

University of Bahrain

College of Business Administration

**Department of Marketing &
Management**



The Significance of Entrepreneurial Marketing on the Growth Potential and Competitive Advantage of Small and Medium Enterprises

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master
Degree in Business Administration

Submitted by
Zainab AbdulRasool Abdulla Fateel
University number: 20113674

Supervised by
Dr. Raala Mohammed AlAthali
Assistant Professor
University of Bahrain

Kingdom of Bahrain
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Defense committee's approval

نموذج رقم (٢)

صفحة الاعتماد من قبل لجنة التحكيم



جامعة البحرين

كلية

قسم

برنامج ماجستير، أو دكتوراه (اسم البرنامج)

ناقش الطالب _____ الرقم الجامعي _____ الأطروحة التي استكمل بها

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ختم القسم الأكاديمي المعني

Abstract

This study examines how entrepreneurial marketing might help small and medium companies (SMEs) expand and gain a competitive edge. Since they frequently operate in dynamic marketplaces with limited resources, SMEs need creative and flexible marketing techniques to succeed. The study investigates how SMEs can overcome obstacles including financial limitations, market volatility, and fierce rivalry by utilizing entrepreneurial marketing, which is defined by creativity, customer-centricity, and resource optimization.

In-depth interviews with Bahraini SME owners and managers were carried out using a qualitative research methodology to learn more about their marketing strategies and difficulties. According to the results, SMEs can use entrepreneurial marketing to increase their agility, innovate with little funding, and cultivate enduring relationships with clients, all of which promote growth and competitiveness. Important tactics include joint ventures, digital marketing, and flexible, niche-market-specific marketing techniques.

By emphasizing the value of entrepreneurial marketing as a strategic mindset as opposed to just a collection of tactics, the study adds to the body of literature. Additionally, it highlights research gaps, including the necessity of longitudinal studies on the long-term effects of entrepreneurial marketing and the impact of contextual and cultural factors on marketing strategies. There are useful suggestions made for SME owners, legislators, and educators to encourage the adoption of entrepreneurial marketing and aid in the growth of SMEs. All things

considered, the study emphasizes how important entrepreneurial marketing is to helping SMEs attain competitive advantage and sustainable growth in the quickly changing business world of today.

Keywords:

Small and medium companies: based on the Bahraini MoIC, small companies have 6-50 employees or have a revenue of 50,001-1,000,000 BHD, whereas medium companies have 51-100 employees or have a revenue of 1,000,001-3,000,000 BHD

Entrepreneurial marketing: Is a strategic marketing practice utilizes innovation and proactiveness in overcoming the challenges borne by SMEs due to the volume and nature of their operations

Growth: growth in companies is measured by different factors among which are: increase in revenue, team expansion, geographical expansion, entering new market, entering new market niches, and more.

Competitive advantage: competitiveness in companies is measured by different factors among which are: market positioning advancements, client retention rates, client base growth, brand recognition, and more.

Publications

Dedication

This dissertation would not have been possible without my family's support, and their patience during my time away doing my research and studies. Thanks to my father who always emphasized the importance of education and knowledge, he was the first person with whom I shared my intent of pursuing higher studies and he was excited for me. Thanks to my mother for her constant reassurance during times of stress and hardship, and for showing much enthusiasm toward my achievements. Thanks to my work colleagues who were patient when I was under pressure during this journey and were kind and supportive, and to my friends for their kind words.

Additionally, I would like to thank myself for having done my best, juggling a full time job, starting a business and co-authoring a book with a world-renowned speaker & author while doing my MBA. This was definitely not easy but it was certainly worth it.

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List of Abbreviations

SMEs	Small and medium companies
EM	Entrepreneurial Marketing

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Chapter One: Introduction to Study

1.1 Background and Rationale

Driving economic development and employment globally, small and medium companies (SMEs) are very crucial. Effective marketing tactics are mostly responsible for their ability to survive in demanding marketplaces; Entrepreneurial Marketing is therefore becoming increasingly important for their success (Gilmore & Carson, 2018). Academic research has paid more and more attention to entrepreneurial marketing—that is, the creative and proactive marketing initiatives of SMEs—because of its ability to enable SMEs to reach sustainable development and competitive advantage (Jones et al., 2020). The purpose of this study is to investigate how entrepreneurial marketing affects SMEs' growth and competitive positioning.

Constraints on resources and operational difficulties that SMEs may experience mean that conventional marketing plans might not be always successful. With its focus on agility, creativity, and risk-taking, entrepreneurial marketing lets SMEs resolve these constraints and promote sustainable development (absah et al., 2022). Unlike big companies with big marketing budgets and well-known brands, SMEs have to use innovative and cost-effective marketing strategies to generate client loyalty and market presence. This study investigates how small businesses and medium companies may apply entrepreneurial marketing technologies to improve their competitive edge and stimulate business growth.

Focusing on how small and medium companies maximize few resources to use creative marketing strategies, the study will look at several Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies taken by SMEs. It will also look at the difficulties SMEs have implementing Entrepreneurial marketing plans and evaluate how innovation and creativity help to overcome these challenges. This study will offer insightful analysis for academics, legislators, and business owners by examining the interaction between entrepreneurial marketing, competitive advantage, and growth potential, therefore supporting the wider discussion on SMEs.

Entrepreneurial marketing is especially important for SMEs running in very competitive and dynamic situations where traditional marketing approaches may not be sufficient to guarantee long-term success, as Baporikar and Fotlela (2018) underline. Absah et al. (2022) also emphasize how SMEs, with their size and limited resources, have to use creative marketing techniques if they are to remain viable and competitive in their particular sectors. Entrepreneurial marketing helps SMEs to maximize their intrinsic advantages—such as adaptability, creativity, and customer-centricity—such that they may stand out from rivals and maintain market significance.

Entrepreneurial marketing techniques help SMEs to use their agility, reactivity, and deep market insights to create focused marketing strategies that appeal to their audience, hence improving brand recognition and consumer involvement (Quaye & Mensah, 2018). For SMEs functioning in niche markets, where industry dynamics and client preferences call for customized and highly specialized marketing efforts, this strategy is very helpful. Moreover, entrepreneurial marketing encourages strategic risk-taking and innovation inside SMEs so they may quickly adapt to

changing market trends and capture new prospects (Seyyedamiri & Faghieh, 2015).

Ultimately, for SMEs, the strategic and well-executed application of entrepreneurial marketing can be a main engine of development and long-term success. Small and medium businesses can not only survive in demanding marketplaces but also create a strong basis for sustained development and growth by knowing and applying entrepreneurial marketing principles.

1.2 Research Problem Statement

Small and medium companies (SMEs) play a crucial role in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and generating employment. They frequently encounter substantial obstacles in sustaining growth and securing a competitive edge, attributed to constrained financial resources, market volatility, and fierce competition from larger firms (Absah et al., 2022). Conventional marketing strategies, necessitating significant financial resources and considerable brand awareness, may not be practical for small and medium companies (SMEs). Consequently, Entrepreneurial Marketing has developed as a strategic option, allowing SMEs to utilise innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking to address market challenges and promote business growth (Gilmore & Carson, 2018).

Although Entrepreneurial Marketing is increasingly acknowledged as a beneficial strategy for SMEs, comprehensive research on its direct effects on competitive advantage and business growth, especially within the context of SMEs in [specific region or industry, if applicable], is still

lacking. Numerous SMEs encounter challenges in effectively implementing EM strategies, primarily due to limitations in expertise, resource allocation, and the capacity to assess marketing success. Moreover, although current research emphasises the advantages of Entrepreneurial Marketing, there is a paucity of empirical evidence connecting its particular strategies—namely customer-centricity, flexibility, and creative resource utilization—to measurable business results, including revenue growth, market expansion, and brand differentiation (Quaye & Mensah, 2018).

This study aims to address the gap by analysing the impact of Entrepreneurial Marketing on the growth and competitive advantage of SMEs. This study analyses key Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies and their effectiveness to provide actionable insights for SMEs seeking to improve their market position. This study will examine the challenges that SMEs encounter in adopting Entrepreneurial Marketing approaches and will propose recommendations for enhancing marketing efforts in resource-constrained environments. This research's findings will benefit entrepreneurs, policymakers, and scholars, enhancing the discourse on SME development and sustainable business success.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research study examines and evaluates the diverse Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies employed by small and medium companies to attain a competitive edge and stimulate business growth. The research examines the particular marketing strategies employed by SMEs, along with their utilization of constrained resources and intrinsic agility to distinguish

themselves in the marketplace and successfully connect with their target audience.

This research examines the influence of Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies on the growth potential and competitive advantage of small and medium companies. The study also investigates how the adoption and implementation of Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies, including innovative marketing tactics, resource-efficient initiatives, and a customer-centric focus, can empower SMEs to improve their growth trajectories, enhance their market position, and achieve a distinct competitive advantage over competitors. Furthermore, this research analyzes the consequences and performance implications of Entrepreneurial Marketing for SMEs, offering important insights into its strategic significance for the success and sustainable development of small and medium companies.

The study also identifies the primary problems and challenges encountered by SMEs in executing Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies. This entails analyzing the particular challenges faced by SMEs, including constrained financial resources, limited access to talent and knowledge, and operational difficulties, and how these limitations affect their capacity to successfully implement Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies. Comprehending these challenges will yield critical insights into the reasons that may obstruct the effective adoption and execution of Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies by small and medium companies.

Based on the above, this study investigates the subsequent main questions:

- What are the main Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies utilized by small and medium companies to achieve a competitive advantage and stimulate business growth?
- What are the main challenges and limitations encountered by SMEs in implementing their Entrepreneurial Marketing strategy, and how do they overcome these challenges?
- What is the effect of Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies on the growth potential and competitive advantage of small and medium companies?

1.4 Theoretical & Conceptual Framework

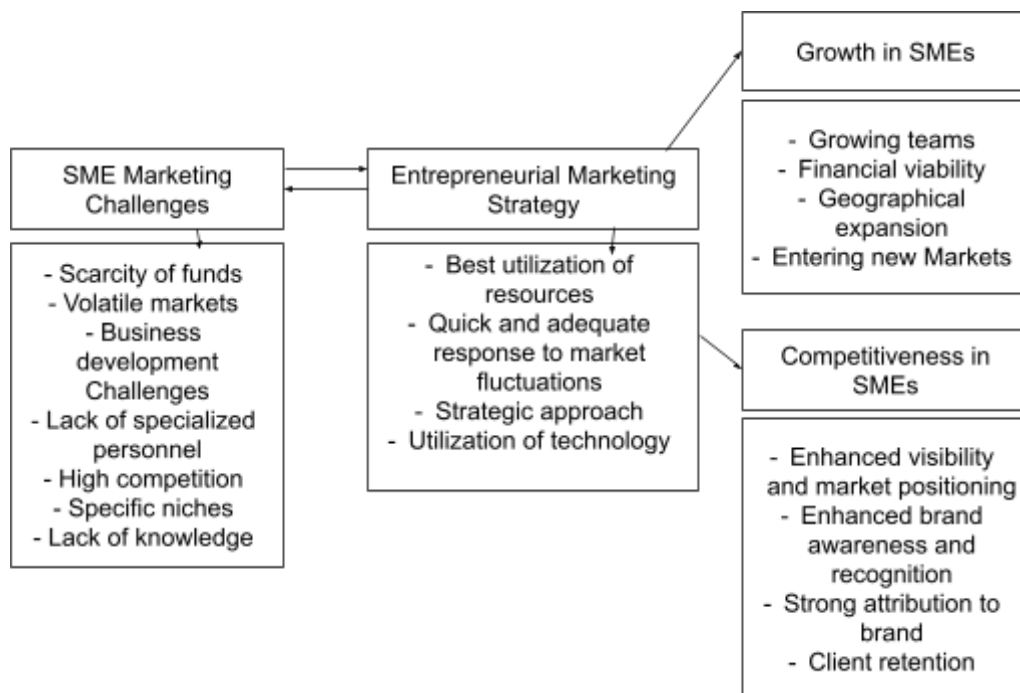


Figure (1) Theoretical Framework

The diagram created by the researcher illustrates the relationship between the marketing challenges faced by small and medium companies, entrepreneurial marketing strategies, and their impact on SME growth and competitiveness. This framework visually represents how entrepreneurial marketing serves as a strategic response to the various challenges encountered by SMEs, contributing to their long-term success.

As depicted in the diagram, SMEs face several marketing challenges, described by (Kotler et al., 2021; Gilmore, 2011) as:

- Financial Constraints - Numerous SMEs function with limited funds due to their recent establishment, starting with limited funds, or focusing on covering the overhead costs before any other costs, which hinders their ability to invest in impactful marketing practices.
- Volatile Markets - Frequent fluctuations in market demand, consumer preferences, and economic situations hinder SMEs from sustaining consistent marketing strategy.
- Challenges in Business Development - SMEs face difficulties in scaling operations, recognizing new opportunities, and maintaining sustained growth over the long run due to focusing on viability and gaining advantage over bigger players.
- Insufficient Specialized Personnel - Budgetary limitations frequently result in SMEs lacking proficient marketing experts, so constraining their capacity to implement effective strategies.
- Intense Competition - Competing against larger, more established companies with superior brand recognition and financial resources presents a significant challenge.

- Specific Niches - Numerous SMEs focus on niche markets, which may restrict their audience and necessitate highly targeted marketing strategies.
- Insufficient Knowledge - Limited proficiency in digital marketing, branding, and consumer engagement may impede SMEs from realizing their objectives.

These challenges, as (Morris et al., 2002) explains, necessitate the adoption of entrepreneurial marketing strategies, which prioritizes optimal resource use, rapid adaptability to market fluctuations, strategic decision-making, and leveraging technology to enhance marketing effectiveness.

To address these challenges, (Bjerke & Hultman, 2002) clarifies the fundamental components of the entrepreneurial marketing strategy recommended for SMEs:

- Optimal Resource Utilization - SMEs must enhance their constrained resources by concentrating on high-impact marketing and economical strategies.
- Prompt and Appropriate Reaction to Market Variability - Due to the volatile nature of markets, SMEs must exhibit agility and promptly modify their strategy in reaction to consumer behavior and external alterations.
- Strategic Approach - SMEs should utilize data-driven insights, customer feedback, and new campaigns to optimize their marketing efforts, rather than relying on conventional marketing methods.

- The employment of technology digital tools, automation, social media, and analytics is essential for enabling SMEs to enhance their reach and productivity while maintaining cost-effectiveness.

By adopting an entrepreneurial marketing strategy, SMEs can alleviate the marketing challenges they encounter and enhance their prospects for success. (Fillis, 2010) explains the anticipated results from implementing entrepreneurial marketing strategies on competitive advantage and growth, which are summarized as follows:

An effectively implemented marketing plan facilitates corporate growth in the following manners:

- Expanding Teams - As small and medium companies develop, they can allocate resources to recruit additional personnel, including proficient marketing specialists.
- Financial Viability - Enhanced marketing techniques result in elevated sales and revenue, thereby securing the long-term viability of the company.
- Geographical Expansion - SMEs can broaden their activities from local markets to national or international markets.
- Entering New Markets - Effective marketing enables SMEs to access new client segments and expand their product or service portfolios.

Besides fostering growth, entrepreneurial marketing improves the competitiveness of SMEs by:

- Improved Visibility and Market Positioning - SMEs can cultivate a robust presence within their sector and attain recognition among their target demographic.
- Augmented Brand Awareness and Recognition - An effectively executed marketing plan enhances brand memory and fosters client loyalty.
- Robust Brand Attribution - Customers link particular values and attributes to the SME's brand, hence enhancing its reputation.
- Client Retention - Successful engagement and relationship cultivation lead to increased customer loyalty and repeat transactions.

The findings derived from this framework align with existing literature, further validating the need for strategic and resource-efficient marketing approaches for SMEs.

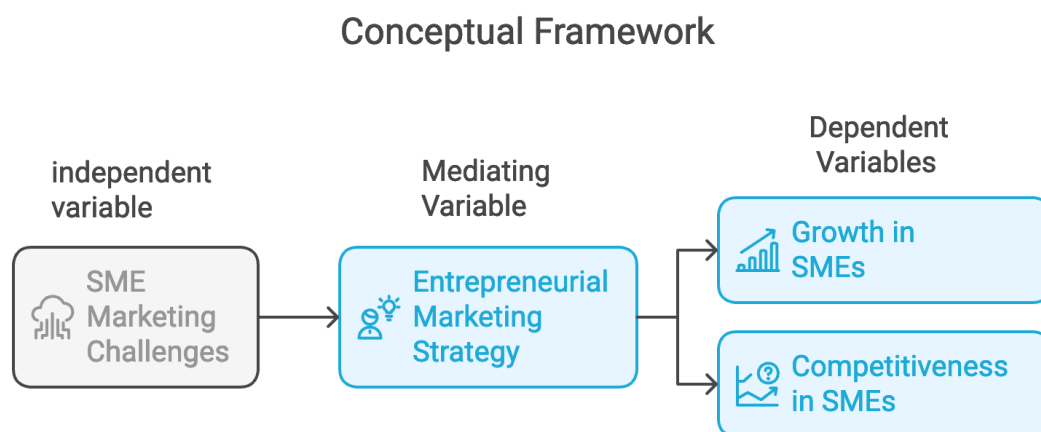


Figure (2) Conceptual Framework

The diagram, developed by the researcher, illustrates the conceptual framework of this study, depicting the relationships among SME

marketing challenges, entrepreneurial marketing strategies, and their subsequent effects on SME growth and competitiveness. The model conceptualizes entrepreneurial marketing as a mediating variable that links the challenges faced by SMEs to their business outcomes.

Within the framework, SME marketing challenges are identified as the independent variable. These challenges, which encompass financial constraints, volatile markets, limited expertise, intense competition, and industry-specific barriers, significantly hinder the ability of SMEs to effectively market their products and services (Gilmore, 2011; Stokes & Wilson, 2017). Traditional marketing methods often fall short in addressing these unique challenges, highlighting the need for more innovative and resource-efficient strategies.

To overcome these obstacles, SMEs adopt entrepreneurial marketing strategies, which serve as the mediating variable. Entrepreneurial marketing allows firms to maximize resource utilization, respond dynamically to market changes, implement data-driven decision-making, and leverage digital technologies for enhanced outreach (Morris et al., 2012). This strategic approach equips SMEs with a competitive advantage, enabling them to sustain and grow within their industries (Fillis, 2010).

The model also identifies two dependent variables: SME growth and SME competitiveness. Indicators of growth include factors such as team expansion, financial stability, and market entry, while competitiveness is characterized by improved brand positioning, customer engagement, and sustained client retention (Bjerke & Hultman, 2002; Kotler et al., 2021). Entrepreneurial marketing plays a pivotal role in driving these outcomes

by providing SMEs with adaptive, cost-effective marketing strategies that align with changing market demands.

By delineating a structured pathway from marketing challenges to business success, this conceptual framework underscores the significance of entrepreneurial marketing in enhancing SME sustainability and performance. The findings of the study are consistent with existing literature, reinforcing the strategic necessity of adopting flexible and innovative marketing strategies within SMEs' contexts (Stokes & Wilson, 2017).

The Self-Reinforcing Cycle of SME Growth

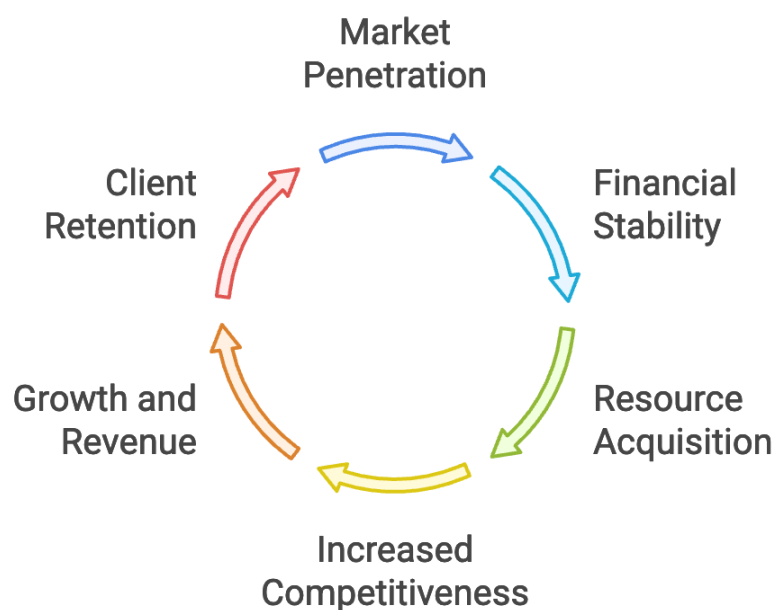


Figure (3) Ongoing Development in SMEs Driven by Entrepreneurial Marketing

The diagram, developed by the researcher, delineates a self-reinforcing cycle that propels the sustained growth of small and medium companies. This cyclical framework demonstrates the interconnected processes that contribute to long-term success for SMEs, initiating with market penetration and progressing through financial stability, resource acquisition, competitiveness, revenue growth, and client retention.

The cycle commences with market penetration, which entails the successful entry and subsequent expansion of SMEs within their designated target markets. Employing effective market penetration strategies—such as competitive pricing, brand differentiation, and proactive customer engagement—enables these companies to establish a significant presence within their respective industries (Kotler et al., 2021). As SMEs increase their market share, they attain financial stability, facilitating improved cash flow management, reduced financial risk, and the capacity to reinvest in business operations (Burns, 2016).

Enhancing financial stability permits SMEs to concentrate on resource acquisition, encompassing human capital, technological infrastructure, and strategic partnerships. The augmented access to resources serves to bolster business capabilities, empowering firms to innovate and develop distinctive products and services (Schaper et al., 2014). This, in turn, fosters increased competitiveness, enabling SMEs to attract a broader customer base, bolster brand positioning, and establish a sustainable competitive advantage within the marketplace (Porter, 2008).

As competitiveness escalates, businesses witness growth and revenue augmentation. Heightened profitability allows for further investments in marketing initiatives, product development, and operational efficiencies,

thereby reinforcing the company's market presence (Davidsson et al., 2010). Subsequently, the cycle culminates in enhanced client retention, a critical component for long-term viability. Building robust customer relationships, offering personalized services, and delivering high-quality products ensures that SMEs maintain a loyal clientele, minimizing customer acquisition costs and promoting repeat business (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990).

The culmination of this cycle serves to reinforce market penetration once more, as effective client retention and revenue growth permit SMEs to explore new markets and customer segments. This cyclical process underscores the continuous interplay between financial and strategic dimensions that characterize SME growth, thereby supporting the assertion that sustainable expansion is achieved through an integrated and dynamic approach (Bridge & O'Neill, 2018).

1.5 Research Significance

- Closing the Knowledge Gap in Entrepreneurial Marketing:
Many marketing professionals and small and medium Companies (SMEs) still find it difficult to understand the fundamentals of entrepreneurial marketing, despite a wealth of scholarly research on the subject (Ismail & Zainol, 2018). By clarifying Entrepreneurial Marketing ideas, this study helps practitioners better understand them and improves their practical use in business strategy.
- Creating a Comprehensive Entrepreneurial Marketing Framework:
The creation of a structured framework outlining the fundamental elements of entrepreneurial marketing is one of this research's main

contributions. SMEs will use this framework as a roadmap to successfully incorporate Entrepreneurial Marketing concepts into their business strategies (Ismail & Zainol, 2018).

- Correcting Myths Regarding Entrepreneurial Marketing as Just Tactical Implementation:

Entrepreneurial marketing is often misunderstood by firms as a collection of tactical approaches rather than a strategic attitude (Ogunode et al., 2020). According to Yadav and Bansal (2020), this study highlights that Entrepreneurial Marketing is essentially an inventive and entrepreneurial viewpoint that influences company strategies, allowing SMEs to overcome challenges and maintain a competitive edge.

- Emphasising Entrepreneurial Marketing as a Strategic Mentality for Growing Businesses:

Entrepreneurial marketing is a strategic strategy that matches a company's products with changing consumer needs rather than only focussing on advertising tactics (Buvár & Gáti, 2023). SMEs may improve long-term competitiveness, creativity, and adaptability by cultivating this attitude.

- Improving SME Competitiveness and Market Responsiveness:

By using innovation, resourcefulness, and customer-centric tactics, SMEs may improve their company performance by comprehending the conceptual underpinnings of Entrepreneurial Marketing (Yadav & Bansal, 2020). In dynamic marketplaces, this study offers practical insights that might propel SME success.

- Supporting Marketing Policy and Educational Initiatives:

By emphasising entrepreneurial marketing as a crucial skill for contemporary businesses, the research findings can help business educators and policymakers create training programs that will produce more qualified marketing professionals (Ismail & Zainol, 2018).

1.6 Research Limitations

Entrepreneurial Marketing is a complex idea that necessitates an extensive analysis from multiple viewpoints to completely understand its resonance. To comprehend how SMEs can effectively leverage Entrepreneurial Marketing, it is essential to examine the effects of cultural factors, local market conditions, and consumer perceptions on the formulation of marketing strategies.

- Cultural Context and Its Significance in Entrepreneurial Marketing:

Cultural values, traditions, and societal standards profoundly influence customer behavior and interaction with marketing initiatives. Small and medium companies must customize their marketing strategies to conform to local cultural norms, guaranteeing that their branding, messaging, and promotional tactics resonate with the intended audience. (Sudirjo, 2023)

A Japanese food business specializing in plant-based meals must account for local dietary patterns and cultural preferences in its marketing strategies. In contrast to Western markets, where plant-based diets are frequently advocated for ethical considerations, Japanese consumers may be more receptive to marketing that emphasizes health advantages and

traditional plant-based components such as soy and seaweed. Inadequate alignment with cultural preferences may lead to poor market penetration. (Karsaklian, 2024)

An international beverages company led a campaign titled "Share a drink" that exemplified personalization by using common first names on its bottles. This campaign was highly effective in Western markets that prioritize individualism. In China, where collectivism and familial values prevail, the company adapted by using familial phrases such as "Mom," "Dad," and "Friend" in place of individual names. This cultural awareness enhanced consumer involvement. (Parent et al., 2011)

- Domestic Market Conditions as Principal Determinants of Marketing Strategies

Domestic economic conditions, competitive environments, and regulatory frameworks influence the marketing tactics of SMEs. Regional business environments differ, affecting the marketing strategies that SMEs utilize to gain a presence. (Ndegwa, 2021)

In very competitive areas such as the United States, where digital advertising is extensively saturated, SMEs frequently depend on content marketing and influencer partnerships to differentiate themselves. Minor beauty firms have effectively established robust customer bases by utilizing user-generated content and social media influencers instead of depending exclusively on conventional advertising. (Rani et al., 2022)

In contrast, in emerging economies with diminished customer understanding, educational marketing methods may prove more

impactful. For example, African fintech businesses prioritize financial literacy initiatives to inform prospective users about mobile banking, hence enhancing adoption rates. The marketing strategy focuses on education and trust-building rather than outright promotion. (Bryson et al., 2015)

- The Significance of Consumer Perception in Entrepreneurial Marketing

The efficacy of marketing initiatives is contingent upon consumer perception and response. Comprehending client sentiments and purchase behaviors enables SMEs to enhance their messaging and develop more effective campaigns. (Durmaz, 2011)

A sustainable fashion business promotes its products as not only premium garments but also as a conscientious option for environmentally aware consumers. This business's communication emphasizes sustainability, environmentally conscious production, and corporate accountability, which strongly connects with its target demographic and cultivates brand loyalty. (Lee & Jin, 2019)

A well renowned manufacturer of electric vehicles' marketing strategy capitalizes on consumer perception by promoting its electric automobiles as luxurious, innovative, and eco-friendly. The company has fostered a devoted consumer base by aligning its brand with innovation and sustainability. (Ingram, 2018)

- Market Dynamics and Consumer Reactions in Formulating SME Strategies

Marketing initiatives drive consumer responses, which subsequently affect brand reputation and business expansion. The interaction between marketing initiatives and consumer reactions enables SMEs to refine their strategy based on immediate feedback. (Qalati et al., 2024)

A startup introducing a new mobile application may initially concentrate on social media advertising and collaborations with influencers. If statistics indicate that people respond more favorably to referral programs and word-of-mouth marketing, the company can adjust its strategy to prioritize rewards for current users who attract new clients. (Carroni et al., 2017) This iterative process guarantees that marketing strategies are refined according to actual consumer behavior instead of wild guesses.

Another instance is that of an online entertainment platform for streaming movies and series, is data-driven content marketing. This international company customizes its suggestions and promotional methods by evaluating user viewing behaviors to align with consumer preferences. (Li & Duan, 2024) This not only improves user satisfaction but also stimulates engagement and retention, demonstrating how organizations may modify marketing strategies depending on customer information.

- Conclusion: A Comprehensive Approach to Entrepreneurial Marketing

According to Nuvriasari et al., (2020), to formulate effective, adaptive, and consumer-focused marketing strategies, SMEs must incorporate

insights from cultural, economic, and consumer-oriented viewpoints. By comprehending the interplay of these factors, SMEs can:

- Conform to cultural norms for enhanced brand resonance.
- Adjust to domestic market conditions to guarantee relevance and viability.
- Utilize consumer information to enhance strategies and augment engagement.
- Continuously assess consumer feedback to dynamically enhance marketing strategies.

By adopting a strategy framework that integrates these components, SMEs can improve their competitiveness, stimulate innovation, and achieve sustained success in their markets.

1.7 Researcher Limitations

As with all research, this study on entrepreneurial marketing in SMEs includes limitations that impact its conclusions. Although the researcher's goal was to offer thorough insights, she ran into a number of noteworthy difficulties. These include possible response biases, disparities in participant replies, inequitable industry representation, and challenges in reaching decision-makers.

Recognising these constraints has two key benefits: it highlights the limitations of the study and offers recommendations for how to enhance further research. Each constraint is explicitly outlined, detailing its implications and potential solutions for further research.

By being open and honest about these limitations, the researcher intends to help improve research techniques in entrepreneurial marketing studies and provide readers with a fair assessment of the findings. These restrictions and possible solutions are described in depth as follows:

- Restricted availability of marketing decision-makers
 - Challenge: Particularly in conventional SMEs, the research encountered challenges in attracting top executives with both decision-making power and specialised understanding of entrepreneurial marketing or even traditional marketing.
 - Implications: It was difficult to assess the extent of managers' effect on entrepreneurial marketing effectiveness, therefore this aspect lacked data to generate conclusions.
- Thematic Complexity in Intersectoral Data
 - Challenge: The varying industrial backgrounds of the participants caused complexity in qualitative analysis, which called for coding and interpretation iterations.
 - Implications: This variability restricted the growth of standardised entrepreneurial marketing frameworks across sectors although it did not impede creating valuable contextual insights.
 - Solution: Recent developments in qualitative analysis applications now allow more complex cross-industry pattern identification

- Response Bias in Self-Report

- Challenge: Consistent with previous organisational behaviour data, participants showed reluctance to talk about entrepreneurial marketing implementation difficulties in fear of giving a bad impression about their businesses. (Tourish, 2020).
- Implications: This optimism bias might hide important challenges to successful entrepreneurial marketing adoption in SMEs (Brown et al., 2023).
- Solution: Innovative methodological approaches, including implicit measuring techniques, are proving useful in reducing self-reporting biases (Greenwald et al., 2022).

1.8 Literature Gap

The current body of literature establishes a robust foundation for comprehending the function of Entrepreneurial Marketing in influencing the competitive advantage and growth of small and medium companies. Nevertheless, despite the breadth of current research, a number of critical areas are still unexplored, which presents valuable opportunities for additional academic research in the following arenas:

- The Influence of Resource Constraints on Entrepreneurial Marketing Strategies

The marketing strategies of SMEs are distinguished from those of large corporations by their restricted access to financial, human, and infrastructural resources, which is a defining characteristic of SMEs. (Absah et al., 2022) Although existing research recognizes the resource constraints that SMEs encounter, additional research is required to comprehend the manner in which these constraints influence and redefine marketing strategies in various industry contexts.

Major Areas of Investigation:

- In emerging markets, how do small and medium companies allocate their limited resources to marketing innovation?

SMEs are able to optimize their impact with minimal expenditures through the implementation of strategies such as growth hacking, guerrilla marketing, or digital transformation. (Tsetim et al., 2020)

- In the face of financial and operational constraints, how do small and medium companies maintain a balance between cost-effectiveness and long-term brand development?
- The Contribution of Entrepreneurial Marketing to the Overcoming of Competitive Pressures

The current body of research emphasizes the manner in which large corporations capitalize on economies of scale and extensive resources to sustain a competitive edge. (Hollensen & Saeidi, 2023) Nevertheless, the extent to which SMEs, which operate in highly competitive

environments, employ Entrepreneurial Marketing to not only endure but also flourish remains uncertain.

Major Areas of Investigation:

- In what ways do small and medium companies employ proactive opportunity-seeking behavior to counteract industry giants?
- How do strategic agility and swift decision-making contribute to the preservation of a competitive advantage?
- In what ways do small and medium companies distinguish their brands by leveraging niche market positioning, consumer co-creation, and personalized engagement?
- The Long-Term Impact of Entrepreneurial Marketing on the Sustainability of Small and medium companies

The majority of research on entrepreneurial marketing in SMEs concentrates on short-term strategies, including guerrilla marketing, viral campaigns, and social media marketing. (et al & et al, 2022) Nevertheless, there is a scarcity of research on the extent to which these strategies contribute to the long-term sustainability and competitive advantage of businesses, and when do these tactics lose their impact and need to be either replaced or fortified by other business practices to effect measurable results.

Major Areas of Investigation:

- In what ways does Entrepreneurial Marketing change as small and medium companies expand and transition from startups to established businesses?
- In the long term, what are the success factors for maintaining a competitive advantage through Entrepreneurial Marketing?
- When do SMEs need to implement long term marketing plans and when do they need to implement short term marketing plans?
- Based on the success of entrepreneurial marketing tactics, how does the SME decide whether or not specific successful tactics should continue or be adjusted and updated regularly?
- How do small and medium companies sustain an innovative, opportunity-driven mindset beyond the initial phases of business expansion?

For instance, SMEs that transitioned from disruptive innovators to industry leaders, such as tech firms, could be the subject of a study that evaluates whether they maintained their entrepreneurial marketing strategies or adopted traditional corporate strategies as they scaled from startups to market leaders.

- The Impact of the Entrepreneurial Mindset on the Marketing Strategies of Small and medium companies

The entrepreneurial mindset is intrinsically motivating in entrepreneurial marketing, as it can considerably impact adaptability, risk-taking, and

decision-making. The marketing strategies and consumer engagement approaches of many SME managers are directly influenced by their personal beliefs, biases, and experiences, as many of the entrepreneurial marketers are also business owners. (Ogunode et al., 2020)

Major Areas of Investigation:

- In what ways do entrepreneurs' cognitive prejudices influence the marketing decisions of SMEs?
- What is the influence of risk tolerance on the development of unconventional, daring marketing strategies?
- In what manner do small and medium enterprise managers maintain a balance between their personal vision and market-driven consumer insights?
- Does seniority level affect the efficiency of a manager in adapting to the principles of entrepreneurial marketing?

For instance, research on founder-led brands (e.g., Tesla, Virgin, Patagonia) could demonstrate the impact of the entrepreneur's personal branding and leadership style on marketing success.

- The Contribution of Entrepreneurial Marketing to Market Resilience and Adaptation

Rapid adaptation to market changes, consumer preferences, and industry disruptions is one of the defining strengths of entrepreneurial marketing.

(et al & et al, 2022) Nevertheless, additional research is required to evaluate the proficient identification and exploitation of emergent opportunities by SMEs through EM.

Major Areas of Investigation:

- What mechanisms enable small and medium companies to anticipate and adapt to evolving market conditions?
- How do small and medium companies incorporate consumer feedback channels, data analytics, and real-time decision-making into their marketing strategies?
- In what ways does Entrepreneurial Marketing enable strategic repositioning and business model pivots?

For instance, the function of Entrepreneurial Marketing in crisis adaptation was illustrated by the fact that numerous restaurants transitioned to digital ordering, online marketing, and delivery partnerships during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, many retail businesses moved a significant portion of their operations to e-commerce channels. (Magableh, 2021)

- The Necessity of Cross-Industry, Cross-Geographical, and Empirical Studies

Although Entrepreneurial Marketing research is extensively documented in developed economies, there is a dearth of research on entrepreneurial marketing strategies in emerging markets and diverse industry sectors.

Major Areas of Investigation:

- In what ways do small and medium companies in emergent economies employ entrepreneurial marketing strategies to compete with global brands? Are there additional challenges faced by SMEs due to operating in smaller or less developed economies?
- What are the cultural factors that influence entrepreneurial risk-taking and market innovation? Are some SMEs forced to adopt certain marketing tactics shaped by the domestic perception or expectations?
- In what ways do regulatory variations among regions influence the marketing strategies of small and medium companies? And how do SMEs navigate the challenges of operating in different markets at once?
- How do multinational SMEs manage their culturally diverse teams to produce a successful entrepreneurial marketing strategy?

For instance, a comparative analysis of European technology firms, African micro-companies, and Asian family-owned businesses could provide valuable insights into the ways in which regional contexts influence entrepreneurial marketing strategies. (Kwame Dzogbenuku & Abekah Keelson, 2019)

By resolving these literature gaps, future research can offer a more thorough, nuanced comprehension of Entrepreneurial Marketing as a strategic, dynamic tool for the success of SMEs. A multidisciplinary approach that integrates technological advancements, economic theory,

and behavioral psychology will guarantee that research findings are practicable, actionable, and impactful for real-world entrepreneurs.

1.9 Research Structure

This thesis is designed to offer a thorough analysis of the function of Entrepreneurial Marketing in supplementing the growth and competitive advantage of small and medium companies (SMEs). The research adheres to a coherent structure, commencing with the introduction and the background of the study, succeeded by a comprehensive literature assessment that situates the research within established academic paradigms. The methodology chapter defines the research approach, sampling strategies, and data processing methods, consequently assuring the reliability and validity of the findings.

The next chapters outline the principal research findings, examine their implications concerning current literature, and investigate the theoretical and practical contributions of the study. The thesis concludes with recommendations for SME practitioners, legislators, and scholars, offering insights into the future evolution of Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies. The thesis structure is listed as follows:

Main Chapters

1. Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background and Rationale

- 1.2. **Problem Statement**
- 1.3. **Research Objectives**
- 1.4. **Theoretical & Conceptual Framework**
- 1.5. **Research Significance**
- 1.6. **Research Limitations**
- 1.7. **Literature Gap**
- 1.8. **Structure of the Thesis**
- 2. Chapter Two: Literature Review**
 - 2.1. **Entrepreneurial Marketing Concept**
 - 2.2. **SMEs and Their Role in the Economy**
 - 2.3. **Theoretical Frameworks**
 - 2.4. **Entrepreneurial Marketing Strategies**
 - 2.5. **Comparison between Traditional and Entrepreneurial Marketing**
 - 2.6. **Existing Research on SME Growth and Competitive Advantage**
- 3. Chapter Three: Research Methodology**
 - 3.1. **Research Approach**
 - 3.2. **Target Demographic**
 - 3.3. **Sampling Method**
 - 3.4. **Data Collection Process**
 - 3.5. **Data Analysis Methods**

- 3.6. **Ethical Considerations**
- 4. **Chapter Four: Research Findings, Discussion, Theoretical Contributions, Practical Implications, Conclusion and Recommendations**
 - 4.1. **Analysis of Key Themes**
 - 4.2. **Comparison with Existing Literature**
 - 4.3. **Entrepreneurial Marketing Strategies in Practice**
 - 4.4. **Challenges and Opportunities for SMEs**
 - 4.5. **Advancing the Concept of Entrepreneurial Marketing**
 - 4.6. **How the Study Adds to the Existing Literature**
 - 4.7. **Bridging Identified Research Gaps**
 - 4.8. **Implications for SME Owners and Managers**
 - 4.9. **Policy Recommendations**
 - 4.10. **Implications for Educators and Researchers**
 - 4.11. **Summary of Key Findings**
 - 4.12. **Final Reflections on Entrepreneurial Marketing**
 - 4.13. **Recommendations for Future Research**
- 5. **References (APA Format)**
 - 5.1. Full citation list of all sources used.
- 6. **Appendices**
 - 6.1. **Interview Questions**
 - 6.2. **Participant Profiles**
 - 6.3. **Additional Supporting Data**

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Previous Studies

This section examines the fundamental principles and theories that underpin Entrepreneurial Marketing. This will explore the definitions and core ideas of entrepreneurship and marketing, and how their convergence leads to the concept of Entrepreneurial Marketing. The conceptual framework will delineate the components and linkages that inform the comprehension of Entrepreneurial Marketing and its importance for small and medium companies. This comprehensive assessment of the current literature will underscore the significance of Entrepreneurial Marketing as a strategic method for SMEs to achieve competitive advantage and foster growth.

2.1 Research Context

Across many sectors, small and medium companies (SMEs) are very vital for employment creation and economic growth. SMEs need smart methods to keep and grow their activities given their restricted resources and competitive market surroundings. Emerging as a creative strategy allowing SMEs to use their agility, innovation, and market adaptation to acquire a competitive advantage is entrepreneurial marketing. (Fatoki, 2019)

With an eye towards filling up current information gaps on how these businesses counteract marketing challenges, this study looks at how entrepreneurial marketing affects SMEs' growth and competitiveness. Emphasising its importance in changing company contexts, the research

places Entrepreneurial Marketing as a useful and strategic framework rather than a set of marketing strategies.

Many SMEs struggle with implementing new marketing tactics given the growing trend towards digitalisation and innovation. (Muafa et al., 2019) The research also investigates the hesitancies, difficulties, and supporting elements influencing SMEs' choice to use entrepreneurial marketing strategies. Moreover, the study offers empirical insights by means of real-world experiences of SMEs' managers and owners.

Utilizing qualitative research techniques, this research provides a thorough investigation of SME marketing dynamics and gives pragmatic suggestions for legislators, entrepreneurs, and marketers. The results help to clarify how entrepreneurial marketing helps SMEs to be resilient and to achieve long-term success.

2.2 Definitions Related to Entrepreneurial Marketing

Entrepreneurship, as defined by Hamsani et al., (2022), denotes the process of establishing, structuring, and overseeing a new business enterprise, typically marked by innovation, risk-taking, and the search for opportunities. Marketing, on the other hand, as defined by Haslindah et al., (2021) is the function and process of recognizing, predicting, and fulfilling client requirements and desires through the creation, marketing, and distribution of products and services.

The convergence of entrepreneurship and marketing produces the notion of Entrepreneurial Marketing. Entrepreneurial Marketing, (2023) denotes that this intersection is defined by the integration of fundamental

principles and methods from these two complementary fields. Entrepreneurial Marketing, (2023) elaborates that Entrepreneurial Marketing derives ideas from entrepreneurship regarding the identification and exploitation of market possibilities, risk management, and the optimization of limited resources. Conversely, marketing encompasses essential principles of value generation, customer-centricity, and innovative communication and delivery tactics. Entrepreneurial Marketing combines several elements to provide a comprehensive and adaptive marketing strategy, especially beneficial for small and medium companies aiming to maneuver through intricate and swiftly changing market conditions.

Entrepreneurial Marketing is characterized as "an organizational function and a series of processes aimed at creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers, as well as managing customer relationships in a manner that benefits the organization and its stakeholders, defined by innovative, pragmatic, and action-oriented marketers who are empowered, opportunistic, and risk-tolerant". (Gilmore, 2011, p. 23)

It is also defined as *"the proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining profitable customers through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging, and value creation"*. (Sasmoko et al., 2019, p. 2)

2.3 The Rise of Entrepreneurial Marketing

Entrepreneurial Marketing has gained significant relevance in academic research and corporate practice recently, reflecting the evolving dynamics of the global business environment. As Ghoshal, (2020) clarifies, the conventional marketing paradigm, historically prevalent in the industry, is widely regarded as inadequate for tackling the distinct challenges and opportunities encountered by small and medium companies in today's intricate, rapid, and intensely competitive market landscapes.

Furthermore, Ismail & Zainol, (2018) state that the origins of Entrepreneurial Marketing may be dated to the late 20th century, emerging as a solution to the deficiencies of conventional marketing methods in meeting the distinct requirements and obstacles encountered by small and medium companies. In an increasingly competitive and dynamic business environment, SMEs acknowledged the necessity for a more flexible and opportunity-oriented marketing strategy to ensure survival and success.

In the same regard, Algarini & Nasution, (2023) explain that today, Entrepreneurial Marketing is acknowledged as an essential technique for SMEs to attain a competitive advantage and foster sustainable growth. Algarini & Nasution, (2023) also adds that Entrepreneurial Marketing's focus on adaptability, innovation, and client orientation corresponds with the distinct traits and requirements of small and medium companies, rendering it an increasingly essential instrument in their pursuit of success within the contemporary business environment.

The theoretical underpinnings of Entrepreneurial Marketing, as per Hills & Hultman, (2013) are based on various academic fields, such as entrepreneurship, strategic management, and marketing. Entrepreneurial Marketing derives insights and theoretical foundations from interconnected disciplines, amalgamating essential theories and frameworks to offer a thorough comprehension of this dynamic marketing approach.

It is also evident from Morrish, (2011) that in the realm of entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Marketing corresponds with the essential tenets of recognizing and capitalizing on market opportunities, mitigating risk, and utilizing constrained resources effectively. The strategic management perspective highlights the significance of adaptation, competitive differentiation, and the cultivation of distinctive talents to achieve lasting competitive advantage.

Shahmohammadi, (2022) adds that marketing fundamentally encompasses the principles of value creation, customer-centricity, and innovative communication and delivery tactics. By including these diverse components, Entrepreneurial Marketing provides a comprehensive and adaptive strategy that is especially advantageous for small and medium companies aiming to maneuver through intricate and swiftly changing market landscapes.

2.4 The Importance of Small and Medium Companies to the Economy

Small and medium companies are vital to the global economy, considerably contributing to economic growth, employment, and innovation. Small and medium companies constitute a significant segment of the contemporary ecosystem and are essential to the broader economic framework, as stated by Elsebaie et al., (2023), adding that they play a crucial role in employment generation, innovation, and the advancement of local communities. (Growing the Global Economy through SMEs, 2023)

It has been determined by Growing the Global Economy through SMEs, (2023) that one statistic indicates that SMEs include around 95% of all companies worldwide, produce nearly 50% of the total value generated, and represent 60-70% of employment in most economies. This underscores the significant magnitude and role of SMEs in fostering economic development and prosperity globally.

Another source being Manzoor et al., (2021) indicates that SMEs are crucial for cultivating entrepreneurship and advancing sustainable development at local and regional levels. Additionally, Mile et al., (2022) confirms that SMEs are essential in empowering communities and fostering socioeconomic advancement by creating jobs, cultivating new skills, and promoting innovative ideas.

Furthermore, Zaid & Yaqub, (2024) adds that despite their constrained resources relative to larger corporations, SMEs exhibit exceptional agility

and adaptability in maneuvering through intricate market conditions. Their distinctive marketing approach, marked by a robust client orientation and inventive techniques, allows them to establish competitive niches and stimulate growth within the larger corporate ecosystem, SMEs: The Effects of Strategic Management, (2023) concludes.

2.5 The Distinct Marketing Approaches of Small and Medium companies

As explained by Zaid & Yaqub, (2024), it is noted that Small and medium companies frequently adopt distinct marketing strategies compared to larger organizations, owing to their specific attributes and limitations. Small and medium companies generally possess more constrained resources, including financial capital, workforce, and infrastructure, in comparison to bigger organizations. The constraint of resources necessitates that SMEs adopt more agile, inventive, and opportunistic marketing strategies. Furthermore, SMEs tend to be more intimately linked to their local markets and clientele, enabling them to cultivate a profound comprehension of customer demands and preferences, as Phan et al., (2023) discusses.

Moreover, Gilmore & Carson, (2018) state that the contextual understanding, along with the flexibility provided by their reduced size, allows SMEs to implement a more personalized and relationship-focused marketing strategy. Consequently, SMEs are generally more customer-centric, emphasizing the cultivation of robust relationships with their target consumers and utilizing individualized communication tactics. Seridaran & Noor, (2021) further exhibits that SMEs are typically more

agile in addressing evolving client demands and market dynamics, as their reduced scale facilitates expedited decision-making and execution of marketing strategies.

To add more, Baporikar & Fotlela, (2018) state that SMEs often depend on word-of-mouth, referrals, and other informal marketing avenues to connect with their target clients, instead of significantly engaging in traditional, resource-intensive marketing campaigns.

To reiterate, Resnick et al., (2016) explain that Small and medium companies are typically managed by owner-managers who possess a generalist viewpoint and engage directly in the daily operations of the business. This enables them to integrate their intuition, risk-taking, and innovative mindset into the marketing role, frequently diverging from the more structured, analytical methods commonly linked with larger companies.

In the same context, Gilmore & Carson, (2018) state that SMEs may depend increasingly on digital and social media marketing, as these platforms can be more economical and allow them to engage a wider audience with constrained resources.

To conclude, Heston, (2017) summarizes that the marketing strategies of SMEs are typically marked by enhanced flexibility, agility, and an emphasis on cultivating strong client connections to secure a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

2.7 Summary of the Literature Review

Year	Author(s)	Key Takeaways
2009	O'Dwyer et al.	Resource-based view theory emphasizes utilizing unique resources for growth.
2010	Maritz et al.	Traditional marketing focuses on established strategies, while Entrepreneurial Marketing prioritizes new opportunities.
2011	Gilmore	Entrepreneurial Marketing is defined as creating, communicating, and delivering value through innovative, pragmatic, and action-oriented approaches.
2011	Morrish	Entrepreneurial Marketing aligns with entrepreneurship principles like opportunity recognition and risk management.
2013	Hills & Hultman	Entrepreneurial Marketing draws from entrepreneurship, strategic management, and marketing theories.
2016	Resnick et al.	SMEs are often managed by owner-managers who integrate intuition and innovation into marketing.
2017	Heston	SME marketing strategies are marked by flexibility, agility, and strong client relationships.
2018	Gilmore & Carson	SMEs use personalized, relationship-focused marketing strategies due to their size and local market understanding.

2018	Herbane	Empowering employees to make entrepreneurial decisions is crucial for SME marketing success.
2018	Ismail & Zainol	Entrepreneurial Marketing is more flexible and adaptive than traditional marketing.
2018	Malek et al.	Employee empowerment in SMEs fosters creativity and customer-focused decision-making.
2018	Baporikar & Fotolela	SMEs rely on word-of-mouth and informal marketing channels due to resource constraints.
2019	Morgan & Anokhin	Risk-taking and uncertainty acceptance are fundamental to Entrepreneurial Marketing in SMEs.
2019	Sasmoko et al.	Entrepreneurial Marketing involves proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities through innovative risk management and value creation.
2020	Adel et al.	Entrepreneurial Marketing helps SMEs navigate volatile markets, optimize resources, and foster growth.
2020	Dhameria et al.	Entrepreneurial Marketing enhances marketing management competencies, promoting SME growth.
2020	Entrepreneurial Marketing and the Marketing Mix	Traditional marketing is systematic and analytical, while Entrepreneurial Marketing is flexible and adaptive.
2020	Ghoshal	Conventional marketing is inadequate for SMEs in today's competitive environment.

2020	Jones et al.	Proactiveness, opportunity focus, customer intensity, and resource leveraging are key to SME growth.
2020	Pulley	Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies help SMEs navigate uncertainty and improve performance.
2020	Sozuer et al.	Traditional marketing emphasizes systematic execution of prearranged initiatives.
2021	Bumgardner & Nicholls	Customer-centric approaches in SMEs involve tailored solutions for specific client needs.
2021	Musneh et al.	Entrepreneurial Marketing aspects like proactiveness and resource leveraging enhance SME competitive advantage.
2021	Nufer	SMEs must embrace risk and uncertainty to exploit emerging market opportunities.
2021	Sawaeen et al.	Employee empowerment fosters ownership and dedication, contributing to SME success.
2021	Seridaran & Noor	SMEs are agile in addressing evolving client demands due to their smaller scale.
2021	Manzoor et al.	SMEs are crucial for entrepreneurship and sustainable development at local levels.
2022	Absah et al.	SMEs exhibit pragmatism in resource allocation, focusing on high-return investments.
2022	Amadasun & Mutezo	Flexible and adaptive marketing strategies are essential for entrepreneurial SMEs.

2022	Haslindah et al.	Marketing involves recognizing and fulfilling client needs through product creation and distribution.
2022	Hamsani et al.	Entrepreneurship involves establishing and managing new business companies marked by innovation and risk-taking.
2022	Liu	Customer-centric approaches in SMEs involve creating tailored solutions for specific client needs.
2022	Shahmohammad i	Entrepreneurial Marketing combines value creation, customer-centricity, and innovative communication tactics.
2022	Stelzl et al.	Entrepreneurial Marketing encourages SMEs to proactively recognize and exploit market opportunities.
2023	Algarini & Nasution	Entrepreneurial Marketing is essential for SMEs to achieve competitive advantage and sustainable growth.
2023	Bruce et al.	SMEs leverage strong client relationships and agility to offset resource limitations.
2023	Buvár & Gáti	SMEs use data-informed strategies for resource distribution to maximize impact within constrained budgets.
2023	Elsebaie et al.	SMEs play a crucial role in employment generation, innovation, and local community development.

2023	Growing the Global Economy through SMEs	SMEs constitute 95% of companies worldwide, contributing significantly to economic growth and employment.
2023	Pellegrino & Abé	SMEs form strategic alliances to enhance marketing reach and effectiveness.
2023	Supriatiningsih et al.	SMEs adopt agile marketing strategies to respond to changing market dynamics.
2023	Yuen	SMEs can identify opportunities in specialized markets overlooked by larger competitors.
2024	Zaid & Yaqub	SMEs exhibit agility and adaptability, allowing them to establish competitive niches in complex markets.

Table 1.1 A summary of key takeaways from research references

The table above, created by the researcher, serves as a facilitator to get a holistic understanding of the main point covered in this section, segregated based on the year the reference was published in chronological order, the author, and the key takeaways included in this report. These key takeaways will be discussed in detail based on their respective section in this chapter.

2.8 Key Strategies of Entrepreneurial Marketing

In this section, the main constituents of the Entrepreneurial Marketing approach will be dissected as per the following figure:

Key Strategies in Entrepreneurial Marketing



Figure (4) The Pillars of Entrepreneurial Marketing

The above figure, created by the researcher, summarizes the key strategies practiced under entrepreneurial marketing, which will be explained in detail in this section.

The figure highlights the fundamental ideas guiding marketing success in small and medium companies (SMEs), hence defining entrepreneurial marketing. Among these techniques are:

- Encouragement of staff members to provide original ideas and assume responsibility for marketing projects can help to build a creative and flexible culture (Morris et al., 2002).

A notion brought about by Herbane, (2018) is that enabling employees to make informed, entrepreneurial decisions is essential to Entrepreneurial Marketing in small and medium companies. By cultivating a culture that promotes entrepreneurial thinking and behavior among employees, SMEs may use the creativity, problem-solving abilities, and customer-focused mentality of their staff.

Based on the former, Malek et al., (2018) adds that an SME may authorize its sales team to make immediate judgments regarding pricing or special promotions to secure a deal with a high-value customer. Likewise, a SME might grant its marketing team the latitude to explore innovative digital marketing strategies, such as initiating focused social media campaigns or partnering with industry influencers, without protracted approval procedures. By empowering employees and granting the entrepreneurial marketing the autonomy to make confident entrepreneurial decisions, SMEs can adapt more swiftly to fluctuating market conditions and more effectively address the changing requirements of their customers.

Moreover, Sawaeen et al., (2021) states that the empowerment of employees cultivates a sense of ownership and dedication, as team members feel enabled to actively contribute to the business's success. When employees are motivated to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, they are more inclined to take initiative, recognize new opportunities, and

execute innovative solutions, thus providing the SME with a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

- Identifying special market prospects and using unusual strategies to create a competitive edge will help one to recognize creative markets (Miles et al., 2015).

Stelzl et al., (2020) explains that Entrepreneurial Marketing urges SMEs to actively recognize and exploit nascent market opportunities instead of merely reacting to existing trends. This proactive strategy may entail the innovative application of market research, customer feedback, and industry analysis to identify unmet requirements or neglected market niches.

To further demonstrate, an SME may utilize its agility and client familiarity to see an opportunity to offer a distinctive product or service that responds to emerging consumer behaviors or technology advancements in the market.

Likewise, Yuen, (2023) adds that an SME may identify an opportunity to penetrate a specialized market that larger competitors have disregarded or overlooked. By embracing a proactive, opportunity-oriented approach, entrepreneurial marketers in SMEs may secure a competitive advantage and foster continuous business growth. This agility and reactivity to changing market conditions enable SMEs to maintain a competitive edge and exploit new opportunities for value creation, enhancing their long-term performance.

- Maximizing little resources by means of strategic alliances, digital tools, and economical marketing strategies helps to innovate resource use (Kraus et al., 2012).

As Morgan & Anokhin, (2019) clarifies, this is a fundamental element of Entrepreneurial Marketing for small and medium companies. SMEs, often possessing limited financial and operational resources relative to larger entities, must devise new strategies to optimize the efficacy of their available assets. This may entail reallocating current resources, such as utilizing a compact workforce to manage several marketing responsibilities or employing a singular social media platform to effectively engage a certain client demographic in a cost-efficient way.

Therefore, Bruce et al., (2023) adds that Entrepreneurial marketers at SMEs excel at recognizing and leveraging their distinctive advantages, including strong client relationships, agility, and specialized knowledge, to offset resource limitations.

Furthermore, Absah et al., (2022) emphasizes that marketers in SMEs exhibit pragmatism in resource allocation, aiming for investments that promise the greatest return. An SME may opt to bypass a comprehensive advertising campaign in favor of a sequence of targeted, tailored outreach initiatives to connect with high-value clients. Consequently, Buvár & Gáti, (2023) conclude that through a calculated, data-informed strategy for resource distribution, entrepreneurial marketers in SMEs can attain considerable influence while adhering to their constrained budgets.

Another instance of innovative resource utilization in Entrepreneurial Marketing is explained by Pellegrino & Abé, (2023) which is the strategic

alliances and collaborations that SMEs may establish. Instead of developing all marketing capabilities internally, SMEs might utilize the expertise and resources of complementary companies or industry influencers to enhance their reach and effectiveness. This may entail co-hosting events, cross-promoting products and services, or utilizing established distribution channels to access new client segments.

These practical and innovative marketing strategies, which maximize constrained resources and reveal new opportunities for value generation, exemplify the Entrepreneurial Marketing mentality that can assist SMEs in achieving their performance and financial goals.

- Emphasizing calculated risk-taking and adaptation to negotiate unpredictable market conditions, risk-taking and uncertainty acceptance should be stressed (Morrish, 2011).

Embracing risk and tolerating uncertainty, as affirmed by Morgan & Anokhin, (2019), are fundamental components of Entrepreneurial Marketing in small and medium companies. Marketers at SMEs must be prepared to venture beyond their comfort zones and explore novel, inventive strategies, despite the unpredictability of the results. This risk-taking mentality enables them to recognize and exploit emerging market opportunities that may not be readily available.

Nufer, (2021) states that an SME may opt to introduce a new product or service that addresses a developing customer trend, despite the absence of historical evidence or established demand. An entrepreneurial marketer may employ an unconventional marketing strategy, such as guerrilla marketing or influencer collaborations, to engage a target demographic

more effectively and economically. Although these risks may not consistently yield positive outcomes, the entrepreneurial marketer's propensity to embrace uncertainty and adjust to evolving conditions can provide the SME with a competitive edge and foster sustained growth.

Moreover, Nufer, (2021) elaborates that entrepreneurial marketers in SMEs must be adept at navigating a degree of uncertainty and ambiguity. They must exhibit agility in decision-making, rapidly adjusting their plans in response to changing market conditions. This tolerance for ambiguity enables them to address unforeseen difficulties or possibilities, rather than succumbing to the paralysis induced by dread of the unknown. By adopting a mindset of strategic risk-taking and flexibility, entrepreneurial marketers in SMEs may maneuver through intricate and swiftly changing market landscapes and maintain a competitive edge.

- Customer-Centricity: Giving customer interactions and involvement top priority can help to create brand loyalty and long-term development (Gilmore, 2011).

Liu, (2022) explains that Entrepreneurial marketers in SMEs recognize that achieving a competitive advantage necessitates a profound comprehension of their clients' demands and preferences. By embracing a customer-centric approach, they aim to create tailored solutions that tackle the specific difficulties and issues of their target groups.

It was noted by Bumgardner & Nicholls, (2020) that an SME delivering professional services may provide bespoke consulting packages designed to meet the distinct needs of each customer, rather than employing a uniform approach. Likewise, a small manufacturer may design and

fabricate specialized items or product alterations to address the distinct requirements of a niche market, such as producing ergonomic office furniture for those with impairments.

This emphasis on providing distinct value via tailored offers enables entrepreneurial SMEs to distinguish themselves from larger competitors and cultivate better, more significant ties with their clients. By predicting and addressing the changing demands of their target market, these entrepreneurial marketers develop a persuasive value offer that fosters customer loyalty and promotes sustainable growth.

- Adopting agile and flexible marketing techniques to react fast to market changes and new trends, helps one to respond (Chaston, 2016).

Employing flexible and adaptive marketing strategies, as explored by Amadasun & Mutezo, (2022) is essential for entrepreneurial SMEs. This entails swiftly adjusting marketing strategies to evolving market dynamics and consumer demands. An SME may adjust its social media marketing strategy to prioritize Instagram over Facebook if data indicates a change in its target demographic to the former platform. Alternatively, a SME might swiftly create and implement a series of customized email messages to tackle new customer pain areas, instead of depending on a static, long-term marketing strategy, Supriatiningsih et al., (2023) explains. By adopting an agile mentality and using adaptive strategies, entrepreneurial marketers in SMEs may leverage new opportunities and maintain a competitive advantage.

2.9 A Comparison between Traditional Marketing and Entrepreneurial Marketing

Juxtaposing two notions is frequently an effective method for its definition. By emphasizing the principal distinctions and similarities among related concepts, one can more effectively clarify the defining traits and significant features of the central concept. This comparative examination draws the borders and fundamental components that differentiate the concept from others, therefore facilitating a clearer and more comprehensive understanding. This section aims to evaluate and contrast the typical, conventional marketing ideology with the Entrepreneurial Marketing approach.

Conventional marketing methods, as discussed in Entrepreneurial Marketing and the Marketing Mix, (2020), are typically more systematic, analytical, and concentrated on executing uniform, standardized techniques and strategies. Sozuer et al., (2020) elaborates that this method emphasizes the systematic execution of prearranged marketing initiatives and the enhancement of established procedures.

Conversely, Ismail & Zainol, (2018) argue that Entrepreneurial Marketing adopts a more flexible, adaptive, and customer-focused approach, utilizing inventive and opportunistic strategies to adjust to changing market dynamics and meet the distinct demands of target segments. Maritz et al., (2010) also posits that Traditional marketing focuses on the effective implementation of established strategies, whereas Entrepreneurial Marketing prioritizes the clever identification and swift reaction to new market opportunities.

2.10 Review of the Significance of Entrepreneurial Marketing for SMEs

- Growth Potential

Entrepreneurial Marketing and growth in small and medium companies have been linked for a long time. This study adds to that body of data. Entrepreneurial marketing helps small businesses counteract lack of resources, take advantage of new possibilities, and come up with new marketing plans that help the businesses grow in the long term (Dhameria et al., 2021). Entrepreneurial Marketing gives small and medium companies the tools they need to stay competitive in markets that are changing quickly by encouraging them to be flexible, creative, and focus on the customer.

Dhameria et al.'s experimental study from 2021 showed that entrepreneurial marketing is linked to the founder-entrepreneur using and improving their marketing management skills. In turn, this makes marketing easier and helps businesses grow by giving small and medium companies the chance to come up with unique value propositions that set them apart from rivals. In the same way, Jones et al. (2020) found that proactiveness, opportunity focus, customer intensity, and resource leveraging were some of the most important aspects of entrepreneurial marketing. All of these factors were strongly linked to SME success and long-term growth. Based on these results, it seems that small and medium companies that use entrepreneurial marketing strategies are better able to take advantage of new trends and customer needs.

Adel et al. (2020) also said that entrepreneurial marketing helps small and medium companies deal with unstable markets, make the most of limited resources, and come up with unique value offerings, which leads to growth and a competitive edge. This is especially important for small businesses that work in fields that change quickly, like technology and consumer preferences. These businesses need to be able to adapt and come up with new ideas all the time (Quaye & Mensah, 2018).

The resource-based view (RBV) idea stresses how important it is to use unique, valuable, and hard-to-copy resources in order to achieve long-term growth. According to O'Dwyer et al. (2009), companies that have unique strengths, like a strong brand name, knowledge of a niche market, and new ways of marketing, are more likely to be successful in the long run. These academic views are in line with the basic ideas of entrepreneurial marketing, which shows how it can help small businesses do better and grow.

Pulley's (2020) research also shows that using entrepreneurial marketing strategies, such as marketing plans that are open, adaptable, and made on the spot, can help small and medium companies deal with uncertain market conditions and do better, which leads to firm growth. Because global markets are so uncertain, small and medium companies need to be able to change with the times in order to succeed. Entrepreneurial marketing helps with this adaptability by pushing businesspeople to take risks, make quick decisions, and keep learning (Baporikar & Fotolela, 2018).

Entrepreneurial marketing is also a key factor in helping small and medium companies go global. Adel et al. (2020) say that Entrepreneurial

marketing helps companies notice and respond to changes in the market, encourages new ideas by letting people try new things, and makes the best use of limited resources, which helps them grow into new markets. This is especially important for small and medium companies that want to break into foreign markets, where competition is high and old-fashioned marketing methods might not work (Seyyedamiri & Faghieh, 2015). small and medium companies can create flexible business models that help them grow across borders and improve their global market presence by using entrepreneurial marketing methods.

Additionally, real-world studies show that small and medium companies that use entrepreneurial marketing strategies have better brand positioning, faster growth rates, and better customer engagement than those that use traditional marketing methods (Hills et al., 2008). Entrepreneurial marketing encourages new ideas, trials, and constant growth, which helps small and medium companies improve their marketing and make the best use of their resources for the greatest effect (Kraus et al., 2019).

Finally, Entrepreneurial Marketing is a very important part of helping small and medium companies grow. small and medium companies can handle challenges, stay ahead of the competition, and grow over the long term by being strategically flexible, innovative, and sensitive to the market. Using Entrepreneurial Marketing ideas in small and medium companies' plans not only makes them more resilient in unstable market conditions, but it also sets them up for long-term success in a business world that is becoming more and more competitive.

- Competitive Advantage

The present research emphasizes the importance of Entrepreneurial Marketing in improving the competitiveness of small and medium companies. Entrepreneurial marketing allows SMEs to differentiate themselves from competition by using unique, value-driven, and innovative marketing tactics that are tailored to their limited resources and changing market conditions (Adel et al., 2020). Given growing competition and fast market shifts, SMEs that include entrepreneurial marketing into their business strategy are better positioned to attain long-term competitive advantages.

According to Shahmohammadi (2022), using an Entrepreneurial Marketing strategy enables SMEs to leverage their agility, customer-centricity, and innovative approaches to create unique value offerings. By doing so, SMEs can carve out competitive niches within the larger market, improving their market positioning. The capacity to quickly recognize and capitalize on market opportunities allows these businesses to establish a solid presence in their respective industries, especially in highly competitive and resource-constrained contexts.

Musneh et al. (2021) back up this claim by demonstrating that key Entrepreneurial Marketing dimensions—such as proactiveness, opportunity focus, customer intensity, and resource leveraging—are significantly correlated with a SME's ability to achieve competitive advantage. By developing these skills, SMEs may quickly adjust to changing market conditions, capitalize on new possibilities, and

efficiently maximize their limited resources to surpass competitors. This adaptability is especially useful in businesses marked by high unpredictability and disruptive innovation, where standard marketing methods may fail.

Furthermore, the resource-based view (RBV) theory offers an appealing framework for comprehending the significance of Entrepreneurial Marketing in SME competitiveness. According to Amadasun and Mutezo (2022), the RBV emphasizes the necessity of exploiting distinctive, valuable, and unique resources to generate a long-term competitive advantage. Entrepreneurial Marketing corresponds with this theoretical perspective by allowing SMEs to create and use distinctive marketing-related competencies such as brand storytelling, guerilla marketing, and experiential marketing, which are difficult for competitors to reproduce. These specific talents enable SMEs to build long-term client connections and nurture brand loyalty, strengthening their competitive advantage (Kraus et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Quaye and Mensah (2018) found that Entrepreneurial Marketing encourages an experimentation-driven culture among SMEs, enabling them to test novel marketing tactics and adapt their plans based on real-time market feedback. This iterative process of learning and adaptation keeps SMEs nimble and sensitive to changing consumer behaviors, technical breakthroughs, and industry trends. As a result, adaptability is an important differentiator for SMEs, allowing them to maintain a competitive advantage over larger, more rigid competitors.

Hills et al. (2008) highlight the importance of entrepreneurial marketing in relationship marketing, stating that SMEs that focus on individualized customer engagement and strategic networking outperform competitors in terms of customer retention and brand identification. By combining direct connections, social media participation, and community-based marketing, SMEs can build a devoted client base, providing a significant competitive advantage in congested markets.

Furthermore, in recent years, digital transformation has had a considerable impact on the performance of company management. According to Pulley (2020), SMEs that incorporate digital marketing tools into their Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies, such as data analytics, AI-driven personalization, and content marketing, can gain a significant competitive advantage by improving customer insights, optimizing marketing efforts, and increasing engagement. This digital-first approach strengthens SMEs' capacity to compete against larger firms with more resources.

Finally, Entrepreneurial Marketing is critical to strengthening SMEs' competitive advantage. By embracing agility, client intimacy, innovation, and strategic resource use, SMEs can develop a distinct market position and achieve long-term success. The dynamic nature of EM guarantees that SMEs remain competitive in an ever-changing business landscape, bolstering their ability to survive despite resource constraints and market uncertainties.

Chapter Three: Methodology of Research

This study will employ a qualitative research approach to comprehensively fulfill the pertinent research objectives via Atlas.ti software. Extensive in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain detailed insights into the research questions.

Qualitative research methods can be used to acquire a better understanding of the examined gaps and to expose the subtle dynamics of entrepreneurial marketing in the context of small and medium companies. (Piperopoulos, 2010)

Qualitative methods, such in-depth interviews and case studies, can provide valuable insights into the complicated and contextual nature of marketing activities in small and medium companies. (Franco et al., 2014)

This method can assist in gathering the viewpoints and real-life experiences of SME owners and managers, enabling a more detailed and in-context investigation of the elements that impact the adoption and implementation of marketing strategies for entrepreneurship. In addition, qualitative research can provide insight into the underlying motivations, decision-making processes, and organizational culture that define the entrepreneurial marketing mindset within small and medium companies. (Edwina & Wahdiniwaty, 2020)

The researcher can gain a better understanding of how entrepreneurial marketing interacts with other organizational competencies and how

impactful factors influence its expression in different situations by examining the qualitative features of this phenomena. They can also learn more about how other factors, including industry dynamics, technological changes, and the regulatory environment, influence the adoption and exercise of entrepreneurial marketing. (Alqahtani & Uslay, 2018) Moreover, qualitative research facilitates the identification of innovative marketing techniques and tactics employed by small and medium companies to effectively address market challenges and capitalize on opportunities, underscoring their creativity and resilience. (Gáti & Bauer, 2019).

A qualitative research approach can be especially helpful in addressing these gaps since it can provide a wealth of information about the intricacies of the nature of marketing activities in small and medium companies and offer real-life experiences from various different perspectives to allow for a more inclusive outlook and enable the derivation of viable recommendations for relative stakeholders. (Gáti & Bauer, 2019)

3.1 Participation Selection

Participant selection criteria encompassed 10 persons between SME owners, managers, and marketing executives possessing a minimum of 5 years of pertinent experience in their respective positions. Participants were chosen from a variety of small and medium companies spanning multiple industries to guarantee thorough representation of the target demographic.

- Sampling Method: Purposive Sampling

The research utilizes a purposive sample method to choose participants. This non-probability sampling technique enables the researcher to intentionally select individuals with the requisite expertise and insights to effectively address the research questions. (Stratton, 2023) Purposeful sampling intentionally selects individuals or groups with extensive knowledge or experience with the topic under investigation, making the best use of limited resources (Palinkas et al., 2013; Setia, 2016).

- Approaching Participants

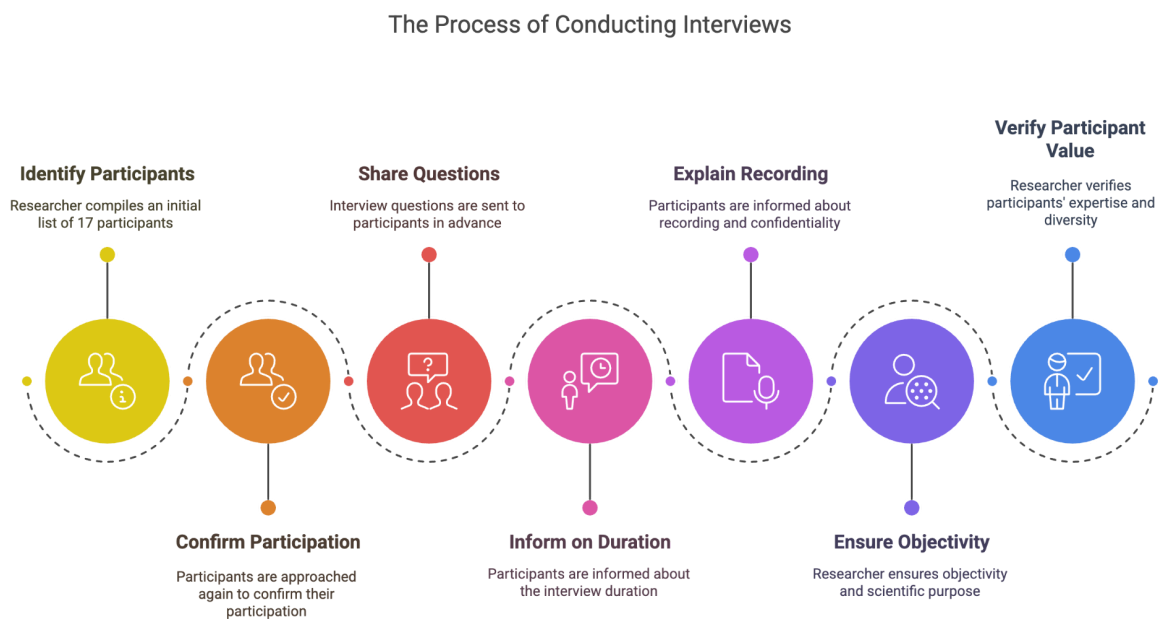


Figure (5) *The steps of the process of conducting interviews*

Figure (5) illustrates the structured process of conducting interviews, as developed by the researcher. The process consists of six key stages, ensuring a systematic and objective approach to gathering qualitative data. The steps are detailed as follows:

- 1) The researcher approached the shortlisted participants' list which included 17 participants initially, most of which were welcoming and agreed to participate, yet the number was minimized due to scheduling constraints where some of the participants were fully occupied during the period designated to run the interviews.
- 2) The final list of participants were approached again to confirm the scheduled meetings.
- 3) Interview questions were shared with interviewees beforehand to prepare and be well acquainted with the research's main discussion points so as to make the best out of the interview duration.
- 4) Participants were also informed that the average duration of the interview would be around 30 minutes to 1 hour, which they did not mind.
- 5) The researcher informed the participants that the interview will be recorded and the raw transcripts of the discussion will be used in the analysis, and that the confidentiality of their information will be maintained by using the transcription for research purposes only. And their consent on that was confirmed.

Interviewees were also informed that the purpose of the interview was to conduct research for preparing this result and that the interviewer does not have any personal interests in their contribution other than scientific research so as to collect honest and objective feedback.

- 6) Since the researcher herself is a marketing practitioner in the mid level of her career, she is present within business communities in Bahrain and was able to reach participants who she verified would have the most valuable input for the study. She also made sure that the participants cover contrasting realms in marketing and were well informed about the research topic so as to have hands-on knowledge and expertise to share.

3.2 Sample Size & Rationale

In qualitative research, choosing an optimal sample size necessitates a careful balance of depth and breadth. The sample size must be small enough to allow for in-depth study and analysis, yet large enough to allow patterns and varied views to emerge (Jones et al., 2020). As White (2022) notes, the scale of the study has a substantial impact on sample size. For smaller research, 6 to 10 participants are typically regarded as adequate, as this range allows for manageable data processing while also allowing for the detection of relevant trends and themes.

For this study, a sample size of 10 participants was purposely chosen using a maximum variation sampling method. This technique ensures the inclusion of individuals from various backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, broadening the analysis and increasing the credibility of the conclusions (Shi et al., 2023). Maximum variation sampling is particularly useful in qualitative research since it allows for a thorough study of the topic, collecting the complete range of perspectives and experiences relevant to entrepreneurial marketing in Bahraini SMEs.

- Theoretical Saturation and Justification of Sample Size

Theoretical saturation is a fundamental notion that guides the calculation of qualitative sample sizes—the point at which additional data collection no longer offers new insights or significantly contributes to the research objectives (Vidhi, 2021). While theoretical saturation is commonly seen as a measure of completeness, it is not an absolute boundary. In many circumstances, extra data gathering can yield fresh and unexpected insights, highlighting the complexities of qualitative research.

The sample size of ten participants was chosen with the idea that it would give significant heterogeneity in replies while also allowing for a thorough, nuanced understanding of entrepreneurial marketing techniques among Bahraini SMEs. The researcher stayed alert to the formation of themes during the data collection process, determining whether additional interviews were required to reach saturation. Given the study's emphasis, it was concluded that the data acquired from these ten participants was sufficiently rich and comprehensive to successfully meet the research objectives.

- Limitations of Sampling Strategy

While this study gives useful insights into entrepreneurial marketing methods among Bahraini SMEs, some limitations must be addressed.

- Regional Focus: Because the study only looks at Bahraini SMEs, the results may not be immediately applicable to SMEs operating in other locations or industries. Bahrain's distinctive economic, cultural, and legal environment may influence entrepreneurial

marketing methods in ways that are distinct from other environments. Future research should include comparable investigations in other regions to evaluate the findings' relevance outside Bahrain.

- **Industry-Specific Considerations:** Although the participating SMEs come from a number of industries, the sample may not reflect the complete spectrum of challenges and strategies used in all industries. Entrepreneurial marketing strategies can range dramatically across industries with varied market structures, customer behaviors, and competitive dynamics.
- **Constraints on Sample Size:** While 10 participants were sufficient to achieve topic saturation, a higher sample size may have resulted in more diverse replies. Future study could include increasing the sample size to include more SMEs or using longitudinal approaches to examine changes in marketing strategy over time.

The choice of ten participants was influenced by methodological concerns such as the necessity for depth of insight, diversity of experiences, and theoretical saturation. The use of maximum variation sampling guaranteed that the study included a diverse variety of perspectives, which enriched the qualitative analysis. While the study's findings contribute significantly to understanding entrepreneurial marketing in Bahraini SMEs, future research should include broader comparative studies to improve the generalizability and applicability of these insights across diverse geographies and industries.

3.3 Research Instrument

Semi-structured interviews are a popular qualitative research approach that combines flexibility and consistency, allowing researchers to investigate participants' perspectives while adhering to a formal framework (Bryman, 2016). Unlike completely structured interviews, which follow a tight series of planned questions, semi-structured interviews allow for open-ended talks, allowing researchers to delve deeper into certain issues as they arise during the conversation (Kallio et al., 2016).

This strategy is especially useful in exploratory investigations, where in-depth understanding of participants' viewpoints is critical (Dearnley, 2005). According to Galletta (2013), semi-structured interviews allow for a dynamic interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee, resulting in rich data collection that can capture complex responses. They also allow for customization based on the participant's skills, experiences, and emerging themes, making them appropriate for research on complex topics (Adams, 2015).

In this study, semi-structured interviews are used to collect information from participants about their experiences and viewpoints on the research issue. This approach's flexibility guarantees that, while vital themes are covered, participants are also encouraged to elaborate on areas that they believe are particularly important. This increases the depth of the findings while ensuring consistency among interviews (King, 2004).

The research aims to obtain comprehensive qualitative data that contributes to a deeper understanding of Growth and Competitiveness in

SMEs, supported by Entrepreneurial Marketing, while adhering to best practices in qualitative research methodology (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

- Interview Questions

The research questionnaire comprises five sections. The demographics portion, which aims to portray the variety of participant's backgrounds which may influence their input, the questions are listed in (Appendix 2). The responses to these inquiries are documented in the participant profiles (Appendix 1) with brief categorization of the participants demographics, followed by interview excerpts.

The second section aims to give a glimpse about Entrepreneurial Marketing to make sure the participants are warmed up and ready to delve deeper into the topic.

The third section aims to explore the effect of Entrepreneurial Marketing on SME growth as the first main pillar of this research. The participants were allowed to add any relevant answers/discussion and explorative on-spot questions were asked to extract any additional information that would fortify the topic.

The fourth section aims to explore the effect of Entrepreneurial Marketing on SME competitiveness as the second main pillar of this research. The participants were also allowed to add any relevant answers/discussion and explorative on-spot questions were asked to extract any additional information that would fortify the topic.

The fifth section aims to give the participants the opportunity to make any additional comments that were not covered in the previous sections while discussing the notion of challenges and opportunities brought about by Entrepreneurial Marketing for SMEs. It is followed by a closing question offering the participants the opportunity to make any comments relevant to the topic of the research, to give suggestions and further explorations.

- Interview Process

To guarantee flexibility and accessibility, interviews were conducted by telephone or online platforms, namely Zoom or Google Meet. The selected platforms were chosen for their dependability, security features, and accessibility, enabling participants' comfortable engagement in the interview process.

- Interview Structure and Question Design

The interviews employed a semi-structured structure, providing a balance between consistency and flexibility. A predetermined set of open-ended questions steered the dialogue, assuring consistency with the study aims while allowing participants the liberty to expand on their experiences. The questions were formulated to encompass essential aspects pertaining to entrepreneurial marketing inside small and medium companies, including:

- General perceptions of entrepreneurial marketing
- Challenges encountered in executing marketing strategy

- Strategies and approaches employed to improve competitiveness & growth
- Perceived influence of marketing strategies on company growth & competitiveness

This semi-structured methodology ensured that all participants engaged with common themes, enabling comparative analysis, while also permitting spontaneous insights to arise from their distinct experiences.

- Data Collection

To protect confidentiality and ensure the integrity of replies, all interviews were recorded audibly with an external device. This approach mitigated the risk of data breaches while maintaining the accuracy of the participants' replies.

Subsequent to each interview, the recordings were transcribed using transcription software, followed by manual verification to ensure correctness. The transcripts were verified against the source recordings to fix transcription mistakes and guarantee accuracy in representing participants' replies. Furthermore, ethical measures were implemented to safeguard participant identities, encompassing data anonymisation and the secure storage of recorded files.

- Data Processing and Analysis

Upon transcription, the interview data underwent a systematic evaluation to determine its readiness for analysis. The transcripts were meticulously

examined, encoded, and classified based on established themes. The investigation utilised Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis software, to identify patterns, correlations, and emergent themes within the data.

The approach promotes transparency and scientific rigour by offering a comprehensive breakdown of the interview process, which includes structure, question design, recording methods, transcription verification, and data analysis, so guaranteeing the findings are reliable and ethically appropriate.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

This research prioritized ethical integrity, which necessitated the implementation of critical ethical standards, including:

- Informed Consent: Participants were required to provide written or verbal consent prior to participating, which guaranteed their voluntary engagement.
- Transcripts were securely stored and are only accessible to the researcher, and data was anonymized.
- Data Security: To guarantee adherence to data protection regulations, digital recordings and transcripts were encrypted and stored on a password-protected device. The softwares and technology used to collect and analyze data was proven to be free of any malpractices regarding the disposal of data such as data breaches and security issues.
- Minimizing Bias: The researcher employed triangulation to cross-check interpretations and adopted a neutral stance, thereby reducing the risk of subjectivity.

Chapter Four: Results, Discussion and Recommendations

This chapter examines the key themes derived from the qualitative data analysis, emphasising the implementation of Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies by SMEs in Bahrain, the challenges they face, and the perceived effects of these strategies on company growth and competitiveness.

The results are organised based on the principal themes detected throughout the data analysis process, including:

- Comprehension of Entrepreneurial Marketing - Participants' views on Entrepreneurial Marketing and its significance in SME operations.
- Challenges in Entrepreneurial Marketing - The impediments SMEs encounter in executing Entrepreneurial marketing plans, include financial constraints and market fluctuations.
- Tactics and Strategies - the innovative strategies SMEs utilise to augment their marketing initiatives, encompassing teamwork, innovation, and the utilisation of digital resources.
- Competitive Advantage - The role of Entrepreneurial marketing in business differentiation, consumer engagement, and overall market positioning.

- Company Growth Potential — The degree to which entrepreneurial marketing initiatives promote scalability and lasting company sustainability.

This chapter offers empirical evidence to clarify the significance of Entrepreneurial Marketing in the development of SMEs. The study focuses on Bahraini SMEs, providing insights into their navigation of marketing issues within a dynamic and competitive landscape. Moreover, the findings enhance the overarching discussion on Entrepreneurial Marketing theory, either supporting or contesting current literature and pinpointing prospective directions for additional study.

The subsequent sections outline each theme area, incorporating participant viewpoints, principal patterns, and supporting data to provide an in-depth understanding of the study's results.

4.1 Data Analysis

To provide a rigorous and systematic study of the interview data, the researcher used Atlas.ti, a popular qualitative data analysis software, for coding, theme identification, and interpretation. Initially, all interview data collected from participants' responses to each topic were transcribed verbatim to maintain the authenticity of their experiences and viewpoints. Verbatim transcription is critical in qualitative research because it ensures data integrity and accurately represents participant voices (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

After transcription, the researcher carefully evaluated the transcripts for quality and consistency, ensuring that the recorded responses accurately mirrored the participants' remarks. This initial stage was critical for becoming acquainted with the data, allowing the researcher to gain an idea of emerging themes before formal coding began. After the transcripts were checked, coding categories and subcategories were methodically constructed to match with the study's research objectives.

- The Descriptive Analysis Approach

The study used descriptive analysis procedures, which include methodically summarizing qualitative data based on preset themes (Miles et al., 2020). This approach is especially beneficial for exploratory research since it allows for a thorough exploration of participants' perspectives while remaining flexible in recognizing emergent themes.

A four-step qualitative data analysis framework was used to structure the analytical process while guaranteeing rigor and consistency. The steps included the following:

Step 1: Initial Coding: Identifying Resonating Codes

The first process entailed selecting meaning units, which are discrete parts of text that capture essential concepts or replies related to the research questions. These meaning units were coded to make them easier to organize and retrieve. Saldaña (2021) describes an inductive coding

approach that derives codes directly from data rather than imposing pre-existing theoretical structures.

A sample of the generated codes comprised the following:

- Entrepreneurial Marketing Challenges
- Financial constraints
- Market fluctuations
- Entrepreneurial marketing strategies
- Collaborations
- Creativity
- Unique customer experience
- Entrepreneurial marketing techniques
- Digital Marketing Tools
- Consumer insight mechanisms
- SME competitiveness
- Competitive Positioning
- Brand differentiation
- SME growth
- Expansion Strategies

Each of these codes contributed significantly to the study's understanding of how entrepreneurial marketing promotes SME growth and competitiveness.

Step 2: Categorizing Codes into Themes

After the first coding was done, relevant codes were carefully organized into bigger categories to capture underlying themes. The categorization approach entailed combining conceptually comparable codes while ensuring that each category had distinct and meaningful bounds (Guest et al., 2012).

The main categories that developed were:

- Opinions on Entrepreneurial Marketing - This category gathered interviewees' perspectives on entrepreneurial marketing as a practice, including how they describe and comprehend its role in SME success.
- SME Challenges - Identifying the major challenges that SMEs encounter, such as resource restrictions, market instability, and industry-specific impediments.
- Entrepreneurial marketing strategies include a variety of strategic approaches used by SMEs, including digital marketing, networking, and client involvement.
- SME Competitiveness - Investigating how entrepreneurial marketing leads to a competitive edge, including insights into differentiation and market positioning.
- SME Growth - Investigating the perceived and actual effects of entrepreneurial marketing on business growth and sustainability.

Each category provided a systematic framework for examining participant responses, providing for a more detailed understanding of the interwoven facets of entrepreneurial marketing.

Step 3: Thematic analysis and interpretation.

After categorizing the codes, a thematic analysis was carried out to uncover patterns, correlations, and deeper meanings in the data (Nowell et al., 2017). This process entailed assessing the significance of each category, connecting themes, and evaluating how they collectively addressed the study questions.

For example, a recurring theme developed connecting entrepreneurial marketing approaches to SME competitiveness, with participants commonly naming inventiveness, strategic collaborations, and customer engagement as critical determinants in business success. Furthermore, resource restrictions were constantly identified as a concern, emphasizing the importance for SMEs to implement cost-effective marketing tactics in order to sustain growth.

Iterative comparison analysis was used to refine patterns and investigate data discrepancies. This helped ensure that the conclusions appropriately reflected the intricacies of entrepreneurial marketing in SMEs, rather than being too simplified.

Step 4: Visual representation and thematic mapping

To improve the clarity of the analysis, Atlas.ti was used to generate illustrative charts, figures, and themed maps. These graphic tools gave an organized overview of the relationships between various topics, which aided in the comprehension of complex results.

For example:

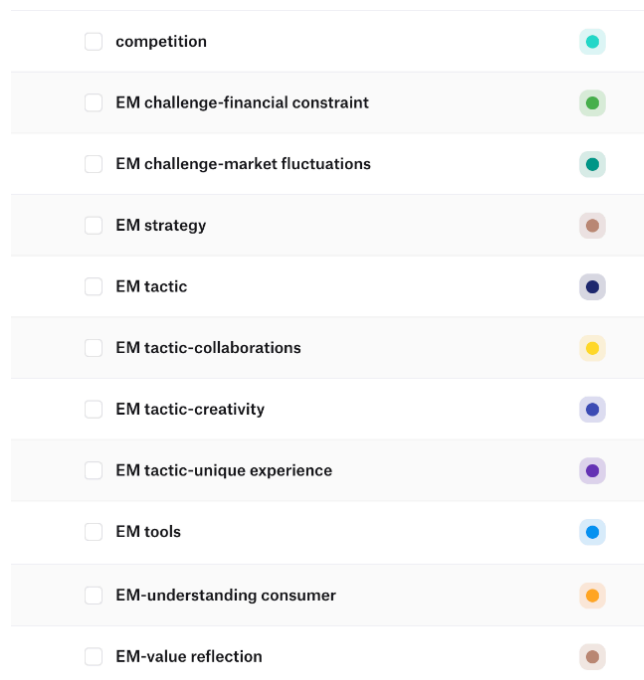


Figure (6) shows the initial list of codes extracted from participant responses.

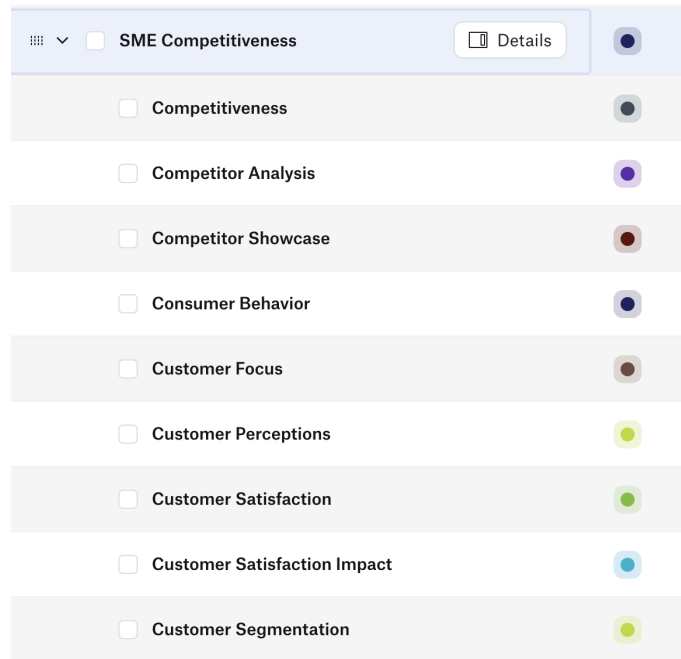


Figure (9) depicts how SMEs assess entrepreneurial marketing's impact on competitiveness.

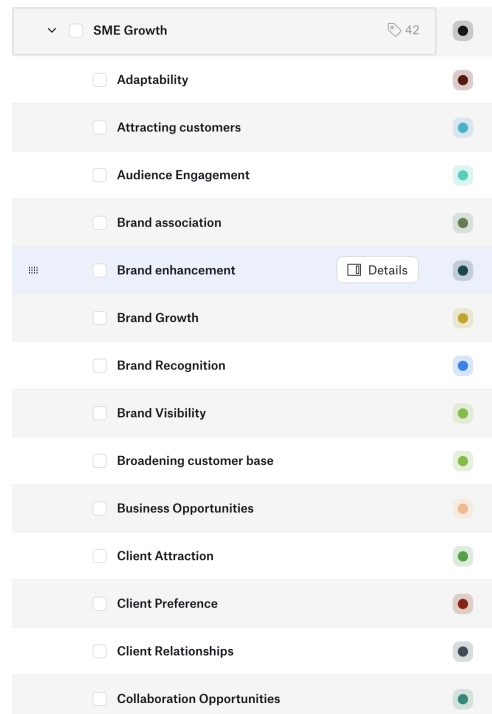


Figure (10) investigates the role of entrepreneurial marketing in SME growth.

The use of thematic mapping enabled a hierarchical representation of topics, making it easier to see the connections between entrepreneurial marketing methods, SME competitiveness, and growth potential.

In summary, the four-step qualitative data analysis paradigm allowed for a systematic and rigorous approach to evaluating interview data. Atlas.ti was used to undertake successful descriptive and thematic analysis, allowing the identification of relevant patterns and insights. The outcomes from this approach provide a thorough idea of how SMEs overcome entrepreneurial marketing challenges, implement strategies, and utilize competitive advantages to achieve long-term growth.

The following section will show the comprehensive findings of this investigation, demonstrating how entrepreneurial marketing affects SME performance in a variety of industry scenarios.

4.2 Findings

Theme	Findings
SME Stance on Entrepreneurial Marketing	• Diverse viewpoints regarding the implementation of entrepreneurial marketing. • Traditional mindsets or a lack of comprehension are the reasons why certain small and medium-sized companies hesitate. • Acceptance is influenced by age demographics, with younger entrepreneurs being more receptive. • Some small and medium companies implement entrepreneurial marketing without their knowledge as a component of trends.
SME Challenges and Entrepreneurial Marketing's Role	• Financial Constraint: Small and medium companies are compelled to optimize their resources due to their restricted budgets. • Market Fluctuations: Entrepreneurial Marketing assists businesses in maintaining their adaptability and agility. • Data Restrictions: The absence of dependable data complicates the process of making strategic decisions. • An effective entrepreneurial marketing strategy necessitates a structured approach. • Customer-centricity: Personalized marketing strategies facilitate audience engagement. • Innovation: Competitiveness and differentiation are improved by creativity. • Value Proposition Establishment: The establishment of a strong perceived value is essential for the success of any business.
Entrepreneurial Marketing's Effect on Growth and Competitive Advantage	• Improved business growth, including revenue, team expansion, and penetration of new markets. • Assisted in the recovery of companies that were experiencing financial difficulties. • Enhanced competition in saturated markets. • Improved brand recognition and differentiation. • Facilitated market entry into industries that are dominated by significant players.

Table (1) A summary of the emerging themes and key findings

Table (1) presents an overview of the emergent themes and main results from this study, outlining SME views, challenges, and the impact of Entrepreneurial Marketing. The researcher created this table to classify the data into three principal themes:

SMEs Stance on Entrepreneurial Marketing - This section emphasises the varied perspectives among SMEs over the adoption of entrepreneurial marketing, including aspects influencing acceptance, such as age demographics and conventional mindsets. Some SMEs integrate entrepreneurial marketing strategies unconsciously as part of broader marketing trends.

Challenges Faced by SMEs and the Role of Entrepreneurial Marketing

The research defines significant challenges encountered by SMEs, including financial restrictions, market volatility, and data deficiencies, which affect decision-making and strategic formulation. It establishes how entrepreneurial marketing enhances customer connection, fosters innovation, and establishes value propositions, assisting SMEs in overcoming these challenges.

The Impact of Entrepreneurial Marketing on Growth and Competitive Advantage - The results demonstrate that entrepreneurial marketing fosters company growth, market penetration, and brand visibility, while simultaneously improving competitiveness in saturated markets. It furthermore aids struggling companies in their recovery and enables SMEs to penetrate sectors dominated by larger entities.

Table (1) systematically organises the data into structured themes, providing a clear representation of the study's important insights and

enhancing the understanding of how Entrepreneurial Marketing impacts SME success.

4.2 Findings

In this results chapter, the researcher will set out the study objectives and provide the particular data obtained and evaluated in relation to the previously examined literature from the perspective of the interview findings. This will allow the author to determine if the study objectives have been met.

The analysis done was aimed at verifying the existence of resemblances to the literature reviewed at the early chapters of the study. The analysis emphasized looking for answers to research questions and also any additional input from study participants that would further complement the research objectives.

Regarding the analysis of the answers to the research questions via Atlas.ti, a code list was generated and the codes fell under three main themes: (1) SME stance on Entrepreneurial Marketing, (2) SME challenges and how Entrepreneurial Marketing helped navigate them, (3) Entrepreneurial Marketing effect on growth potential and competitive advantage.

For the purpose of facilitating the demonstration of findings using excerpts from the interviews conducted, study participants will be allocated codes that will refer to their contribution within the text. Based on the order of interview transcriptions in Appendix (B), participants will

be given the alpha (P), short for participant, in addition to a number corresponding to the order of their interview; ie (P1).

- SME Stance on Entrepreneurial Marketing

Participants in the survey had varying perspectives on SMEs' attitudes towards Entrepreneurial Marketing implementation. While the literature firmly supports the idea that Entrepreneurial Marketing is an important business characteristic for SMEs (Gilmore, 2011; Jones & Rowley, 2011), the study findings show that some businesses are hesitant and resistant to it. This hesitation indicates that, despite the proven benefits of Entrepreneurial Marketing, such as flexibility, creativity, and resource optimisation, some organisations are hesitant to completely embrace its concepts.

Some of this reluctance is explained by practical issues. Participants, for example, identified constraints such as a lack of internal experience in entrepreneurial marketing strategies, insufficient financial resources to experiment with unusual marketing tactics, and uncertainty about the return on investment (ROI) of applying innovative approaches. These concerns are consistent with previous research, which shows that SMEs frequently struggle with the risk-taking and innovation-driven character of Entrepreneurial Marketing owing to budgetary restrictions and a lack of specialised marketing skills (Chaston, 2016).

Furthermore, some SMEs still rely on traditional marketing strategies, preferring steady, predictable strategies to dynamic, fast shifting entrepreneurial approaches. This opposition may be due to business

culture, leadership style, or a concern of losing control of brand message when transitioning to digital, experiential, or guerilla marketing strategies (Eggers et al., 2020). SME owners, in particular, who have little experience with digital transformation may struggle to implement real-time, data-driven marketing techniques, despite their success.

However, in several situations, the data did not provide a clear explanation for this resistance. Some SME owners voiced doubts about whether Entrepreneurial Marketing is compatible with their company models, implying a potential knowledge gap or mismatch between their strategic vision and the actual use of entrepreneurial marketing strategies. Future study should look at the underlying psychological and structural constraints that hinder SMEs from completely adopting Entrepreneurial Marketing. Understanding these variables can aid in the development of specialised training programs, industry collaborations, and legislative initiatives to assist SMEs in making a more seamless shift to an entrepreneurial marketing attitude.

By tackling these difficulties, SMEs may seize new development possibilities and maintain their competitiveness in changing markets. Further research into how SMEs might blend traditional and entrepreneurial marketing strategies could give further insight into overcoming opposition while maximising strategic flexibility.

For example, P1 Stated that: “To be honest, we’re still conservative with our advertising.” without giving further explanation as to why their marketing approach has not been developed. It is worth noting that in some of the interviews, the interviewee explicitly stated that they’re using entrepreneurial marketing strategies yet at the core level they were

unaware of that, they used these strategies only because they have become commonly used and preferred by their targeted audience.

On the other hand, P3 commented: “There’s still a gap. Many businesses are still relying on traditional forms of marketing. While digital marketing is growing, there’s a need for businesses to understand how to leverage digital tools effectively. For us, it’s a new space, and we’re working on improving our digital presence to attract clients globally.” In this case, although the SME can see from some examples in their respective niches that many players are lagging on the implementation of Entrepreneurial Marketing practices, P3 does confirm that this setback has put it behind, and that it has to compensate in order to realize their full potential in the light of their business goals and targeted audiences.

Moreover, P4 added: “First, it goes back to the mentality. I’ve noticed that they don’t believe in it. They don’t believe a small amount invested in marketing can yield results. Some might be starting to believe it after seeing everyone else go into digital marketing or TikTok, for example. Baby boomers might not understand it—they think if you just say “TikTok,” that’s it. But I think most of them are baby boomers. When I worked with SMEs, especially at the start, they weren’t convinced. They wanted everything to be organic. They didn’t see the value in paying for ads.” This participant introduced an element that influences the SME acceptance of Entrepreneurial Marketing, which is the age demographic.

The mindset of leaders and managers of SMEs has a major impact on the implementation of Entrepreneurial Marketing practices. Since many of these practices are linked to technology, social media platforms and quick

trends, some age demographics may refrain from adapting to these practices due to their pertinence to youth more profoundly.

Another participant, P5, also reiterated the same idea that management ideology highly affected the SME's pursuit of Entrepreneurial Marketing.

P5 also added that: "There is a lack of understanding about the actual effectiveness of marketing, especially in more traditional sectors that are less familiar with the dynamics of online platforms." This supports the earlier statement of P3 who mentioned that due to the SME operating in a certain niche or offering services which are not commonly promoted using Entrepreneurial Marketing, this results in the SME falling behind on this practice. P5 also mentioned that: "and many people just don't feel the need for social media, especially for service-based businesses or B2B services." which conforms with the current conclusion.

P8, from another angle, stated: "When I first introduce the concept of entrepreneurial marketing, people don't usually understand what it is. They know that social media plays a major role in visibility and results, but they don't necessarily make the connection between entrepreneurial marketing and consumer engagement." This means that in some cases, the reason behind SMEs being reluctant in applying Entrepreneurial Marketing practices is because they are simply unaware of what it actually is, be it due to lack of knowledge or due to not being familiar with a clear definition for Entrepreneurial Marketing, rendering confusion due to the interconnections between marketing nuances.

P5 then comments that: "When I first introduce the concept of entrepreneurial marketing, people don't usually understand what it is.

They know that social media plays a major role in visibility and results, but they don't necessarily make the connection between entrepreneurial marketing and consumer engagement." And they continue by saying, "especially in a market where many are unfamiliar with or skeptical about the value of a solid marketing plan." Another reason why some SMEs or SMEs heads are discouraged from adopting Entrepreneurial Marketing practices in their entirety is that they might be unaware of their implications on their business. Another case is that these SMEs might have had previous unstructured or random Entrepreneurial Marketing approaches which fell short from yielding anticipated results.

In contrast, P10 argues that: "It's an old mindset to think that marketing is optional. It's become essential now." They also state that: "It's important to recognize that some businesses succeed because of their presence on social media." Unlike the perspectives shared above, this statement forms a solid confirmation that Entrepreneurial Marketing is definitely a major contributor to an SMEs success.

- SME Challenges And How Entrepreneurial Marketing Helped Navigate Them

- Financial Constraint

One of the main challenges facing SMEs in the process of implementing Entrepreneurial Marketing is lack of funds, which is specifically what Entrepreneurial Marketing works on overcoming.

On that note, P2 comments: "despite the limited resources, I didn't plan to invest a lot in the marketing budget at the start. I just used what I had." It

is an essential part of the entrepreneur experience to utilize resources to their maximum potential, Which is what P4 confirmed by saying: “it’s not about rushing to spend money. It’s about using your resources wisely.”

P8 adds that: “Digital marketing helps us get the results we want with fewer costs, and that’s something that’s very important when you’re starting a business.” Meaning that even in the case of scarcity or absence of funds due to other business priorities, Entrepreneurial Marketing is still able to deliver results with minimal investment.

Digital platforms such as social media, search engine optimisation (SEO), and content marketing enable SMEs to communicate with customers, increase brand recognition, and drive sales without incurring significant financial costs (Kraus et al., 2019). This opinion is confirmed by research, which shows that digital marketing enables small and medium companies to access highly focused audiences at a fraction of the expense of traditional marketing strategies (Eggers et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the data indicate that SMEs who effectively employ Entrepreneurial Marketing see financial restrictions as an opportunity for innovation rather than a hindrance. Many entrepreneurs utilise their limited budgets to experiment with non-traditional marketing methods including viral marketing, influencer collaborations, and customer-driven brand advocacy. This indicates that Entrepreneurial Marketing is about using available resources strategically to generate maximum impact, not the amount of the budget.

While financial restrictions continue to be a key barrier for SMEs, Entrepreneurial Marketing gives a framework for efficiently navigating

these limitations. Future study might look at how different sectors implement Entrepreneurial Marketing in resource-constrained contexts, as well as long-term methods for SMEs to increase their marketing activities while remaining cost-effective.

- Market Fluctuations

Another complicated challenge SMEs face is the need to adopt an agile strategy that provides them robustness and resilience in the face of market turbulence. This is noted by P4 who stated: “The market today is different from tomorrow. So, it must move with the market exactly. That’s basically Entrepreneurial marketing.” P10 also added: “the biggest challenge is understanding the market. Many businesses try to copy strategies they’ve seen elsewhere, but you need to tailor it to your own audience.” These statements emphasize the vital role of entrepreneurial marketing in navigating market fluctuations.

The necessity for adaptability in entrepreneurial marketing is especially important at times of economic uncertainty or disaster, such as the COVID-19 epidemic. Several SMEs in the research described how they had to immediately pivot their marketing strategy, whether by switching to digital platforms, rebranding their products, or adapting their language to address evolving client needs. For example, one SME that previously relied on in-person client contacts was able to effectively adapt to digital marketing and remote service delivery, illustrating Entrepreneurial Marketing's resilience-building element.

This is consistent with the notion of adaptive marketing, which emphasises ongoing learning, experimentation, and strategic flexibility as

critical survival strategies for SMEs (Kraus et al., 2019). Successful entrepreneurial marketing requires not only a strategy, but also the willingness to adapt that plan in reaction to changing market realities. The capacity to pivot and innovate distinguishes successful SMEs from those that struggle to stay up with change.

Furthermore, the study discovered that collaborative marketing techniques have an important role in resilience building. SMEs that developed relationships with complementary businesses—for example, a wellness service provider collaborating with a fitness equipment supplier—were able to widen their reach and pool marketing resources, making them less exposed to unexpected market changes. This study confirms Eggers et al.'s (2020) claim that entrepreneurial collaboration promotes company sustainability by allowing enterprises to exploit each other's capabilities and client bases.

Finally, Entrepreneurial Marketing gives SMEs the agility, flexibility, and strategic foresight they need to successfully navigate turbulent markets. SMEs who embrace Entrepreneurial Marketing see volatility as an opportunity for innovation, consumer involvement, and long-term success.

- Data Limitations

This challenge received varying responses which reflected on the importance of utilizing scarce resources to create opportunities. P3 starts by saying that: “open data in the Gulf is limited. We’re not yet fully mature in terms of market research, and it can be difficult to gather data on specific gaps in the market. But for marketing, it’s difficult to find

solid data.” Which reflects a real struggle in supplying information that drives informed marketing decisions. P8 adds that: “Another challenge is collecting reliable data. For example, we don’t have a database of potential customers. We have to start from scratch, conducting research and testing to understand our audience. Running a full campaign can be time-consuming and requires a lot of trial and error.” This means that SMEs must take calculated risk inspired by the entrepreneurial mentality that helps them navigate uncertain experiences.

Beyond the scarcity of data, some participants raised a more serious issue: the underutilisation of accessible data owing to a lack of strategic thinking. As one attendee remarked, even when data is available, many SMEs fail to turn it into practical marketing plans. This represents a larger imbalance, not just in finances but also in strategic capacity, which, if addressed, has the potential to dramatically increase the success of SME marketing activities.

- Entrepreneurial Marketing Strategy

There was a general consensus in the participants’ responses and a notable emphasis on the notion of developing strategies that enable SMEs to implement marketing practices wisely and efficiently. While this remains an internal issue compared to other challenges facing SMEs in implementing Entrepreneurial Marketing, which are mostly external, it remains a vital angle of discussion.

All participants agreed that regardless of the Entrepreneurial Marketing endeavours being undertaken by an SME, if it is not paired with strategic insight, it will most definitely go to waste.

Strategy includes working on developing a solid business model, enhancing offering of products or services, and planning a strategic client-centric approach to market the offering. Strategy also involves maintaining both consistency and perseverance, as consistency yields long-term results and perseverance offers SMEs continuous marketing exercise which will cultivate experience, knowledge and skill.

In summary, strategy is parallel to the success of Entrepreneurial Marketing efforts.

- Customer-centricity

In a time characterized by an abundance of options in all aspects of life, creating a standout offering is challenging to SMEs in different industries and niches. In response to this challenge, and as evident from participant's responses, Entrepreneurial Marketing assists SMEs in creating close connections with targeted audiences which enables these SMEs to have access to receptive clients while using minimal resources. In this regard, P6 comments: "Marketing needs to be personalized, not one-size-fits-all. It's crucial to provide value and build trust with the audience. If you're not giving people an incentive to buy or engage, it won't matter how much money you spend."

On another note, P7 adds: "One of the key marketing features here is that there's no invasion of personal space. The advertisement exists, but the way it's presented makes the recipient engage with it voluntarily. It's not forced. This is one of the advantages of modern marketing techniques." This translates to a major advantage of Entrepreneurial Marketing, while

it can be used in disruptive approaches, it is still effective in making SMEs noticeable through a focus on creating and maintaining a close relationship with targeted audiences.

- Innovation

Innovation on its own is not considered a challenge as such that SMEs encounter, it is rather a necessity, as noted from participant's responses. Innovation is at base an advocate for Entrepreneurial Marketing, which highly affects how the SMEs' marketing practices are differentiated and perceived by their audience.

In this regard, P9 states: "As a marketer, it's important to be innovative and think outside the box. Sometimes a simple twist on an existing idea can be more effective than trying to invent something entirely new. The key is to communicate your value clearly." This means that due to saturation of concepts in the marketing realm, SMEs need to regenerate their approach constantly via implementing creativity. What makes creativity an impactful factor in achieving the success of Entrepreneurial Marketing endeavors is that it works on both the internal and external levels. SMEs are encouraged to adopt a creativity-inducing work environment that stimulates all stakeholders inside the entity to engage in creative thinking. This also reflects on employing creativity in promoting offerings and approaching designated audiences.

- Establishing Value Proposition

One of the main challenges SMEs face that bear a direct influence on competitiveness is the SMEs success in delivering the desired perceived

value to their audiences. P6 argues that: “if there’s no incentive to buy or engage with your service, then there’s no point.” This means that Entrepreneurial Marketing has a profound effect on delivering a perceived high value to the audience, otherwise the offering will be rendered useless.

In this context, P3 states: “It requires a lot of creativity. It’s about making them realize that this is the best option for them.” This means that creativity is a key aspect of Entrepreneurial Marketing that enables SMEs to manoeuvre the intricacies of their offering regardless of their industries and niches, enabling them to realize business goals.

- Entrepreneurial Marketing Effect On Growth Potential And Competitive Advantage

The primary goal of this study was to investigate and demonstrate the tangible influence of Entrepreneurial Marketing on the development potential and competitive advantage of small and medium companies (SMEs). Throughout the interviews, this subject emerged as one of the most prevalent and recurring, highlighting the importance of Entrepreneurial Marketing in defining the strategic orientations of SMEs. The thematic analysis found that both sub-themes — growth and competitiveness — emerged with almost similar frequency in participants' replies. This ruled out the researcher's initial premise that Entrepreneurial Marketing would have a greater affect on one dimension than the other. Instead, the data indicated a balanced and synergistic effect in which Entrepreneurial Marketing both supports corporate growth and increases competitive positioning.

- Growth Potential

When addressing growth, participants consistently and favourably stated that Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies had a meaningful, and often dramatic, impact on their companies. This was evident in a variety of growth metrics, including higher revenues, business development, team expansion, market diversification, and a rising client base (Participant 1, personal communication, January 2025; Participant 4, personal communication, January 2025). For several participants, Entrepreneurial Marketing served as both a promotional tool and a growth facilitator, opening up new channels and unlocking previously unreachable prospects.

Three participants made a particularly noteworthy observation, emphasising how Entrepreneurial Marketing had helped revive declining or struggling businesses (Participant 3, personal communication, January 2025; Participant 5, personal communication, January 2025; Participant 9, personal communication, January 2025). These participants highlighted incidents in which companies were on the verge of closing owing to weak revenues, declining market share, or insufficient consumer involvement. By implementing Entrepreneurial Marketing tactics characterised by agility, inventiveness, and customer-centric approaches, these organisations were able to reposition themselves in the market, re-establish relationships with their target audience, and return from the verge of failure. This shows that the influence of Entrepreneurial Marketing extends beyond standard development patterns; it may also act as a lifeline for companies suffering adversity and without the financial or operational capacity to recover through traditional ways.

- Competitive advantage.

The second significant dimension investigated in this subject was competitiveness. Participants shared valuable insights on how Entrepreneurial Marketing initiatives helped them achieve, preserve, or restore competitive advantages in their businesses. Several important characteristics of competitiveness were highlighted:

1. Compete in Saturated Niches

Participants agreed that Entrepreneurial Marketing was critical to making their firms stand out in highly competitive and crowded marketplaces. In industries where many players compete for limited consumer attention, Entrepreneurial Marketing's emphasis on innovative, creative, and personalised strategies helped these SMEs differentiate themselves and build stronger relationships with their audiences (Participant 2, personal communication, January 2025; Participant 6, personal communication, January 2025). This distinction resulted in increased client reach, engagement rates, and customer retention.

2. Promoting intangible offerings

Participants in service-based sectors reported difficulties expressing the value of intangible offerings. Traditional marketing tactics sometimes fell short of communicating the distinctiveness or additional value of services. However, participants from four different service niches reported that Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies enabled them to introduce their services in a clear, impactful, and relatable manner. They were able to clarify their unique selling propositions, improve their reputation, and, eventually, grow their market share by using narrative, personalised content, and direct consumer interactions.

3. Creating market presence, brand recognition, and differentiation

In an age of information overload and hyper-competition, SMEs have a powerful job in creating a recognisable and distinct brand identity. Two participants discussed how Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies helped them stand apart, especially in crowded sectors where clients are bombarded with advertising information on a regular basis. One participant, a company entrepreneur, discussed how Entrepreneurial Marketing activities helped them establish a strong market position early on, laying the groundwork for rapid expansion. These firms were able to establish a recognisable brand presence and differentiate themselves from competition by utilising new digital technologies, smart content, and real connection.

4. Challenge Dominant Market Players

Finally, participants discussed how Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies helped SMEs challenge and disrupt markets dominated by big companies or monopolies. Two participants described how Entrepreneurial Marketing enabled them to strategically manoeuvre inside marketplaces formerly controlled by established rivals (Participant 2, personal communication, January 2025; Participant 9, personal communication, January 2025). While increasing market share in such conditions necessitated significant work and money, Entrepreneurial Marketing played a critical role in changing market dynamics. Through unconventional methods, inventive advertising, and focused outreach, these SMEs were able to carve out market space and progressively transform the competitive environment in their favour.

Summary

Overall, the data clearly show that Entrepreneurial Marketing has a significant and multidimensional influence on SME success. It not only promotes corporate growth (as measured by revenue, market expansion, and organisational development), but it also considerably improves competitiveness by allowing companies to stand out, gain consumer trust, and strategically position themselves in tough markets. These findings support the study's fundamental argument: that Entrepreneurial Marketing is more than just an alternative marketing method; it is a critical facilitator of sustained growth and competitive advantage for SMEs operating with fewer resources and increased market volatility.

4.3 Discussion

This chapter takes a closer look at the results of the study, considering the aims it set out to achieve, the questions it sought to answer, and the current information on Entrepreneurial Marketing. It assesses how well the study objectives have been achieved, examines the most important insights gained from the data, and indicates any limits that were encountered during the research process. In addition, it examines how the findings are similar to or different from current research, which contributes to the bigger argument about the role of entrepreneurial marketing in the growth and competitiveness of small and medium businesses.

- Assessment of Research Objectives:

The purpose of the study was to accomplish three main goals:

- To assess the marketing tactics that small and medium companies utilize to obtain a competitive edge and expand their businesses. This involved looking at how small and medium companies use their agility, limited resources, and innovative methods to set themselves apart from their competitors.
- To evaluate how Entrepreneurial Marketing affects the growth and competitiveness of small and medium companies . The purpose of the research was to find out how Entrepreneurial Marketing techniques, such as innovative marketing, resource-efficient initiatives, and customer-centric strategies, contribute to business growth and improve market positioning.
- To determine the primary obstacles and limitations that small and medium companies have while implementing entrepreneurial marketing techniques. This included looking at financial, operational, and skill-related obstacles to implementation, as well as the ways that SMEs use to overcome these issues.

The research was able to achieve these goals by revealing important information on the marketing strategies of small and medium companies, how they respond strategically to environmental challenges, and the ways

in which entrepreneurial marketing helps the entrepreneurial marketing succeed.

- Entrepreneurial Marketing as a Strategic Imperative for SMEs

The study confirmed that Entrepreneurial Marketing is not just a collection of methods; it is a strategic framework that enables small and medium companies to compete successfully even when they have limited resources. According to the research, standard marketing methods are frequently not a good fit for small and medium companies because of their restricted budgets, human resources, and infrastructure, according to Gilmore (2011). Instead, small and medium companies use entrepreneurial marketing to create marketing strategies that are flexible, adaptable, and focused on opportunities. This allows entrepreneurial marketing to compete with larger companies.

The research findings corroborate Jones and Rowley's (2011) notion that Entrepreneurial Marketing includes a number of different dimensions, such as:

- Opportunity discovery: Small and medium companies aggressively search for new market trends and unmet customer demands in order to successfully position their products and services.
- Resource leveraging: Small and medium companies make the most of their existing resources, frequently through partnerships, digital platforms, and cost-effective marketing strategies.

- Value generation: Small and medium companies concentrate on developing marketing campaigns that are tailored and targeted to certain niches in order to increase consumer engagement and satisfaction.
- Risk management: Small and medium companies take calculated risks in their marketing strategies. They frequently try out innovative or disruptive methods to connect with their target audience.

This adaptability is demonstrated by a practical example from the study: A participant whose business relied on face-to-face meetings with clients successfully converted to digital marketing and remote service delivery during COVID-19. This demonstrates the role of Entrepreneurial Marketing in disaster resilience and business continuity.

- The Influence of External Environmental Factors

The research showed that outside influences, like changes in the economy, improvements in technology, and unexpected emergencies, had a major impact on the marketing strategies of small and medium companies. COVID-19, in particular, served as a catalyst for innovation in Entrepreneurial Marketing, forcing small and medium companies to change their strategies in response to quickly changing market conditions.

One participant, who owned a retail business, adjusted their approach by using marketing that focused on customer experience. This included clear communication, updates on deliveries in real time, and relationships with

alternative suppliers. This is consistent with Chaston's (2016) claim that Entrepreneurial Marketing allows small and medium companies to stay competitive by encouraging innovation and responsiveness in unpredictable situations.

Another attendee pointed out that their business was able to keep customers engaged even with physical limits by taking advantage of collaborations on social media. This highlights the significance of digital and collaborative marketing as essential methods for entrepreneurial marketing. It also supports the conclusions of Kraus et al. (2019), who stress that digital platforms are crucial for small and medium companies to implement cost-effective marketing strategies.

- The Rise of Collaborative Marketing

The research revealed that collaborative marketing is becoming a more popular entrepreneurial marketing strategy among small and medium companies. The study found a different type of cooperation in which two or more small and medium companies work together to produce and promote a product or service. This is in contrast to the previous literature, which mostly focuses on collaborations with influencers based on Eggers et al., (2020).

For example, a small and medium enterprise in the area that provides health and wellness services teamed up with a supplier of workout equipment to develop packaged service packages. This partnership was advantageous for both parties since it allowed the entrepreneurial marketing to promote each other and share marketing resources. This method is consistent with the resource-leveraging idea in Entrepreneurial

Marketing since it enables companies to expand their market reach without spending substantial expenses.

More research into collaborative marketing strategies could help small and medium companies learn how to improve their market position by developing strategic partnerships.

- Entrepreneurial Marketing Mix: A Combination of Strategies

The survey proved that small and medium companies do not depend on a single entrepreneurial marketing strategy. Instead, they use a combination of strategies that are customized to meet their unique company requirements. This is consistent with the findings of Franco et al. (2014), who claim that Entrepreneurial Marketing is intrinsically adaptable, allowing small and medium companies to experiment with different tactics in order to determine what is most effective for their company model and target audience, even when using a number of strategies combined at once, without exhausting the resources of the business.

The study includes the following examples:

- New pricing models (for example, subscription services and flexible payment plans).
- Guerilla marketing initiatives that take use of local community involvement.
- Interactions with customers that are tailored to entrepreneurial marketing in order to improve loyalty and referrals.

These findings support the idea that Entrepreneurial Marketing is a constantly changing concept, which means that small and medium companies must constantly adjust to feedback from the market and changes in the environment.

- Restrictions and Areas for Additional Study

While this study met its aims and provided useful insights on the impact of Entrepreneurial Marketing in the growth and competitiveness of small and medium companies, several drawbacks were discovered during the research process. These limitations, along with recommendations for further research, are detailed below:

- The Impact of SME Owners' Ideology and Strategic Orientation

One of the study's significant shortcomings was the lack of empirical investigation into how SME owners' personal philosophy, attitude, and strategic orientation impact their adoption and use of Entrepreneurial Marketing. Although participants indicated knowledge and implementation of entrepreneurial marketing practices, the study did not dive further into the psychological, cognitive, or ideological aspects influencing these decisions. Existing research indicates that an entrepreneur's attitude, such as risk tolerance, proactiveness, and innovativeness, frequently influences strategic decision-making and marketing behaviour (Yadav & Bansal, 2020). However, this study did not collect specific information on how individual variations, leadership styles, or personal beliefs influence the willingness to implement Entrepreneurial Marketing methods. Future study should investigate this relationship more closely, potentially by psychological profiling or

cross-sectional surveys, to determine how entrepreneurial inclination affects marketing decisions and outcomes.

- Long-Term Effects of Entrepreneurial Marketing on SME Sustainability

Another key restriction is the study's chronological span. While the study found that Entrepreneurial Marketing improves short-term corporate development and competitive standing, it did not examine the long-term viability of these findings. The majority of data collected from participants represented immediate or recent success stories, which may not accurately reflect the long-term impacts of Entrepreneurial Marketing practices. There is still a lack of understanding of whether Entrepreneurial Marketing contributes to steady corporate growth, sustained competitive advantage, or long-term brand value. As Yadav and Bansal (2020) argue, longitudinal research is required to identify how Entrepreneurial Marketing tactics change over time and how they affect financial stability, market position, and organisational resilience in the long run. Future study might use longitudinal research methodologies that monitor SMEs over time to examine the long-term viability and scalability of Entrepreneurial Marketing activities.

- Industry-Specific Applications and Sector Adaptability

The current study took a comprehensive approach, incorporating SMEs from a variety of industries and market conditions. While this technique gave a broad picture of Entrepreneurial Marketing's effects, it did not allow for a detailed examination of how EM strategies change between sectors or how industry-specific characteristics influence the success of

these strategies. Given the diversity of SME environments, which range from technology-driven startups to traditional service-based businesses, as well as private enterprises and public-sector-affiliated SMEs, more research is needed to tailor and contextualise Entrepreneurial Marketing frameworks to industry-specific challenges and opportunities. Comparative studies might be done to study how Entrepreneurial Marketing approaches are tailored to different sectors, such as creative industries, healthcare, technology, and manufacturing, and how sectoral features impact the outcomes of these activities.

- Final reflections and implications for further research

In conclusion, this study has provided strong evidence that Entrepreneurial Marketing is a strategically important instrument for SMEs, particularly in terms of competitiveness, flexibility, and market success. The findings support and expand on previous research by providing new insights into how Entrepreneurial Marketing improves resource optimisation, develops creative marketing strategies, and helps SMEs to establish strong market positions despite external restrictions.

Furthermore, the study emphasises that Entrepreneurial Marketing is more than just a collection of marketing strategies; it is a context-sensitive, dynamic, and entrepreneurial strategy that enables SMEs to navigate complicated and competitive markets. By using Entrepreneurial Marketing, SMEs may efficiently overcome resource constraints, capitalise on market possibilities, and create distinct brand identities.

Nonetheless, as the limits demonstrate, there is still plenty of room for more academic research. Future research should try to address the existing knowledge gaps by:

- Investigating the psychological and strategic aspects that influence Entrepreneurial Marketing adoption.
- Investigating the long-term and cumulative effects of Entrepreneurial Marketing on SME viability and financial stability.
- Conducting industry-specific analysis to improve Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies and identify sectoral variances.

Future research that addresses these topics will expand the theoretical and practical knowledge of Entrepreneurial Marketing, providing SMEs with more nuanced and evidence-based ways to ensure long-term development, resilience, and market relevance.

4.3 Theoretical Contributions

It has been established throughout this study that entrepreneurial marketing has transitioned from a simple variety of tools and procedures to an intellectual framework that shapes the formulation and execution of the business marketing strategies.

This chapter thoroughly analyzes entrepreneurial marketing as a strategic mindset instead of a mere operational instrument. Additionally, it formulates a detailed model that encompasses the fundamental components of entrepreneurial management—opportunity identification, resource allocation, value creation, and risk management—while examining their impact on growth and competitiveness in small and medium firms .

This chapter enhances the current body of literature by:

- Reframing entrepreneurial marketing as a foundational orientation that informs business strategy.
- Incorporating fundamental aspects of entrepreneurial marketing into an organized framework.
- Utilizing practical examples to demonstrate theoretical concepts in application.
- Advancing Beyond Instruments and Methodologies

Conventional marketing literature frequently characterizes entrepreneurial marketing as a collection of strategies (e.g., guerilla marketing, viral marketing, and social media involvement). This tactical viewpoint constrains the more in-depth strategies and practices of EM.

entrepreneurial marketing ought to be perceived as a mindset that governs action, founded on the subsequent principles:

- Effectuation supersedes Causation - Entrepreneurs utilize accessible resources and engage in experimentation with techniques instead of adhering to a predetermined strategy.
- Innovation-Driven Market Creation (Schumpeter, 1934) — entrepreneurial marketing prioritizes market disruption over mere competition within established markets.
- Customer Co-Creation — Entrepreneurs actively involve customers in product development and value generation.
- Adaptive and Agile Decision-Making — entrepreneurial marketing strategies are defined by swift reactions to environmental fluctuations.

Example: An enterprise such as Airbnb disregarded conventional hospitality marketing strategies (hotel promotions and price competition) in favor of a paradigm shift—converting unoccupied residences into revenue streams for individuals. This strategic shift was directed by the entrepreneurial marketing mindset of utilizing underexploited resources and generating new market opportunities.

- Entrepreneurial Marketing versus Traditional Marketing

In contrast to traditional marketing, which prioritizes predetermined segments, demand forecasts, and extensive advertising, entrepreneurial marketing highlights:

- Opportunistic Adaptation — Modifying business models in response to real-time feedback.

- Resource-Limited Innovation — Generating influence without substantial financial resources.
- Growth Through Relationships — Emphasizing networks and trust cultivation over mass-market advertising.

Example: modest organic skincare firm can choose for community-oriented influencer collaborations instead of investing millions on worldwide advertising initiatives. This methodology emphasizes authenticity and engagement rather than extensive reach.

- An Extensive Framework of Entrepreneurial Marketing

This section establishes a systematic framework for entrepreneurial marketing, emphasizing four fundamental components:

- Identification of Opportunities

Opportunity discovery is central to EM, wherein companies recognize market deficiencies and build distinctive value propositions.

1. Market Gaps and Unmet Needs: Entrepreneurs diligently seek underutilized opportunities through qualitative insights, customer feedback, and social trends.
2. Fortunate Discoveries: Numerous entrepreneurial advancements arise from unforeseen discoveries and continuous experimentation.
3. Data-Driven Market Intelligence: Small and Medium companies utilize affordable data analytics tools to identify trends. The rise of AI is also proven to have a significant effect on lending SMEs the necessary resources to back up their limited teams, saving the entrepreneurial marketing time and effort and opening up

continuously expanding business management and development capabilities.

Example: Netflix evolved from DVD rentals to streaming by identifying changes in consumer behavior and using advancements in internet speeds and device functionalities.

- Resource Allocation

Entrepreneurial companies generally function under resource limitations and must ingeniously maximize limited resources, the following tactics summarize SMEs' entrepreneurial endeavors in this regard:

1. The Bootstrapping Approach: Utilizing limited resources to attain optimal results.
2. Network Capital: Entrepreneurs utilize personal and professional networks for financing, guidance, and collaborations. Since the SME ecosystem is one of the most extensive and interrelated business environments globally, the need for collaborations emerges whereas companies look for opportunities to exchange resources with other SMEs whenever possible. Sharing resources helps preserve them even if already limited, while making the most reward of utilizing them.
3. Digital Leverage: Small and medium companies mitigate budget constraints by employing cost-effective digital marketing, automation, and cloud-based solutions.

Example: Dropbox expanded its user base via a referral network rather than investing millions in advertising, exemplifying effective resource allocation.

- Value Creation

Value generation encompasses not just product sales but also the cultivation of customer experiences and the establishment of community-oriented brands.

1. Client-Focused Innovation: Entrepreneurs customize solutions to address particular client challenges.
2. The Experience Economy: Products are promoted as facilitators of lifestyle rather than as independent goods.
3. Storytelling as a Value Amplifier: Compelling brand narratives strengthen customer engagement.

Example: Tesla distinguishes itself not only through electric vehicles but also by advocating for a vision of sustainable energy and technical advancement, fostering profound consumer loyalty.

- Risk Mitigation Strategies

Entrepreneurial companies frequently function in unpredictable settings, necessitating proactive risk management measures.

1. Agile Business Models: Capacity to swiftly adapt to market fluctuations.
2. Lean Experimentation: Evaluating hypotheses through small-scale trials prior to full implementation.
3. Strategic Alliances: Partnering with existing companies to distribute risks.

Example: Spotify mitigated financial risks by implementing a freemium model, facilitating subscriber acquisition while capitalizing on premium services.

- Generalisability of the findings

While this study provides valuable insights into the influence of Entrepreneurial Marketing on SME development and competitive advantage, some aspects restrict the findings' generalizability outside the study's specific context.

- Context-Specific Entrepreneurial Orientation

One of the most significant constraints to generalisability is the lack of a thorough assessment of SME owners' personal philosophy, strategic vision, and entrepreneurial attitude. (Matchaba-Hove et al., 2015) According to the findings of this study, entrepreneurial marketing is more than just a strategic instrument; it is a strategic attitude founded on principles such as resourcefulness, opportunity discovery, and client co-creation. As a result, the entrepreneurial traits of firm owners and managers have a significant impact on entrepreneurial marketing adoption and success. Because this study did not rigorously investigate these aspects, its findings may not be applicable to SMEs whose executives lack a proactive, risk-tolerant, or innovation-driven mindset. In other contexts—particularly if SME leadership is more conservative or resource-constrained—the effects of entrepreneurial marketing adoption may vary dramatically. (Aslam et al., 2022)

- Sector and Market Specificity

The research sample comprised SMEs from a variety of industries in Bahrain, with little emphasis on sector-specific dynamics. While this technique provides a wide grasp of entrepreneurial marketing's influence, it limits the capacity to generalise findings across industries. For example, the study found that entrepreneurial marketing strategies including rapid decision-making, digital leverage, and relationship-based growth were extremely beneficial. However, the success of these methods may differ in capital-intensive, tightly regulated, or low-margin businesses where strategic flexibility is restricted or market circumstances are fundamentally fixed. Thus, the findings are more applicable to industries with high flexibility, low entry barriers, and a significant digital presence, such as technology, services, and creative sectors, than to conventional manufacturing or public sector SMEs. (Poufinas et al., 2018)

- Geographic and cultural constraints.

The study was done in a specific geographical and cultural framework, with a focus on SMEs operating in Bahrain. Local market circumstances, socioeconomic considerations, and cultural attitudes towards risk, innovation, and business practices all have an impact on entrepreneurial behaviour and marketing strategy. As a result, applying the findings to SMEs in other geographic locations, particularly in economies with varying market maturity, regulatory regimes, or cultural settings, should be done with caution. What works well in one company ecosystem may require major change in another. (Fatoki, 2019)

- Short-Term Measurement Bias

The study's data is also short-term in nature, which restricts generalisability. The study effectively revealed the immediate benefits of entrepreneurial marketing, such as higher revenue, market expansion, and client retention. However, it did not account for the long-term impacts of entrepreneurial marketing, such as sustainability, brand equity building, or market resilience during downturns. As a result, while the findings may be relevant to SMEs seeking short-term market advantages, they cannot definitively guide long-term strategy planning in larger contexts without more longitudinal study. (Walsh & Lipinski, 2009)

- Sample size and research design.

Finally, while the study's qualitative technique is useful for generating rich, in-depth insights, it restricts the data's generalisability. Qualitative findings are contextualised and based on a specific sample size, which may not statistically reflect the total SME population. As a result, the results reached are better understood as analytical generalizations—informing theory and providing strategic implications—rather as statistical generalisations that apply to all SMEs. (Gáti & Bauer, 2019)

Summary

In conclusion, the study's findings are most applicable and generalisable to SMEs working in flexible, resource-constrained contexts with entrepreneurial leadership, particularly in the service and technology sectors of culturally comparable markets. When extending these findings

to other industries, locations, or businesses with fundamentally different structural, cultural, or strategic qualities, proceed with caution.

4.4 Practical Implications

Entrepreneurial Marketing is essential for the success of Small and Medium companies as it allows them to distinguish themselves from competitors, identify emerging market opportunities, and establish long-term competitive advantages. Educators, policymakers, researchers, and SME owners and managers are provided with actionable recommendations in this section to cultivate an entrepreneurial marketing mindset and implement it effectively.

Strategic Suggestions for Small and medium Enterprise Owners and Managers

In order to succeed in competitive markets, small and medium companies must redefine conventional marketing strategies and adopt an entrepreneurial marketing approach that emphasizes customer-centricity, innovation, and agility. The subsequent suggestions can assist small and medium companies in the effective implementation of entrepreneurial marketing strategies:

- Fostering a Marketing Mindset of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial marketing is not solely concerned with the sale of products; it also entails the implementation of a proactive, innovative, and risk-taking approach to market engagement. Owners and administrators of small and medium companies should:

- Encourage an experimental approach:

Small and medium companies should test and iterate their marketing strategies in response to real-time consumer feedback, rather than relying on rigid, long-term marketing plans.

For instance, a local specialty coffee brand may evaluate consumer interest by implementing pop-up stores and social media influencer partnerships prior to embarking on a comprehensive expansion. Menu testing events can be very rewarding to businesses in terms of strengthening customer-business relationships, cultivating word of mouth marketing, involvement of user generated content which is one of the most impactful marketing practices nowadays.

- Utilize digital tools to facilitate real-time communication:

CRM systems, AI-driven analytics, and social media platforms can assist small and medium companies in comprehending market trends and promptly responding to them.

For instance, in order to enhance consumer engagement and personalize recommendations, a boutique fashion retailer may implement AI chatbots and Instagram polls.

- Implement guerrilla marketing strategies:

Viral chatter can be generated and SMEs can be distinguished from their competitors through low-cost, high-impact marketing campaigns using creative and trendy content.

For instance, a fashion startup could enhance its brand visibility by utilizing interviews with the general public, viral TikTok challenges, or local influencer endorsements.

- Coordinating Marketing Strategies with Emerging Opportunities

SMEs must remain competitive by recognizing and leveraging emerging opportunities, as markets are in a state of perpetual fluctuation:

1. Market trends and customer shifts:

These should be monitored by SMEs, who should utilize data analytics to monitor customer preferences and modify their offerings accordingly.

For instance, a handmade jewelry brand that has observed a trend toward sustainable products may introduce eco-friendly collections that come in recyclable packaging.

2. Engage in niche market targeting:

SMEs can concentrate on specialized consumer segments that are underserved by large brands, rather than competing head-to-head with larger firms.

For instance, an organic patisserie may appeal to health-conscious millennials who prioritize organic and ethical food alternatives.

3. Use dynamic pricing models to adapt to market conditions, competition, and customer demand:

SMEs can implement agile pricing strategies to offer products at continuously competitive prices.

For instance, a software startup that provides premium features and tiered subscription plans that are tailored to the specific requirements of its customers, or even offers customizable plans to ensure value is proportionate to price.

- Establishing a Sustainable Competitive Advantage

In order to maintain their competitive edge, small and medium companies must consistently enhance their marketing strategies and capitalize on their distinctive strengths.

1. Establish a robust brand identity:

Small and medium companies can foster enduring consumer loyalty through the use of authentic branding and emotional storytelling. This involves developing brand visuals, collaterals and tone of voice to create a memorable image for the business.

For instance, a cosmetic brand that is family-owned and prioritizes organic ingredients, craftsmanship, and heritage in order to distinguish itself from mass-produced alternatives.

2. Concentrate on relationship marketing:

Small and medium companies should allocate resources to personalized experiences and consumer engagement, as opposed to transactional selling.

For instance, a travel agency could establish exclusive communities for its previous clients, providing them with referral bonuses, private events, and loyalty rewards.

- Education and Training in Entrepreneurial Marketing for Small and medium Enterprise Leaders

In order to improve the marketing capabilities of small and medium companies, entrepreneurial marketing education should be tailored to the specific needs of business owners and managers, with an emphasis on practical applications rather than purely theoretical knowledge.

1. Tailored Training Programs

Specialized workshops and hands-on training are essential for SME executives, as they frequently lack formal marketing training. Training should prioritize the following:

- Social Media & Digital Marketing for Small and medium companies (utilizing social media platforms to establish a brand)
- Techniques for Growth Hacking (utilizing viral content, referral programs, and partnerships to expedite sales)
- Customer Psychology & Behavioral Marketing (the art of crafting persuasive marketing messages by comprehending consumer behavior)
- Innovation-Driven Marketing (educating small and medium companies to experiment with new business models and technology integration, especially AI)

2. Collaboration between Universities and Industry

Entrepreneurial marketing knowledge-sharing can be promoted through partnerships between academia and industry:

- Universities may provide certifications in entrepreneurial marketing that integrate academic knowledge with real-world case studies.
 - Public-private partnerships may be sponsored by governments, in which entrepreneurs are provided with mentorship from corporate marketing professionals.
 - Offering sponsored or free of charge courses that help business people from all levels in enhancing their knowledge in entrepreneurial marketing practices.
- Fostering an Entrepreneurial Marketing Culture by Empowering Policymakers and Institutions

Entrepreneurial Marketing has evolved into an essential tool for small and medium companies (SMEs) to navigate competitive marketplaces. However, SMEs in Bahrain confront specific problems, including restricted access to funding, regulatory restraints, and digital transformation impediments. To address these issues, governments across the area have implemented a variety of policies targeted at providing SMEs with marketing innovation, digital transformation, and market development prospects.

The following policy actions can boost the adoption of entrepreneurial marketing in Bahrain.

1. Financial incentives for digital transformation and marketing innovation.

Governments around the GCC recognise the value of digital marketing and innovation for SMEs. Financial incentives such as grants, subsidies,

and financing programs have been implemented to assist firms in investing in data-driven marketing, e-commerce platforms, and automation technologies.

Example 1: Tamkeen, Bahrain.

Tamkeen, Bahrain's main SME aid organisation, funds digital marketing tools, website building, and branding projects. The Business Growth Program assists SMEs in implementing technology-driven marketing solutions that help them develop a competitive online presence.

Example 2: The Saudi Vision 2030 E-Commerce Enablement Program

As part of Saudi Vision 2030, the government announced steps to help SMEs shift to e-commerce, including subsidies for social media advertising, AI-powered consumer analytics, and influencer partnerships. This initiative guarantees that SMEs can sell their products more successfully, both locally and globally.

Example 3: UAE's Digital Transformation Fund.

The UAE has established a Digital Transformation Fund to grant funding to SMEs that use digital-first marketing tactics such as AI-driven ad targeting and omnichannel consumer interaction.

Policy Recommendation: SME financial aid can be extended and diversified to include grants for digital marketing training, AI-powered consumer analytics, and performance-based subsidies for SMEs demonstrating effective marketing innovation.

2. Improving Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to Increase SME Market Reach.

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) help SMEs develop into regional and global markets. Governments may assist small companies by cooperating with corporations, investors, and industry experts to get market insights, financial possibilities, and specialised marketing coaching.

Example 1: Hope Fund, Bahrain.

Bahrain's Hope Fund brings together investors from throughout the Arab world to fund early-stage firms, offering not just funding but also marketing experts and growth strategists. This helps firms to fine-tune their market positioning, branding, and client acquisition methods.

Example 2: The Dubai SME 100 Program

The Dubai SME 100 project helps SMEs by offering branding training, business development materials, and networking events. This initiative guarantees that firms receive hands-on support to improve their market presence and competitiveness.

Example 3: Monsha'at from Saudi Arabia and the Misk Foundation.

Saudi Arabia's Monsha'at (General Authority for SMEs) and the Misk Foundation have collaborated with tech behemoths such as Google and Facebook to provide training in social media marketing, content production, and SEO optimisation, empowering businesses with critical digital marketing knowledge.

Policy Recommendation: Encourage corporate-sponsored accelerator programs, SME-focused marketing mentorship efforts, and regional trade collaborations to help businesses extend beyond national borders.

3. Simplifying Regulatory Procedures for Startup Marketing Activities

Marketing restrictions may be a challenge for SMEs, especially in businesses like finance, e-commerce, and digital services. Governments should implement streamlined advertising regulations that allow companies to test and expand their marketing activities with little paperwork.

Example 1: Bahrain FinTech Regulatory Sandbox.

Bahrain was the first GCC country to establish a FinTech Regulatory Sandbox, which allows fintech businesses to test new financial products and marketing techniques in a controlled regulatory environment before full compliance is required. This freedom has enabled fintech businesses to experiment with customised marketing methods, referral schemes, and digital payment campaigns.

Example 2: UAE E-Commerce Friendly Legislation

The UAE has amended its e-commerce legislation to make it simpler for small companies to engage in cross-border digital marketing, allowing them to sell items online and advertise globally with fewer regulatory constraints.

Policy Recommendation: Governments should provide sector-specific marketing exemptions for entrepreneurs in fintech, edtech, and e-commerce to test creative marketing efforts with fewer legal and administrative restrictions.

4. Creating specialised SME accelerators and incubators.

Entrepreneurial success is frequently dependent on access to mentoring, finance, and formal training opportunities. Establishing

marketing-focused incubators and accelerators may help SMEs improve their branding, digital outreach, and customer interaction methods.

Example 1: Flat6Labs. Bahrain

Flat6Labs, one of the region's premier startup accelerators, offers seed capital, mentoring, and market entrance assistance to early-stage enterprises. The accelerator offers courses in branding, narrative, and digital marketing to assist entrepreneurs improve their customer acquisition methods.

Example 2: Mohammed Bin Rashid Innovation Fund, UAE.

The Mohammed Bin Rashid Innovation Fund provides finance and advising services to high-potential entrepreneurs, such as market research findings and expert-led marketing training programs.

Example 3: Saudi Arabia's Misk Accelerator.

Misk Accelerator, backed by Monsha'at and worldwide venture partners, teaches entrepreneurs in digital branding, content strategy, and data-driven marketing.

Policy Recommendation: Governments should invest in marketing-focused SME accelerators that provide

- Mentorship by branding experts
- Access to AI-powered marketing tools.
- Industry cooperation to improve digital advertising skills

Conclusion: Improving the Entrepreneurial Marketing Ecosystem in Bahrain and the GCC.

To empower SMEs and drive long-term competitiveness, Bahrain and the GCC must continue to invest in policies that promote entrepreneurial marketing adoption. Governments can:

- Employ financial incentives,
- Public-private collaborations,
- Legislative simplifications
- Marketing-focused incubators.
- Provide digital tools for SMEs to achieve long-term growth.
- Promote innovation in marketing strategies across sectors.
- Help local companies increase their market reach regionally and worldwide.

With continued policy improvements and increased collaboration between government and private sector stakeholders, Entrepreneurial Marketing will continue to be a critical facilitator of SME success in the dynamic GCC business landscape.

4.5 Recommendations

Further research in adjacent fields can be conducted to further substantiate and support the conclusions drawn, based on the results of this study. By expanding the scope of investigation, academics and practitioners can enhance their comprehension of entrepreneurial marketing and its influence on the success of small and medium companies. The following are critical suggestions for future research directions:

- Examine the Contextual Influences on Entrepreneurial Marketing in Small and medium companies

Entrepreneurial marketing is not a standalone phenomenon; it is influenced by a variety of contextual factors that affect the development, implementation, and refinement of marketing strategies by small and medium companies. Future research should investigate:

- Entrepreneurial Marketing Applications & Industry-Specific Dynamics

The adoption of entrepreneurial marketing strategies by SMEs is influenced by the competitive landscape, consumer expectations, and market saturation that differ across industries.

For instance, a technology startup may depend on viral campaigns and growth hacking strategies, while a conventional handicraft business may depend on niche branding and community engagement.

The research should compare high-tech and low-tech industries to ascertain the differences in entrepreneurial marketing practices based on product cycles and innovation levels

- The Impact of Technological Developments on Entrepreneurial Marketing

New opportunities and challenges for SME marketing are presented by the rapid advancement of AI, automation, and digital platforms.

For instance, the integration of predictive analytics and AI-driven chatbots enables small and medium companies to offer personalized marketing services at a large scale.

Research should evaluate the extent to which emerging technologies alter entrepreneurial marketing strategies, particularly in resource-constrained SMEs.

- Policy and Regulatory Frameworks Influencing Entrepreneurial Marketing

Marketing freedoms are significantly influenced by government policies, particularly in industries that are highly regulated, such as finance, healthcare, and education.

Future research could investigate the influence of evolving policies on the adaptability of SME marketing and the methods by which businesses manage regulatory compliance while maintaining their competitive edge.

- The Influence of Cultural and Societal Factors on Entrepreneurial Marketing Strategies

SME marketing strategies are influenced by cultural norms, values, and consumer behaviors in various regions.

For instance, in collectivist cultures, small and medium companies may prioritize community-driven campaigns and relationship marketing, while in individualist cultures, they may concentrate on personalized brand differentiation.

It is imperative that research investigate the impact of cultural adaptation on consumer engagement and brand loyalty in small and medium companies that operate in international markets.

- Examine the Impact of Entrepreneurial Teams on the Marketing of Small and medium companies

The majority of entrepreneurial marketing research concentrates on individual entrepreneurs; however, team-based entrepreneurial endeavors are becoming more prevalent in small and medium companies. Research in the future should investigate:

- The Impact of Entrepreneurial Teams on Marketing Innovation

Entrepreneurial teams cultivate decision-making agility, innovation, and creativity in marketing by assembling a variety of skill sets.

For instance, a startup that has a co-founder who is an expert in data analytics may produce more data-driven marketing campaigns than one that is headed by conventional marketers.

Research should investigate whether cross-functional collaboration improves marketing performance and how team diversity affects outcomes.

- The Interaction Between Collective and Individual Entrepreneurial Marketing Approaches

Although individual entrepreneurs may be the driving force behind visionary leadership, teams frequently engage in strategic risk-taking and collaborative experimentation.

For instance, a small and medium enterprise that is headed by a single founder may prioritize networking and personal branding, while a SME that is led by a team may prioritize customer segmentation and multi-channel engagement.

Entrepreneurial marketing decision-making, adaptability, and risk mitigation should be the focus of future research, which should examine the impact of various team structures.

- The Impact of Leadership Styles on the Success of Entrepreneurial Marketing

The implementation of marketing strategies by SMEs may be influenced by a variety of leadership styles, such as transformational, transactional, and servant leadership.

For instance, a transformational leader may cultivate an environment of ongoing innovation, whereas a transactional leader may prioritize marketing strategies that are based on return on investment.

The effectiveness of entrepreneurial marketing in SMEs should be quantified by research that examines the influence of leadership dynamics.

- Conduct longitudinal research on the evolution of entrepreneurial marketing.

The majority of entrepreneurial marketing studies only capture a single moment in time, whereas longitudinal studies can offer a more comprehensive understanding of the evolution of entrepreneurial marketing practices and their influence on the development of businesses over time.

- The Development of Entrepreneurial Marketing Strategies Throughout the Key Stages of the SME Lifecycle

As small and medium companies transition from the inception to the growth to the scale-up phases, their marketing strategies undergo multiple transformations.

For instance, bootstrap marketing strategies may be employed by early-stage businesses, while established small and medium companies may migrate to scalable digital marketing solutions.

In response to market shifts, competitive pressures, and financial stability, research should investigate the manner in which SMEs adjust their entrepreneurial marketing strategies over time.

- The Long-Term Effect of Entrepreneurial Marketing on the Competitiveness of Small and medium companies

Numerous marketing initiatives for small and medium companies generate immediate benefits; however, what constitutes their sustainability?

For instance, do customer co-creation strategies result in increased brand loyalty over a five- to ten-year period?

The most effective entrepreneurial marketing strategies for achieving sustained competitive advantage and profitability should be assessed through longitudinal studies.

- Enhance Research Methodologies to Acquire Contextualized Insights

Although quantitative surveys and case studies are the primary focus of current entrepreneurial marketing research, alternative methodologies can offer more profound, practical insights:

- Ethnographic Research on Entrepreneurial Marketing Practices

Immersive, field-based research has the potential to reveal latent challenges and adaptive marketing behaviors in small and medium companies.

For instance, ethnographic research can investigate the manner in which small and medium companies in developing countries participate in relationship-driven marketing within their local communities.

Research should investigate the organic development of marketing tactics by SMEs in resource-limited environments.

- Action Research for Real-Time Entrepreneurial Marketing Interventions

Action research entails direct collaboration with SMEs to test and refine marketing strategies in real time.

For instance, researchers could collaborate with a SME to develop a digital marketing campaign and evaluate its efficacy through iterative feedback cycles.

This methodology would offer practical suggestions that small and medium companies could implement promptly.

- Holistic Understanding Through Mixed-Method Approaches

Comprehensive insights into entrepreneurial marketing practices can be obtained by integrating surveys, in-depth interviews, and experimental research.

Example: In order to evaluate the efficacy of social media branding strategies, a study could implement quantitative metrics (ROI analysis) in conjunction with qualitative insights (entrepreneurial narratives).

In order to offer a comprehensive understanding of the marketing dynamics of small and medium companies, future research should implement triangulated methodologies.

Figure (1):Theoretical Framework

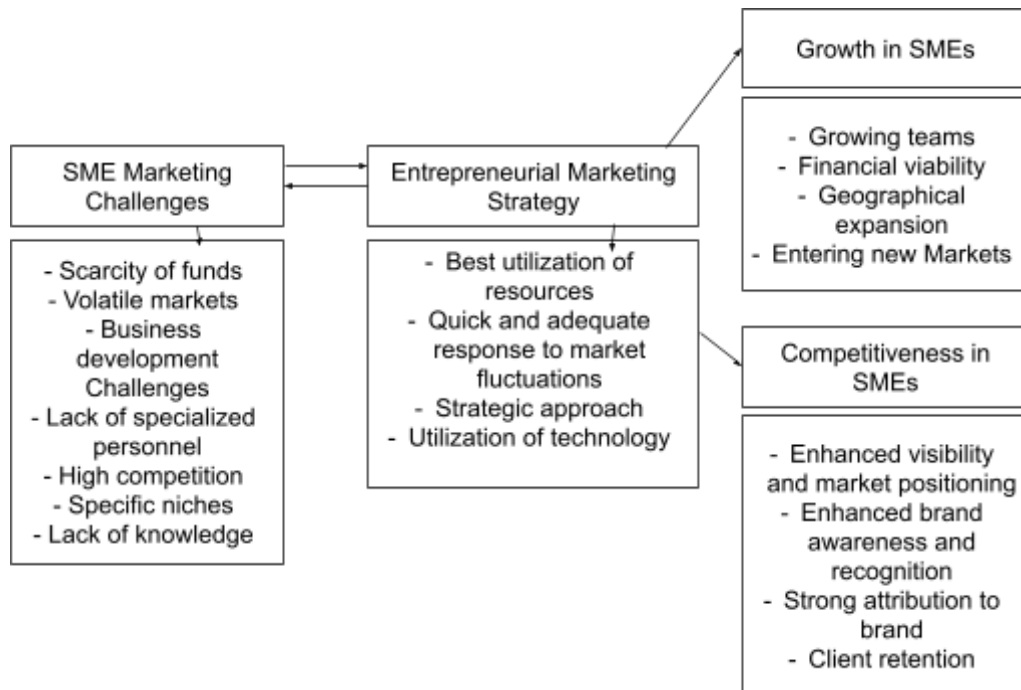


Figure (2): Conceptual Framework

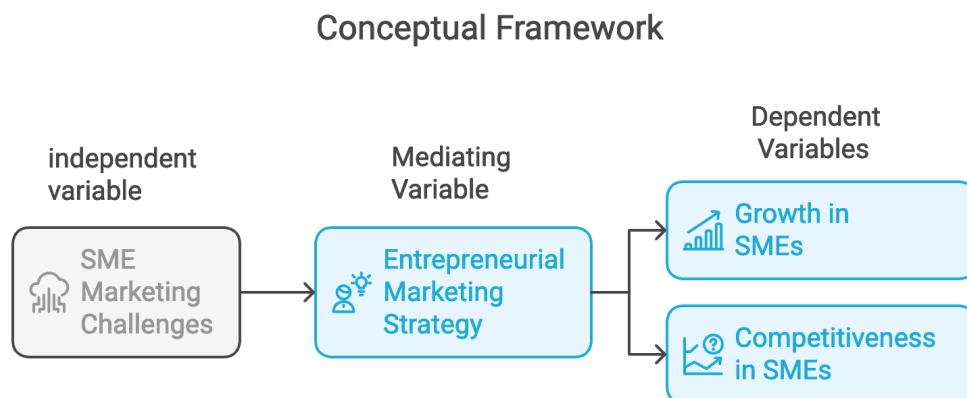


Figure (3) Ongoing Development in SMEs Driven by Entrepreneurial Marketing

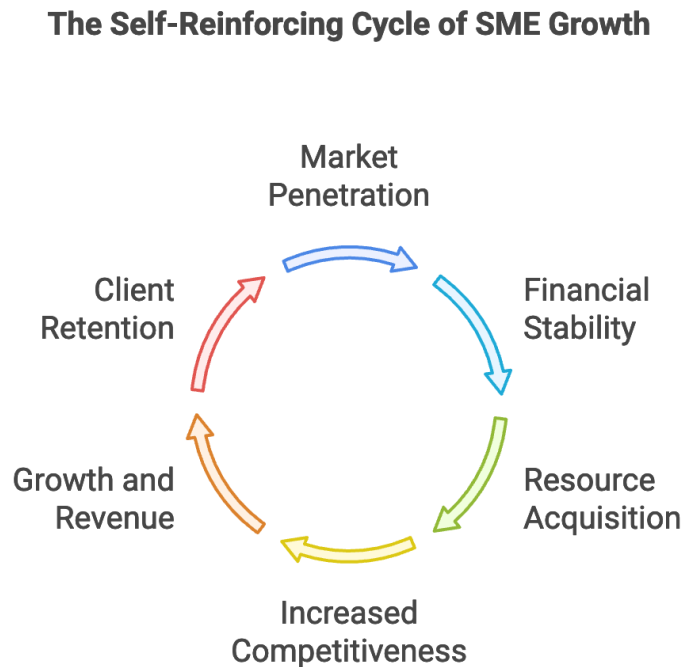


Figure (4) The Pillars of Entrepreneurial Marketing (Chapter 2)



Figure (5) The steps of the process of conducting interviews

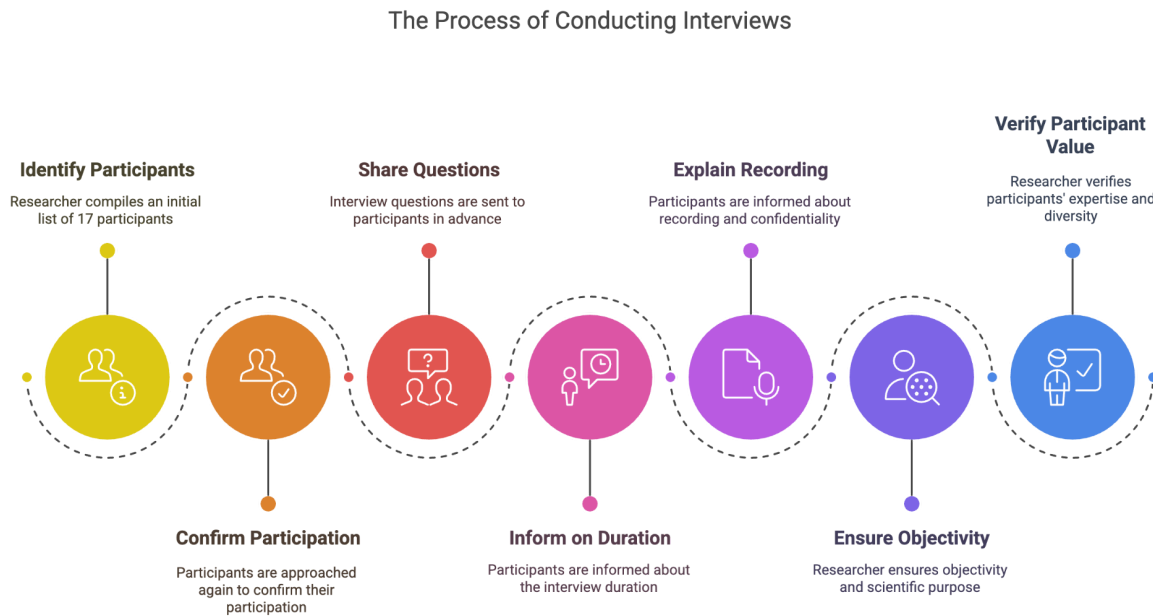


Figure (6) The list of codes generated based on interview quotes

☐ competition	●
☐ EM challenge-financial constraint	●
☐ EM challenge-market fluctuations	●
☐ EM strategy	●
☐ EM tactic	●
☐ EM tactic-collaborations	●
☐ EM tactic-creativity	●
☐ EM tactic-unique experience	●
☐ EM tools	●
☐ EM-understanding consumer	●
☐ EM-value reflection	●

Figure (7) The list of codes pertaining to entrepreneurial marketing challenges faced by SMEs

▼ ☐ Entrepreneurial Marketing Challenges	🔍 42	🔍 Entrepreneurial mar
☐ added value to service	🟢	
☐ Budget constraints	🟡	
☐ catering for a wider and a varying audience.	🟠	
☐ creativity in offering service	🟡	
☐ creativity in promoting offering	🔴	
☐ Data limitations	🟡	
☐ Effective marketing despite constraints	🟢	
☐ Execution challenges	🔴	
☐ Fierce Competition	🔴	
☐ Financial burden impact	🟡	
☐ Judging entrepreneurial marketing	🟢	
☐ Lack of Belief in Marketing	🟡	
☐ Lack of dedicated marketing team	🟡	

Figure (8) The list of codes pertaining to entrepreneurial marketing tactics utilized by SMEs

☰ ▼ ☐ Entrepreneurial marketing tactics	🔍 Details	🔍 Entrepreneurial mar
☐ Active Marketing Efforts	🟡	
☐ Adaptation	🟡	
☐ Adaptation to Market Changes	🟠	
☐ Adaptation to Trends	🟢	
☐ Adapting to Trends	🔴	
☐ Adoption of new technologies	🟡	
☐ Advertising Campaigns	🟡	
☐ Amplified Experience	🟡	
☐ Attracting clients	🟢	
☐ Awareness raising	🟡	
☐ Balancing Skills	🟡	
☐ Brand Awareness	🟢	
☐ Budget Allocation	🟡	
☐ Building Relationships	🔴	

Figure (9) The list of codes pertaining to SME competitiveness

☰	☐ SME Competitiveness	Details	●
☐	Competitiveness		●
☐	Competitor Analysis		●
☐	Competitor Showcase		●
☐	Consumer Behavior		●
☐	Customer Focus		●
☐	Customer Perceptions		●
☐	Customer Satisfaction		●
☐	Customer Satisfaction Impact		●
☐	Customer Segmentation		●

Figure (10) The list of codes pertaining to SME growth

☐	☐ SME Growth	42	●
☐	Adaptability		●
☐	Attracting customers		●
☐	Audience Engagement		●
☐	Brand association		●
☐	Brand enhancement	Details	●
☐	Brand Growth		●
☐	Brand Recognition		●
☐	Brand Visibility		●
☐	Broadening customer base		●
☐	Business Opportunities		●
☐	Client Attraction		●
☐	Client Preference		●
☐	Client Relationships		●
☐	Collaboration Opportunities		●

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Appendices

Appendix (1) Research Participants Profiles

Participant #	Position	Industry	Years of Experience	Gender	SME Type
1	Business Development Manager	Construction (Services) Supplier of flooring materials such as tiles, ceramic, granite and marble as well as premium sanitaryware	7 years	F	Medium
2	Founder, Coach and Trainer	Consultancies (Services) Educational and family consultancies, personal development coaching and trainer of trainers	20+ years	F	Small
3	Education Consultant and an expert in	Education-edutech and formulation of education	17 years	F	Medium

Participant #	Position	Industry	Years of Experience	Gender	SME Type
	Education investments	systementrepreneurial marketingand educational institutions consultant			
4	Business Mentor & Marketing Consultant for SMEs and Startups	Consultancies (Services)- Specialized in offering training and mentorship to SMEs, creating training schemes and programs, accompanying SMEs in investment collection & approaching investors	18 years	F	Small
5	Marketing Specialist and Business Advisor	Marketing & IT (specialized in creating specifically curated ad campaign in	20+ years	M	Small

Participant #	Position	Industry	Years of Experience	Gender	SME Type
		partnership with influencers and tech partners such as social media applications namely snapchat and Tiktok; the first to get approval for creating Snapchat filters in bahrain and the first in the region to be granted the access to running campaign on TikTok)			
6	Marketing Consultant and Entrepreneur, content creator on Marketing	Entrepreneurship (Owner of a company with 3 branches across the Arab world, specialized in marketing for rising niches and	17 years	M	Small

Participant #	Position	Industry	Years of Experience	Gender	SME Type
		governments)			
7	Specialist Underwriter (with an extensive background in public relation and marketing)	Insurance (Services) all types of insurance services	17 years	M	Medium
8	Marketing and CSM Specialist, content creator on marketing	Business IT Solutions and Lead Generation (specialised in training sales and marketing teams and creating customized tech business solution to run various CSM and sales operations)	14 years	M	Small
9	Founder and Partner, content creator and educator in marketing	Marketing Services (all supporting marketing and creative services	6 years	F	Small

Participant #	Position	Industry	Years of Experience	Gender	SME Type
		and consultancies)			
10	Founder and CEO	Business Consultancies and SME Services (Establishment, scale up and all business related services and formalities, business tools)	16 years	M	Small

Appendix (2)

Interview Questions:

Demographic Information

1. In which industry do you operate?

- Industrial
- Services
- Commercial
- Medical
- Technology
- Hospitality
- Other: _____

2. What is the entity size?

- Micro (1-5 employees)
- Small (6-50 employees)
- Medium (51-100 employees)

3. What is your current position in the entity?

- Owner/founder/partner
- Executive management
- Middle management (head of department)
- Employee

4. How many years of experience do you have?

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

Entrepreneurial Marketing Strategies

5. Does your SME adopt Entrepreneurial Marketing practices?

6. How does your SME utilize innovation in product/service offerings?

7. Does your SME take risks in its marketing initiatives (e.g., campaigns with unusual concepts)? Give an example.

8. Do you believe your SME leverages limited resources effectively for marketing activities? Explain.

Growth Potential

9. How important is Entrepreneurial Marketing for the growth potential of SMEs?

10. Has Entrepreneurial Marketing contributed to the growth of your SME in the past year? How so

11. Do you think your SME will achieve growth targets through Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies in the next year?

Competitive Advantage

12. How does your SME compete in your niche? What sets you apart from competitors?

13. Do you think Entrepreneurial Marketing is an effective tool in maintaining your SMEs competitive advantage?

14. How does your SME differentiate itself from competitors through Entrepreneurial Marketing efforts?

Challenges & Opportunities

15. What are the main challenges faced by your SME in implementing Entrepreneurial Marketing strategies?

- Limited financial resources
- Lack of skilled personnel
- Limited access to market data and analytics
- Intense competition
- Regulatory constraints
- Other: _____

16. What opportunities do you see for your SME in leveraging Entrepreneurial Marketing for growth and competitiveness?

- Expanding into new markets
- Increasing market share
- Enhancing brand visibility
- Improving customer loyalty
- Partnering with other businesses
- Other: _____

Future Outlook

17. Will you consider investing more resources into Entrepreneurial Marketing activities in the future?

18. How do you foresee the role of Entrepreneurial Marketing evolving for SMEs in the next 5 years?

Additional Information

19. Please provide any additional comments or insights you have regarding the significance of Entrepreneurial Marketing for SME growth potential and competitive advantage.

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف دور التسويق الريادي في تعزيز النمو والميزة التنافسية للشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة. تعاني الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة، التي غالباً ما تكون مقيدة بموارد محدودة وتعمل في أسواق متقلبة، من الحاجة إلى استراتيجيات تسويقية مبتكرة وقابلة للتكيف لتحقيق النجاح. تبحث الدراسة في كيفية تمكين التسويق الريادي، الذي يتميز بالإبداع، والتركيز على العملاء، والاستخدام الأمثل للموارد، الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة من التغلب على التحديات مثل القيود المالية، وتقلبات السوق، والمنافسة الشديدة.

باستخدام منهجية بحثية نوعية، تم إجراء مقابلات مفصلة مع مالكي ومديري الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة في البحرين لجمع بيانات مفصلة حول ممارساتهم التسويقية والتحديات التي يواجهونها. تكشف النتائج أن التسويق الريادي يمكن الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة من الاستفادة من مرونتها، والابتكار بموارد محدودة، وبناء علاقات قوية مع العملاء، مما يعزز النمو والقدرة التنافسية. تشمل الاستراتيجيات الرئيسية التسويق الرقمي، والشراكات التعاونية، والمناهج التسويقية المرنة والقابلة للتكيف المصممة خصيصاً للأسواق ذات الطبيعة الخاصة أو التحديات المختلفة.

تساهم الدراسة في إثراء البحث العلمي من خلال تسليط الضوء على أهمية التسويق الريادي كأداة استراتيجية وليس مجرد مجموعة من الممارسات العشوائية. كما تحدد الفجوات في البحث الحالي، مثل الحاجة إلى دراسات طولية حول التأثير طويل المدى للتسويق الريادي وتأثير العوامل الثقافية والسياقية على الاستراتيجيات التسويقية. تقدم الدراسة توصيات عملية لمالكي الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة، وصناع السياسات، والمؤسسات التعليمية لتعزيز تبني التسويق الريادي ودعم تطوير المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة. بشكل عام، تؤكد الدراسة على الدور الحيوي للتسويق الريادي في تمكين الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة من تحقيق نمو مستدام وميزة تنافسية في بيئة الأعمال سريعة التطور اليوم.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة: وفقاً لوزارة الصناعة والتجارة البحرينية، تُعرّف الشركات الصغيرة بأنها التي تضم 6 إلى 50 موظفاً أو تحقق إيرادات تتراوح بين 50,001 و1,000,000 دينار بحريني، بينما تُعرّف الشركات المتوسطة بأنها التي تضم 51 إلى 100 موظف أو تحقق إيرادات تتراوح بين 1,000,001 و3,000,000 دينار بحريني.

التسويق الريادي: هو ممارسة تسويقية إستراتيجية تعتمد على الابتكار واستباق الأسواق

بهدف قيادة الشركات الصغيرة والمتوسطة لتجاوز التحديات الناتجة عن حجمها وطبيعة عملياتها.

النمو: يُقاس نمو الشركات وفقاً لعوامل مختلفة، من بينها: زيادة الإيرادات، توسيع الفريق، التوسع الجغرافي، دخول أسواق جديدة، استهداف شرائح سوقية جديدة، وغيرها.

الميزة التنافسية: تُقاس تنافسية الشركات وفقاً لعوامل متعددة، مثل: تحسين التمرکز السوقي، معدلات الاحتفاظ بالعملاء، نمو قاعدة العملاء، رسوخ العلامة التجارية، وغيرها.

جامعة البحرين



قسم الإدارة والتسويق

كلية إدارة الأعمال

أهمية التسويق الريادي على النمو والميزة التنافسية في الشركات المتوسطة والصغيرة

أطروحة مقدمة كجزء من متطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في إدارة الأعمال

اعداد

زينب عبد الرسول
٢٠١١٣٦٧٤

اشراف

د. رعد العثالي
أستاذ مساعد
جامعة البحرين

مملكة البحرين

فبراير ٢٠٢٥