaire to complete. These are more likely to be government employees, as evident in Table 5.10. Government officials would require internet services to access their social network accounts to run their daily official business to minimise interruptions while away on other official engagements. Leisure trips came in second place with 18.8%, followed by visitors who were in transit to other localities or countries with 15.6%. Those who were visiting friends and relatives came in fourth place with 9.4%%. Religious trips trailed and came in at fourth place with 7.8%.

Table 5.10 indicates that leisure trip visitors who lodged at these facilities were more likely to be unemployed. Those who were in transit to other destinations were more likely to be self-employed.

Table 5-10*: Employment Status by Purpose of Visit*

Employment Status	Purpose of Visit					Total
	Leisure	Visiting Friends & Relatives	Business & Professional (including studying)	In-transit	Religion/ Pilgrimage	
Unemployed	3	2	1	1	0	7
	42.9%	28.6%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Self-employed	2	1	5	3	1	12
	16.7%	8.3%	41.7%	25.0%	8.3%	100.0%
Employed in the Private Sector	2	2	9	3	2	18
	11.1%	11.1%	50.0%	16.7%	11.1%	100.0%
Employed in the Public Sector	5	1	15	2	2	25
	20.0%	4.0%	60.0%	8.0%	8.0%	100.0%
Total	12	6	30	9	5	62
	19.4%	9.7%	48.4%	14.5%	8.1%	100.0%

5.3.3 Degree of Social Media Utilisation among Clients of SMTEs

Under this section, the study examines the state of utilisation of social media among clients of SMTEs to determine whether there is a match between their utilisation rate and that of the SMTEs.

5.3.3.1 Media Utilisation

Social media had the edge over other forms of communication in terms of reaching out to clients of SMTEs, suggesting a high rate of social media utilisation among these clients. According to Figure 5.21, the majority (46%) of visitors who participated in the study had obtained information that influenced their decision to travel from social media.

Previous visits came across as the second most inspiring factor, with 27.8% of visitors have indicated that they had an urge to visit those places because they had previously paid a visit to them. Word-of-mouth came in third place with 22.7%, followed by website and newspapers with 11.3% respectively. Radio was perched at sixth place with 10.3% while television trailed behind with 6.2%.

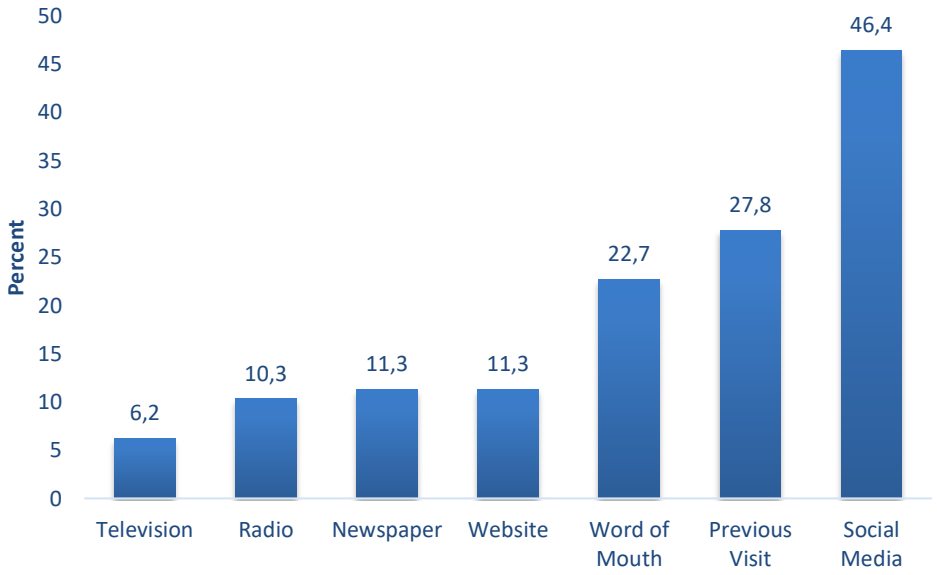

Figure 5-21: Source of information on travel decisions to a destination

5.3.3.2 Social media utilisation

According to Figure 5.22, the vast majority (88.0%) of clients of SMTEs had indicated that they use social media, and this confirms the assumption made above that the utilisation rate of social media among clients of SMTEs is high. SMTEs should reconsider their marketing approach and invest more efforts and resources in scaling up e-marketing and, more importantly social media as the target market is widely accessible on this platform. Table 5.11 further suggests that the utilisation of social media is highly prominent among young people in the age range 20-39 years, which constitutes the largest share of SMTEs clientele base.

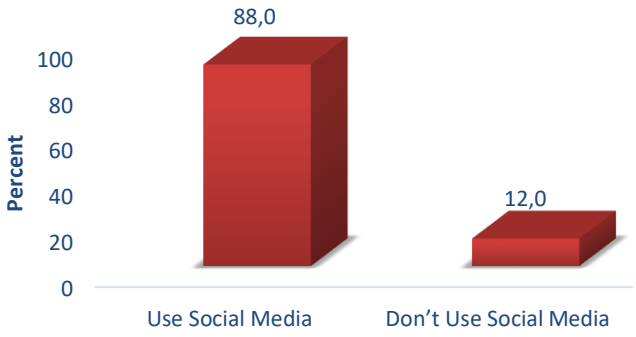

Figure 5-22: Utilisation of social media amongst respondents

Table 5-11: Social media utilisation by Age group

Age Group (years)	Do you use social media		Total
	Yes	No	
20-24	13	1	14
	92.9%	7.1%	100.0%
25-29	12	1	13
	92.3%	7.7%	100.0%
30-34	18	1	19
	94.7%	5.3%	100.0%
35-39	28	2	30
	93.3%	6.7%	100.0%
40-44	6	4	10
	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
45-49	6	1	7
	85.7%	14.3%	100.0%
50-54	3	1	4
	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
55-59	1	1	2
	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Total	87	12	99
	87.9%	12.1%	100.0%

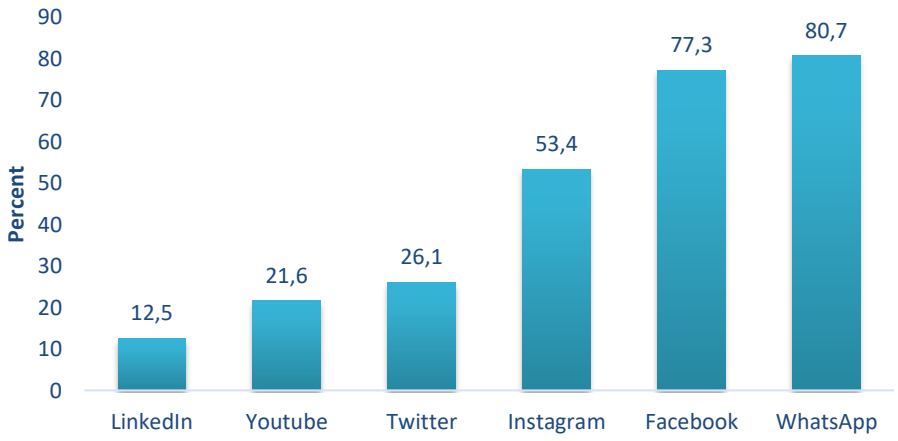

Figure 5-23: Types of social media used by respondents

The study identified several social media sites used by clients of SMTEs, and these include WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. However, social media networks differ in terms of the number of users. According to Figure 5.23 above, WhatsApp tends to be the most common type of platform, with over eighty percent (80.7%) clients of SMTEs having agreed to be subscribing to it. This implies communication with previous clients where the phone number is known. Facebook was placed below WhatsApp in terms of following with 77.3%. Instagram was used by 53.4% of clients of SMTEs, and this earned it third place in the user ratings. Twitter and YouTube were placed in fourth place, 26.1% respectively. LinkedIn is the least used social media form with 12.5%.

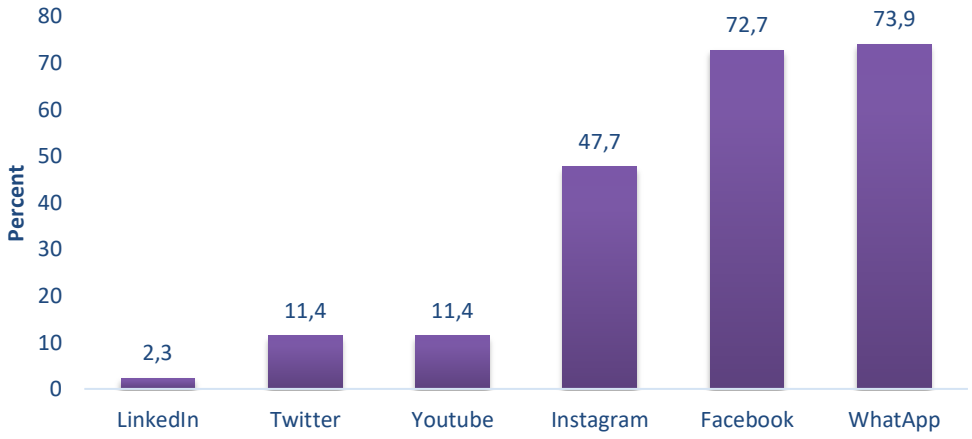

Figure 5-24: Types of social media preferred by respondents

According to Figure 5.24, clients of SMTEs spent most of their time on WhatsApp, followed by Facebook and Instagram, a replica of the pattern that was observed in Figure 5.24 above. YouTube also remained in fourth place, and so was Twitter with 11.4%. Just as in Figure 5.24, LinkedIn trailed behind with 2.3%.

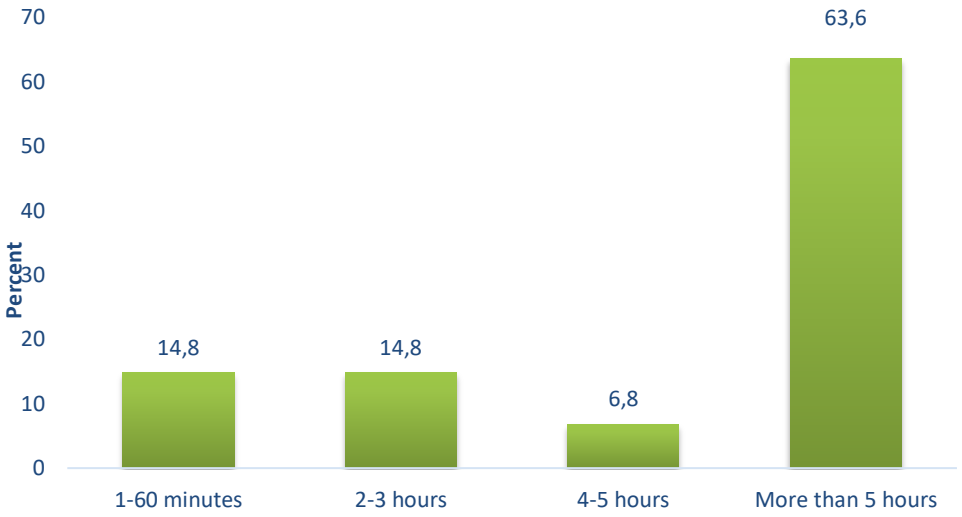

Figure 5-25: Time spent on social media per week by respondents

Regarding the average length of time spent on social media, in a week, a majority (63.6%) of clients of SMTE spent more than five hours on social media, as shown in Figure 5.25. With only 8.9% of the SMTEs having matched this time, more efforts should be made to encourage SMTEs to come on board in large numbers and adopt and recognise social media as an effective marketing tool, particularly for their target market tend to be prominent users of social media.

5.3.3.3 The Importance of Social Media in Planning a Holiday Destination

Social media provides users who wish to travel with a platform to gather and implement information on various destinations worldwide. It informs patrons once a decision regarding the best holiday destination had to be made.

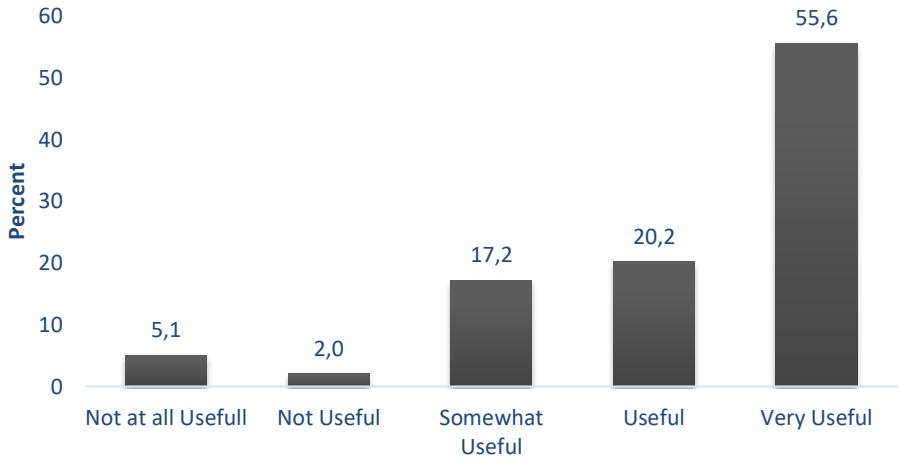

Figure 5-26: Usefulness of social media in choosing and planning holiday destination

According to Figure 5.26, most clients of social media believed social media was very useful in assisting them to choose and plan their holiday destination. The high median value of 5 demonstrates the SMTE clients' strong positive sentiments on the usefulness of social media in so far as choosing and planning holiday destinations is concerned. The low interquartile range of 1 suggests consensus among SMTE clients on this position.

Table 5-12: Factors to consider when using social media for travel purposes

Factors	Level of Importance (%)					Measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion	
	Not at all Important	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Median (Mdn)	Inter Quartile Range
Easy access to social media sites	5.00%	5.00%	11.90%	23.80%	54.50%	5	1
A one-stop-shop for all my travel needs	5.00%	5.00%	18.00%	22.00%	50.00%	4.5	2
Secure site	5.00%	6.90%	17.80%	20.80%	49.50%	4	2
Fast feedback from product owners	1.00%	7.90%	20.80%	16.80%	53.50%	5	2
Quality information on the products	2.00%	3.10%	20.40%	19.40%	55.10%	5	2
Previous reviews on the products	3.00%	10.90%	16.80%	19.80%	49.50%	4	2
Able to directly book	6.00%	7.00%	14.00%	12.00%	61.00%	5	2

To further understand the importance of social media in choosing and planning a holiday destination, the study identified several factors that one would normally consider when using social media for travel purposes. Clients of SMTEs were asked to state how these factors are important to them when using social media for travel purposes. According to Table 5.12, the majority (54.5%) of SMTE clients were of the view that easy access to social media both during planning and visiting is very crucial. SMTE clients had proved to be prominent users of social media, and difficult access would make life difficult for them. A Spearman's rank-order correlation was carried out to determine the relationship between 'the usefulness of social media in choosing and planning holiday destination' and 'easy access to social media during the planning and visiting.' The Spearman's correlation coefficient (*rs=0.584)* suggests a moderate to a relatively strong positive relationship between the two factors, and this basically implies that an increase in the degree to which SMTE clients would feel social media are useful in choosing and planning holiday destination the more they would wish for easy access to social media for travel purposes. The relationship is statistically significant at p=0.0001, which implies that there is a 99.99% chance that the strength and direction of the relationship between the two factors are not due to chance.

Most (50%) SMTE clients believed that it was very important for social media to serve as a one-stop-shop for all travel needs, and this is corroborated by the high median value and low interquartile range. The Spearman's correlation coefficient (*rs*=0.521) also suggests a moderate positive relationship between 'the usefulness of social media in choosing and planning a holiday destination' and 'one-stop-shop for all travel needs', and the relationship between the two factors is statistically significant at p=0.0001. This means that an increase in the degree to which SMTE clients would feel social media are useful in choosing and planning holiday destinations would trigger a rise in the demand for the use of social media and a site that could satisfy all travelling needs. In this case, users who wish to travel would not waste time and money that would otherwise be spent on the actual travel moving from one service point to another seeking service and information. The majority (49.5%) of them further believed that secure social media sites are very important because customers are guaranteed safety against scams.

Instant feedback from product owners also renders social media a very important tool, with over fifty-three percent (53.5%) of SMTE clients indicating that they consider this aspect very critical when using social media for travel purposes. This is further corroborated by the moderate positive relationship *(rs=0.487)* between 'the usefulness of social media in choosing and planning a holiday destination' and 'fast feedback from product owners' derived from Spearman's rank-order correlation analysis, which suggests that an increase in the degree at which SMTE clients would feel social media are useful in choosing and planning holiday destination would rise in tandem

with demand for the use of social media for travel purposes and in particular a site that could provide fast feedback from product owners. In their current state of utilisation of social media, the SMTEs would not adequately meet the expectation of their clients.

For instance, with the promotional campaigns and product or price updating carried out monthly on the websites mentioned above, it generally suggests that the social media sites for SMTEs are not as lively and responsive as SMTE clients would have expected. Most (55.1%) SMTEs believed that quality information on the products is very important when using social media for travel purposes. Poor quality information about the product can be misleading and inconveniencing to anyone who wishes to travel. Previous reviews on the products constitute quality issues, and therefore it is considered very important by most (49.5%) clients of SMTEs when planning a visit. The information that is uploaded on social media sites should be updated in tandem with the changes in the product to avoid inconvenience and possibly tension between clients and SMTEs.

The majority (61.0%) of clients further believed that it is very important to use social media sites that could allow direct booking for accommodation space or any form of tourism and travel service ahead of travel. The Spearman's rank-order correlation analysis that was carried out between 'the usefulness of social media in choosing and planning a holiday destination' and 'direct booking capability' revealed a moderate to a relatively strong positive relationship *(rs=0.595)* between the two factors. This means that an increase in the degree to which SMTE clients would feel social media are useful in choosing and planning holiday destination would trigger a rise in the demand for the use of social media for travel purposes and, in particular, a site that could allow for direct booking of accommodation and other tourism and travel services ahead of travel.

5.3.4 The Importance of Internet Access at the Destination

The section of the report examines the degree of the importance of internet access while visiting. It further highlights how the lack of access to the internet at the destination can affect visitors.

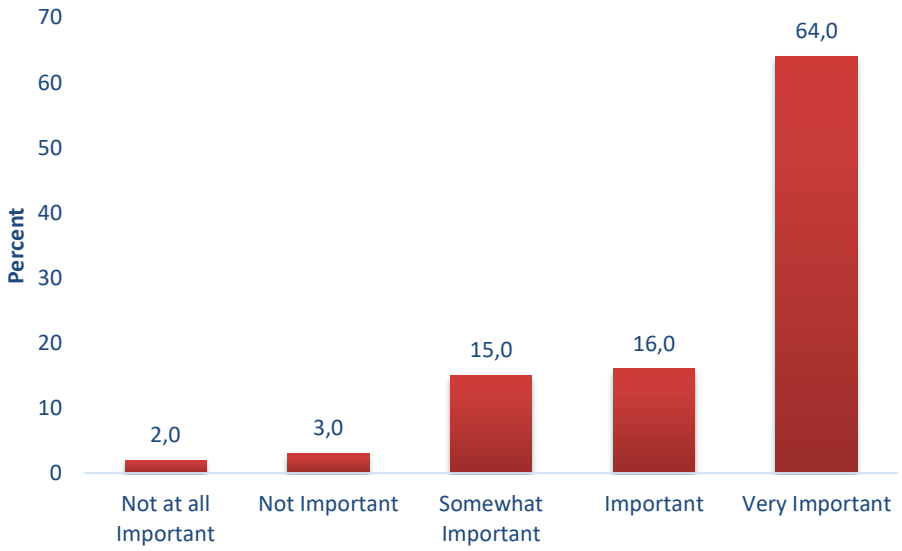

Figure 5-27: Importance of internet access while visiting

Figure 5.27 shows that clients of SMTEs recognise the internet as a very crucial tool, particularly while visiting. Most (64%) of them had indicated that access to the internet is very important at the destination.

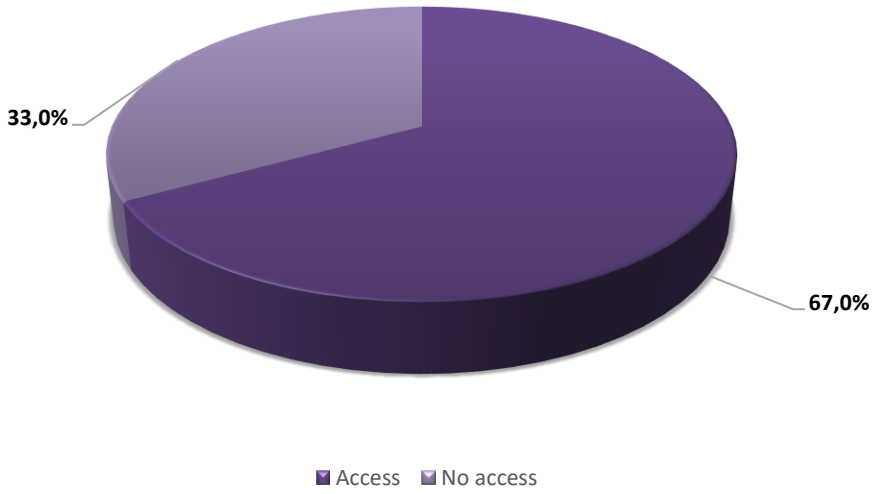

Figure 5-28: Internet access at accommodation facilities

Figure 5.28 suggests that most of the accommodation facilities where the interviewed visitors lodged had internet service, with 67% of the participating visitors indicating that they had internet access at these facilities.

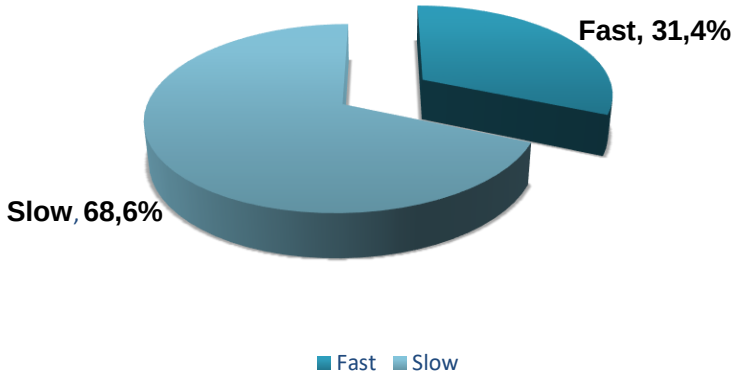

Figure 5-29: Speed of internet connectivity within SMTEs

Figure 5.29 above, however, suggests that the connectivity speed is low, one of the possible underlying factors for the low rate of utilisation of social media among SMTEs and possibly the situation observed above where over seventy percent (71.8%) of the SMTEs indicated that they do not have websites. Also, only 5.3% of them reported having always used the internet to obtain information from public authorities.

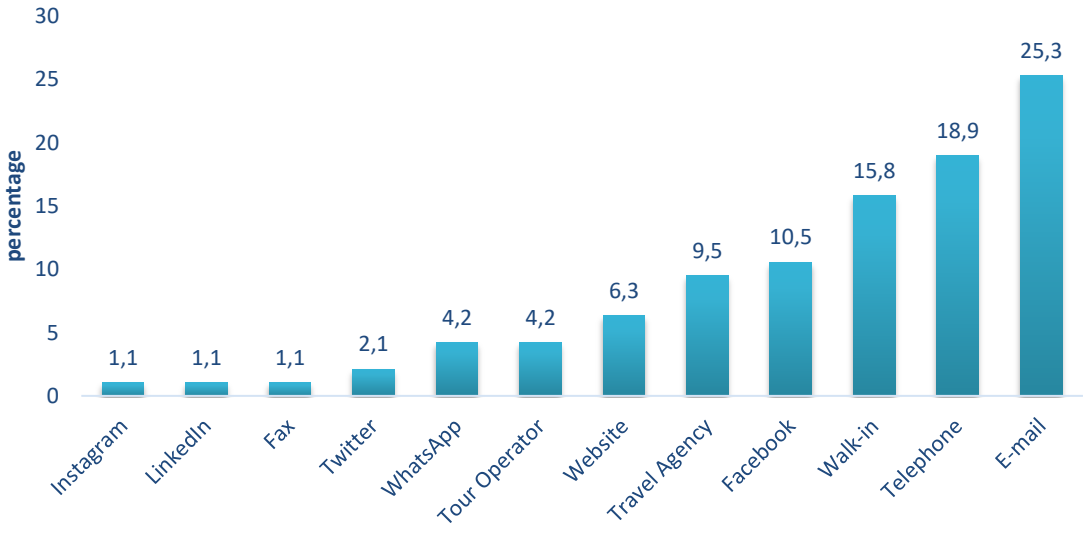

Figure 5-30: Booking mode of accommodation

According to Figure 5.30 above, most visitors made their accommodation bookings by e-mail. However, clients of SMTEs would use the traditional way of placing bookings such as telephone and walk-ins, possibly due to low internet connectivity speed or inactive social media sites.

5.4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS FROM KEY GOVERNMENT INFORMANTS

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with government officers who have detailed knowledge about tourism policies in Botswana, SMTEs, e-marketing, and IT. Their contribution is presented in the following sections.

5.4.1 Demographic information related to the participants

The findings in figure 5.31 show that 21.4% of key informants were from the Department of Tourism, 21.4% were from Botswana Tourism Authority, 14.3% were from Tourism Licensing and Inspection, 14.3% were from the Department of Environmental Affairs, 7.1% were from Department of Wildlife and Parks, 7.1% were from Department of Forestry, 7.1% were from Department of Waste Management and 7.1% were from Department of Information Technology.

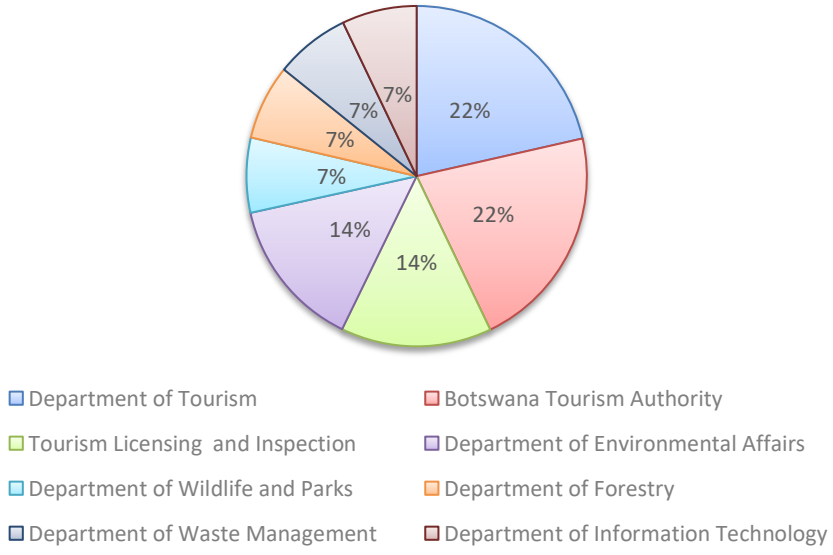

Figure 5-31 : Distribution of Key Informant Participants

5.4.2 Understanding of e-marketing

All 14 respondents were able to accurately define e-marketing as an application of marketing tools and techniques through electronic media, and more specifically, the Internet, to sensitise and attract customers about the products and services being offered by a business. The marketing could also be done through email, social media, and other online environments. The main purposes of e-marketing were stated as the possibility of generating sales, getting new customers for the business, as well as raising brand awareness to prospective customers. Below are examples of specific responses from key informants:

Informant 2 from Botswana Tourism Authority said that

''E-marketing is basically the marketing of a product or a service using online tools.''

Informant 4 from the Department of Tourism said that

''E-marketing, also known as electronic marketing, is the use of the Internet and digital media to sell a product or a service. This could be using social media platforms, etc.''

5.4.3 Importance of e-marketing in the tourism industry

All 14 informants could explain the role of e-marketing in the tourism industry. E-marketing was stated as giving both local and international coverage to potential clients who may want to consume tourism products and services. Companies could get exposure 24/7 and get connected to other marketers and create strategic partnerships in the process. The faster response time and easy access of Internet platforms were cited as other reasons why e-market is important in the tourism industry compared to traditional media such as billboards and newspapers. Below are examples of specific responses from key informants:

Informant 7 from the Department of Wildlife said

''E-marketing allows for a global platform which in turn could yield partnerships and recognition.''

Informant 9 from the Department of Forestry said

''An online presence is built through visual appeals providing an experience for potential customers.''

5.4.4 How e-marketing is benefiting or can benefit the SMTEs in Botswana

Informants stated that e-marketing gives SMTEs an online digital presence which helps them to make their products and services visible to customers, locally and globally. SMTEs can also use the concept of personalisation to tailor-make their offerings to individual customers. The creation of more customers, in turn, results in the creation of additional jobs in Botswana. E-marketing is the preferred choice because it is much cheaper compared to traditional methods of marketing. Below are examples of specific responses from key informants:

Informant 1 from the Department of Tourism said

‘*’Details of the business can be readily available for potential customers, hence increasing the efficiency of the business, for example, booking details can be provided online.”*

Informant 4 from the Department of Tourism said

‘’In Botswana, e-marketing can help the SMTEs to share their products and services online. This will enable the creation of leads online and reduce advertising costs. The SMTEs have an online presence, the more they will get repeat business.’’

5.4.5 Whether SMTEs should increase the use of e-marketing approach in their day-to-day operations

Figure 5.32 suggests that the key informants were not impressed with the utilisation rate of the e-marketing approach among SMTEs, with all of them calling for an increase in the utilisation rate of this marketing approach.

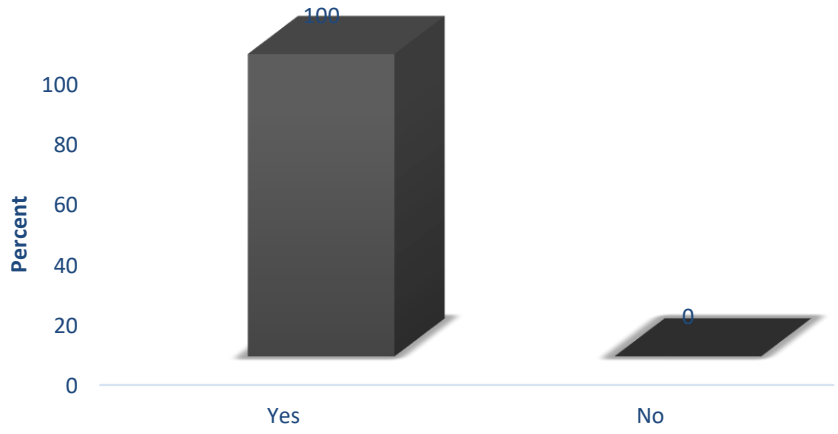

Figure 5-32: Increase the use of E-marketing on daily operation

5.4.6 Why participant feels e-marketing approach is not adequately used in SMTEs

The findings in Figure 5.33 show that 20.1% of informants believed that the e-marketing approach is not adequately used in SMTEs because of insufficient resources, 20.1% believed that it was due to lack of skills capacity, 17.2% believed that it was the unwillingness on the part of enterprise management, 12.1% believed that it was due to the slow penetration of the Internet, 12.1% believed that it was due to security concerns, 8.6% believed that the tourism enterprise management did not think that it was useful and 8.6% believed that it was due to lack of trust.

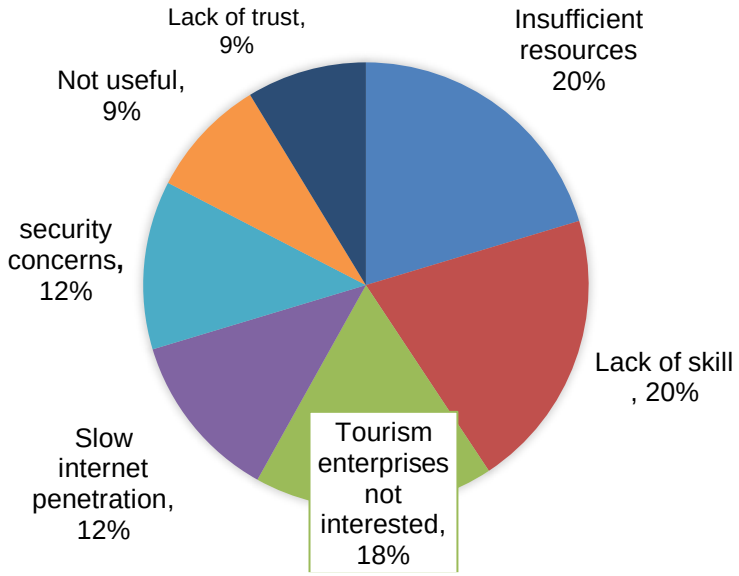

Figure 5-33: Why e-marketing approach is not adequately used

5.4.7 Measures in place to address the challenges of using E-marketing

According to Figure 5.34, the majority (77.8%) of key informants indicated that there were measures in place to address challenges relating to the inadequate use of e-marketing among the SMTEs in Botswana. It is, however, important to note that 22.2% of the key informants stated that there were no such measures in place.

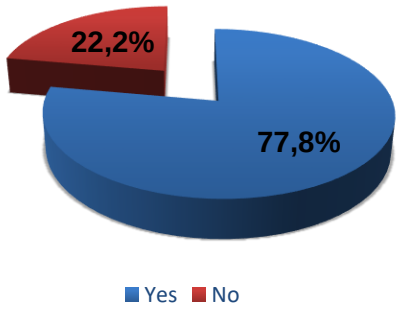

Figure 5-34: Measures to address E-marketing challenges among SMTEs

5.4.8 Remedial measures to address the challenges

The key informants recommended establishing infrastructure to connect all areas in Botswana and conducting training seminars and workshops so that SMTEs have better knowledge and understanding of the e-marketing approach. Other strategies suggested including the appointment of resource persons to help SMTEs gain awareness about the importance of e-marketing. Below are examples of specific responses from key informants:

Informant 8 from the Department of Environmental Affairs said

''The government can set in place infrastructure to connect all areas of the country.''

Informant 13 from the Department of Waste Management said

''Educate and create awareness on how the Internet can better build your brand and online presence.''

5.4.9 The most effective way for SMTEs in Botswana to promote their businesses

The informants recommended the use of social media for e-marketing purposes, the use of search engine optimisation, and radio as the most effective ways to promote SMTEs businesses. Other recommendations given were the development of customer relations with clients and hosting websites to market the SMTEs. Below are examples of specific responses from key informants:

Informant 7 from the Department of Wildlife and Parks said

‘’*Posting photos, videos and updated data on company websites would help to promote the use of e-marketing approach.’’*

Informant 9 from the Department of Forestry said

‘’Develop a relationship with your customers through email marketing.’’

5.4.10 Presence of e-marketing strategy in Botswana

Figure 5.35 below indicates that 46.2% of government informants agreed that the Botswana government does not have an e-marketing strategy, and 53.8% did not know whether the government had an e-marketing strategy. They were also not aware of who coordinates this e-marketing strategy if at all it existed.

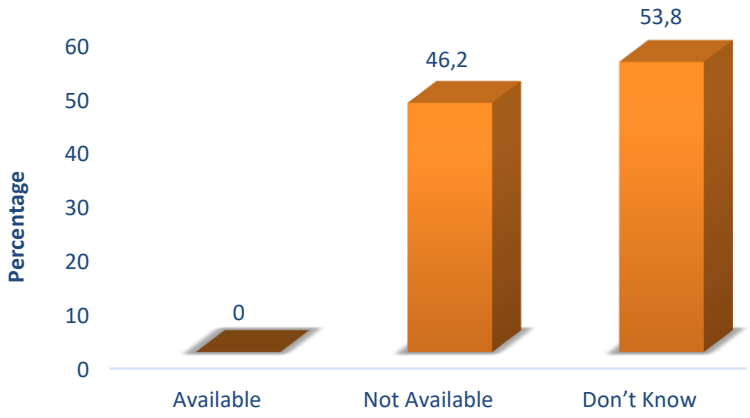

Figure 5-35: Availability of E-marketing strategy in the Tourism industry

5.4.11 Implementation of the e-marketing strategy

Figure 5.36 below shows that 7.7% of government informants stated that the Botswana government had not implemented the e-marketing strategy, and 92.3% did not know whether the government had implemented the e-marketing strategy.

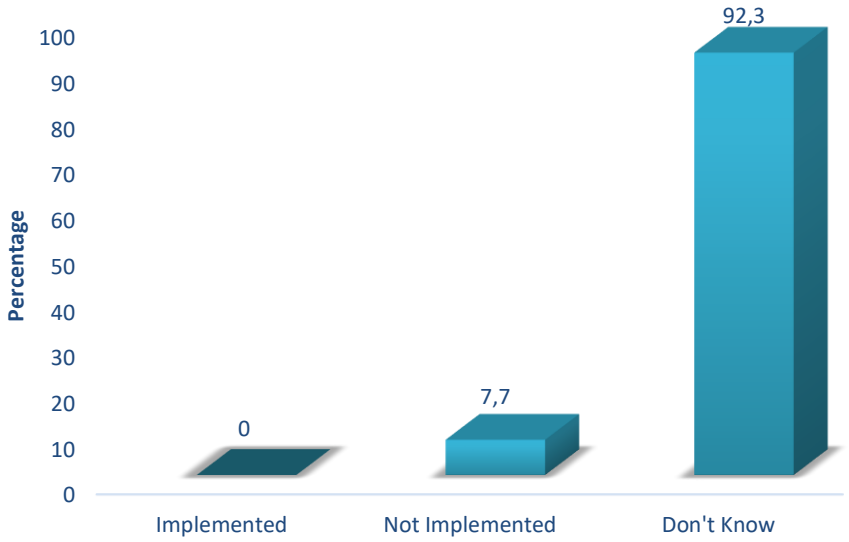

Figure 5-36: Implementation of E-marketing strategy

5.4.12 Challenges that are encountered with respect to the implementation of the e-marketing strategy

Informants stated that the major challenges encountered were technology illiteracy amongst users of e-marketing tools, lack of funds to implement the e-marketing strategy, fear of change, limited Internet connectivity, and lack of IT skills on the part of employees, and lack of funds to implement and support the strategy. Below are examples of specific responses from key informants:

Informant 12 from the Department of Tourism said

‘’*IT illiteracy, lack of funds and limited Internet were some of the challenges encountered in respect to the implementation of the e-marketing strategy.’’*

Informant 14 from the Department of IT said

‘’The primary challenge would be lack of knowledge of e-marketing, identification of the best and cost-effective strategies. Other challenges would be implementation and administrative costs.’’

5.4.13 General comments regarding the subject matter

Government informants stated that SMTEs can increase their e-marketing experience by setting up websites on which they will post relevant content to attract prospective customers. The use of search engine optimisation can also help the SMTEs strategically position themselves when customers search for information on destinations. SMTE websites can also be used as distribution points for promotional material targeting individual viewers of their websites. Below are examples of specific responses from key informants:

Informant 8 from the Department of Environmental Affairs said

> *'In order to get good coverage through search engines, SMTEs will need to update their websites regularly."*

Informant 14 from the Department of IT said

> ''*SMTEs can benefit a lot from e-marketing. With the Internet, information reaches people quickly in every corner of the world. SMTEs have to educate themselves to take advantage of e-marketing. E-marketing is environmentally friendly since it reduces printing as compared to traditional marketing."*

In summary, key government informants highlighted the issues of insufficient resources, lack of skills capacity, lack of SMTE management support, slow penetration of the Internet, and security as major inhibitors to the utilisation of e-marketing by SMTEs in Botswana. Lack of resources, lack of knowledge, and lack of support to SMTEs exist, and the Botswana government has put remedial measures to deal with these challenges. Specific solutions cited by key government informants are the establishment of Internet infrastructure to connect all areas in Botswana, conducting of knowledge dissemination seminars on e-marketing approaches, the appointment of dedicated resource persons to assist SMTEs with their e-marketing strategies. Social media, search engine optimisation, and radio to promote SMTEs were also other recommendations.

Despite the above problems and solutions cited, government informants were not sure about specific e-marketing strategies in Botswana to assist with the e-marketing of SMTE businesses. Specific policies such as Maitlamo 2004 and BTO Act were not known by most government informants. This lack of knowledge was reported as being due to a lack of adequate implementation of Botswana government policies and strategies. The absence of web presence by the majority of SMTEs has also been confirmed by key government informants who highlighted

the importance of websites when attracting customers who are searching for information and distribute promotional material.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the findings from three sets of participants consisting of 199 SMTEs, 102 visitors to SMTEs businesses, and 14 government officials who acted as key informants during face-to-face interviews. SMTE representatives gave their views on their attitudes and understanding of social media marketing networks in Botswana, the importance and degree of use of social media among SMTE, and e-marketing security and compliance.

Visitors of SMTEs gave their views on the degree of social media utilisation among clients of SMTEs and observed challenges in respect to the use of e-marketing among SMTEs. Government officials gave their opinions on their understanding, importance, and benefits of e-marketing strategies for tourism in Botswana; and the challenges encountered during the implementation of an e-marketing strategy in tourism in Botswana. The next chapter, Chapter 6, discusses the findings in greater detail.

CHAPTER 6: CRITICAL REVIEW OF E-MARKETING STRATEGIES USED BY SMTES IN BOTSWANA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the critical review of e-marketing strategies used by SMTEs in Botswana. These reviews focus on challenges facing SMTEs in Botswana, marketing strategies used by SMTEs, SMTEs social media utilisation, e-marketing, and legal compliance, and Botswana government intervention strategies to promote SMTEs. This discussion will compare the findings with the literature review to allow for informed decisions, which will help to determine conclusions and recommendations in the next chapter, Chapter 6. Initially, statistical measures are presented, and justification on how they fit into the discussion of these findings are explained.

The discussions in this chapter are also aligned to the initial research questions which are- to identify and analyse strategies for harnessing the potential of tourism in stimulating socio-economic development, specifically in the case of Botswana, by means of literature review; to analyse the current marketing challenges, processes, successes of SMTEs in the developing tourism environment through an in-depth literature review; to analyse the potential of e-business strategies with specific reference to e-marketing strategies in contributing to business success in the tourism industry by means of a literature review; to determine the adoption and the extent of the use of e-marketing strategies by SMEs in the tourism industry of Botswana by means of empirical study, and to develop an e-marketing strategy for SMEs in the tourism industry of Botswana.

6.2 RELIABILITY OF QUESTIONNAIRES

The reliability (the extent to which items are inter-correlated or measure the same construct) was measured using Cronbach's Alpha (CA). In general, a CA value greater than 0.70 indicates enough internal consistency of the instrument and is acceptable, but less than 0.70 indicates insufficient consistency (Chang, Magobe & Kim, 2015). CA was greater than 0.70 in all seven constructs ranging from 0.728 to 0.792 (See Table 6.1). The CA's were greater than 0.80 in both constructs of the visitor's questionnaire, indicating a high level of reliability for the visitor questionnaire (See Table 6.2).

Table 6-1*: Reliability of Constructs (CA) for SMTE Instrument*

Measurement Scale	Number of Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
SMTE understanding of social network marketing	7	0.738
SMTE challenges of social media	11	0.735
SMTE importance of social media	9	0.728
SMTE increased use of social media	3	0.785
SMTE better utilisation of social media	5	0.785
SMTE website characteristics	12	0.734
SMTE legal compliance	7	0.792

Table 6-2*: Cronbach's Alpha (CA*)

Measurement Scale	Number of Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Visitor social media usage	20	0.814
Visitor advantages of social media	7	0.913

6.3 CRITICAL REVIEW ELEMENT ONE: CHALLENGES FACING SMTEs IN BOTSWANA

While SMTEs in Botswana have an adequate understanding of social network marketing, there exist some gaps in terms of their lack of knowledge of the contribution of customer relationship management and the reinforcement of messages on quality-of-service delivery to help such messages to go viral. Some SMTEs confirmed that social media is not adequately used in their organisation because they felt that it is not useful, while others cited insufficient knowledge for its lack of use. Other SMTEs stated that they do not use social media due to inadequate resources and lack of time to use social media for marketing purposes.

These challenges have also been cited by scholars Shemi and Procter (2013b) as negatively impacting the use of technology in Botswana, and this has impacted the efforts of SMTEs to attract more customers to their businesses and realise more revenue.

The findings of this study concluded that the majority of SMTEs do not have websites to market their services. This may be mainly attributed to a lack of Internet access to a significant section of the country's landscape. This lack of Internet access may be attributed to the lower-than-expected e-marketing effort of SMTEs in Botswana. Most SMTEs also lack policies and procedures to

describe how and when e-marketing-related independent reviews are performed. This may imply that e-marketing strategies for SMTEs are static in nature and are seldom updated to suit new market conditions and changing technology. The findings show that there are some gaps still to be filled in terms of government intervention efforts to the promotion of e-marketing among SMTEs. More than a third of SMTEs have no access to government support in terms of promoting their businesses. This may be impacting their effort to attract customers and generate revenue to be competitive.

Key government informants summed up the above challenges by suggesting that e-marketing approaches are not adequately used by SMTEs in Botswana because of insufficient resources, lack of skills capacity, and unwillingness on the part of the tourist enterprises management, slow penetration of the Internet, security concerns, and lack of trust. The issue of resources has also been cited by SMTEs. Various scholars (Okurut & Ama, 2013; Shemi & Procter, 2013b; Nkwe, 2014) have also concluded that lack of resources such as the Internet and IT equipment is a hindrance to the e-marketing effort of SMTEs in Botswana. Lack of skills capacity, including the high recruitment and retention costs of IT officers, has also been cited by Shemi and Procter (2013b) as being a significant setback for SMTEs in their endeavour to establish e-marketing strategies in their businesses. Most SMTEs have failed to take off due to lack of management support (Chang, 2012; Rocha & Snow, 2009), and the findings of this study are also not an exception.

6.4 CRITICAL REVIEW ELEMENT 2: MARKETING STRATEGIES USED BY SMTEs IN BOTSWANA

The majority of SMTEs who participated in this study acknowledged that they use social media for marketing purposes. However, studies from across the globe revealed that social media usage in Botswana for marketing purposes is still low. Social media, as a marketing tool, has not yet been embraced by a sizeable number of SMTEs in Botswana. Other media such as word-of-mouth and billboards and brochures are still dominating the marketing field in tourism in Botswana. The commonest tool used to market SMTE businesses is Facebook. This is comparable to regional and global statistics, which also confirm that small businesses dominantly use Facebook as a marketing tool. Other tools which are also popular amongst SMTEs in Botswana are WhatsApp, Instagram, email, and Twitter and these statistics are also like global statistics, which reveal that social media tools are some of the emerging and prominent e-marketing tools which are used to promote businesses.

The study shows that most SMTEs feel that their employees still lag behind as far as adoption of e-marketing strategies is concerned, with most employees still preferring to use traditional marketing media and offline transactions. This can also be inferred from their views on employment and training of staff who are competent in ICT skills. Longenecker *(*2013) reveals that e-marketing is cheaper and more convenient and has, thus, become more popular with SME management. It appears that a significant number of current SMTE websites in Botswana do not promote e-business; business owners suggest that their businesses should have websites that enable e-marketing and e-business. This can be achieved through embedding features like blogs, videos, audio clips, photos, and infographics which allow a higher level of interactivity and customer feedback than with most websites. A study by Preda and Furdui (2009) suggests that SMEs are not realising their full potential from free Internet-based e-marketing solutions due to their ignorance and limited resources. Ananda *et al.* (2015) conclude that SMEs which take advantage of the versatility of e-marketing solutions have reaped benefits which include visualisation of corporate image and online engagement of customers.

SMTEs can also promote their e-marketing by continuously testing different social media tools until they identify and adopt the ones which suit their businesses best. Various social media tools exist for different business environments and include Facebook (for dynamic single pages), websites (collection of static or dynamic webpages with text, audio, graphics and video), WhatsApp, and Twitter (for short messages and data transfer, including audio, and video). According to Ananda *et al.* (2015), SMEs can adopt what is termed social media marketing strategies to integrate tailor-made tools which assist them in driving their marketing effort at a lower cost. Key areas involved are personalizing the customer experience and customisation of products, engaging with competitors in social media, customer support, and market intelligence (Ananda *et al.,* 2015). SMTEs also highlighted the issue of removing the fear and stigma associated with social media. For example, some SMTEs confessed that their employees associated tools like Facebook with unethical things, others felt that social media is not trustworthy, and others felt that social media would not work for small businesses. These findings are consistent with those of Mgaya *et al.* (2012), who raised SME management socio-cultural concerns with ICT and were more comfortable with face-to-face interactions.

SMTEs also felt that they could promote e-marketing if their companies moved away from traditional media and used digital technologies for marketing purposes. Most SMTEs in Botswana still depend on traditional media, and the few which have adopted digital presence still have challenges of Internet connectivity, privacy concerns, and lack of ICT skills on the part of staff (Nkwe, 2012; Dlodlo & Dhurup, 2013). The final major recommendation made by SMTEs was on benchmarking. SMTEs suggested that benchmarking could be done to investigate how other

businesses have adopted e-marketing in their structures. Benchmarking has also been used by SMEs to upgrade and rapidly accelerate their e-readiness and marketing strategies (Kahn, Strong & Wang, 2014). According to Kahn *et al.* (2014), SMEs could measure their e-marketing programmes by benchmarking aspects such as download speed, visitor statistics, and competitor sales.

More than half of SMTEs suggested that the future of e-marketing in Botswana is good. This can also be confirmed by the legislative frameworks which have already been set up by the Botswana Government (Maitlamo, 2006, BTA Act, 2015; BTC Act, 2011) to support all types of business, including the establishment of e-governance in all Ministries. There is also evidence to suggest that a significant number of SMEs have brought e-business strategies onboard and are beginning to migrate from traditional forms of marketing to e-marketing. However, it is shocking to see that some of the challenges experienced in the current study were similar to findings of 2012 and even earlier – this question the status and how to move the SMTE's forward.

6.5 CRITICAL ELEMENT 3: SOCIAL MEDIA UTILISATION BY SMTEs IN BOTSWANA

SMTEs gave their feedback on the types of media or communication channels that they use to advertise their businesses. The commonest media used by SMTEs is the traditional word-of-mouth followed by social media and other traditional channels such as brochures, billboards, newspapers, and radio. Findings from literature also reveal that word-of-mouth is by far the largest form of marketing and advertising, with many companies across the globe using the channel to power their online presence (Naz *et al.,* 2014; van Scheers & Prinsloo, 2014). Findings by Naz *et al.* (2014) and van Scheers and Prinsloo (2014) suggest that organisations create a competitive advantage when they use the positive features of word-of-mouth as a medium to advertise and market their products and services.

On the issues surrounding SMTEs understanding of social network marketing, the findings show that most SMTEs have a moderate understanding of social network marketing. SMTEs showed an understanding of social network marketing as a tool that makes it easier for businesses to identify and interact with target markets (Rodgers *et al.,* 2012), as a tool that helps to project an SMTE's brand image (CMO Council Report, 2018), as a tool transforms the marketing landscape by making it possible for consumers and businesses to interact instantly and with ease (Sawhney *et al.,* 2016), as a tool which helps to give SMTEs instant feedback from their customers (Kumar *et al.,* 2015) and as a tool which helps SMTEs to analyse competition (Sawhney *et al.,* 2016). This, however, has not been achieved to its full extent in Botswana.

On the downside, most SMTEs did not understand that social network marketing is about customer relationship management (Sheikh & Basti, 2015; Didia & Nwokah, 2015) and that it reinforces messages on quality service delivery and helps it to go viral (Diagne & Ossebi, 2016).

SMTEs were of the view that social media is still good for marketing purposes even if it requires shorter posts (messages). In fact, short messages have been strongly recommended as appropriate marketing techniques because they home in on the key marketing messages to the audience. The SMTEs were not sure whether the content shared on social media is trustworthy. Trust is another factor that has been cited in the literature review as being crucial for the adoption of social media by all players. SMTEs also agreed that they did not view the variety of social media platforms as a disadvantage but as an advantage, because they have a wide choice of media types to select from when marketing their businesses, from text in web pages, audio in podcasts, and videos in YouTube.

There was consensus amongst SMTEs that social media cuts across the entire age divide and is not restricted to the younger people only. This implies that social media can be an ideal e-marketing tool because it has a universal appeal to all population age groups. SMTEs were not sure whether or not social media can promote or tarnish brand image. All the uncertainty creates problems in implementing such systems for SMTE's in Botswana.

The literature review suggests that since social media is an e-marketing tool, it helps businesses to promote both products and brand images of organisations. SMTEs agreed that social media is easy to use, hence its emergence and popularity amongst all age groups. The literature review reveals that social media is convenient, fast, and secure, and this has made it attractive to users from different backgrounds.

On the issue of cost, SMTEs stated that social media is cheap to use. This makes it a target for e-marketing services because it is cheap and can be used on different types of computer hardware and software platforms. On the issue of connectivity, SMTEs agreed that the relative ease with which devices can connect to social media platforms was a significant advantage of the tool. Literature also reveals that social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter can be connected and used on the fly and do not need extensive training before they can be used. Even it is easy to use and easy to connect, the availability of trusted internet directly influences this aspect.

SMTEs were of the view that social media does not affect productivity. However, a significant number of SMTE were not sure whether social media affects productivity. While the literature supports the notion that social media increases productivity through the attraction of new

customers and greater revenue generation, there are also dissenting views on the effects of social media. Scholars have suggested that social media if abused, can lead to what is known as cyber-loafing, whereby users can spend endless hours surfing content that does not add value to their actual work.

SMTEs agreed that social media is an effective tool for selling a product or service. This is also supported by scholars who concluded that modern businesses, both small and large, can realise great profits from advertising and marketing their products and services using social media. Social media has the advantage of popularity and ease of connectivity compared to other media types. SMTEs were not sure whether social media platforms violate company privacy. However, a significant number disagreed that social media violates company privacy. There is ample evidence from literature that social networks are secure, and designers of these networks are continuously making efforts to ensure that user information is kept private and confidential. Measures such as encryption, authentication, access restrictions using passwords and usernames have helped to allay user fears about releasing data to social media networks. The SMTE's of Botswana is either not aware of how to secure their sites or just do not know how to do it.

The findings from SMTEs survey indicate that, on average, an SMTE owner spends about 2.54 hours on social media per day. This compares reasonably well with regional statistics of 2.50 hours per day (Qwerty, 2018) but is less than global statistics, which stand at 2 hours 25 minutes spent on social media per day (World News media Network, 2018). SMTEs also agreed that social media was very useful to their business. These findings compare well with those from other studies conducted across the globe, which also state that more and more businesses are finding social media to be helpful when they market their businesses (Paliszkiewicz *et al.,* 2017; Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

SMTEs gave reasons why they use social media in their businesses. The main reasons which they gave are the ability to attract many customers, the ability to rapidly grow and gain exposure, and the ability to communicate with customers. These findings are consistent with those from global studies. A study by Arseculeratne and Yazdanifard (2014) concluded that modern businesses are using social media for online marketing to reach targeted customers, promotions, marketing intelligence, and marketing communications.

Abuhashesh (2014) concluded that companies use social media for them to have more significant interaction with customers and to create a positive brand image. However, Abuhashesh (2014) also cautions the use of social media because it has the potential to cause negative social media campaigns against organisations if it is not properly implemented and managed. Singh and Sinha

(2017) concluded that social media is popular with businesses due to its high levels of interactivity and accessibility. Social media is also favoured because it is cheap but can reach a wider audience than traditional media (Singh & Sinha, 2017).

Almost all SMTEs who participated in this study concurred that they would recommend social media to another organisation as a tool for marketing its products or services. This may be due to the popularity and versatility of social media to both large and small businesses (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014). The majority of SMTEs are, however, not willing to increase the use of social media. This might be because they do not have adequate tools, infrastructure, and manpower to deploy social media within their structures.

SMTEs suggested that social media is not adequately used in their organisations mainly due to lack of time, insufficient resources, and insufficient knowledge about social media. These findings are consistent with studies by Siddiqui and Singh (2016), who concluded that social media has problems such as being time-consuming to use, lack of standardised metrics to evaluate the success of the advertising effort, proneness to negative public opinions leading to organisational failure and lack of technical skills to deal with challenges such as hacking and viruses. A study by Rahadi and Abidillah (2013) revealed that factors that contribute to better utilisation of social media in organisations include the improvement of professional management of social media at the workplace, placing measures in place to maintain brand quality to improve customer satisfaction, and improving customer communication and feedback. These findings are also complemented by Rugova and Prenaj (2016), who suggested that the utilisation of social media can be improved through the engagement of human and time resources in organisations, engaging employees in IT skills training and customer management, designing effective strategies to measure return on investment in social media and develop strategies to deal with major risks such as reputational, legal, and operational.

About a quarter of SMTEs stated that they have websites that have online ordering/reservation/booking facilities. These websites also have product catalogues or price lists for customers' attention. More than half of these SMTEs stated that they had hosted their websites themselves, with almost a quarter stating that their websites are hosted by third parties. Studies by Notta and Vlachvei (2013) on website characteristics on Greek SMEs revealed that companies add to their websites properties like business information, production and products information, facility for online ordering and payments, social media blogs, tourism opportunities and local partnerships, clear navigation options (including logos, site map, language selection, and website updating), value-added features like press releases, and educational information for customers.

Findings from the study reveal that most SMTEs develop and maintain their website content. In a UK study, Mohammadi and Thelwall (2014), while acknowledging that most SMTEs have websites, there still remain challenges of optimisation with major search engines such as Yahoo! and Google. A significant number of SMEs were reported as having websites, but their main challenge was control of the content of the websites and managers' lack of website experience. An Australian study by Bednarski and Tatnall (2015) revealed that SMEs tend to be successful when they receive government funding to host and maintain their websites. The main challenges faced by SMEs were the issue of updating and maintaining website content. A similar study by Magaya *et al.* (2012) revealed that fewer than half of SMEs in Botswana have their own websites, and the majority employed third parties to develop their website content. Most of the websites are not maintained with key transactions such as online payments being made offline.

The study concluded that there is limited access to the business through mobile phones by SMTE employees in Botswana. There was also limited use by SMTEs to use the Internet to access information from public authority homepages. A New Zealand study by Karam and Zhu (2015) concluded that SME employees used mobile phones to communicate with customers and transfer data between devices. A similar study by Wahla and Awan (2014) concluded that employee usage of mobile phones has both positive and negative effects. The study revealed that employees used mobile phones for purposes of communication and improving productivity as a result. However, mobile phones were also perceived as creating dependency by employees and negatively affecting employee performance and productivity in the end.

The study findings show that most SMTEs agreed that the Botswana Government is doing enough to promote the use of e-marketing amongst SMTEs. The government of Botswana has implemented an ICT Policy called Maitlamo in 2006 (Maitlamo, 2006). The purpose of this policy is to create an enabling environment, provide universal service and access to information and communications facilities, and help to make Botswana a regional ICT hub. On the ICT legal and regulatory framework, Botswana has established the Botswana Telecommunications Authority (BTA) and the Botswana Telecommunications Company (BTC) as ICT regulatory bodies and watchdogs. Whilst the Botswana Government has designed and adopted an ICT Policy, this policy has largely remained unimplemented (Nkwe, 2012). Magaya *et al.* (2012) also concur with the conclusion by Nkwe (2012) by revealing that the rollout of ICT to SMEs in Botswana has been slow and is in stark contrast to the declarations made in Maitlamo Policy of 2006.

SMTEs suggested measures that they would recommend for the promotion of e-marketing in their business. The findings in Table 6.3 summarise and rank the views of SMTEs regarding the promotion of e-marketing in their business. The commonest measure dealt with is the training, so

that they have the skills to manage and drive the e-marketing strategy of the business. Scholars have also acknowledged that most ICT strategies fail due to a lack of IT skills of personnel (Magaya *et al.,* 2012; Nkwe, 2012).

The next important point focused on the hiring of suitable employees with knowledge of e-marketing. This point is related to the first one which deals with staff training because it is IT skills related. SMTEs suggested that their lack of finances was a barrier to the promotion of e-marketing in their business and suggested that financial assistance from the government and other sources could help to promote e-marketing through purchasing suitable hardware and software resources. The issue of finance and resources is also confirmed by Magaya *et al.* (2012) and Bednarski and Tatnall (2015). SMTEs also suggested conducting market research to promote e-marketing in their business. Kotler *et al.* (2016) suggest that to investigate a specific business problem or opportunity, an organisation should embark on market research. This market research helps the business to obtain information related to customers' attitudes and buying behaviour.

Google analytics can be used by SMTEs to monitor customer traffic as a measure of the effectiveness of the e-marketing effort. Similar views are given by Haugestaad (2009), who suggested that businesses can use analytics software to isolate subsets of web traffic to track and compare all adverts, affiliate campaigns, paid links, and key words on a variety of search engines with the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of their e-marketing effort. The reality is that most of the SMTEs do not have the skills and knowledge to deal with this type of analyses.

Table 6-3*: Measures to promote e-marketing*

Measure to promote e-marketing	**Frequency**	**Ranking**
Training of staff so that they have the skills to manage and drive the e-marketing strategy of the business.	44	1
Hire suitable employees with knowledge of e-marketing	35	2
Seek financial assistance from government and other sources to promote e-marketing through purchasing of suitable hardware and software resources	26	3
Conduct an initial market research to assess the potential of the e-marketing aspect of the business.	18	4
Use Google analytics software to monitor customer traffic as a measure of the effectiveness of the e-marketing effort.	15	5

There is a need for employees to change their mindset and switch to e-marketing platforms when advertising the business.	13	6
The company must create a website so that it is able to promote e-marketing	12	7
Use content management strategies to add tools such as blogs, videos, photos and infographics with the aim of attracting visitors to the website	11	8
The company should try different social media platforms and settle for the one which attracts the most customers and yields maximum returns	10	9
Remove fear and stigma associated with social media	9	10
The company should move away from traditional media and use digital technologies for marketing purposes.	8	11
Perform benchmarking in order to see how other businesses have adopted e-marketing in their structures	8	12

6.6 CRITICAL ELEMENT 4: E-MARKETING AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE

The findings from the study show that more than three-quarters of SMTEs stated that they do not have any policies and procedures in place which describe how and when e-marketing-related independent reviews are performed. For those who stated that they have these policies and procedures, most agreed that the policies and procedures include security and procedure reviews. However, most SMTEs stated that their policies and procedures do not have the following – attack and penetration testing, regulatory compliance reviews, member privacy reviews, application development and maintenance reviews, incident response, and business continuity plan reviews, and virus detection and protection reviews. This implies that the majority of SMTE websites in Botswana are vulnerable and not compliant with almost all policies and regulations dealing with e-marketing security and legal compliance. These findings are collaborated by Nkwe (2012) and Magaya *et al.* (2012), who also concluded that e-business and security and legal compliance is still a challenge in Botswana at both government and corporate levels. According to Nkwe (2012), lack of security and privacy of information, lack of knowledge about e-government programs, lack of strategic plans, and resistance to e-systems are hampering the implementation of e-business in service delivery in governments across the globe.

Specifically, Botswana faces challenges of a lack of an institutional framework to support e-government, privacy and security concerns, and limited IT skills and training. Magaya *et al.* (2012) revealed that most SMEs in Botswana still prefer to conduct offline transactions due to poor Internet connectivity, especially in rural areas.

Another reason why it is taking long to have effective e-business systems in SMEs is the issue of security concerns amongst both users and management of SMEs (Magaya *et al.* 2012). Evidence from visitors to SMTEs reveals a social media utilisation of 46.4%. This figure, which is below 50% is an indication that there is still room for improvement in social media utilisation by SMTE visitors. The high utilisation of Whatsapp and Facebook by visitors to SMTEs imply that SMTEs in Botswana should increase the utilisation of these two tools to market and reach out to new and current visitors. Current evidence from SMTEs reveals that their utilisation of Whatsapp and Facebook is at 41.6% compared to 80.7% for visitors. This wide gap indeed required closing. Whilst Internet access at SMTE premises was noted to be mostly available, visitors complained about the slow speed of Internet services. This may also be the reason why most SMTE visitors stated that they mostly preferred to use telephone and walk-ins as their method of making bookings rather than social media.

Testimonies from key government participants suggest that SMTEs should increase their use of e-marketing. This is an implication that the current utilisation of e-marketing strategies is still very low. Key reasons given for the low utilisation are the lack of resources, lack of skills, and lack of interest by SMTEs. Government informants recommended that there should be an expansion of current Internet infrastructure to deal with the abovementioned challenges. Other measures suggested including training of IT officers and appointment of key resource personnel at the premises of SMTEs.

The lack of an e-marketing strategy by the Botswana government was also cited by key government informants as a hindrance towards the marketing of SMTEs to both local and global visitors, which is addressed by this study. Government informants highlighted that it was presently difficult to implement an e-marketing strategy in Botswana because of technology illiteracy, lack of funds, fear of change, limited Internet connectivity, and lack of IT skills.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to present and critique the e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry in Botswana. Key challenges faced by SMTEs in implementing e-marketing

strategies were discussed. These include lack of resources, especially when setting up websites, lack of website security compliance, lack of management support, lack of knowledge on the part of both management and employees, high costs associated with setting up infrastructure. The study also revealed that SMTEs in Botswana mainly utilise social media and word of mouth as their marketing strategies. There was evidence of significant adoption of social media tools such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram as key e-marketing elements when attracting visitors to their businesses.

The study showed that there existed some discrepancies in terms of the level of adoption of these tools by both SMTEs and visitors, and this could be a gap that may be used by SMTEs to increase their e-marketing effort. Whilst there exist policies and guidelines to guide the e-marketing effort in Botswana SMTEs; there is little evidence to show that these policies and guidelines are being utilised by SMTEs in Botswana. Part of the reasons lies in a lack of government support and ignorance on the part of SMTEs in implementing these policies and guidelines. Key government informants predicted success and greater competitive advantage for SMTEs if the Botswana government placed more measures to promote SMTEs by assigning staff to support SMTEs in their e-marketing strategies. They also proposed the acceleration of infrastructural installation in Botswana since most parts were still not connected to the Internet.

CHAPTER 7: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the study on a critical review of e-marketing strategies implemented in Botswana's tourism industry. The previous chapter discussed the findings based on the critical review elements, which are challenges facing SMTEs in Botswana, e-marketing strategies, social media utilisation for both SMTEs and visitors to SMTEs, e-marketing, and legal compliance in Botswana, and Botswana Government intervention strategies to promote SMTEs in Botswana. This chapter reviews the significant findings from the literature review, especially on the critical elements under investigation; the key findings from the primary study; the significance of the research in the tourism industry; limitations of the study; and recommendations for further research.

7.2 EVALUATION OF THE RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The main goal of the study was to critically review e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry of Botswana. To help to achieve the requirements of the goal, a set of five objectives were formulated and are evaluated as follows:

7.2.1 Research objective 1 - To analyse e-business strategies with specific reference to e-marketing strategies in contributing to business success in the tourism industry by means of a literature review

The requirements of this objective were achieved by conducting a detailed literature review in Chapters 1 and 3. Chapter 1 outlined the study's background, problem statement, conceptual model, research methods, and the initial literature review. Chapter 3 presented and explained e-marketing strategies as they are used in different types of industries. The chapter also discussed the contribution of e-marketing strategies to SMTEs and the various adoption models which SMTEs can use to implement e-marketing strategies.

7.2.2 Research objective 2 - To analyse the current challenges, processes, successes of SMTEs in the developing tourism environment through an in-depth literature review

This objective's requirements were fulfilled in Chapter 2, where detailed information on the tourism sector from a global, regional, and local perspective and SMTEs within the tourism sector were

presented. The chapter also explained internal and external challenges faced by SMTEs as part of building the case for e-marketing strategies.

7.2.3 Research objective 3 - To determine the adoption and the extent of the use of e-marketing strategies by SMTEs in the tourism industry of Botswana by means of an empirical study based on challenges, marketing strategies, social media utilisation, e-marketing, and legal compliance and government intervention strategies to promote SMTEs

Data were collected and analysed from different stakeholder groups within the tourism industry in Botswana to fulfill this objective's requirements. The data collection and analysis plan was presented and justified in Chapter 4 of this study. The findings were done in Chapter 4, where data from SMTEs, visitors to SMTEs, and government informants gave their views on the phenomenon under investigation - a critical review of e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry of Botswana.

7.2.4 Research objective 4 - To inform the development of an e-marketing strategy for tourism SMTEs in Botswana

This research objective's requirements were fulfilled in Chapters 5 and 6 where the findings from the three groups which participated in the empirical study were presented and explained according to the research objectives given in Chapter 1 and compared with the literature review given in Chapters 2 and 3. The findings were then used to compile statements highlighting the current status of e-marketing strategies implemented in Botswana's tourism industry. Any existing gaps were also highlighted to inform the study of appropriate conclusions and recommendations in the subsequent chapter.

7.2.5 Objective 5 - To make conclusions and recommendations regarding the critical review of e-marketing strategies and the implementation of the strategy

This objective's requirements are fulfilled in Chapter 7, which will provide summaries of what was discovered in the literature review and the empirical study according to the research objectives. The chapter also critiques the methodology and data analysis methods that were used in the study. A strategy is then presented based on the findings of the literature review and the empirical research with the purpose of mapping the way forward as far as the adoption and implementation of e-marketing strategies amongst SMTEs in Botswana are concerned.

7.3 SUMMARY OF THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES USED AND DATA ANALYSIS USED IN THE STUDY

The research methodology employed in the study was presented in Chapter 1, and further explained in Chapter 4. The background of the study, problem statement, research methods, and significance of the study were presented in Chapter 1. Chapter 4 discussed the Positivist paradigm, which was used to test the initial framework presented in Chapter 1. The Positivist paradigm emphasised data collection through both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study used mixed methods as the research choice where numeric data was collected from tourists and SMTE owners, and textual data was collected from key government informants.

The use of mixed methods ensured high quality of data output and more in-depth discussion of the findings. Mixed methods also helped to ensure that the weaknesses of one method are offset by the strengths of the other method. The validity and reliability of the findings were also enhanced using a quantitative approach where such data was statistically analysed and tested using means and standard deviations, allowing for the generalisation of the findings. The in-depth analysis of qualitative data helped to allow for a detailed understanding of the problem under investigation. Both methods, thus, helped to develop the strategy for the study in the final chapter.

7.4 CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following conclusions are made based on the research objectives given at the beginning of the study:

7.4.1 Conclusions with respect to the analysis of e-business strategies with specific reference to e-marketing strategies in contributing to business success in the tourism industry through a literature review

The following are the conclusions based on Objective 1 (c.f. 1.4.2):

- Deployment of e-marketing strategies helps the tourism sector significantly reduce operational costs and increase transaction processing speed (c.f. 3.4.2).
- The use of e-marketing strategies by the tourism sector has helped the industry reach the global market at lower marketing costs (c.f. 3.4.2).
- The use of e-marketing strategies can enable small companies within the tourism sector to equally compete with large established companies on the global market using Internet technologies.

- The use of e-marketing strategies helps the tourism sector rapidly gather and analyse large amounts of data, thus giving SMTEs a competitive advantage (c.f. 3.4.2).
- E-marketing strategies help the tourism sector to communicate at a faster speed compared to the traditional methods of communication seamlessly (c.f. 3.4.2).
- E-marketing strategies are becoming more readily available due to the iniquitousness of gadgets such as smartphones and laptops (c.f. 3.5).
- Information searches about various destinations and trips have been rapidly improved using e-business strategies (c.f. 3.4.2).
- On the downside, when not carefully used, e-marketing strategies can expose the tourism sector to different forms of cyber-attacks since the e-market uses the Internet as its backbone (c.f. 3.4.2).
- E-marketing strategies also have the potential to expose the tourism industry to financial loss through hacking and data theft (c.f. 3.4.2).

7.4.2 Conclusions concerning the analysis of the current challenges, processes, successes of SMTEs in the developing tourism environment through an in-depth literature review

The following are the conclusions based on Objective 2 (c.f. 1.4.2):

- The tourism sector has evolved to become a major economic player in developing industries. As such, countries need to develop appropriate product development and marketing strategies informed by prospective travellers (c.f. 2.2.1).
- The effects of globalisation and changing consumer behaviour have resulted in greater demand for products and services in the tourism industry (c.f. 2.2.1).
- The rising earnings of households, mobility increase, rising levels of education, and the desire to escape from the pressure of day-to-day urban living have resulted in increased demand for tourism services and products (c.f. 2.2.1).
- The development of the tourism sector in developing countries can also develop other support industries such as transportation, accommodation, and airports (c.f. 2.2.2).
- The marketing and commercialisation of tourism in Western countries has helped to expand tourism to previously unknown destinations, including developing countries (c.f. 2.2.2).
- The increase in disposable income in the middle class has helped propel tourism to greater heights, with tourists currently accessing more destinations in both developed and developing countries (c.f. 2.2.2).

- The expansion of tourism to developing countries has helped create employment and provided households with more disposable income (c.f. 2.2.2).
- The introduction of shorter working days, especially in developing countries, coupled with the cessation of wars, has helped promote domestic tourism in developing countries (c.f. 2.2.2).
- On the downside, the proliferation of environmental, political, and financial crises over the last 10 to 20 years has negatively impacted the tourism industry, especially in developing industries where tourism contributed significantly to GDP (c.f. 2.2.2). (This is even worse now during the pandemic)
- The proceeds from tourism have generally benefitted foreign companies, with local companies only getting a smaller share of the revenue. This problem is partly due to the complex nature of the tourism industry (c.f. 2.2.3).
- The challenges caused by pollution have resulted in some countries developing strategies to protect the environment, especially at tourist sites. This has resulted in new forms of tourism such as eco-tourism, medical tourism, and cultural tourism, aiming to conserve the environment, animal, and plant species (c.f. 2.2.3).
- Human mobility relaxation has brought new challenges of human trafficking, illegal national labour migration from poor to wealthy countries, refugees fleeing from conflict zones, and terrorism (c.f. 2.2.2).
- More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought additional challenges to the tourism industries in both developed and developing countries. These include the closure of international and regional borders in 2020 and part of 2021, the closure of all tourist attractions, job losses of individuals working in the tourism industry, and additional knock-on effects of national economies (c.f. 2.2.2).

7.4.3 Conclusions concerning the determination of the adoption and the extent of the use of e-marketing strategies by SMTEs in the tourism industry of Botswana through an empirical study based on challenges, marketing strategies, social media utilisation, e-marketing, and legal compliance and government intervention strategies to promote SMTEs

The following are the conclusions based on Objective 3 (c.f. 1.4.2):

- SMTEs in Botswana currently use word-of-mouth and social media as the dominant communication channels to advertise their business (c.f. 5.2.1.1).

- SMTEs in Botswana held the same consensus about their understanding of social media as a tool that helps them to identify and interact with their target markets and reinforces messages on quality delivery (c.f. 5.2.1.2).
- Most SMTEs in Botswana held the view that social media is an effective tool for marketing in modern-day society where technology is prevalent (c.f. 5.2.3.1).
- For those SMTEs that use social media, Facebook and WhatsApp were the most popular tools used for marketing purposes (c.f. 5.2.3.2).
- The main reasons SMTEs found social media attractive were its ability to attract customers and enable a business to grow and get exposure to the outside world (c.f. 5.2.3.4).
- The biggest challenge facing social media was its underutilisation amongst SMTEs in Botswana, with more than 50.0% stating that they do not use it (c.f. 5.2.4).
- The major reasons given by SMTEs for not using social media were insufficient resources, lack of time to use social media, inadequate knowledge, and some SMTEs felt that social media was not helpful (c.f. 5.2.4.2).
- SMTEs felt that their utilisation of social media could be improved by providing better Internet services, availability of dedicated staff working with social media and staff, and management training in social media marketing (c.f. 5.2.4.3).
- A significantly high number of SMTEs in Botswana do not have websites to manage their businesses. Those with websites were found to be lacking in terms of capacity to promote products and services, including lack of privacy (c.f. 5.2.5.2).
- Social media and previous visits were the primary sources of information on why SMTE-visitors were attracted to Botswana destinations (c.f. 5.3.3.1).
- Most SMTE visitors used Facebook and WhatsApp as their main social media tools (c.f. 5.3.3.2).
- Social media was the most prevalent tool for selecting a destination by visitors, with most visitors spending considerable time on social media every week (c.f. 5.3.3.3).
- Social media was the most preferred option for travellers because of the quality of product information available through social media, ease of availability, high interactivity, and the availability of several features on one interface (c.f. 5.3.3.3).
- Visitors to SMTEs placed a high value on Internet access availability at sites visited (c.f. 5.3.4).
- While the Internet was available at most of the sites visited, the speed of such Internet was slow, which frustrated most visitors to those sites (c.f. 5.3.4).
- Key government informants fully understood what e-marketing is and its importance to the Botswana tourism industry (c.f. 5.4.2).

- Like SMTEs, key government informants believed the utilisation of e-marketing by Botswana SMTEs is still below capacity (c.f. 5.4.6).
- Key government informants stated that insufficient resources, lack of skills, lack of SMTE enterprises in e-marketing, slow penetration of the Internet, and security concerns were some of the reasons why government informants thought that an e-marketing approach was not adequately used in Botswana SMTEs (c.f. 5.4.7).
- Some of the government informants' measures as suitable for addressing the challenges included the setting up of appropriate Internet infrastructure in Botswana and training of staff on e-marketing strategies (c.f. 5.4.9).
- Key government informants suggested that Botswana SMTEs could best promote their businesses by adopting social media for e-marketing purposes, use of search engine optimisation, and effective customer relationship management (c.f. 5.4.10).
- There was a lack of knowledge on the part of government informants on the availability of e-marketing strategies amongst SMTEs and whether such strategies were implemented (c.f. 5.4.11).
- The significant challenges faced when implementing e-marketing strategies included technology illiteracy, lack of funds to implement the e-marketing strategy, fear of change, limited Internet connectivity, and lack of IT skills (c.f. 5.4.13).
- Additionally, key government informants proposed that the establishment of websites supported by search engine optimisation could help SMTEs to increase their e-marketing experience (c.f. 5.4.14).

7.4.4 Conclusions with regard to informing the development of an e-marketing strategy for tourism SMTEs in Botswana

The following are the conclusions based on Objective 4 (c.f. 1.4.2):

- Several gaps exist concerning an adequate understanding of social network marketing by SMTEs in Botswana. These gaps include lack of knowledge on the contribution of social media to customer relationship management, reinforcement on quality of service, underutilisation of social media on the basis that it is not useful, insufficient knowledge about social media, lack of time and insufficient resources (c.f. 6.3). This implies that e-marketing strategies should address these cited challenges for SMTEs to reap the benefits of these strategies and realise competitive advantage.
- Lack of Internet availability in some parts of Botswana was a hindrance to the deployment of websites by some SMTEs in the country (c.f. 6.3). This implies that more effort should be made to increase access to the Internet by SMTEs in Botswana.

- Government intervention efforts for SMTE to promote their e-marketing strategies were also perceived to be below expectations (c.f. 6.3). This implies that the Botswana government should reach out to all sectors of the economy for SMTEs to also benefit from e-marketing strategies.
- The development of e-marketing strategies by SMTEs in Botswana can be readily facilitated by tools such as Facebook and WhatsApp based on these tools' popularity on both SMTE and customer perspectives (c.f. 6.4).
- The development of social media could be accelerated if SMTEs in Botswana remove their perceived fear and stigma of social media tools. A significant proportion of SMTEs associated social media with unethical practices (c.f. 6.4).
- There is still over-reliance on traditional marketing strategies like billboards, radio, and telephone, and a shift from these tools is required for social media, which is cheaper and readily available, to increase the marketing of SMTEs (c.f. 6.4). This implies that more effort should be made to remove the gap between the traditional and online forms of marketing by conscientising SMTEs about the benefits of e-marketing strategies.
- Social media's ability to attract more customers than the traditional marketing tools was an important factor that SMTEs considered when selecting the tool for marketing purposes. Rapid growth and expansion were also more significant when social media was used (c.f. 6.5).
- Website management processes were reported as still below expectation on SMTEs, which had websites in Botswana. Typical challenges included lack of regular website content updates and insufficient staff experience on website management (c.f. 6.5). This means that Internet rollout to the rest of the country could motivate SMTEs to incorporate websites as part of their e-marketing strategies.
- Despite the availability of legal and regulatory frameworks on ITC, the study concluded that the Botswana government's support towards SMTEs was still below expectations. This implies that more could be done in terms of supporting SMTEs in the implementation of ICT policies (c.f. 6.5).

7.5 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The information used to perform a critical evaluation of e-marketing strategies by SMTEs in Botswana was compiled from both the literature review and the empirical findings from the data collected and analysed from SMTEs in Botswana, visitors to SMTEs, and key government informants working in various Ministries related to tourism in Botswana. The contribution of the

findings from the literature review and empirical study on the topic under investigation are presented below.

7.5.1 Contribution of the study to current literature on e-business strategies

7.5.1.1 Literature on strategies to enhance livelihoods

Tourism has the potential to uplift the livelihoods of individuals and communities where travellers visit to consume products and services in the sector. Tourism also can increase the competitiveness of small-medium tourist enterprises (SMTEs) participating in the industry. Despite this potential, the literature review has pointed out many challenges affecting the tourism industry in developing countries, especially from the perspective of SMTEs. Some of the challenges given include lack of access to global markets, intense competition from established multinationals also participating in the sector, and the tourism industry's complex nature. This study sought the views of different participants in the tourism industry in Botswana, which were SMTEs, visitors to SMTEs, and government informants working in departments that support tourism. Their views on the status of e-marketing strategies in Botswana SMTEs helped build new knowledge on tackling existing challenges using e-marketing strategies. E-marketing strategies have been promoted as the best approach to ensure that organisations of any form and size can efficiently market their products and services at the lowest cost and access the global markets. This study has helped unearth several gaps that can be filled through the design and implementation of a specific framework targeting e-marketing strategies for SMTEs in Botswana. The framework addresses the challenges from a developing country perspective which is a first of its kind in Africa.

7.5.1.2 Literature on the use of data triangulation to reveal gaps in the phenomenon under investigation

This study covered the views of all critical players in the formulation, implementation, and consumption of e-marketing strategies in Botswana through data collection and analysis using a detailed structured questionnaire for SMTEs and visitors, together with in-depth interviews with key government participants working in different departments supporting ICT and e-marketing in Botswana tourism. This approach helped ensure that all aspects of e-marketing strategies were covered. The findings contributed to the formulation of a unique e-marketing strategy for tourism for Botswana SMTEs. The use of different data collection and data analysis methods resulted in the triangulation of methods and data, which helped to ensure that the richness and quality of data were high enough to lead to more reliable and valid findings. This triangulated approach

identified the roles of different stakeholders in taking the establishment of e-marketing strategies forward.

7.5.1.3 Literature on solving SMTE challenges from an integrated approach

The framework which was developed in this study focuses on the deployment of appropriate e-marketing strategies to solve traditional problems affecting small businesses, including lack of skills, lack of access to markets, lack of access to finance, and competition from established companies. The framework also targets individual challenges affecting citizens like high unemployment, lack of disposable income, low levels of innovation and entrepreneurship, and lack of knowledge and skills to contribute to Botswana's development positively. The findings of this study contribute towards literature by revealing that through the adoption of e-business strategies, SMTEs can have access to global markets because of the broader reach of the Internet, operate their businesses at little or no costs through social media tools, and compete with large established companies because of equal access to markets because of e-marketing strategies. The findings also contribute towards scholarly content by highlighting that through proper training in e-marketing strategies, individuals can be gainfully employed and contribute towards the uplifting of their economic livelihoods. The newly developed framework will depict different stages where both SMTEs and individuals reap benefits because of the deployment of e-marketing strategies in Botswana's tourism sector that is tailor-made to the identified circumstances. Literature highlights the importance of e-business – and e-marketing strategies, but the lack of optimisation is alarming. Currently, the implementation of such strategies is not as straightforward as described in the literature. SMTEs in developing countries experience unique challenges that need to be addressed in the development of the framework.

7.5.1.4 Literature on strengths and weaknesses of local e-marketing strategies and the application of e-marketing strategies to SMTEs

This study is, to the researcher's knowledge, the only one that critiques the current e-marketing strategies for SMTEs in Botswana. The findings of the study will help to add more information to the literature on the value-adding effects of e-marketing strategies, especially in the tourism sector. The findings also help improve the framework and pave the way for informing different tourism sector players on those elements of e-marketing strategies that should be enhanced to ensure that SMTEs in Botswana gain a greater competitive advantage. The findings will also help update and improve current e-marketing strategies, policies, and guidelines in Botswana tourism in particular and other general sectors. It was recognised that one could not assume that all businesses such as SMTEs understand and implement e-marketing strategies. Thus it is not to

say that if one has a smartphone one can do business with it – online business strategies such as e-marketing should be taught.

7.5.2 Practical contributions of the study towards e-marketing strategies

The findings of the study help to contribute towards the optimisation of e-marketing strategies implementation for SMTEs in the following ways:

7.5.2.1 Increase in marketing of Botswana's Tourism industry

The development and implementation of e-marketing strategies, through the framework for SMTEs, can increase the marketing of Botswana's tourism products. Botswana's tourism industry lags South Africa, Zambia, and Namibia in terms of destination attractiveness, number of tourist arrivals, and annual share of the revenue from tourist visitors. This low position may be attributed to Botswana's small population of fewer than 2.5 million people and lack of a clear tourist marketing strategy by the Botswana government. It is envisaged that the adoption of e-marketing strategies such as social media may help to increase the awareness of tourist spots in Botswana and attract customers to these spots. A coordinated effort is needed to ensure that the SMTEs understand the e-marketing environment and contribute to Botswana's greater marketing effort. This will build Botswana's image and brand, increase the number of visitors to this country, and might even save the government on marketing costs.

7.5.2.2 Greater market share of the Tourism industry in Botswana

The literature review has highlighted that SMTEs are losing business to larger and more established multinational corporations participating in Botswana tourism. The development of a framework on e-marketing for SMTEs may help local SMTEs to have greater access to both global and local travellers. Social media tools have been observed to boost market share for SMTEs that have adopted them. Case studies from countries such as Mauritius, Kenya, and South Africa reveal that a more significant market share is realised when e-business/e-marketing strategies are used for marketing the tourism industry, including operators within the SMTE category.

Currently, Botswana has a ranking outside the top 10 African countries in terms of the number of annual tourist visitors and annual revenue. However, there is ample evidence from other similar countries that these statistics may change, especially when government and the private sector intervenes in supporting the e-marketing effort of SMTEs in Botswana.

7.5.2.3 Diversification of Botswana's Economy

The development of a theoretical framework also focuses on the creation of wealth and poverty reduction for both SMTEs and individuals participating in the tourism industry. The discovery of diamonds in Botswana in the late 1960s and the commencement of their mining in 1972 transformed Botswana from a low income to middle-income status. The country of Botswana has used diamond revenue for national development. This has paid dividends considering the phenomenal growth of the country's infrastructure and improvement in areas such as education, health, and infrastructural development. However, the global financial crisis of late 2007 led to lower demand for diamonds, especially in the country's top markets in Europe and India. These developments led the country's leadership to consider other avenues of developing the country, and tourism has been proposed as one of the potential diversification strategies that the country can embark on. Studies have shown that countries that have diversified away from mining have equally flourished economically. For example, Zambia managed to diversify from copper mining and is now one of the top tourist destinations in Southern Africa through the marketing of Victoria Falls and other tourist spots in the country. Similarly, Mozambique's economy has witnessed a significant revival because of measures that the country has taken to make tourism one of the country's top contributors to its GDP.

7.5.2.4 Closing of loopholes on legal compliance

The development of the framework for the advancement of e-marketing strategies for SMTEs in Botswana may help inform key stakeholders how best the gaps identified in the study on the legal and regulatory framework may be closed. This study's findings have helped expose loopholes on ICT and e-business/e-marketing compliance within tools used by SMTEs operating within the tourism industry in Botswana. These loopholes include lack of policies and procedures in place which describes when e-marketing related independent reviews are performed, lack of attack and penetration testing, lack of regulatory compliance reviews, lack of member privacy reviews, lack of application development and maintenance reviews, lack of incidence response and business continuity plan reviews, and lack of virus detection and protection reviews. These legal compliance reviews are meant to enhance visitor data privacy and confidentiality, including the security of the software from which these tools operate. The prevalence of these challenges means that most SMTEs within the tourist industry do not effectively deal with these loopholes, and future e-marketing policies and guidelines can be directed towards formulating strategies to close these loopholes.

7.5.2.5 Acceleration of government intervention strategies to promote e-marketing

The development and implementation of the framework will help accelerate government intervention strategies to promote e-marketing amongst SMTEs. The Botswana government has put in place guidelines to support different organisations when they plan to migrate to e-business/e-marketing strategies to promote their businesses through the Internet. Specific policies include the Maitlamo Policy of 2004, the National ICT Policy of 2007, National Development Plan 9, Vision 2016 and Vision 2036, and Botswana National e-Government Strategy 2011-2016. Even with these in place, no significant progress has been made.

7.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: STRATEGY

Table 7.1 shows the framework for the development and implementation of specific e-marketing strategies for SMTEs in Botswana.

7.6.1 The development of the framework

The development of the conceptual framework was rooted in the research goals and the five research questions. The critical review of the current status of the implementation of e-marketing strategies by SMTE's in Botswana from different perspectives informed the development of the framework. E-marketing has been available for many years, but it has still not been optimised in Botswana, which affects the success of small businesses and the overall tourism industry. The study was thus motivated by the need to solve perennial problems affecting small businesses in developing countries like Botswana. On the part of SMTEs, these problems include lack of access to markets, lack of access to finance, lack of business management and ICT skills, and high competition from large enterprises. It was also evident that several small business owners do not trust this medium. On the part of individuals, these challenges include high poverty levels, unemployment, and lack of disposable income.

Table 7-1: Framework to implement an e-marketing strategy for Botswana SMTEs

Step Number	Key phase	Actors	Actions	Outcomes
1.	Identification and consultation of stakeholders	• Department of Tourism in Botswana • SMTEs in Botswana	• Listing of registered SMTEs • Conducting a needs analysis of identified SMTEs	• Updated SMTEs • Compiling needs and gaps for SMTEs
2.	Developing ICT structures: App for SMTEs	• Officers from Department of Tourism • Officers from Ministry of Technology and Infrastructure • Private ICT partners • Commercial banks	• Develop a mobile-friendly App for SMTEs to market their business • Create the infrastructure to support the App	Tailor-made App to support SMTEs
3.	Training and mentoring	• Marketing consultants (1 consultant per 10 SMTEs) • IT support officers at SMTE premises	Workshops: • Tourism marketing • E-marketing • Communication • SMTE's App	• Fully functional App • SMTE staff equipped with marketing and IT skills
4.	Implementing of e-marketing strategy and going live	• SMTEs to implement the e-marketing strategy • Reviews to be conducted annually	Review: • Number of bookings • Number of views	• Successful use of e-marketing by SMTE's • Gaining of competitive advantage and greater market share by SMTEs

Source: Researcher's compilation

A literature review was conducted to gather data to answer the research questions. A list of five research questions consisted of the inputs of the framework. The empirical research added critical information from all the stakeholders to pave a specific and clear strategy. Three groups of participants were important, namely, SMTEs, visitors to SMTEs, and key government informants. Their views were used to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation and compile a list of action items required to inform the study on what would contribute to the framework. After analysing the data and critically review the relevant variables, it was decided to develop a four-step framework which includes actions and responsibilities for all stakeholders.

7.6.2 How the conceptual framework would be implemented

The framework will be implemented based on the following guidelines:

7.6.2.1 Phase 1: Stakeholder identification and consultation

Purpose and reasoning of Phase 1:

The critical review emphasised the importance of the relevant stakeholders. It was, however, realised that how the stakeholders interact and who is responsible for which activity will be different than what is advocated in literature. Specifically, in the case of SMTEs it was found that these businesses will not be able to develop e-marketing strategies on their own, which can be one of the reasons for them being unsuccessful in this regard. Their lack of trust in and understanding of e-marketing requires a different framework than what would be appropriate in a developed country context. To a certain extent, these SMTE's think almost too small, whereas e-marketing can connect them with the whole world. All stakeholders should cooperate to market Botswana as one tourism destination with unique experiences and offerings.

Actions in Phase 1:

- Key stakeholders are identified, which include the following: SMTEs operating across Botswana, the Department of Tourism, potential travellers, and ICT experts. All stakeholders to be listed, linked on groups such as WhatsApp groups. This is critical for continuous communication.
- The current infrastructure related to e-marketing and the inputs that can be delivered by each stakeholder should be listed.
- Identification of gaps and challenges with regard to the implementation of an e-marketing strategy.

- Setting up a helpline in the office of Botswana Tourism to assist SMTE's in the implementation of such a strategy.
- Setting up the guidelines for participating in the development of an e-marketing strategy. For example: the SMTE should be a registered business, the SMTE should have data available, and should identify a responsible contact person that can manage the e-marketing strategy.
- Botswana Tourism to held workshops to create awareness amongst SMTEs and explain the implementation plan.

- **Outcomes of Phase 1:**
  - Database of all stakeholders with relevant contact information
  - A list of infrastructure needs for all stakeholders
  - A list of gaps and challenges in taking the e-marketing strategy forward.

7.6.2.2 Phase 2: Developing the ICT structures

Purpose and reasoning for Phase 2

To create a stronger coordinated effort to implement an e-marketing strategy in Botswana for the SMTEs based on the challenges listed in the study, it is recommended to develop an APP to be used by SMTEs. This APP will be tailor-made to the needs of SMTE's, and it will widen access since SMTE's can participate via their phones. In this phase, the development of the APP will take place.

Actions for Phase 2:

- Finalise the infrastructure list to define required hardware and software for the proposed ICT infrastructure for SMTEs.
- Develop a budget related to the development of the APP
- Develop a marketing campaign to advertise the APP, which can be accessed by potential tour operators and tourists.
- Seeking financial support from Government, setting up partnerships with ICT companies and commercial banks.
- SMTE's will be required to pay a minimum annual fee to have access to the APP.
- All relevant information from SMTEs will be gathered to enable the development of the APP, and thus each SMTE will have a page on the APP that can be populated with information related to their products and services. At this time, photos will be required.

Outcomes of Phase 2:

- Finalise the user specification document for SMTEs.
- Test the APP with five SMTE's to minimise potential problems and to determine where SMTE's struggle with the APP.
- Test the APP with five tour operators and five potential tourists to obtain their input related to the user-friendliness of the APP.

7.6.2.3 Phase 3: Training and mentoring phase

Purpose and reasoning for Phase 3

This is a critical phase where the SMTE's will be trained on using the APP. Training guides will be provided to all stakeholders for future reference. The SMTE's will work on an unpublished version for the time of the training. After completion of the training course, they will be given access to the live APP.

Action steps for Phase 3:

- Set-up training dates for SMTE's and communicate to all participating stakeholders
- Schedule training workshops to be presented by marketing consultants for SMTEs on tourism marketing, e-marketing, effective communication.
- Explain the role of the helpline in ensuring the effectiveness of the APP
- Identify the mentors to assist the SMTE's in applying their knowledge and skills
- Roll out the marketing campaign to launch the travel-APP.
- After completion of the training, assessment of the SMTEs, the stakeholders get access to the live APP.
- Link the APP to commercial banks to facilitate financial transactions.

Outcomes for Phase 3:

- Trained SMTE's
- Mentor programme implemented
- SMTE's access to the live APP

7.6.2.4 Phase 4: Implementation phase

Purpose and reasoning for Phase 4

The SMTE's can now conduct business on the APP. The mentors should provide feedback monthly to ensure that the SMTEs can work effectively on the APP.

Actions related to Phase 4

- Rollout the APP to all registered SMTEs in Botswana
- Incorporate security and privacy features to all levels of data communication channels linked to the APP.
- Put measures in place to gather statistics on transactions using the app, including the number of inquiries, click-throughs, and actual books.
- Develop actual guidelines tailor-made for e-marketing strategies for STMEs, including policies and guidelines to deal with privacy and security.
- Adapt the APP and strategy where need be.
- A monthly report from mentors.
- Add new SMTE's as the programme develops.

Outcomes of Phase 4:

- The successful use of e-marketing by SMTEs.
- SMTEs will be able to gain a competitive advantage over their rivals, especially those which have not embraced e-marketing strategies in the sector.
- A coordinated effort to marketing Botswana tourism experiences through SMTE's
- Development of SMTE's to promote themselves and grow into medium-size businesses.

7.7 RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings of the study show that SMTEs are not fully aware of the benefits of customer relationship management (CRM) as a strategic tool in attracting, managing, and retaining customers. The use of CRM has been cited as a critical success factor in businesses which have an online presence since it is easy to tailor-made message and promotions for a particular target group of customers. There might be a need for SMTEs in Botswana to be conscientized on the value-added to e-marketing when CRM is also incorporated in the marketing effort.

Lack of ICT skills has also been attributed to the lack of adoption of a web presence by the majority of SMTEs as reported in the study. The same challenge is also affecting those SMTEs which have managed to develop and host websites because they find themselves without suitable staff to maintain their websites. The other problem, also related to this lack of ICT skills, might be attributed to the scarce financial resources of SMTEs when it comes to hiring or employing experts

to maintain and update their websites on a regular basis. It is, however, true that SMTE's cannot appoint an additional staff member to manage their online presence due to limited resources and the manager normally doing all the work. Thus, equipping the manager with the necessary skills to have an online presence will make a difference to his/her business.

It is recommended that the framework for the implementation of an e-marketing strategy is applied. This will improve the marketing and business skills and knowledge of SMTEs, give them a trusted platform to do their marketing and business, and assist in developing to tourism brand of Botswana. Ultimately, this will add value to the growth and sustainability of SMTEs in Botswana, which will directly contribute to the success of the diversification strategy in Botswana.

The success of the framework is reliant on buy-in and training. SMTEs should be equipped with the necessary skills to understand the function of online marketing and the importance of keeping a good relationship with customers. It will be necessary to do follow-up training and more in-depth for certain SMTEs as more gaps are identified per product.

It is also recommended that the issue of consortiums amongst SMTEs in Botswana may need further investigation. Studies show that regions that have merged their resources together and formed consortiums have experienced phenomenal growth when it comes to improving their marketing effort within the tourism industry. Such regions have realised economies of scale through lower equipment and infrastructural costs. Working with other SMTEs can also help emerging SMTEs quickly gain access to key markets through affiliate marketing and search engine optimisation.

The study findings have confirmed that SMTEs complain of lack of support from the Botswana government whilst key government informants have also reported a lack of knowledge of the existing legislative framework to support e-business and e-marketing in Botswana. There is a need for a concerted effort on the part of the Botswana government and key private partners to ensure that these strategies are implemented for the benefit of not only SMTEs, but the entire business community in Botswana. The issue of poor policies and guidelines also needs serious addressing.

7.8 LIMITATIONS

The study has largely managed to fulfill the initial research objectives, but there exist challenges that may impact the generalisability of these findings to other industry sectors. The research

methodology was quantitative on the side of SMTEs and visitors and qualitative on the side of key government informants. The findings of the study could have been more in-depth if they were quantitative-qualitative for SMTEs and visitors in order to allow the researcher to obtain more information from these respondents by using other methods such as interviews, website inspection, and site/document observation. The findings from SMTEs have revealed some grey areas such as low utilisation of websites, and face-to-face interviews could have helped to obtain reasons why SMTEs are not fully utilising websites as marketing tools.

The study's timeframe was another limitation. Unlike a longitudinal study which allows for a more in-depth analysis of the phenomenon under investigation, this study was cross-sectional, and data was collected and analysed within a much shorter timeframe. This limited the researcher from performing detailed triangulation of data collection and analysis methods, and this limitation impacted on the validity and reliability of the findings. The short timeframe also prohibited the researcher from making follow-ups on participants for clarification of the phenomena under investigation and impacted on data quality.

The subjects of e-business and e-marketing are quite technical in nature and this may impact on the way participants respond to the questions in the research instruments. This may have affected the way participants responded to certain questions with words that direct translation into the Setswana language do not have, which is the national language in Botswana. This limitation could have resulted in some participants either not fully understanding some of the questions, especially from the structured questionnaires, or misinterpreting such questions. However, the fieldworkers assisted in this regard to the best of their ability.

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ANNEXURE 1: SMTES VISITOR QUESTIONNAIRE

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
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Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Tel: 018 299-1427

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

E-MARKETING SURVEY

Ethics No: NWU-00426-18-S4

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR VISITORS OF SMTE

GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME OF FACILITY	
LOCATION	
ENUMERATOR'S NAME	

Section A: Degree of Social Media Utilisation among Clients of SMTE

No.	Questions and filters	Coding categories	Skip to
Q1	**Sex of Respondent**	Male……1 Female……2	
Q2	**Age**	……[___|___]	
Q3	**Marital Status**	Never Married……1 Married……2 Living together……3 Divorced……4 Widowed……5	
Q4	**Highest Level of Education**	Non-formal……1 Primary……2 Secondary……3 Certificate……4 Diploma……5 Degree……6 Post-graduate……7	
Q5	**Employment Status**	Unemployed……1 Self-employed……2 Employed in the private Sector……3 Employed in the public sector……4	
Q6	**a) Country of residence**	……	

	b) If country of residence is Botswana, please state your current place of residence.		
	c) If this place is not your current place of residence, please state your main purpose of visit at this locality.	Leisure……..1 Visiting Friends & Relatives……..…….2 Business & Professional (including Studying)…..3 In-transit……..…….4 Religion/Pilgrimage…….……5 Other (specify)…….…….....6	
Q7	**How did you obtain information to make your travel decisions to this place?**	Newspapers…...……...1 Radio……2 Television……..3 Social media……4 Websites……..5 Previous Visits……6 Word-of-mouth..……7 Other…….....8	
Q8	a) **Do you use social media?**	Yes……1 No……..2	**No→Q9**
	b) If yes, which type of social media do you use often?	Facebook…...…….…..1 Twitter……...2 Instagram……3 WhatsApp.....……..……..…4	**You may select as many choices**

		YouTube……5 LinkedIn……6	**as you like**
	c) Which type of social media did you spend most of your time this week?	Facebook…..……1 Twitter……..……..2 Instagram……3 WhatsApp.....…….……4 YouTube…….……..5 LinkedIn…….……6	
	d) On average, how much time did you spend on social media sites this week?	1-60 minutes……..……..1 2-3 hours…….……2 4-5 hours……..……3 More than 5 hours……..4	
	e) How do you participate in social media?	Comment on interesting posts…..……..……1 Participate in competitions…...……..…..……2 Only read certain posts……..…...…...3 Search for relevant information on sites…..…....4 Personal chats with friends…….…….....……...5 Participate in blogs…….....……...6	
Q9	**How useful do you think social media is for choosing your holiday destination and planning your visits?**	Not at all useful……..……..……..1 Not useful……..…..…..……..…..2 Somewhat useful ……..……..…..3 Useful……...……..…….....4 Very useful……..…....……...5	
Q10	**How important do you consider the following aspects when using social media for travel purposes?**		

	Aspect	Not at all Important	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
	a) Easy Access to social media sites	1	2	3	4	5
	b) A one-stop-shop for all my travel needs	1	2	3	4	5
	c) Secure site	1	2	3	4	5
	d) Fast feedback from product owners	1	2	3	4	5
	e) Quality information on the products	1	2	3	4	5
	f) Previous reviews on the products	1	2	3	4	5
	g) Able to directly book	1	2	3	4	5

Section B: Observed Challenges in respect to the use of e- Marketing among SMTE

No.	Questions and filters	Coding categories	Skip to & Notes
Q11	**How often have you used Small Medium Tourism Enterprises in Botswana?**	Many times……..……..1 Rarely……..…2 First time……..……3	
	INFORMATION RELATED TO YOUR ACCOMMODATION BOOKING		
Q12	**a) Is it your first time to stay at this accommodation facility?**	Yes……..1 No……2	
	b) If No, how many times have you stayed/used this accommodation facility (including the current visit)?	……..……[___|___]	
	c) How many nights are you staying at this accommodation facility during the current visit?	……..……[___|___]	
Q13	**a) Is it important for you to have access to internet whilst visiting?**	Not at all Important……..……..…..1 Not Important……..……..……..…..2 Somewhat Important ……..…..…3 Important……...……....4 Very Important…….....……...5	
	b) Do you have access to internet (Wifi) in this accommodation facility?	Yes……..1 No……..……2	**No→Q14**
	c) How is the internet connectivity (speed) in this accommodation facility?	Fast……..……..1 Slow……2	

Q 14	a) **How did you know about this accommodation facility?**	Website……1 Facebook…….2 Twitter……3 Instagram……4 WhatsApp……5 YouTube……6 LinkedIn……7 TV……8 Radio……9 Newspapers & Magazines……10 Previous visits……11 Word of Mouth……12 Fair/Expo……13	You may select as many choices as you like
	b) How did you book for accommodation space at this accommodation facility?	Website……1 Facebook…….2 Twitter……3 Instagram……4 WhatsApp……5 YouTube……6 LinkedIn……7 E-mail……8 Telephone……9 Fax……10	

		Travel Agency……11 Tour Operator……12 Walk-in……..……..……..….13 Other(specify)……14	
	c) If you walked in or used telephone or fax, please state the main reason for doing so. …… …… …… …… …… ……		
Q 15	How do you think small businesses can improve their business online? …… …… …… …… …… ……		

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

ANNEXURES 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SMTES

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
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STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

E-MARKETING SURVEY

Ethics Nr: NWU-00426-18-S4

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TOURISM ENTERPRISES

GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS	
LOCATION	
ENUMERATOR'S NAME	

Section A: Attitude and Understanding of Social Media and Social Marketing Networks

Among Small Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTE) in Botswana

No.	Questions and Filters	Coding Categories	Skip to & Notes
Q1	**Which type of media or communication channels do you use to advertise?**	Newspapers…..……..……1 Radio……..…2 Magazines……..……..…3 Billboards……..……...…4 Brochures……..……..……5 Stickers…….……...6 Travel Shows.....……...…7 Word-of-mouth……....8 Social media (Facebook, e-mail, website etc.)...9 Other (Specify)……....10	

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements related to social media marketing:

Q2	What do you understand by social network marketing? For example Facebook, Twitter etc.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	a) It is about customer relation management	1	2	3	4	**5**
	b) It makes it easy for businesses to identify and communicate with target markets	1	2	3	4	**5**
	c) It reinforces messages on quality service delivery and helps it go viral	1	2	3	4	**5**

	d) It projects the image of your business	1	2	3	4	5
	e) It has changed the marketing landscape by making it possible for consumers and businesses to interact instantly and with ease	1	2	3	4	5
	f) It helps you gaining feedback directly from customers	1	2	3	4	5
	g) It helps business owners to analyse competition	1	2	3	4	5
Q3	To what extend do you agree with the following regarding social media such as Facebook?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	a) Social media require shorter posts (messages) and therefore it is not good for marketing purposes	1	2	3	4	5
	b) The content shared on social media sites is not trustworthy	1	2	3	4	5
	c) All social media platforms are the same and therefore there is no need to use various platforms to market our product/services	1	2	3	4	5
	d) Social media targets younger generations and therefore it would miss out on older generations	1	2	3	4	5
	e) Social media can tarnish the image of the brand	1	2	3	4	5
	f) Social media is too difficult to use	1	2	3	4	5
	g) Social media is too expensive to use	1	2	3	4	5

	h) It is difficult to connect to social media sites	1	2	3	4	5
	i) Social media negatively affects productivity	1	2	3	4	5
	j) Social media is effective for selling a product/service	1	2	3	4	5
	k) Social media violates the privacy of the business	1	2	3	4	5

Section B: The Importance and Degree of use of Social Media among SMTE

No.	Questions and Filters	Coding Categories	Skip to & Notes
Q4	a) **Do you use social media for marketing purposes?**	Yes……..1 No……2	**No→Q5**
	b) If yes, which type of social media do you use?	Facebook…..……..1 Twitter…….2 Instagram……...3 WhatsApp.....……..4 YouTube…….5 LinkedIn……..6 E-mail…….7 Other (Specify)……..8	You may select as many choices as you like
	c) On average, how much time did you spend on social media for marketing purposes this week?	1-60 minutes……1 2-3 hours……...2 4-5 hours… ……...3 More than 5 hours……...4	

	d) How useful do you think social media has been for your business?	Not at all useful……1 Not Useful……..2 Somewhat useful ……...……...3 Useful…..…….....4 Very useful…….....…….....5	**Not Useful & Not at all Useful→ Q4** **(f)**
	e) If useful, how has it helped your business? …… …… …… …… …… ……		
	f) Would you recommend using social media to another business as a tool for marketing a product/service?	Yes……..……1 No……..……....2	
Q5	a) **Do you feel that your business should increase the use of social media in its day to day operation?**	Yes……....1 No……..……...2	**No→Q6**
	b) If yes, please state why you feel social media is not adequately used?	Not enough time……..1 Insufficient resources (finance & infrastructure)……..……2 Don't think it is useful to the business 3 Have insufficient knowledge on how to use social media……4 Other (Specify)……....……5	You may select as many choices as you like

Q6 **To what extent will the following factors contribute to better utilisation of social media for your business?**

Factors	To a small extent	To some extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent
a) Improved knowledge about social media	1	2	3	4	5

	b) Training in social media marketing	1	2	3	4	5
	c) Combined efforts to market a group of businesses	1	2	3	4	5
	d) Better internet services	1	2	3	4	5
	e) Dedicated staff working with social media	1	2	3	4	5
Q7	**a) Do you have a website?**	Yes……...1 No……2				**No→Q8**
	b) If yes, does your website or homepage have online ordering/reservation/booking?	Yes……...1 No……...2				
	c) Does it have privacy policy statement, a privacy seal or certification related to website safety?	Yes……...1 No……...2				
	d) Does it have product catalogues or price list for customers?	Yes……...1 No……2				
	e) Who is your website host?	The Organisation……...1 Vendor……...2 Third Party……3				
	f) Is your website content developed by the organisation?	Yes, all the contents……...1 Yes, some of the contents……...2 No……3				
	g) Is your website content maintained by the organisation?	Yes, all the contents……...1 Yes, some of the contents……...2 No……3				
	h) How often do you change/update product/pricing on the company website?	Weekly……1				

		Monthly……2 Quarterly……..3 Annually……4	
	i) How often do you embark on promotional campaigns?	Weekly……...1 Monthly……2 Quarterly……..3 Annually……....4	
Q8	**Do employees have portable devices that would allow a mobile connection to the internet for business use?**	Yes all……..1 Yes some…… ……..2 No…… ……..3	
Q9	**Does your organisation use internet to obtain information from public authorities' homepages?**	Yes always……..1 Yes sometimes……..2 No……..3	

Section C: e-marketing Security and Legal Compliance

No.	Questions and filters	Coding Categories	Skip to
Q10	a) **Does your organisation have policies and procedures in place which describe how and when e-marketing-related independent reviews are performed?**	Yes……..1 No…….……2	**No→Q11**
	b) If yes, what do they include?	Security policy and procedure reviews…….……....1 Attack and penetration testing…2 Regulatory compliance reviews….3 Member privacy reviews……..4 Application development and maintenance reviews……..5 Incident response and business continuity plan reviews……..6 Virus detection and protection reviews…7	You may select as many choices as you like

Section D: e-marketing Challenges and Solutions among SMTE in Botswana

No.	Questions and filters	Coding Categories	Skip to
Q11	**a) Do you think that the Government of Botswana is doing enough to promote the use of e-marketing among Small Medium Tourism Enterprises?**	Yes……..1 No……2	**Yes→Q12**
	b) If No, what do you suggest government should do to promote the use of e-marketing among Small Medium Tourism Enterprises …… …… …… …… …… …… ……		
Q12	**What are the challenges to the implementation of e-marketing in your organisation?** …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……		
Q13	**What measure would you recommend for the promotion of e- marketing in your organisation?** …… …… …… …… ……		

	…… ……		
Q14	**According to you, what is the future of e-marketing in Botswana?**	Very gloomy……..….1 Gloomy……...2 Not so good…….…..…..….3 Good…….…….....4 Very good…….…….....5	

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

ANNEXURE 3: GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES QUESTIONNAIRE

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Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Tel: 018 299-1427

E-Marketing Survey

Ethics Nr: NWU-00426-18-S4

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION & TOURISM (MENRCT)

GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME OF DEPARTMENT	
LOCATION	
ENUMERATOR'S NAME	

No.	Questions	Coding categories	Skip to & Notes
Q1	What is your understanding of e-marketing? …… ……		

	…… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……
Q2	What is the importance of e-marketing strategy in the tourism industry? …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……
Q3	How do you think it is benefiting or can benefit the Small Medium Tourism Enterprises in Botswana? …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……

	…… …… …… …… ……

No.	Questions and filters	Coding categories	Skip to & Notes
Q4	a) Do you feel that Small Medium Tourism Enterprises should increase the use of an e-marketing approach in their day to day operation?	Yes……..……...1 No……..……...2	 **No→Q5**
	b) If yes, please state why you feel e-marketing approach is not adequately used in Small Medium Tourism Enterprises?	Insufficient resources…...…….....1 The tourism enterprise management don't think it is useful to their organisations.....2 Unwillingness on the part of the tourism enterprise management ..... 3 Lack of skills capacity……..... 4 Slow penetration of internet..... 5 Security concerns ..... 6 Lack of trust……..…..……....7 Other (Specify)…….....	

	c) Do you have any measures in place to help address the challenges outlined at **Q4 (b)**?	Yes……...1 No……..……2	
	d) If yes, please state those remedial measures …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……		
	e) If no, what are you planning to do to help address the challenges and promote the use of an e-marketing approach among Small Medium Tourism Enterprises? …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……		
Q5	What would you consider as the most effective way for SMTEs in Botswana to promote their businesses? …… …… ……		

	…… …… ……		
Q6	a) Does government have an e-marketing strategy for the tourism industry in Botswana?	Yes……...1 No……..…….2 Don't know……..……3	**No→Q7**
	b) If yes, what does it seek to address (strategic objectives)? …… …… …… …… …… ……		
	c) Who coordinates the implementation of this strategy? …… ……		
Q7	a) Has the strategy been implemented?	Yes……..……...1 No……..2 Don't know……..…..3	**No→Q9**
	b) If yes, to what degree has it helped to promote the use of e-marketing approach among Small Medium Tourism Enterprises?	Not at all helpful.……..……..1 Not helpful……..……..……..……..2 Somewhat helpful ……...…...…...3 Helpful……...……...…….4 Very helpful…….……..…..…….5	
Q8	Please state the challenges that are encountered in respect to the implementation of this strategy …… …… ……		

	…… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……
Q9	Please state your general comments regarding this subject matter …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

ANNEXURE 4: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

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17 July 2018

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)** on 17/07/2018, the Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-RERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: A Critical Review of E-Marketing Strategies implemented in the Tourism Industry of Botswana.
Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Prof E Slabbert
Student: S.M. Mongwaketse

Ethics number:

N	W	U	-	0	0	4	2	6	-	1	8	-	A	4
Institution				Study Number						Year			Status	

Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation

Application Type:
Commencement date: 17/07/2018 **Risk:** Low
Expiry date: 16/07/2019
Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- *The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the EMS-REC:*
  - *annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and*
  - *without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.*
- *The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the EMS-REC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.*
- *Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.*
- *The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.*
- *In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-RERC and EMS-REC reserves the right to:*
  - *request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;*
  - *to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;*
  - *withdraw or postpone approval if:*
    - *any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;*
    - *it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the EMS-REC or that information has been false or misrepresented;*
    - *submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or*
    - *new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.*

The EMS-REC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the EMS-REC or the NWU-RERC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Dr M Rathbone
Vice-Chairperson NWU Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm
8 November 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.1

ANNEXURE 5: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

Declaration

This is to declare that I, Annette L Combrink, accredited language editor and translator of the South African Translators' Institute, have language-edited the thesis by

SM Mongwaketse

with the title

A critical review of e-marketing strategies implemented in the tourism industry of Botswana

Prof Annette L Combrink

Accredited translator and language editor

South African Translators' Institute

Membership No. 1000356

Date: 2 February 2021