

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-57816

Title: DIGITAL MARKETING, SERVICE QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE OF SMES IN MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA.

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance		✓		

Reviewer's ID: JPR-130

Detailed Reviewer's Report

Overall Evaluation

This manuscript examines the relationship between digital marketing, service quality, and sales performance among SMEs in Machakos County, Kenya. The study uses a quantitative approach and PLS-SEM analysis to investigate both direct and mediating effects. The topic is relevant and timely because digital marketing has become an important tool for SME growth and competitiveness. The study provides useful insights for business owners, policymakers, and researchers interested in SME development and digital transformation. The paper is generally well-structured and the findings are clearly presented. The results support all proposed hypotheses and demonstrate that digital marketing positively influences service quality and sales performance, with service quality acting as a mediator.

Strengths

- 1. Relevant and Important Topic** - The study addresses a contemporary issue that is highly relevant to SMEs operating in increasingly digital business environments. The focus on Kenya adds practical value for developing economies.
- 2. Clear Research Objectives** - The objectives and hypotheses are clearly stated and logically connected to the conceptual framework.
- 3. Appropriate Methodology** - The use of quantitative research design, online questionnaires, and PLS-SEM analysis is appropriate for examining the proposed relationships among variables.

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4. Reliability and Validity Assessment - The study adequately evaluates convergent validity, discriminant validity, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE values. The reported values indicate acceptable measurement quality.

5. Practical Implications - The findings provide useful recommendations for SME managers on how digital marketing and service quality can improve business performance.

Areas for Improvement

1. Sample Size Justification - Although 100 SMEs were surveyed, the manuscript does not sufficiently justify why this sample size is adequate for the analysis. A brief explanation based on statistical requirements would strengthen the methodology.

2. Limited Geographic Scope - The study focuses only on SMEs in Machakos County. This may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions of Kenya or other countries. The limitation should be explicitly acknowledged.

3. Measurement Details - More information about questionnaire items and their sources would improve transparency and replicability.

4. Discussion Section - The discussion largely repeats previous literature and findings. Greater emphasis on the unique contribution of the study and comparison with previous Kenyan studies would improve scholarly value.

5. Language and Formatting - The manuscript contains several grammatical errors, repetition of methodological explanations, inconsistent formatting of tables, and minor typographical issues. Careful language editing is recommended before publication.

6. Interpretation of Results - The R^2 value for service quality is relatively low (9.8%), suggesting that other factors may influence service quality. This should be discussed more thoroughly.