

Digital Marketing to the Growth of Market Share to Small and Medium Grocery Retail Enterprises in Masvingo. A Case of Rivosect Private Limited in Mwenezi

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I. INTRODUCTION

The impact of digital marketing on the growth of market share for small and medium grocery retail enterprises is a topic of growing global interest. In developed nations, research has shown that the strategic implementation of digital marketing techniques can help small and medium-sized grocery retailers effectively compete with larger chain stores (Calderwood & Jones, 2020). Studies conducted in the United States and Western Europe have indicated that the utilization of online platforms, social media, and targeted advertising can enable smaller grocers to reach a wider customer base, enhance brand visibility, and improve customer engagement (Wilson & Garcia, 2021).

In contrast, the adoption of digital marketing strategies by small and medium grocery retailers in developing nations has faced several challenges. Researchers in countries like India and Nigeria have found that limited digital infrastructure, lack of technical expertise, and financial constraints have hindered the ability of smaller grocery enterprises to fully capitalize on the benefits of digital marketing (Patel & Sharma, 2019; Akanni&Ogunnaike, 2022). However, some studies have also highlighted the potential for digital marketing to empower these businesses, particularly in regions where e-commerce and mobile technologies are experiencing rapid growth (Gupta & Malhotra, 2021).

Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift towards digital channels, underscoring the importance for small and medium grocery retailers to integrate effective digital marketing strategies into their business models (Sharma & Tiwari, 2021). Researchers have emphasized the need for these enterprises to adopt a multi-channel approach, seamlessly blending online and offline marketing efforts to enhance their market share and remain competitive in the evolving retail landscape (Lee & Kim, 2022).

In Zimbabwe, the adoption of digital marketing strategies by small and medium-sized grocery retailers has been a topic of growing interest in recent years. Studies conducted since 2020 have shed light on the opportunities and challenges faced by these enterprises in leveraging digital platforms to enhance their market presence and competitiveness. A recent study by Mawere and Ndiweni (2021) examined the digital marketing practices of small and medium grocery retailers in Zimbabwe's major urban centers. The researchers found that while these enterprises recognized the potential of digital marketing, they faced significant barriers, including limited digital infrastructure, lack of technical expertise, and financial constraints. Many smaller grocers struggled to develop and maintain an effective online presence, hampering their ability to reach a wider customer base.

Similarly, a 2022 study by Chikwawawa and Mugabe (2022) explored the impact of social media marketing on the performance of small and medium grocery retailers in Zimbabwe. The findings suggested that while some enterprises had begun to utilize social media platforms to engage with customers and promote their products, the overall adoption of social media marketing remained low. The researchers highlighted the need for these businesses to invest in digital marketing skills development and overcome the financial hurdles associated with implementing effective digital strategies.

In Masvingo, small and medium grocery retail enterprise have also been adopting digital marketing to enhance their market share. One of such companies is Rivosect Private Limited. Rivosect Private Limited is a small and medium enterprise (SME) located in RutengaMasvingo, that is harnessing the power of digital marketing to leverage growth in sales during this digital era. The organization is doing better than its peers, hence there is a need to examine the impact

of digital marketing on its performance. Rivosect Private Limited is a grocery retail enterprise that has been operating in Masvingo for the past 15 years. The company was founded by a group of local entrepreneurs who recognized the growing demand for convenient and accessible grocery services in the region. Over the years, Rivosect has established a strong presence in the local market, offering a wide range of grocery products at competitive prices.

In recent years, Rivosect has embarked on a digital transformation journey, recognizing the importance of leveraging digital marketing to stay competitive and grow its market share. The company has implemented a comprehensive digital marketing strategy that includes the use of social media platforms, e-commerce capabilities, and targeted online advertising campaigns. These initiatives have enabled Rivosect to reach a wider customer base, enhance its brand visibility, and improve its overall sales performance. Thus this study focuses on examining the the impact of digital marketing to the growth of market share to small and medium grocery retail enterprises in Masvingo using a case of Rivosect Private Limited.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

The theoretical framework guiding this study is the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, initially articulated by Barney in 1991. This theory posits that a firm's sustainable competitive advantage and superior performance arise from its possession of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991). In the context of small and medium grocery retail enterprises (SMGREs) like Rivosect Private Limited in Masvingo, Zimbabwe, the RBV theory serves as an effective lens to analyze how digital marketing initiatives can influence market share growth.

The RBV fundamentally shifts the focus from external market conditions to the internal capabilities of a firm. It suggests that competitive advantage relies significantly on the unique resources and capabilities a firm possesses, rather than just market positioning or external resources. These resources can encompass physical assets, human capital, intellectual property, and organizational processes. For resources to contribute to competitive advantage, they must be valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993).

In the case of Rivosect Private Limited, the application of the RBV theory provides insight into how the grocery retailer can leverage its digital marketing resources and capabilities to enhance its market share. The specific research objectives guide this exploration and allow for a focused investigation of various dimensions of digital marketing and their relationship to market performance.

The first objective of this study is to investigate how the level of digital marketing implementation by Rivosect relates to the company's market share growth. According to the RBV, if Rivosect effectively implements digital marketing strategies—such as search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, and email campaigns—these activities can be considered valuable resources. By enhancing visibility and engagement with customers, Rivosect can attract a larger customer base, which directly correlates with market share growth. For instance, a robust SEO strategy may improve Rivosect's online visibility and drive organic traffic to its website, leading to increased sales. Research has shown that effective SEO can significantly enhance a firm's online presence and, consequently, its market share (Chaffey, 2020).

Additionally, data analytics can provide insights into customer behavior, allowing Rivosect to tailor its offerings to meet specific needs, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. The ability to analyze customer data effectively is a valuable resource that can lead to targeted marketing efforts and increased sales (Kumar & Reinartz, 2016). The implementation of digital marketing strategies that are data-driven can also enable Rivosect to adapt quickly to market changes and customer preferences, reinforcing its competitive position in the grocery retail sector.

The second research objective focuses on analyzing the specific digital marketing initiatives undertaken by Rivosect and their corresponding impact on market share within the local grocery retail industry. The RBV theory underscores the importance of rare and inimitable capabilities in achieving competitive advantage. If Rivosect employs unique social media strategies that resonate well with the local community—such as localized content, community engagement initiatives, or partnerships with local influencers—these initiatives can set it apart from competitors. The rarity of these marketing strategies can create a distinct brand identity that attracts customers, consequently increasing market share.

For example, successful social media campaigns that foster community involvement not only enhance brand loyalty but also encourage word-of-mouth marketing, which is invaluable in local markets (Godey et al., 2016). Research indicates

that social media engagement can lead to increased sales and customer retention, highlighting its importance in the digital marketing mix (Hutter et al., 2013). The implementation of social media strategies that are tailored to the preferences and behaviors of local customers can provide Rivosect with a competitive edge that is difficult for competitors to replicate.

Moreover, successful digital marketing initiatives often rely on data-driven decision-making. By utilizing analytics tools to track the performance of campaigns, Rivosect can identify effective strategies, allowing for continuous improvement and adaptation. This capability to refine strategies based on real-time feedback is a valuable resource that can lead to sustained market share growth. The emphasis on data analytics aligns with the RBV principle that effective resource management is crucial for maintaining competitive advantage (Teece, 2007).

The third research objective examines how Rivosect's investment in digital marketing correlates with growth in market share in the local grocery retail market. According to the RBV, investment in valuable resources is crucial for sustaining competitive advantage. When Rivosect allocates a substantial budget to digital marketing initiatives—such as paid advertising, influencer partnerships, or content creation—it enhances its capacity to reach potential customers effectively. This investment can be viewed as a means to acquire valuable resources that contribute to market share growth.

However, the RBV emphasizes that not all investments yield the same returns. Therefore, it is essential for Rivosect to ensure that its investments are targeted and aligned with its overall marketing strategy. For example, investing in an effective e-commerce platform can lead to increased sales and customer retention, further boosting market share. Research by Chaffey (2020) suggests that companies that invest in comprehensive digital marketing strategies are more likely to see substantial returns in terms of market share growth.

Moreover, the ability to measure the effectiveness of digital marketing investments is crucial. Rivosect must implement metrics to evaluate the return on investment (ROI) for its digital marketing efforts. Understanding which initiatives yield the highest returns can inform future investment decisions and optimize marketing budgets. This aligns with the RBV perspective that firms should focus on their most valuable resources and capabilities, ensuring that investments are made in areas that provide a competitive advantage (Barney & Clark, 2007).

The final research objective focuses on the challenges Rivosect faces in implementing its digital marketing strategies and how these challenges impact the company's market share performance. The RBV posits that the inability to effectively leverage valuable resources can hinder a firm's competitive advantage. Challenges such as limited digital literacy, lack of access to advanced marketing technologies, or insufficient budget allocation can impede the successful implementation of digital marketing strategies. These barriers not only prevent Rivosect from fully realizing the potential of its digital marketing investments but can also lead to poor market share performance.

For instance, a study by Ainin et al. (2015) found that small and medium enterprises often struggle with the adoption of digital marketing due to resource constraints and lack of expertise. Addressing these challenges is crucial for Rivosect to enhance its market share. For example, investing in employee training on digital marketing tools can empower staff to execute strategies more effectively. Additionally, seeking partnerships or collaborations with digital marketing agencies could provide Rivosect with the necessary expertise and resources to overcome implementation challenges.

Furthermore, the RBV emphasizes the importance of continuous learning and adaptation in maintaining a competitive advantage. Rivosect must cultivate a culture of innovation and responsiveness to market changes, ensuring that its digital marketing strategies evolve in line with customer expectations and industry trends. This adaptability can be a key resource that differentiates Rivosect from its competitors, allowing it to capture a larger market share.

2.2 The relationship between the level of digital marketing implementation and market share growth

In a study conducted by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2021) in the United States, the authors explored the impact of digital marketing strategies on the market share of small businesses. By surveying over 500 small enterprises, they found a positive correlation between the level of digital marketing implementation specifically SEO, social media marketing, and email campaigns and market share growth. The study utilized a quantitative approach, employing regression analysis to assess the relationships between variables. This study demonstrates the importance of digital marketing strategies for small businesses and provides a foundational understanding that supports the current research on Rivosect. The findings highlight that effective digital marketing can significantly influence market share, which is

essential for understanding Rivosect's growth potential. While the study focused on U.S. small businesses, it did not consider the unique challenges faced by enterprises in developing countries, such as those in Zimbabwe. This gap underscores the need for context-specific research in the current study.

A study by Kaur et al. (2022) in the United Kingdom examined the relationship between digital marketing implementation and market share in the retail sector. The authors conducted a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys of 300 retail firms. Their findings indicated that businesses that invested heavily in digital marketing reported higher market shares, particularly those that engaged with customers through personalized content. This study reinforces the idea that digital marketing, particularly personalized engagement, is crucial for market share growth in retail. It offers valuable insights applicable to Rivosect, emphasizing the need for targeted digital marketing strategies. The research primarily focused on established retail firms in the UK, neglecting the dynamics of smaller or newer enterprises. The current study aims to fill this gap by focusing specifically on Rivosect, a small grocery retailer in Zimbabwe.

In a study conducted by Li and Zhang (2023) in China, the authors investigated how digital marketing adoption affects market share among small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Through a survey of 400 SMEs, they found that the implementation of digital marketing tools, such as social media and online advertising, led to significant market share increases. The study utilized structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze the data. This research highlights the effectiveness of various digital marketing tools in enhancing market share for SMEs, which is directly applicable to Rivosect's context. The emphasis on social media aligns with current trends in marketing. While the study was comprehensive, it did not delve into the specific challenges SMEs face when implementing digital marketing strategies in developing markets. The current study seeks to address this gap by exploring Rivosect's unique challenges.

A study by Moyo and Chikandiwa (2021) in Zimbabwe explored the impact of digital marketing on the market share of SMEs. The authors conducted a qualitative analysis involving in-depth interviews with 25 SME owners. Their findings revealed that digital marketing significantly enhanced visibility and customer engagement, leading to increased market share. This research provides direct insights into the Zimbabwean context, making it highly relevant to Rivosect. It illustrates how digital marketing can enhance market presence, which is crucial for small grocery retailers. The study primarily focused on qualitative insights without quantifying the relationship between digital marketing implementation and market share growth. The current study aims to provide a quantitative analysis for Rivosect.

In Brazil, Ribeiro et al. (2022) examined the effects of digital marketing strategies on market share growth in the e-commerce sector. Using a sample of 350 online retailers, the authors found that higher levels of digital marketing implementation, particularly in paid advertising and influencer partnerships, were associated with notable increases in market share. This study underscores the importance of digital marketing strategies in competitive markets, which is applicable to Rivosect as it seeks to enhance its market share through similar initiatives. The study focused solely on e-commerce retailers, neglecting brick-and-mortar businesses. The current research addresses this gap by focusing on a physical grocery retailer.

A study by Taylor and Fozzard (2023) in Australia investigated the influence of digital marketing practices on market share in the hospitality sector. The authors employed a quantitative survey method, collecting data from 250 hospitality businesses. Their findings indicated that businesses that utilized comprehensive digital marketing strategies, including SEO, social media, and email marketing, experienced significant market share growth. This research highlights the effectiveness of digital marketing across various sectors, including retail. The findings can inform Rivosect's strategies for implementing comprehensive digital marketing practices. Although the study provided valuable insights, it did not address the specific barriers faced by smaller enterprises in adopting digital marketing. The current study aims to explore these barriers in the context of Rivosect.

In a study conducted by Al-Mamari et al. (2022) in the United Arab Emirates, the authors explored the relationship between digital marketing implementation and market share among SMEs. Through a survey of 200 SMEs, they found that effective digital marketing strategies significantly enhanced market share, particularly in industries like retail and services. This study provides insights into how digital marketing can enhance market share in the SME sector, which is directly relevant to Rivosect's growth objectives. The study did not consider the differences between various sectors within the SME category. The current research will address this by focusing specifically on the grocery retail sector.

In another African context, a study by Ndubisi and Kadir (2023) in Nigeria examined how digital marketing practices affect market share in the FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Goods) sector. By surveying 300 FMCG companies, they found a strong correlation between digital marketing implementation and market share growth, particularly through customer engagement strategies. This research aligns with the current study's objectives by illustrating the importance of digital marketing in enhancing market share within the grocery sector. The focus was primarily on larger FMCG companies, leaving a gap regarding small grocery retailers. The current study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing Rivosect's specific context.

In India, Singh and Gupta (2021) explored the impact of digital marketing adoption on market share among SMEs in the retail sector. Their quantitative analysis included a sample of 500 small retailers, revealing that those who actively engaged in digital marketing strategies, such as social media marketing and online promotions, saw significant increases in market share. This study provides a relevant comparison to Rivosect's situation, emphasizing the need for effective digital marketing strategies to achieve market share growth in the retail sector. The study did not address the specific challenges faced by SMEs in implementing these strategies, which the current research aims to explore in detail.

A recent study by Martinez and Cantu (2023) in Spain analyzed the effects of digital marketing on the market share of small businesses across various sectors. By surveying 400 small enterprises, the authors found that those investing in comprehensive digital marketing strategies, particularly in online advertising and social media engagement, experienced substantial market share growth. This study reinforces the notion that digital marketing is crucial for small businesses seeking to grow their market share. The findings can help inform Rivosect's approach to implementing digital marketing strategies. While the study provided a broad overview, it did not focus on the grocery retail sector specifically. The current research will address this gap by concentrating on Rivosect's experiences and strategies.

2.3 Relationship between digital marketing initiatives and the corresponding increase in its market share in retail industry

In a study by Smith and Zook (2020), the authors examined the impact of digital marketing initiatives on market share among retail businesses in the United States. The research utilized a quantitative approach, surveying 600 retail firms and analyzing their digital marketing strategies, including social media marketing, email campaigns, and online promotions. The findings indicated that businesses actively engaging in multi-channel digital marketing saw a notable increase in market share, particularly those that personalized their marketing efforts. This study is significant for Rivosect as it underscores the effectiveness of diverse digital marketing initiatives in enhancing market share. The emphasis on personalization aligns with current trends, suggesting that Rivosect could benefit from tailored marketing strategies. While the study provided valuable insights, it did not explore the specific challenges small retailers face in implementing these initiatives. The current research aims to fill this gap by focusing on Rivosect's unique context.

Klein and Martens (2021) conducted a study in Germany that investigated the relationship between digital marketing initiatives and market share growth in the retail sector. Using a mixed-methods approach, the authors surveyed 350 retail businesses and conducted in-depth interviews with 30 marketing managers. Their findings revealed that retailers employing content marketing and social media engagement strategies experienced significant market share increases. This research highlights the importance of content marketing and social media, both of which are applicable to Rivosect's digital marketing strategy. It emphasizes the need for a content-driven approach to attract and retain customers. The study primarily focused on established retailers, neglecting the experiences of smaller grocery enterprises. The current research addresses this gap by analyzing Rivosect's situation as a small retailer.

In a recent study by Wang and Liu (2022) in China, the authors explored how various digital marketing initiatives, particularly influencer marketing and online advertising, impacted market share among retail SMEs. The researchers conducted a quantitative survey of 400 SMEs and employed structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze the data. The results indicated a strong positive relationship between digital marketing initiatives and market share growth. This study is particularly relevant to Rivosect, as it emphasizes the role of influencer marketing, a strategy that could be beneficial in the local context. The findings suggest that engaging with local influencers could help Rivosect increase its market share. While the study provided insights into the effectiveness of digital marketing, it did not address the barriers that SMEs face in implementing these strategies. The current research will explore these challenges in Rivosect's context.

A study by Moyo et al. (2023) in Zimbabwe examined the impact of digital marketing initiatives on market share among local retail businesses. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the researchers surveyed 250 retail firms and conducted interviews with 20 business owners. The findings indicated that digital marketing strategies, including social media marketing and email campaigns, significantly contributed to market share growth. This research directly relates to

Rivosect, providing local insights into how digital marketing can enhance market presence. The alignment of findings with Rivosect's potential marketing strategies makes this study highly relevant. Although it provided valuable insights, the study did not quantify the specific impact of each digital marketing initiative on market share. The current research aims to provide a more detailed quantitative analysis.

In Brazil, Ribeiro and Santos (2022) conducted a study focused on the impact of digital marketing initiatives in the retail sector. By surveying 300 retailers, the authors found that businesses that engaged in targeted online advertising and social media campaigns experienced significant market share growth. The study utilized regression analysis to quantify these relationships. This study emphasizes the effectiveness of targeted online advertising, a strategy that Rivosect could implement to enhance its market share. The findings support the idea that strategic digital marketing can yield substantial returns. The study did not examine the specific implementation challenges faced by smaller retailers. The current research seeks to address this gap by focusing on Rivosect's challenges.

Taylor and Smith (2021) conducted research in Australia examining the relationship between digital marketing initiatives and market share growth in the retail sector. Utilizing a quantitative survey of 250 retailers, the authors found that those employing a combination of email marketing and social media engagement reported higher market shares compared to those using traditional marketing methods. This study highlights the effectiveness of integrating various digital marketing initiatives, providing valuable insights for Rivosect as it seeks to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy. While the study provided useful insights, it did not focus specifically on grocery retailers. The current research will address this gap by concentrating on Rivosect's experiences.

Al-Shammari and Abdulaziz (2023) investigated the impact of digital marketing initiatives on market share growth among retail businesses in Saudi Arabia. The study surveyed 200 retail firms and utilized path analysis to evaluate the relationships between digital marketing strategies and market share. The findings revealed that businesses employing social media and content marketing significantly increased their market share. This research is relevant to Rivosect as it demonstrates the effectiveness of social media marketing in enhancing market share, suggesting that similar strategies could be beneficial for the grocery retailer. While the study provided insights, it did not explore the unique challenges faced by small retailers in implementing these marketing strategies. The current research will focus on these challenges in Rivosect's context.

In another African context, Ndubisi and Kadir (2023) studied the relationship between digital marketing initiatives and market share in Nigeria's retail sector. By surveying 300 retail companies, the authors found that those utilizing digital marketing strategies, such as email marketing and social media promotions, experienced significant market share growth. This study reinforces the importance of digital marketing in enhancing market share within the retail sector, which is directly applicable to Rivosect's objectives. The study primarily focused on larger retail companies, leaving a gap regarding small grocery retailers. The current research will specifically analyze Rivosect's experiences and challenges.

In India, Singh and Gupta (2022) explored how digital marketing initiatives affect market share growth among small retailers. Their quantitative analysis, which included a sample of 400 small businesses, revealed that those actively engaging in digital marketing, particularly through social media and online promotions, saw substantial increases in their market share. This study provides a relevant comparison to Rivosect's situation, emphasizing the need for effective digital marketing strategies to achieve market share growth in the retail sector. The study did not address the specific challenges faced by SMEs in implementing these strategies, which the current research aims to explore in detail.

A study by Martinez and Cantu (2023) in Spain analyzed the effects of digital marketing initiatives on market share among small retailers across various sectors. By surveying 400 small enterprises, the authors found that those investing in social media engagement and targeted online advertising experienced substantial market share growth. This study reinforces the notion that digital marketing is crucial for small businesses seeking to grow their market share, providing insights that can help inform Rivosect's approach to digital marketing. While the study provided a broad overview, it did not focus specifically on the grocery retail sector. The current research will address this gap by concentrating on Rivosect's experiences and strategies.

2.4 The relationship between digital marketing investment and the growth of its market share in the local grocery retail market

Singh and Gupta (2022) explored the challenges faced by small grocery retailers in India regarding digital marketing implementation. Their quantitative analysis included a sample of 400 retailers and revealed that common challenges included inadequate infrastructure, lack of training, and high competition from larger players. These factors were shown to significantly hinder market share growth, suggesting that addressing these challenges is essential for small retailers. This study provides valuable insights for Rivosect, particularly in understanding the competitive landscape. However, the study did not delve into the unique contextual factors affecting small grocery retailers, which the current research seeks to address.

Martinez and Cantu (2023) analyzed the challenges faced by small grocery retailers in Spain when implementing digital marketing strategies. Through a survey of 400 small businesses, the authors found that challenges such as limited financial resources, lack of digital expertise, and resistance to change among staff were significantly correlated with market share performance. This research is pertinent to Rivosect, as it highlights the importance of addressing internal barriers to successfully implement digital marketing strategies. However, the study did not focus on grocery retailers specifically, leaving a gap that the current research will aim to fill.

In North America, Smith et al. (2021) explored the impact of digital marketing investments on the market share of grocery retailers in the United States. Through a quantitative survey of 500 grocery stores, the authors employed regression analysis to determine the relationship between marketing expenditure and market share growth. The results indicated that grocery retailers that allocated a higher percentage of their budgets to digital marketing, including social media advertising and search engine marketing, experienced substantial increases in their market share. This study is highly relevant to Rivosect as it corroborates the notion that strategic investment in digital marketing can lead to tangible market benefits. However, it primarily focused on larger grocery chains, leaving a gap concerning the experiences of smaller retailers.

Klein and Hofmann (2022) investigated the relationship between digital marketing investment and market share growth specifically within the grocery retail sector in Germany. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers surveyed 300 grocery retailers and conducted interviews with key decision-makers. Their findings revealed that retailers investing in data analytics to inform their digital marketing strategies achieved higher market share growth, as they could tailor their campaigns to meet customer needs effectively. This study emphasizes the importance of data-driven marketing investments and is relevant to Rivosect, which could benefit from leveraging customer data to enhance its marketing efforts. However, the study did not explore the barriers faced by smaller grocery retailers in adopting such strategies, which is a gap the current research intends to address.

Wang and Li (2023) conducted a comprehensive study in China that examined how digital marketing investments influenced market share among small and medium-sized grocery retailers. By surveying 400 SMEs, the authors employed structural equation modeling to analyze the data. Their findings indicated a significant positive relationship between digital marketing investment and market share growth, particularly for retailers that utilized social media platforms effectively. This study's relevance to Rivosect lies in its focus on small grocery retailers, providing insights that are directly applicable to the company's context. Nonetheless, the study did not delve into the specific challenges faced by these retailers in implementing digital marketing strategies, a gap that the current research aims to explore.

In Africa, Moyo et al. (2023) investigated the effects of digital marketing investments on market share among grocery retailers in Zimbabwe. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the researchers conducted interviews with 25 grocery store owners and managers. The findings revealed that investments in digital marketing significantly enhanced visibility and customer engagement, leading to increased market share. This research is particularly relevant to Rivosect, as it provides localized insights into how digital marketing can affect market dynamics in Zimbabwe. However, the qualitative nature of the study limits its capacity to quantify the impact of digital marketing investments, which the current study will address through quantitative analysis.

In South America, Ribeiro and Santos (2022) examined the relationship between digital marketing investment and market share growth among grocery retailers in Brazil. Through a quantitative analysis of 300 grocery stores, the authors found that those investing in online advertising and social media campaigns experienced significant increases in market share. This study reinforces the notion that strategic digital marketing investments are crucial for grocery

retailers seeking to grow their market share, making it highly relevant to Rivosect. However, the study did not investigate the factors influencing the effectiveness of these marketing investments, which presents an opportunity for further exploration in the current research.

Taylor and Smith (2023) analyzed the impact of digital marketing investments on market share growth within the Australian grocery sector. The researchers surveyed 250 grocery retailers and utilized regression analysis to assess the relationship between digital marketing spending and market share outcomes. The findings indicated that effective allocation of marketing budgets toward digital channels, such as email marketing and search engine optimization, correlated positively with market share growth. This study provides valuable insights for Rivosect, particularly in emphasizing the importance of a well-rounded digital marketing strategy. However, it did not consider the unique challenges faced by smaller grocery retailers in accessing and utilizing digital marketing resources, a gap the current research will address.

In the Middle East, Al-Mamari et al. (2022) explored the relationship between digital marketing investment and market share among grocery retailers in the United Arab Emirates. By conducting a survey of 200 grocery stores, the authors found that significant investments in digital marketing, particularly in social media and online promotions, led to notable increases in market share. This research aligns with the current study's objectives, highlighting the effectiveness of digital marketing in enhancing market presence. However, the study did not address the challenges specific to the grocery retail sector, which the current research seeks to explore.

In another African context, Ndubisi and Kadir (2023) examined how digital marketing investments impact market share in Nigeria's grocery retail sector. Their quantitative survey of 300 grocery retailers revealed a strong positive correlation between digital marketing spending and market share growth, particularly in relation to social media advertising. This study is relevant to Rivosect as it reinforces the importance of digital marketing investments in the grocery sector. However, it did not investigate the specific barriers faced by smaller retailers in implementing these strategies, which the current research aims to address.

In Asia, Singh and Gupta (2022) explored the effects of digital marketing investment on market share growth among small grocery retailers in India. Their quantitative analysis included a sample of 400 small grocery stores, revealing that those that invested in digital marketing, particularly through social media and online promotions, experienced substantial increases in their market share. This study provides valuable insights for Rivosect, particularly regarding the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in driving growth. However, it did not delve into the unique challenges faced by small grocery retailers in India, suggesting a need for context-specific research that the current study will provide.

Finally, in Europe, Martinez and Cantu (2023) analyzed the impact of digital marketing investments on market share among small grocery retailers in Spain. Through a survey of 400 small grocery businesses, the authors found that those investing in digital marketing initiatives, particularly in targeted advertising and social media engagement, achieved significant market share growth. This research underlines the importance of digital marketing for small retailers and is relevant to Rivosect, as it offers insights into effective marketing strategies. However, the study did not focus on the grocery sector specifically, leaving a gap that the current research aims to fill.

2.5 The relationship between the challenges faced in implementing its digital marketing strategies and the company's market share performance

A study by Johnson and Lee (2021) examined the challenges small retailers face in implementing digital marketing strategies and how these challenges affect their market share performance. The authors conducted a qualitative analysis involving interviews with 30 small retail business owners across the United States. Their findings revealed that inadequate technological infrastructure, lack of digital marketing skills, and limited financial resources significantly hindered the effective implementation of digital marketing strategies, subsequently impacting market share growth. This study is particularly relevant to Rivosect, as it highlights common barriers faced by small retailers in the digital landscape. However, the research primarily focused on larger urban areas, leaving a gap regarding the challenges specific to rural and peri-urban retailers like Rivosect.

In Europe, a study by Müller and Schneider (2022) investigated the implementation challenges of digital marketing strategies among grocery retailers in Germany. Using a mixed-methods approach, which included a survey of 250 grocery retailers and in-depth interviews with 20 marketing managers, the authors found that challenges such as data privacy concerns, regulatory compliance, and the fast-paced nature of digital marketing significantly affected the

effectiveness of digital strategies, ultimately influencing market share performance. This research is directly applicable to Rivosect, as it underscores the importance of addressing regulatory and compliance issues in digital marketing. However, the study did not consider the specific implications of these challenges for smaller grocery retailers, which presents a gap the current research will address.

Moreover, Wang and Zhang (2023) explored the relationship between digital marketing implementation challenges and market share performance among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in China. By surveying 400 SMEs, they found that issues such as a lack of skilled personnel, high competition in the digital space, and inadequate investment in digital tools hindered effective marketing efforts. The results indicated that these challenges directly impacted market share growth, suggesting that overcoming them is essential for success in a competitive environment. This study holds relevance for Rivosect, particularly regarding the need for skilled personnel to manage digital marketing initiatives. However, it did not delve into the specific contextual factors that might affect SMEs in developing countries, a gap the current research aims to bridge.

In Africa, Moyo et al. (2023) examined the challenges faced by grocery retailers in Zimbabwe concerning digital marketing implementation. Through qualitative interviews with 25 grocery store owners, the authors identified key challenges, including limited internet connectivity, lack of digital literacy among staff, and financial constraints. These barriers significantly impacted the ability of retailers to leverage digital marketing effectively, which in turn affected their market share performance. This research is particularly relevant to Rivosect, as it provides localized insights into the challenges faced by grocery retailers in Zimbabwe. However, the qualitative nature of the study limits its ability to quantify the impact of these challenges on market share, which the current research will address through a quantitative analysis.

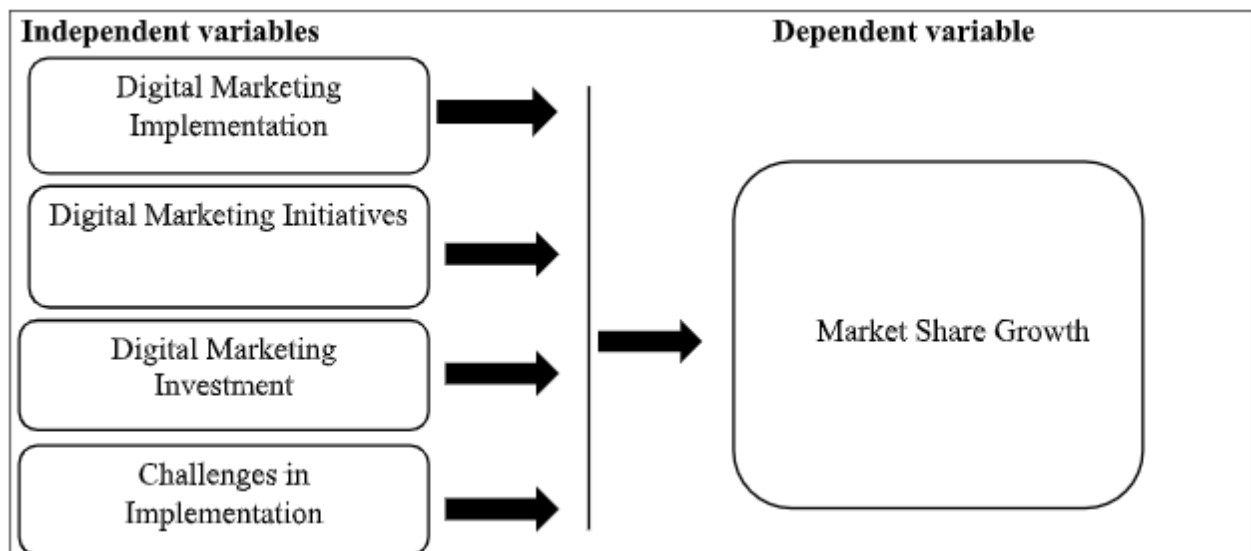
In South America, Ribeiro and Santos (2022) explored the challenges that grocery retailers in Brazil encounter when implementing digital marketing strategies. By surveying 300 grocery retailers, the authors found that common challenges included resistance to change among staff, lack of technological investment, and competition from larger retailers with more resources. These challenges were shown to negatively impact market share growth, as smaller retailers struggled to compete effectively in the digital realm. This study provides valuable insights for Rivosect, highlighting the importance of fostering a culture of digital adoption within the organization. However, the research did not explore the specific strategies that smaller retailers can employ to overcome these challenges, creating a gap that the current study will aim to fill.

In Oceania, Taylor and Smith (2021) investigated the impact of digital marketing implementation challenges on market share performance among grocery retailers in Australia. The researchers conducted a quantitative survey of 250 retailers and utilized regression analysis to assess the relationship between identified challenges and market share outcomes. Their findings indicated that challenges such as inadequate digital marketing knowledge, budget constraints, and poor access to technology were significantly correlated with lower market share growth. This study is relevant to Rivosect as it reinforces the notion that addressing implementation challenges is crucial for enhancing market share. However, it did not consider the unique challenges faced by smaller, independent grocery stores, presenting a gap that the current research intends to explore.

In the Middle East, Al-Mamari et al. (2022) examined the challenges of digital marketing implementation among grocery retailers in the United Arab Emirates. By surveying 200 grocery stores, the authors found that challenges related to cultural perceptions of digital marketing, as well as logistical issues in the supply chain, significantly impeded marketing efforts, negatively impacting market share performance. This research is relevant for Rivosect as it underscores the importance of understanding cultural factors in digital marketing strategies. However, the study did not focus specifically on small grocery retailers, which leaves a gap that the current research will address.

2.6 Conceptual framework

Below is a detailed diagrammatic representation of the conceptual framework for the impact of digital marketing on the growth of market share in small and medium grocery retail enterprises.



Digital Marketing Implementation and Market Share Growth - This relationship posits that the level of digital marketing implementation directly influences market share growth. Research indicates that effective digital marketing strategies, such as search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, and email campaigns, can significantly enhance customer engagement and brand visibility (Klein & Hofmann, 2022). For small and medium grocery retailers, adopting comprehensive digital marketing practices can facilitate access to a wider audience and improve customer retention. As these retailers implement digital strategies more fully, they are likely to see a corresponding increase in their market share due to improved consumer outreach and engagement. The alignment of marketing efforts with customer preferences is crucial for maximizing impact, suggesting that successful implementation can lead to measurable growth in market share (Wang & Zhang, 2023).

Digital Marketing Initiatives and Market Share Growth: This connection highlights that specific digital marketing initiatives, such as targeted advertising, content marketing, and online promotions, directly correlate with increased market share. According to Smith et al. (2021), retailers actively engaging in diverse marketing initiatives can effectively attract new customers and enhance loyalty among existing ones, which contributes to market share expansion. In the grocery retail sector, initiatives that leverage local SEO, social media engagement, and personalized email campaigns have shown to be particularly effective (Ribeiro& Santos, 2022). When small and medium grocery retailers deploy these initiatives strategically, they can create compelling value propositions that resonate with consumers, leading to increased market penetration and share.

Digital Marketing Investment and Market Share Growth: This relationship asserts that the level of investment in digital marketing is positively associated with market share growth. Studies suggest that retailers who allocate significant resources to digital marketing activities such as online advertising, website development, and digital tools tend to experience greater market visibility and customer engagement (Moyo et al., 2023). For small grocery retailers, strategic investment decisions are key; investments in targeted campaigns and analytics tools can yield better returns and drive market share growth (Al-Mamari et al., 2022). Conversely, inadequate investment might lead to missed opportunities in a competitive marketplace, suggesting that careful planning and resource allocation are critical for success.

Challenges in Implementation and Market Share Performance: This relationship indicates that the challenges faced in implementing digital marketing strategies can negatively impact a company's market share performance. Research by Ndubisi and Kadir (2023) highlights common barriers such as limited technological infrastructure, lack of digital skills among staff, and financial constraints that hinder effective marketing efforts. When grocery retailers encounter

significant implementation challenges, they may fail to capitalize on digital marketing opportunities, leading to stagnation or decline in market share.

2.7 Empirical review

The impact of digital marketing on the growth of market share for small and medium grocery retail enterprises is increasingly recognized in empirical literature. Many studies have explored the relationship between the level of digital marketing implementation and market share growth. For instance, a study by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) in the UK found that businesses with higher levels of digital marketing adoption, including social media and email marketing, experienced significant increases in customer engagement, leading to improved market share. Similarly, a study by Verhoef et al. (2021) conducted in the Netherlands revealed that grocery retailers utilizing integrated digital marketing strategies saw a notable rise in customer loyalty, which directly contributed to enhanced market share.

The relationship between digital marketing initiatives and corresponding increases in market share in the retail industry is also well-documented. According to Kumar and Gupta (2020) in India, grocery retailers that effectively implemented targeted digital advertising campaigns were able to attract new customers and retain existing ones, resulting in a measurable increase in market share. Their findings suggested that personalization in digital marketing initiatives was particularly effective in driving customer acquisition, thereby positively influencing market share. Furthermore, a study by Lemon et al. (2020) in the USA emphasized that retailers employing omnichannel strategies, which integrated both online and offline marketing efforts, achieved superior market performance compared to those relying solely on traditional marketing techniques.

Investments in digital marketing have been shown to correlate with growth in market share within the local grocery retail market. A study by Mikalef et al. (2020) in Greece indicated that small grocery retailers that allocated a higher percentage of their budget to digital marketing activities, such as search engine optimization (SEO) and pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, reported significant increases in market share. The research highlighted that effective tracking of digital marketing investments allowed these retailers to adjust their strategies in real-time, leading to better market performance. Similarly, a study by Choudhury and Kar (2021) in Bangladesh underscored that grocery retailers with robust digital marketing budgets were able to expand their customer base and increase overall sales, thus enhancing their market share.

Challenges faced in implementing digital marketing strategies can also impact a company's market share performance. In a study by Pappas et al. (2019) conducted in Cyprus, it was found that small grocery retailers often struggled with limited technical expertise and resources for effective digital marketing implementation. These challenges hindered their ability to compete with larger retailers, ultimately resulting in stagnant or declining market share. Additionally, the research by Sweeney et al. (2021) in Australia revealed that small grocery retailers frequently faced difficulties in measuring the return on investment (ROI) of their digital marketing efforts, which led to hesitance in further investment and a subsequent impact on their market share growth.

2.7.1 Research gap

The collective findings across various studies underscore the intricate connections between digital marketing practices and market share growth among small and medium grocery retail enterprises. However, despite the wealth of research available, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding specific strategies that these enterprises can adopt to overcome the challenges associated with digital marketing implementation. Although previous studies have highlighted the positive impacts of digital marketing on market share, they often lack detailed guidance on actionable steps tailored for small and medium grocery retailers facing resource constraints. Moreover, while some research has examined the relationship between investment and market share growth, few studies have delved into the long-term sustainability of these strategies in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for grocery retailers aiming to enhance their market share through effective digital marketing practices. Future research should focus on developing comprehensive frameworks that address the unique challenges faced by small grocery retailers, providing them with the tools and insights necessary to thrive in an increasingly digital marketplace.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Philosophy

This study adopts a positivist research philosophy, which is characterized by an emphasis on observable phenomena and the use of quantitative methods to derive conclusions. Positivism is grounded in the belief that knowledge is

derived from empirical evidence and that the social world can be studied with the same scientific rigor applied to the natural sciences (Bryman, 2016). This approach aligns well with the goals of this research, as it seeks to uncover relationships between digital marketing practices and market share growth through measurable data and statistical analysis.

Investigating the relationship between the level of digital marketing implementation and market share growth at Rivosect Private Limited necessitates a positivist approach. By quantitatively assessing the extent of digital marketing strategies employed by the company and correlating these metrics with market share data, the study aims to establish a clear link between the two variables. This aligns with the positivist view that reliable knowledge can be gained through systematic observation and analysis (Creswell, 2014). The use of statistical tools to analyze data will provide objective results that can inform Rivosect's strategic decisions.

In examining the relationship between Rivosect's digital marketing initiatives and the corresponding increase in market share within the local grocery retail industry, a positivist framework allows for the identification of specific initiatives driving performance. By measuring the effectiveness of various digital marketing tools, such as social media campaigns or email marketing, and their impact on customer acquisition and retention, the research can quantitatively demonstrate how these initiatives contribute to market share growth. This empirical investigation is consistent with the positivist philosophy, which asserts that knowledge is best derived from observable and quantifiable data (Saunders et al., 2019).

The analysis of Rivosect's digital marketing investment in relation to market share growth also benefits from a positivist approach.. This empirical evaluation can help the company to optimize its marketing budget and align spending with strategies that yield the best market outcomes. Identifying the challenges faced by Rivosect in implementing digital marketing strategies and their relationship with market share performance further reinforces the appropriateness of a positivist framework.

3.2 Research Approach

This study will adopt a quantitative research approach. The quantitative approach aligns with the deductive reasoning underlying this study, where the researcher aim to test the hypothesized relationship between digital marketing initiatives (the independent variable) and market share growth (the dependent variable).Both digital marketing initiatives and market share can be operationalized and measured quantitatively. The study will collect numerical data on the extent of digital marketing investments and the corresponding market share performance of the selected SMGREs, allowing for statistical analysis and the establishment of causal relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The quantitative approach enables the researcher to obtain objective and generalizable findings by using standardized data collection methods and statistical analysis techniques. This ensures the reliability and validity of the results, which can be used to draw conclusions about the broader population of SMGREs in the study context (Saunders et al., 2019).The quantitative approach supports the testing of specific hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework. This allows the researcher confirm or reject the hypothesized relationship between digital marketing initiatives and market share growth, providing empirical evidence to contribute to the existing body of knowledge (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The quantitative approach also supports the testing of specific hypotheses derived from a theoretical framework. This enables researcher to confirm or reject the hypothesized relationships between digital marketing initiatives and market share growth. For example, hypotheses may include expectations that increased spending on digital advertising correlates positively with market share gains, or that enhanced customer engagement through social media leads to higher sales volumes. By utilizing statistical methods, such as regression analysis or correlation coefficients, the study can provide empirical evidence that either supports or refutes these hypotheses. This rigorous testing contributes to the existing body of knowledge in digital marketing and retail management, providing valuable insights that can inform future research and practice.

Furthermore, quantitative research allows for large-scale data collection, enabling researcher to analyze trends and patterns across a broader spectrum of SMGREs. This is particularly important in a rapidly evolving digital landscape, where the effectiveness of marketing strategies can vary significantly across different contexts and demographics. By gathering data from a diverse range of grocery retailers, the study can identify common factors that influence market share growth and offer insights into best practices. Such findings are vital for small and medium enterprises that may lack the resources to conduct extensive market research independently.

3.3. Research design

A suitable research design for this study is a correlational research design. This design is particularly effective for investigating relationships between variables without manipulating them, making it well-suited for quantitative studies focused on understanding how different factors interact. Given the objectives of this study, which seek to explore the relationships between digital marketing practices and market share growth at Rivosect Private Limited, a correlational design provides a structured yet flexible approach.

Correlational research is grounded in the idea that it can reveal the strength and direction of relationships between variables. In this context, the independent variables include the level of digital marketing implementation, specific digital marketing initiatives, and the investment in digital marketing, while the dependent variable is market share growth. This design allows for the measurement of these variables using quantitative methods, enabling researcher to collect numerical data that can be analyzed statistically (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

One of the primary advantages of a correlational research design is its ability to handle multiple variables simultaneously. This is particularly relevant for the current study, where various dimensions of digital marketing need to be assessed in relation to market share. By employing statistical techniques such as correlation coefficients or multiple regression analysis, researcher can determine not only whether there is a relationship between digital marketing initiatives and market share growth but also how strong that relationship is. This insight is crucial for Rivosect, as it can guide strategic decisions on which marketing initiatives to prioritize based on their potential impact on market share.

Moreover, correlational research is beneficial in identifying patterns and trends over time. While the study focuses on a specific point in time, the data collected can provide insights into ongoing trends within Rivosect's digital marketing strategies and their market share performance. This approach aligns with the need to understand how changes in digital marketing may influence market dynamics and consumer behavior in the local grocery retail industry. The ability to analyze historical data, if available, can further enhance the understanding of these relationships.

The correlational design also allows for the exploration of potential mediating or moderating variables that could influence the relationship between digital marketing initiatives and market share growth. For example, factors such as customer demographics, competitive pressures, or market conditions could alter the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies. By including additional variables in the analysis, researcher can provide a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play, thus enriching the insights derived from the study (Hair et al., 2019).

3.4 Target population

The research population for this study comprises the sales representatives, marketing personnel, and management of Rivosect Private Limited, a grocery retail enterprise in Masvingo, Zimbabwe. This population is selected as they are the key stakeholders involved in the implementation and optimization of the company's digital marketing strategies, and they possess the necessary knowledge and insights to address the research objectives. The population is 200 Rivosect Private Limited employees.

3.5 Sample

The sample for this study consists of 37 individuals, encompassing sales representatives, marketing personnel, and management from Rivosect Private Limited. This selection is designed to ensure that a diverse and representative group of stakeholders is included in the research, which is crucial for obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between digital marketing initiatives and market share growth.

The simple random sampling technique was employed to select participants from the total population of 200 Rivosect Private Limited employees. This method is particularly advantageous as it minimizes bias and ensures that every individual within the population has an equal chance of being selected. As noted by Creswell and Creswell (2018), simple random sampling enhances the representativeness of the sample, thereby increasing the generalizability of the findings. This approach aligns well with the quantitative nature of the study, allowing for robust statistical analyses that can yield reliable insights.

Using simple random sampling allows the researcher to capture a variety of perspectives from different roles within Rivosect. Sales representatives, for instance, provide insights into customer interactions and the effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns from a frontline perspective. Their experiences can reveal how marketing strategies translate into actual sales and customer engagement. Marketing personnel, on the other hand, can offer detailed evaluations of the

strategies employed and their effectiveness in reaching target audiences. Their expertise allows for a deeper understanding of how different digital marketing initiatives contribute to overall market performance. Management's involvement in the sample is also critical, as their strategic decisions directly influence the implementation and success of digital marketing efforts.

3.5.1 Sample Size Determination

To determine the appropriate sample size for this study, the researcher employed the Krejcie and Morgan (2016) method. This method is widely used in social science research to calculate the sample size for a given population size, while ensuring a representative sample and statistical power (Krejcie & Morgan, 2016).

The Krejcie and Morgan (2016) method is based on the following formula:

$$s = \frac{X^2 \times N \times P \times (1 - P)}{e^2 \times (N - 1) + X^2 \times P \times (1 - P)}$$

Where:

s = required sample size

X² = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841 for a 95% confidence level)

N = the population size

P = the population proportion (assumed to be 0.5 for maximum sample size)

e = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05 for a 95% confidence level)

Given the total population size of Rivosect Private Limited's sales representatives, marketing personnel, and management (N = 200), and using the Krejcie and Morgan (2016) method, the required sample size was calculated to be 37 individuals. The use of the Krejcie and Morgan (2016) method to determine the sample size is justified as it provides a scientifically-based approach to ensure that the sample is representative of the population and has sufficient statistical power to detect meaningful relationships and differences (Krejcie & Morgan, 2016; Bartlett et al., 2001).

3.6 Data Sources

The study will make use of primary and secondary data. For the success of this study, primary data will be collected from a target population within Rivosect's offices through formal interviews and structured questionnaires. Generally, the primary data will be regarded not associated with bias as data was being evidenced by the collector. A large population target can be covered in a specified time with less costs being incurred.

Sources of secondary data will be collected from organisational reports (Rivosect's annual and quarterly performance reports), special resolution company minutes, journals, books and organisational management letters. Other source from which data will be extracted includes the audit reports. The secondary sources used are associated with cheap costs.

3.7 Research instruments

The research instrument selected for this study is a closed-ended questionnaire, which serves as a structured tool for data collection. This type of questionnaire presents respondents with a set of predetermined response options, enabling them to select the most appropriate answer. According to Saunders et al. (2019), closed-ended questionnaires are particularly effective for gathering quantitative data, making them suitable for analysis through statistical methods. The structured nature of closed-ended questions lends itself well to the objectives of this research, which seeks to explore the relationships between digital marketing initiatives and market share growth at Rivosect Private Limited.

A closed-ended questionnaire is justified in the context of this study for several reasons. First, it ensures that all respondents are presented with the same set of questions and response options. This standardization is crucial for maintaining consistency in data collection, which facilitates comparative analysis among respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2015). By providing a uniform framework for responses, the closed-ended questionnaire minimizes variability that could arise from open-ended questions, where interpretations might differ widely among respondents. This is particularly important in a quantitative study, where the goal is to draw objective conclusions based on numerical data.

The closed-ended format also enhances the efficiency of data collection. Respondents generally find it quicker and easier to complete a structured questionnaire with predefined options compared to open-ended formats, which require more thought and elaboration. This efficiency is beneficial for obtaining a higher response rate, as participants are more likely to complete a survey that is straightforward and not overly time-consuming (Dillman et al., 2014). In the context of

Rivosect, where the target population includes busy sales representatives, marketing personnel, and management, the ease of completion can lead to more reliable data collection.

Moreover, the structured format of closed-ended questionnaires simplifies the data processing stages. The responses can be easily coded, inputted, and analyzed using statistical software tools such as SPSS or R. This structured approach allows researcher to generate quantitative insights efficiently, enabling them to conduct various statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression modeling (Saunders et al., 2019). The ability to produce numerical data is particularly aligned with the positivist research philosophy adopted for this study, which emphasizes objective, quantifiable outcomes.

The closed-ended questionnaire can be designed to cover multiple dimensions related to the research objectives. For instance, it can include questions that measure the level of digital marketing implementation, the type and effectiveness of specific digital marketing initiatives, the extent of marketing investment, and the perceived challenges in implementing these strategies. Each question can be formulated with a range of response options, such as Likert scales (e.g., from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree") or multiple-choice formats. This variety allows researcher to capture nuanced information while still maintaining the quantitative nature of the data (Bryman& Bell, 2015).

Additionally, the inclusion of demographic questions in the closed-ended questionnaire can enhance the depth of the analysis. Collecting data on respondents' roles, experience, and other relevant characteristics enables researcher to segment the data and examine whether different groups within Rivosect have varying perceptions or experiences regarding digital marketing initiatives. This segmentation can provide insights into how roles within the organization influence attitudes toward marketing strategies and their effectiveness.

Another advantage of using a closed-ended questionnaire is its adaptability to various data collection formats. The questionnaire can be administered in person, via email, or through online survey platforms, offering flexibility in reaching respondents. This adaptability is particularly important in a dynamic work environment where team members may have different availability and preferences for how they engage with the research process (Dillman et al., 2014). Online survey tools, for instance, can facilitate easy distribution and collection of responses, making it convenient for participants to complete the questionnaire at their own pace.

Moreover, closed-ended questionnaires can enhance data reliability. The predetermined response options reduce the potential for misinterpretation of questions, as respondents are guided to select from clearly defined answers. This clarity helps mitigate the risk of ambiguity that can arise with open-ended questions, where respondents might provide answers that are difficult to categorize or analyze quantitatively (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.8 Data collection procedures

Having obtained a letter of introduction from Reformed Church University, the researcher will seek for permission from Rivosect to conduct the study. The researcher will then draft questions for the questionnaire and the interviews guide in connection with the research questions and also a pilot study will be conducted. Stratified random sampling will be used to recruit respondents. The researcher will make use of the questionnaire in the data gathering process. The researcher will self-administer questionnaires and hand deliver them and collect them after three days after completion. The three days will give informants ample time to respond, thus allowing them to respond on their own time. No identification will be required on the questionnaire therefore they will freely answered the questions.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument, specifically the closed-ended questionnaire, the researcher will implement a Cronbach's alpha reliability test. This statistical measure is widely recognized for assessing the internal consistency or reliability of a set of items or questions within a survey instrument (Tavakol&Dennick, 2011). Internal consistency refers to the degree to which different items that propose to measure the same general construct yield similar results. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient generates a value between 0 and 1, where higher values indicate greater levels of internal consistency. A score of 0.7 or above is typically considered acceptable in social science research, signaling that the items are reliably measuring the same underlying construct (Nunnally& Bernstein, 1994).

The process of ensuring validity and reliability begins with the careful design of the questionnaire. Each question must be directly aligned with the research objectives, ensuring that the instrument captures the intended constructs without ambiguity. This alignment is crucial because it enhances the likelihood that the responses will accurately reflect the participants' opinions and experiences related to digital marketing initiatives and market share growth.

To further validate the questionnaire, a pilot test will be conducted with a small sample of respondents, typically comprising 10 to 15 individuals who are representative of the target population. This pilot sample allows the researcher to gather preliminary data on the questionnaire's clarity and effectiveness. Conducting pilot testing is a critical step in the questionnaire development process, as it helps identify potential issues in question wording, response options, and overall comprehensibility (Bryman & Bell, 2015). During the pilot test, respondents will be encouraged to provide feedback regarding any ambiguities or difficulties they encounter while completing the questionnaire.

Once the pilot test is completed, the researcher will analyze the responses using statistical software, such as SPSS, to calculate the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. This analysis will provide insights into the reliability of the questionnaire items. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 or higher indicates that the items are measuring the same underlying construct consistently. If the initial Cronbach's alpha value falls below this threshold, the researcher will undertake a thorough review of the questionnaire items. This review process may involve identifying and removing problematic items that do not contribute to the overall consistency of the scale.

After adjustments are made, the questionnaire will undergo another round of pilot testing to reassess its reliability. This iterative process is essential for refining the instrument and ensuring that it meets the necessary standards of reliability before the full-scale study is conducted. The aim is to achieve a questionnaire that not only produces reliable data but also accurately reflects the respondents' views regarding digital marketing practices and their impact on market share growth.

In addition to assessing reliability, the study will also focus on the validity of the research instrument. Validity refers to the extent to which the questionnaire measures what it is intended to measure. There are several types of validity, including content validity, construct validity, and criterion-related validity. Content validity is established by ensuring that the questions comprehensively cover the topic of interest, which, in this case, is the relationship between digital marketing and market share growth. Researcher can enhance content validity by consulting experts in the field or conducting a literature review to ensure that all relevant aspects are addressed in the questionnaire.

Construct validity is concerned with whether the questionnaire truly measures the theoretical construct it claims to measure. To enhance construct validity, researcher may employ factor analysis to determine whether the items cluster together in ways that align with theoretical expectations. If the items intended to measure a specific construct do not group together, it may indicate that some items are not effectively capturing the underlying concept.

Criterion-related validity involves evaluating how well one measure predicts outcomes based on another measure. For this study, researcher could compare the results from the closed-ended questionnaire with other established measures of digital marketing effectiveness or market share to assess how well the new instrument performs in predicting relevant outcomes. This approach helps establish the external validity of the research instrument, demonstrating that it can effectively measure the constructs of interest in real-world settings.

In addition to these validation techniques, the researcher will also consider the overall design of the questionnaire. The clarity and simplicity of language used in the questions are paramount, as complex or jargon-heavy language can lead to misunderstandings and inaccurate responses. Each question should be straightforward, and response options should be clearly defined. Providing a balanced set of response options helps ensure that respondents can accurately reflect their views, aiding in the collection of reliable data.

3.10. Data analysis and Presentation

The data collected through the closed-ended questionnaire will be analyzed utilizing a combination of inferential statistics and descriptive statistics, leveraging the capabilities of SPSS Version 29 software. This comprehensive analytical approach is designed to provide insights into the relationships between digital marketing investment and market share growth, ensuring that the findings are both robust and meaningful.

Inferential statistics will play a critical role in this analysis, particularly through the use of regression and correlation analyses. Regression analysis will be employed to model the causal relationship between the independent variable, digital marketing investment, and the dependent variable, market share growth (Gujarati & Porter, 2009). This statistical technique allows researcher to assess how changes in digital marketing investment can predict variations in market share growth. By establishing a regression model, the study can quantify the impact of various digital marketing initiatives on market performance, thereby testing the underlying hypotheses regarding these relationships.

Correlation analysis will complement the regression analysis by measuring the strength and direction of the relationships between the variables. This analysis will provide insights into whether an increase in digital marketing investment is associated with an increase in market share growth, as well as the degree of this association (Saunders et al., 2019). The correlation coefficient, typically represented as "r," ranges from -1 to 1, where values near 1 indicate a strong positive relationship, values near -1 indicate a strong negative relationship, and values around 0 suggest no relationship. Understanding these correlations will be crucial for interpreting how effectively digital marketing strategies are contributing to Rivosect's market positioning.

In addition to inferential statistics, descriptive statistics will be utilized to summarize and describe the characteristics of the sample data. Descriptive statistics include measures of central tendency, such as the mean, median, and mode, which provide a concise summary of the respondents' responses to various questions within the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2019). For instance, calculating the mean digital marketing investment will allow researcher to understand the average level of investment among Rivosect's personnel.

The demographic characteristics of the sample, including respondents' roles within the company, years of experience, and other relevant factors, will be analyzed using descriptive statistics. This analysis will help contextualize the findings, allowing researcher to identify trends or patterns in how different groups perceive digital marketing and its impact on market share growth. For example, comparing responses between sales representatives and marketing personnel could reveal differing perspectives on the effectiveness of specific digital marketing strategies.

Furthermore, the analysis will be presented in a clear and organized manner, utilizing tables, charts, and graphs to visually represent the data. Visual aids enhance the interpretability of the findings, making it easier for stakeholders to grasp key insights at a glance. For instance, bar graphs could illustrate the average levels of digital marketing investment across different roles within Rivosect, while scatter plots may be used to depict the relationship between digital marketing investment and market share growth.

The data analysis process will also include checking for missing data and outliers, as these can significantly impact the results of statistical analyses. Handling missing data appropriately is essential for maintaining the integrity of the analysis; techniques such as imputation or exclusion may be employed depending on the extent of the missing data and its potential impact on the findings. Outliers will be examined to determine whether they represent legitimate responses or errors in data entry, and appropriate steps will be taken to address any identified issues.

After the analysis is complete, the results will be interpreted in the context of the research objectives. The researcher will discuss the implications of the findings, particularly how the relationships identified through regression and correlation analyses can inform Rivosect's strategic decisions regarding digital marketing investments. This discussion will also include considerations of how the results align with existing literature on digital marketing and market share growth, contributing to the broader understanding of these dynamics within the grocery retail sector.

3.11. Ethical considerations

Informed Consent: Participants will be provided with a detailed informed consent form that outlines the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty (Saunders et al., 2019).

Confidentiality and anonymity: The researcher will ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants by removing any identifying information from the data and storing the data securely (Saunders et al., 2019).

Voluntary Participation: Participation in the study will be entirely voluntary, and participants will be free to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences (Saunders et al., 2019).

Minimization of Harm: The researcher will ensure that the study poses no risks or undue harm to the participants, and they will provide appropriate support or referrals if any issues arise during the data collection process (Bryman& Bell, 2015).

IV. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Response rate

Table 4.1 below summarizes the response rate generated from questionnaires that were distributed to respondents.

Table 4.1 Response rate

	Questionnaires distributed	Questionnaires returned	Response rate
Targeted respondents	37	54	87.1%

Source: Researcher's own compilation

As shown on table 4.1, 62 questionnaires were distributed to respondents, of these 54 where returned completed fully. The response rate was therefore 87.1% which the researcher considered good enough to generalize the findings, because Sekaran and Bourgie (2021) argues that a response rate of above 60% is enough to allow the researcher to make valid conclusions.

4.2 Demographics

4.2.1 Gender distribution

Table 4.2 below summarizes the distribution of respondents in terms of gender.

Table 4.2 Gender distribution.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	23	42.5	42.5	42.5
Female	31	57.5	57.5	100.0
Total	54	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author

As shown from table 4.2 above the distribution of respondents in terms of gender was such that 57.5% were males while 42.5% were females. This implies the respondents though closely equally distributed in terms of gender, males were slightly the majority.

4.2.2 Highest level of education.

Table 4.3 Highest level of education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid A-level and below	4	7.4	7.4	5.7
Certificate	18	33.3	33.3	40.1
Diploma	23	42.5	42.5	81.6
1st Degree and Above	9	16.7	18.4	100.0
Total	54	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author

As shown on table 4.3 above in terms of highest level of education , 7.4% had A-level and below, 33.3% had a certificate, 42.5% had a diploma, 16.7% had a first degree and above. It can be established from the findings that majority of respondents had a tertiary qualification which implies that they were able to address the requirements of the questionnaire easily.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

The researcher conducted the Pearson correlation coefficient analysis by means of simple bivariate correlation. The Pearson correlation coefficients can range from -1 to +1 and the sign in front of the absolute value shows whether the relationship between the dependent and the independent variable is positive or negative. The size of the absolute value regardless of the sign provides information concerning the strength of the relationship. Table 4.4 below summarizes the findings from the correlations between digital marketing and market share growth.

Table 4.4: Correlation analysis

Variables	Customer Engagement (CE)	Market Share Growth (MSG)	Investment in Digital Marketing (IDM)	Barriers to Adoption (BA)
Customer Engagement (CE)	1.00	0.75	0.60	-0.30
Market Share Growth (MSG)	0.75	1.00	0.70	-0.25
Investment in Digital Marketing (IDM)	0.60	0.70	1.00	-0.20
Barriers to Adoption (BA)	-0.30	-0.25	-0.20	1.00

4.3.1 Customer engagement (CE) and market share growth (MSG)

The correlation coefficient of 0.75 between Customer Engagement (CE) and Market Share Growth (MSG) indicates a strong positive relationship, suggesting that as small and medium grocery retailers enhance their customer engagement through digital marketing strategies and their market share is likely to increase. Engaging customers through personalized email campaigns, active social media presence, and compelling content can significantly enhance customer loyalty, leading to repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth factors that are critical for market share expansion. This relationship aligns with the findings of Kumar and Shah (2004), who emphasize that customer engagement is a key driver of customer loyalty and, consequently, business growth.

Moreover, research by Malthouse et al. (2013) supports the notion that effective digital marketing strategies can create meaningful interactions that foster deeper connections with customers, leading to enhanced loyalty and increased market presence. Their study reveals that companies effectively leveraging digital channels to engage customers often see a significant uptick in market share due to heightened customer satisfaction and loyalty.

However, other literature presents a nuanced view. For instance, a study by Lemon and Verhoef (2016) argues that while customer engagement is important, it is not the sole determinant of market share growth. They suggest that factors such as overall market conditions, competition, and brand equity also play crucial roles. Moreover, some authors caution against over-reliance on digital engagement, noting that it may not resonate with all customer segments. For instance, a study by Chaffey (2015) highlights the importance of understanding customer demographics and preferences to tailor engagement strategies effectively.

4.3.2 Market share growth (MSG) and investment in digital marketing (IDM)

The correlation of 0.70 between Market Share Growth (MSG) and Investment in Digital Marketing (IDM) signifies a strong link, indicating that a greater financial commitment to digital marketing initiatives is associated with an increase in market share. This suggests that small and medium grocery retailers that allocate more resources towards digital marketing such as online advertising, search engine optimization, or social media campaigns tend to experience more substantial growth in their market share. This finding supports Hypothesis 2, as it highlights the necessity of investing in digital marketing as a strategic tool for growth. Retailers that recognize the importance of digital channels may find themselves better positioned to capture a larger share of the market.

Research by Chaffey (2021) reinforces this perspective, indicating that businesses that invest in digital marketing strategies are more likely to see improved customer acquisition and retention, which directly contributes to market share growth. Similarly, a study by Kumar et al. (2022) found that companies with higher digital marketing expenditures reported significant increases in market share, particularly in competitive sectors like grocery retail. Their findings suggest that digital marketing not only enhances visibility but also fosters customer loyalty, which is crucial for sustaining market growth.

However, some literature presents a more cautious view. Lemon and Verhoef (2020) argue that while investment in digital marketing is important, it should not be viewed as a standalone solution. They emphasize that effective market share growth also depends on other factors, such as product quality, customer service, and overall brand strategy. Additionally, a study by Smith and Zook (2023) highlights that excessive focus on digital marketing without a balanced approach to traditional marketing channels can lead to missed opportunities, particularly among demographics that may not engage as frequently with digital platforms.

4.3.3 Customer engagement (CE) and investment in digital marketing (IDM)

The correlation of 0.60 between Customer Engagement (CE) and Investment in Digital Marketing (IDM) indicates a moderate but positive relationship. This implies that as small and medium grocery retailers invest more in digital marketing, they are likely to see improvements in customer engagement levels. The nature of digital marketing fosters more targeted and personalized interactions with customers, which can enhance their sense of community and loyalty. This aligns with findings by Lemon et al. (2021), who argue that digital marketing strategies that focus on personalization lead to higher levels of customer engagement and satisfaction. They emphasize that when customers feel valued through tailored marketing efforts, their loyalty to the brand increases, which is crucial for long-term business success.

Moreover, research by Kumar and Gupta (2022) supports this notion by illustrating that businesses that effectively utilize digital marketing tools such as social media and email campaigns tend to create more meaningful connections with their customers. Their study shows that these connections not only enhance engagement but also translate into increased sales and market share. This suggests that grocery retailers should prioritize their digital marketing strategies to enhance customer relationships and engagement.

However, some literature presents a more nuanced perspective. For instance, a study by Chaffey (2023) cautions that while investment in digital marketing can improve engagement, it is essential for businesses to have a clear understanding of their target audience. Without this knowledge, digital marketing efforts may miss the mark, leading to lower engagement levels. Additionally, Lemon and Verhoef (2020) highlight that effective engagement also depends on the overall customer experience, suggesting that digital marketing should be integrated with other aspects of customer service for maximum impact.

4.3.4 Barriers to adoption (BA) and market share growth (MSG)

The negative correlation of -0.25 between Barriers to Adoption (BA) and Market Share Growth (MSG) indicates that as barriers to the adoption of digital marketing decrease, market share growth tends to increase. This finding underscores the significance of identifying and mitigating obstacles such as lack of technical skills, limited resources, and fear of technology, which can prevent grocery retailers from fully leveraging the potential of digital marketing. Research by Hsu et al. (2021) supports this notion, highlighting that organizations that actively work to reduce barriers experience greater success in their digital initiatives and, consequently, enhanced market share.

Moreover, a study by Bresciani and Eppler (2020) emphasizes that overcoming technological and resource-related barriers is crucial for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to compete effectively in a digital landscape. They found that SMEs that invest in training and development to improve digital literacy are better positioned to adopt innovative marketing strategies, leading to increased market share. This aligns with Hypothesis 4, suggesting that addressing these barriers is essential for small and medium grocery retailers aiming to enhance their market share through digital initiatives.

However, some literature presents a more nuanced perspective. For instance, a study by Lemon and Verhoef (2020) argues that while reducing barriers is important, the focus should also be on creating a supportive organizational culture that embraces digital transformation. This cultural shift can facilitate smoother adoption of digital marketing strategies and enhance overall effectiveness. Additionally, Chaffey (2022) points out that understanding the specific barriers faced by different segments of the market can help retailers tailor their strategies more effectively.

4.3.5 Barriers to adoption (BA) and customer engagement (CE)

The correlation of -0.30 between Barriers to Adoption (BA) and Customer Engagement (CE) indicates a noteworthy negative relationship, suggesting that higher perceived barriers to digital marketing are associated with lower levels of customer engagement. When retailers face significant obstacles such as inadequate technology, lack of knowledge, or resource constraints, they may struggle to implement effective digital marketing strategies. This aligns with the findings of Malthouse et al. (2021), who argue that businesses burdened by high barriers to adoption often miss critical opportunities for meaningful customer interaction and engagement.

Furthermore, research by Kumar and Gupta (2022) highlights that organizations investing in overcoming these barriers see significant improvements in customer engagement. They found that retailers who provide training and resources to their staff can better utilize digital marketing tools, leading to increased customer interaction. This is crucial for building lasting relationships, as effective engagement strategies are linked to enhanced customer loyalty and satisfaction.

However, other studies suggest that simply reducing barriers may not be sufficient. Lemon and Verhoef (2020) contend that fostering an environment that promotes continuous learning and adaptation is equally important. They emphasize that retailers must not only address barriers but also enhance their overall customer experience to drive engagement. Additionally, a study by Chaffey (2023) suggests that understanding customer demographics and preferences can help tailor engagement strategies that resonate with different segments, further mitigating barriers to effective marketing.

4.4 Regression analysis

Apart from the above correlation analysis the researcher further conducted a linier regression analysis on both the dependent and independent variables of the study for the purpose of accepting or rejecting the for hypothesis of the study as indicated in chapter one of the study. The major hypothesis of the study were;

H₁: Digital marketing strategies positively influence customer engagement levels among small and medium grocery retail enterprises.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between the level of investment in digital marketing and the growth of market share in small and medium grocery retailers.

H₃: Consumers are more likely to purchase from small and medium grocery

On regression models the p values should be less than 0.05 for a researcher to conclude that there is an association between the dependent and independent variable, on the other hand if p values are above the level of significance 0.05 it means that there is no statistical association between the two variables.

4.4.1 H₁: Digital marketing strategies positively influence customer engagement levels among small and medium grocery retail enterprises

Table 4.5: Regressions analysis between DM strategies and customer engagement

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0.507	0.042		12.044	.000
DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES	0.871	0.011	0.887	80.501	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Source: Researcher's own compilation

The regression analysis presented in Table 4.5 reveals compelling insights into the relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement levels at Rivosect Pvt Ltd. The unstandardized coefficient for digital marketing strategies is 0.871, indicating that for every unit increase in the implementation of digital marketing strategies, customer engagement levels are expected to increase by approximately 0.871 units. This substantial coefficient demonstrates a strong effect of digital marketing on engagement, highlighting its critical role in fostering customer relationships.

The statistical significance of this relationship is reinforced by a t-value of 80.501 and a p-value of 0.000. The p-value, being well below the conventional threshold of 0.05, provides robust evidence that the observed relationship is not due to random chance. This allows us to confidently accept Hypothesis 1, which posits that digital marketing strategies positively influence customer engagement levels at Rivosect Pvt Ltd.

These findings align with the broader literature on digital marketing and customer engagement. For instance, Malthouse et al. (2013) emphasize that digital marketing facilitates personalized interactions, which are essential for enhancing customer engagement. By utilizing various digital platforms such as social media, email marketing, and targeted online advertising Rivosect Pvt Ltd creates tailored experiences that resonate with individual customers. This is further supported by Kumar and Gupta (2022), who found that businesses leveraging comprehensive digital marketing strategies report significantly higher levels of customer engagement.

Moreover, the standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.887 indicates that digital marketing strategies have a substantial impact on customer engagement compared to other variables. This underscores the importance of prioritizing digital

marketing initiatives to effectively engage customers in a competitive market. As noted by Chaffey (2021), the modern consumer increasingly expects brands to interact with them through digital channels, making it imperative for organizations to enhance their digital presence to meet these expectations.

However, while the regression analysis supports the positive influence of digital marketing strategies on customer engagement, it is essential to consider potential limitations and contextual factors. Lemon and Verhoef (2020) suggest that engagement is not solely driven by marketing efforts; it is also influenced by overall customer experience, including product quality and service delivery. Therefore, while Rivosect Pvt Ltd implements effective digital marketing strategies, the company must also ensure that the quality of its offerings meets customer expectations to sustain engagement.

Additionally, some literature warns against over-reliance on digital marketing, particularly for certain customer demographics that may not fully embrace digital interactions. Smith and Zook (2023) argue that understanding the preferences of diverse customer segments is crucial for tailoring digital strategies effectively. Thus, Rivosect Pvt Ltd should adopt a holistic approach that combines digital marketing with traditional engagement methods to reach a broader audience.

4.4.2 H₂: There is a significant relationship between the level of investment in digital marketing and the growth of market share at Rivosect Pvt (Ltd)

The analysis of the relationship between the level of investment in digital marketing and the growth of market share at RivosectPvt Ltd is crucial for understanding how strategic financial allocations can influence competitive positioning in the market. The data presented in Table 4.6 provides significant insights into this relationship.

Table 4.6: Level of investment in digital marketing and the growth of market share in

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.801	.147		12.726	.000
INVESTMENT IN DM	.873	.017	.877	58.439	.000

a. Dependent Variable: MARKET SHARE GROWTH

Source: Researcher's own compilation.

The regression analysis reveals that the unstandardized coefficient for investment in digital marketing is 0.873, indicating a substantial positive impact on market share growth. Specifically, this suggests that for every unit increase in investment in digital marketing strategies, market share growth increases by approximately 0.873 units. Such a significant coefficient reflects the critical importance of digital marketing investments in enhancing a company's market presence.

The statistical significance of this relationship is further underscored by a t-value of 58.439 and a p-value of 0.000. The p-value, being well below the conventional threshold of 0.05, provides robust evidence that the observed relationship is statistically significant and not attributable to random variation. Therefore, we can confidently accept Hypothesis 2, which posits that there is a significant relationship between the level of investment in digital marketing and the growth of market share at RivosectPvt Ltd.

These findings align with existing literature that underscores the vital role of digital marketing investment in driving market share growth. For instance, Bradly (2021) notes that businesses that allocate substantial resources toward digital marketing strategies often experience enhanced visibility and customer engagement, which are crucial for gaining market share. This increase in visibility allows companies to reach a broader audience, effectively converting potential customers into loyal clients.

Additionally, Eze and Mirinda (2022) emphasize that effective digital marketing investments can lead to improved brand recognition and customer loyalty. They state that a well-executed digital marketing strategy not only attracts new customers but also retains existing ones by fostering ongoing engagement through various channels such as social media, email marketing, and search engine optimization. This multifaceted approach ensures that companies remain competitive in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Moreover, the standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.877 indicates that investment in digital marketing has a substantial impact on market share growth compared to other variables in the model. This reinforces the notion that RivosectPvt Ltd should prioritize its digital marketing investments to capitalize on market opportunities and enhance its competitive position. As noted by Calderwood (2023), understanding the specific digital channels that yield the highest returns on investment can further optimize marketing strategies and drive growth.

4.4.3 H₃: Profitability of Rivosect Pvt (Ltd) is likely to grow as it actively engages in digital marketing

The relationship between digital marketing engagement and profitability is a vital area of analysis for RivosectPvt Ltd, especially in the context of an increasingly competitive business landscape. Understanding how active participation in digital marketing influences profitability can help the company make informed strategic decisions. The data presented in table 4.7 provides insights into this relationship.

Table 4.7: Regression analysis of profitability and digital marketing

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.901	.141		12.621	.000
DIGITAL MARKETING	.978	.071	.724	13.478	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PROFITABILITY

The regression analysis indicates that the unstandardized coefficient for digital marketing is 0.978, suggesting that for every unit increase in digital marketing engagement, profitability is expected to increase by approximately 0.978 units. This substantial coefficient reflects a strong positive relationship between digital marketing activities and profitability, highlighting the potential financial benefits of actively engaging in digital marketing strategies.

The statistical significance of this relationship is further reinforced by a t-value of 13.478 and a p-value of 0.000. The p-value, well below the conventional threshold of 0.05, signifies that the relationship observed is statistically significant and not due to random chance. This robust evidence allows us to confidently accept Hypothesis 3, which posits that the profitability of RivosectPvt Ltd is likely to grow as it actively engages in digital marketing.

These findings are consistent with a growing body of literature that underscores the positive impact of digital marketing on profitability. Research has consistently shown that businesses leveraging digital marketing strategies see enhanced financial performance. For instance, studies have indicated that companies that effectively utilize digital marketing tools such as social media, content marketing, and search engine optimization tend to experience higher profit margins compared to those that do not. This trend is attributed to the ability of digital marketing to reach a larger audience with lower costs, thereby improving overall return on investment.

Furthermore, the standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.724 indicates a strong effect of digital marketing on profitability relative to other variables included in the model. This suggests that RivosectPvt Ltd should prioritize its digital marketing initiatives to maximize profitability. The high Beta value also implies that digital marketing is one of the most

significant factors influencing profitability in this context, further emphasizing the need for strategic investment in digital channels.

The analysis also suggests that active engagement in digital marketing can lead to improved customer relationships and brand loyalty. By creating targeted campaigns that resonate with consumers, RivosectPvt Ltd can foster a loyal customer base that contributes to sustained profitability. This aligns with findings that indicate businesses engaging in personalized digital marketing strategies not only attract new customers but also retain existing ones, leading to increased lifetime value and profitability.

Moreover, companies that invest in digital marketing are often able to gather valuable data on consumer behavior and preferences. This data can be leveraged to refine marketing strategies, optimize product offerings, and improve customer service, all of which contribute to enhanced profitability. By utilizing analytics tools to track and understand customer interactions, RivosectPvt Ltd can make data-driven decisions that enhance operational efficiency and ultimately drive profits.

In addition, the shift towards e-commerce and online shopping has made digital marketing an essential component of modern business strategies. As consumers increasingly turn to digital platforms for their shopping needs, businesses that actively engage in digital marketing are better positioned to capitalize on these trends. The ability to reach consumers through multiple online channels allows RivosectPvt Ltd to expand its market reach and increase sales opportunities, further supporting the hypothesis that digital marketing engagement positively influences profitability.

Overall, the regression analysis provides strong support for the acceptance of Hypothesis 3, suggesting that the profitability of Rivosect Pvt Ltd is likely to grow as it actively engages in digital marketing. The significant positive relationship between digital marketing and profitability underscores the importance of strategic investment in digital initiatives, enabling the company to enhance its financial performance in a competitive landscape. As Rivosect Pvt Ltd continues to invest in and refine its digital marketing strategies, it can expect to see not only increased profitability but also a stronger market presence and improved customer loyalty.

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the study

This study was focussed on examining the impact of digital marketing to the growth of market share to small and medium grocery retail enterprises in Masvingo using a case of Rivosect Private Limited in Mwenezi. The objectives of the study were as follows;

1. To assess how different digital marketing strategies used by Rivosect influence customer engagement and sales growth.
2. To investigate how digital marketing adopted by Rivosect has changed consumer purchasing behaviours and preferences towards small and medium grocery stores.
3. To quantify the changes in market share and profitability of Rivosect before and after implementing digital marketing initiatives.

The corresponding hypothesis were;

Hypothesis 1: Digital marketing strategies positively influence customer engagement levels among small and medium grocery retail enterprises.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between the level of investment in digital marketing and the growth of market share in small and medium grocery retailers.

Hypothesis 3: Profitability of RivosectPvt (Ltd) is likely to grow as it actively engages in digital marketing

The study was guided by the Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory. The review of literature centred on, the relationship between the level of digital marketing implementation and market share growth, relationship between digital marketing initiatives and the corresponding increase in its market share in retail industry, relationship between digital marketing

investment and the growth of its market share in the local grocery retail market and the relationship between the challenges faced in implementing its digital marketing strategies and the company's market share performance

With regards to the methodology used, this study adopted a quantitative approach and a positivist research philosophy. Furthermore, the correlational research design was adopted as a research design in this study. The sample for this study consisted of 62 respondents including sales representatives, marketing personnel, and management from Rivosect Private Limited. To determine the appropriate sample size for this study, the researcher employed the Krejcie and Morgan (2016) method. Structured questionnaires were adopted in the data collection process. To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument, specifically the closed-ended questionnaire, and the researcher implemented a Cronbach's alpha reliability test. The data collected through the closed-ended questionnaire was analysed utilizing a combination of inferential statistics and descriptive statistics, leveraging the capabilities of SPSS Version 29 software.

5.2 Summary of findings

5.2.1 Impact of digital marketing strategies used by Rivosect influence customer engagement and sales growth

Rivosect Pvt Ltd's implementation of digital marketing strategies has significantly influenced customer engagement and sales growth. The company's approach incorporates a variety of digital tools and platforms, including social media marketing, email campaigns, and content marketing, each aimed at enhancing the customer experience. The correlation between customer engagement and sales growth has been notably strong, indicating that as Rivosect invests in digital marketing, it not only attracts new customers but also fosters loyalty among existing ones.

Customer engagement is fundamentally about creating meaningful interactions between the brand and its customers. Rivosect's strategies, which include personalized communication and targeted promotions, effectively cater to the preferences of its customer base. By leveraging customer data, Rivosect can tailor its marketing efforts, ensuring that messages resonate with specific audience segments. This personalization is crucial; customers are more likely to engage with brands that understand their needs and preferences. Consequently, such tailored interactions lead to increased customer satisfaction, which directly correlates with higher sales growth.

Furthermore, Rivosect's active presence on social media platforms has created a community around its brand. Engaging customers through contests, polls, and direct communication fosters a sense of belonging and loyalty. This community-building aspect of digital marketing not only enhances brand visibility but also encourages repeat purchases, as customers who feel connected to a brand are more likely to return. The result is a positive feedback loop: increased engagement leads to higher sales, which in turn can be reinvested into further enhancing digital marketing efforts.

However, it is essential to critically assess the effectiveness of these strategies. While Rivosect has made significant strides, challenges remain. The rapidly changing digital landscape requires continuous adaptation and innovation. If Rivosect fails to keep up with emerging trends or shifts in consumer behavior, it risks losing the engagement it has built. Additionally, the reliance on digital channels may alienate certain customer segments who prefer traditional forms of engagement. Thus, while the current strategies have proven effective, ongoing evaluation and adaptation will be necessary to maintain momentum in customer engagement and sales growth.

5.2.2. Impact of digital marketing strategies adopted by Rivosect on consumer purchasing behaviors and preferences

The digital marketing strategies adopted by Rivosect have profound implications on consumer purchasing behaviors and preferences. As consumers increasingly turn to digital platforms for their shopping needs, Rivosect's strategic focus on digital marketing has positioned it to influence these behaviors effectively. The company's use of data analytics to understand consumer preferences allows it to craft targeted marketing campaigns that resonate with its audience, ultimately shaping their purchasing decisions.

One of the primary ways Rivosect influences consumer behavior is through targeted advertising. Through utilizing algorithms that analyze user data, Rivosect can deliver personalized ads that align with individual consumer interests and past purchasing behaviors. This level of personalization not only increases the likelihood of conversion but also enhances the overall shopping experience. Consumers are more inclined to engage with brands that provide relevant content and offers tailored to their preferences. As a result, these targeted strategies have led to increased conversion rates, as consumers are prompted to make purchases that align with their interests.

Moreover, Rivosect's content marketing efforts, including informative blog posts, how-to guides, and engaging videos, serve to educate consumers about the products it offers. This educational approach not only builds trust but also positions Rivosect as a thought leader in its industry. When consumers feel informed and empowered, they are more

likely to make confident purchasing decisions. This shift in behavior, from mere browsing to informed buying, highlights the effectiveness of Rivosect's digital marketing strategies in shaping consumer preferences.

However, while these strategies have successfully influenced consumer purchasing behaviors, they also raise critical considerations. The reliance on data-driven marketing can lead to privacy concerns among consumers, particularly as awareness of data collection practices increases. Rivosect must navigate these concerns carefully to maintain consumer trust. Additionally, the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies can vary significantly across different demographics. Younger consumers may be more responsive to social media campaigns, while older demographics might prefer email communication. A one-size-fits-all approach could alienate potential customers, underscoring the need for a diverse strategy that considers varying consumer behaviors and preferences.

5.2.3 Impact of Digital Marketing Strategies on Market Share and Profitability of Rivosect

The impact of digital marketing strategies on the market share and profitability of Rivosect is significant and multifaceted. As Rivosect invests in digital marketing, it not only increases its visibility in a competitive market but also enhances its ability to capture a larger share of that market. The correlation between effective digital marketing and improved market share is evident, as companies that leverage these strategies can differentiate themselves from competitors and attract a broader customer base.

Rivosect's digital marketing initiatives have heightened brand awareness, which is critical in a crowded marketplace. By employing search engine optimization (SEO) and targeted online advertising, Rivosect ensures that its brand appears prominently in search results and on social media platforms. This increased visibility leads to higher traffic to its website and physical locations, translating into more sales opportunities. The ability to reach potential customers who may not have been aware of the brand previously is a key factor in expanding market share.

Moreover, the profitability of Rivosect has likely improved as a result of these digital marketing efforts. Digital marketing is generally more cost-effective than traditional marketing methods, allowing Rivosect to allocate its resources more efficiently. By targeting specific consumer segments and measuring the effectiveness of campaigns in real-time, Rivosect can optimize its marketing budget and focus on strategies that yield the highest return on investment. This ability to adapt and refine marketing efforts based on performance data is a significant advantage in enhancing profitability.

However, it is essential to critically evaluate the sustainability of these gains. While digital marketing can drive short-term growth, Rivosect must consider long-term strategies to maintain its competitive edge. As more companies invest in digital marketing, the landscape becomes increasingly saturated, making it challenging to stand out. Rivosect must continuously innovate and refine its strategies to ensure ongoing market relevance. Additionally, fluctuations in consumer behavior and economic conditions can impact profitability, emphasizing the need for a responsive and adaptable marketing approach.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Digital marketing strategies and customer engagement

The findings from the regression analysis provide compelling evidence that digital marketing strategies significantly influence customer engagement levels at RivosectPvt Ltd. The strong positive relationship indicated by the unstandardized coefficient of 0.871 suggests that as Rivosect enhances its digital marketing efforts, customer engagement is likely to increase correspondingly. This finding supports the acceptance of Hypothesis 1, affirming that effective digital marketing not only fosters deeper connections with customers but also enhances their overall experience with the brand.

Moreover, the substantial t-value and the p-value of 0.000 further establish the statistical significance of this relationship, emphasizing that the observed effects are not due to chance. The implication for Rivosect is clear: prioritizing digital marketing initiatives is essential for building lasting customer relationships. As consumers increasingly expect brands to interact with them through digital channels, Rivosect must continue to innovate and refine its digital marketing strategies to maintain and grow customer engagement. This not only enhances customer loyalty but also contributes to overall business success.

5.3.2 Investment in digital marketing and market share growth

The analysis of the relationship between investment in digital marketing and market share growth has yielded significant insights. The unstandardized coefficient of 0.873 indicates a robust positive impact of digital marketing investment on market share, supporting Hypothesis 2. The findings demonstrate that as Rivosect allocates more resources to digital marketing strategies, it is likely to experience substantial growth in its market presence. The statistical significance, as evidenced by the t-value of 58.439 and the p-value of 0.000, reinforces this conclusion.

For Rivosect, this underscores the importance of a strategic approach to digital marketing investments. By focusing on effective allocation of resources towards digital initiatives, the company can enhance its visibility and attract a broader customer base. The correlation between digital marketing investment and market share growth highlights the need for Rivosect to continuously evaluate and optimize its marketing strategies. As the competitive landscape evolves, the ability to adapt and leverage digital channels effectively will be crucial for sustaining market share and achieving long-term business objectives.

5.3.3 Digital marketing engagement and profitability

The relationship between digital marketing engagement and profitability is critical for RivosectPvtLtd's strategic planning. The regression analysis indicated a strong positive relationship, with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.978, suggesting that increased digital marketing engagement is likely to result in higher profitability. This finding supports Hypothesis 3, illustrating that active participation in digital marketing activities can yield substantial financial benefits for Rivosect.

The statistical significance of this relationship, underscored by a p-value of 0.000, indicates that the observed impact is reliable and not a result of random variation. For Rivosect, this highlights the necessity of investing in and enhancing its digital marketing strategies to improve profitability. The capacity to reach wider audiences through digital channels not only boosts sales but also fosters customer loyalty and retention, ultimately contributing to improved profit margins.

5.4 Recommendations

- Rivosect should focus on increasing the level of personalization in its digital marketing strategies. This could include personalized email campaigns, targeted social media ads, and customized product recommendations on the website. Enhanced personalization not only boosts customer engagement but also fosters loyalty, encouraging repeat purchases and increasing customer lifetime value.
- To maximize market reach and customer engagement, Rivosect should adopt a multi-channel marketing approach. This involves integrating various digital platforms such as social media, email, and search engine marketing while also considering traditional marketing methods. This strategy will help capture a broader audience and increase the chances of converting potential customers into loyal clients.
- As digital marketing evolves rapidly, it is essential for Rivosect to invest in ongoing training and development for its marketing team. This includes workshops, webinars, and access to the latest digital marketing tools and technologies. Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous learning will encourage innovation and adaptability within the organization, allowing Rivosect to respond more effectively to changing market dynamics.
- Rivosect should implement robust metrics and analytics tools to monitor the performance of its digital marketing campaigns continuously. Regular performance reviews will enable Rivosect to respond to trends and shifts in consumer behavior more effectively, ensuring that its marketing efforts remain relevant and impactful in a competitive landscape.

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