

**AFRICA UNIVERSITY**

(A United Methodist-Related Institution)

**ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT ON  
SALES VOLUME IN ZIMBABWE AUTOMOBILE BATTERY  
INDUSTRY: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE CONTENT  
DEVELOPMENT**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF EXECUTIVE MASTERS IN  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND  
MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

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## Abstract

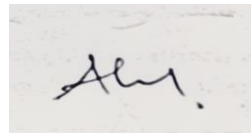
The study assesses the impact of social media content strategies on sales volume in the Zimbabwe automobile battery industry. The study objectives were to examine the effect of social media engagement on sales volume; assess the influence of promotional offers on social media on sales volume; evaluate the impact of influencer endorsements on social media on sales volume and to determine the effect of posting frequency on social media on sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe. The study was conducted in Harare and four (4) major players in the sector were chosen, namely, Exide, Battery Warehouse, Raylite and Ducelier. The study was underpinned by the Uses and Gratification Theory and AIDA model. The study adopted a quantitative approach, explanatory and descriptive research designs, stratified and systematic random sampling techniques and survey questionnaires to gather data from 196 customers. Data was analysed quantitatively using SPSS software to produce descriptive statistics in the form of tables and graphs. Correlation and regression analysis was also performed to ascertain the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The study results showed that the independent variables (ENG, PO, EI and PF) have statistically significant but weak positive association with sales volume in the Zimbabwe automobile battery industry at least for now. It was thus concluded that though the social media content strategies and sales volume are statistically significant, their effect is relatively weak to contribute to the model, particularly IE and PF which were excluded in the regression analysis for their insignificant effect on sales volume. Nevertheless, all the alternative hypotheses were not rejected. It was thus recommended that the management of automobile battery firms should invest more in social media content strategies that encourage two-way communication and provide direct value to customers; should partner with industry-relevant and technical stakeholders, such as , battery specialists and auto-reviewers to promote influencer endorsements and subsequently boost sales volume; engage experienced experts for developing quality content that is more targeted and able to track actual sales from social media campaigns; build capacity in social media content strategy, customer engagement as well as analytics for better execution of campaigns and should integrate social media campaigns with offline channels, such as, trade shows, workshops as well as partnerships with auto-service providers to enhance effectiveness. Future studies should therefore attempt to explore other variables, such as, product quality, brand loyalty, pricing and after-sales service to understand their effect on sales volume. Further, qualitative or mixed methods should be used to use different research instruments to gather data from different participants. In addition, similar studies should expand to other sectors and regions.

**Keywords:** Social media, social media content, social media marketing, sales volume.

## Declaration Page

I state that this dissertation is my own effort excluding where it has been cited and accredited. The research has not been submitted before nor will it be submitted for the award of a degree to another institution.

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## **Acknowledgments**

To all who contributed to the success of this dissertation, I am forever grateful.

## **Dedication Page**

To my Wife and Kids.

## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

AIDA	-	Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action
AUREC	-	Africa University Research Ethics Committee
ENG	-	Engagement
FGC	-	Firm-Generated Content
IE	-	Influencer Endorsements
PF	-	Posting Frequency
PO	-	Promotional Offers
SMEs	-	Small-to- Medium Enterprises
SOME-Q	-	Social Media Content Quality
SMM	-	Social Media Marketing
SV	-	Sales Volume
UGC	-	User-Generated Content
VSEs	-	Very Small Enterprises

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The study sought to assess the impact of social media content strategies in enhancing sales volume with particular focus on the Zimbabwean automobile battery industry. This chapter however covered the background to the study, problem statement, assumptions, hypothesis, significance, delimitations as well as limitations of the study, among other pertinent issues.

### **1.2 Background to the Study**

Coined the information age, this era has unquestionably altered business practices and consumer behaviour, worldwide (Akkor & Ozyuksel, 2020). In essence, consumers way of shopping, interaction, communication and consumption of information have notably and tremendously shifted in the recent past (Ndekwa, 2025; Thu & Phuong, 2021). Information has become consumers new currency. Such a development has been principally ascribed to the exponential growth of internet and mobile penetration as well as various social media applications across the globe (Serhat & Mehmet, 2025). Customers have become increasingly key influencing factors for peer reviews and expert opinion for sales generation, prompting many automobile battery players to go beyond social media presence through effective social media content (Dwidienawati, Tjahjana, Abdinagoro, & Gandasari, 2020). Fundamentally, social media content entails creating and sharing valuable,

relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience and to ultimately drive sales (Chinakidzwa & Phiri, 2020).

The United States of America's (USA) retail sector spent nearly US\$180 billion on social media investment in 2014, an increase from US\$40 billion spent in 2013 (Nuseir & Aljumah, 2020). Global retail giants, such as, McDonald have been expansively building online communities and using various social media platforms to reinforce brand messages, entertain, educate and cement long term relationships with customers and this have been positively linked to sales performance (Dara, 2020). Correspondingly, Amazon.com, the largest online retailer registered US\$80 billion by 2011, in market value, denoting 41% more than USA's huge and successful retail giants, Target and Kohl's 2800 physical stores, combined by widely using various social media strategies (Masengu, 2021).

By the same token, in China, approximately 90% retailers use more than one social media strategy, and this have been found to improve their performance and competitive edge (Islami & Tiara, 2020). Equally, in Belgium, social media marketing as well as content marketing are commonly digital marketing strategies employed by hoteliers and have been found to be driving room occupancy through social media reviews (Pelsmacker, Tilburg & Holthof, 2019). Likewise, in United Arab Emirates (UAE), reputable brands like Coca-Cola, Nike, Rolex and New York Times, among others, have adopted and implemented content marketing effectively to bolster consumer awareness as well as boost sales, trust and loyalty amongst customers (Hollebeek & Macky, 2020).

Similar to other developed economies, Africa has not been an exclusion in embracing social media marketing channels. As confirmed by the World Bank (2020), the growth in mobile penetration as well as an investment in more than USD\$600b in the telecommunication sector, have facilitated tremendous usage in social media marketing strategies in Africa. Using various social media marketing channels, businesses have managed to expand beyond their geographical markets, to share content, be efficient as well as enhance sales performance (Hisrich, Soltanifar, Hughes & Gocke, 2020). Particularly, Kalei (2020) and Moyo and Tengeh (2021) note that many businesses in economies, such as, Rwanda, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, South Africa as well as Tanzania, have adopted social media marketing strategies to boost sales, increase market share and transcend beyond borders. (Moyo & Tengeh, 2021).

Just like other African nations, Zimbabwe has equally taken tremendous efforts towards investing in technological infrastructure to promote social media usage, nationwide (Chinakidzwa & Phiri, 2020), through high internet and mobile penetration rate (Mutingwende, 2022). Such developments have been undeniably continued to facilitate the adoption of various social media marketing strategies in the country in general and in the automotive battery sector, in particular (POTRAZ Fourth Quarter Performance Report, 2021).

The Zimbabwean automotive battery segment is highly competitive with major players being Exide under Chloride, Battery Warehouse (Powerstart), Raylite as well as Battery World (Ducelier) (Kuhudzai, 2022). These players offer a wide product portfolio to both individual and corporate customers.

Further, many retail stores, such as Halsteds, N Richards and Company, Transerv and Electrosales players carry these product lines under the dealership banner. Mapakame (2021) however laments that due to economic pressures, categorised by low disposable income, high operating costs as well as recurrent power outages, the Zimbabwean automotive battery sector has been performing dismally, posting low sales and revenues despite the adoption of at least one social media marketing strategy or platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. For instance, Exide Express's battery sales declined by 3% in 2023, by 8% in 2024 and 3% in the third quarter of 2025 despite undertaking intensive battery clinics on social media (Art Corporation Limited, 2025). Likewise, Raylite suffered a considerable 10% sales decline in 2024 compared to 2023 figures (Raylite Batteries Zimbabwe, 2024) and further posted 12% drop in sales in 2025 third quarter period (Raylite Batteries Zimbabwe, 2025). By the same breadth, Battery Warehouse recorded 15% decrease in 2024 sales figures comparable to previous year performance (Battery Warehouse, 2024). Similarly, during the same period, Ducelier registered 18% drop in sales below 2023 figure (Central African Batteries, 2024). This development has raised some questions to the researcher as to whether social media marketing carries the content that enhance sales, particularly in the automotive battery sector in Zimbabwe.

There are no studies that been conducted specifically to examine social media content impact on sales volume in the automobile battery sector in Zimbabwe. Although there has been an attempt by Wang et al (2020), in the US automobile sector, it focused the relationship between firm-generated content (FGC) and user-generated content (UGC) as well as traditional media on firm

performance in the automobile sector in general and not battery segment in particular. Further, some studies carried out in developed economies like US and Europe and other African economies, present geographical gap compared to Zimbabwe's market dynamics, consumer behaviour and social media usage. Further, the existing studies present sectoral gap as they focused on retail (clothing), telecommunications, as well as electronics small to medium enterprises (SMEs), while none focussed on the automobile battery sector. In addition, the studies present content-type gaps as they emphasise platform choice and engagement (Liadeli et al., 2023), but few directly assess content characteristics or dimensions in relation to sales volumes in emerging markets. Furthermore, the studies present some practical gaps as the automobile battery sector in Zimbabwe is faced with intense competition from imported brands, making effective digital content strategies an important but under-researched area for sustaining sales. It is thus against this background that this study examines the impact of social media content on sales volume of automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe, particularly adopting engagement, promotional offers, influencer endorsements and posting frequency as dimensions of social media content.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

In the recent past, the underperforming Zimbabwean economy has forced businesses, the automobile battery firms included to significantly cut their above-the-line marketing budgets. Alternatively, these firms have extensively invested and adopted social media marketing on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, X and YouTube, among others, to support their sales efforts.

However, the automobile battery sector continues to experience dwindling sales figures. This development suggests a potential disconnect between their social media activities and effective sales conversion. The specific characteristics of social media content, rather than mere platform presence, and their direct impact on sales volume in the automobile battery market remain unassessed.

Existing studies have only focussed on different geographical contexts with different market dynamics, different sectors, such as, retail and telecommunications, and have failed to directly assess the impact of specific content dimensions, vis-à-vis engagement, promotions, influencer endorsements and posting frequency on sales volumes, particularly in emerging markets, like Zimbabwe, in the automobile battery sector. It is therefore against this backdrop that the study examines the impact of social media content on sales volume of automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe, particularly adopting engagement, promotional offers, influencer endorsements and posting frequency as dimensions of social media content.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- (i) To examine the effect of social media engagement on sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.
- (ii) To assess the influence of promotional offers on social media on sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.
- (iii) To evaluate the impact of influencer endorsements on social media on sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.

- (iv) To determine the effect of posting frequency on social media on sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The specific questions of this study are to:

- (i) Does engagement on social media engagement has impact on sales volume in the automobile batteries in Zimbabwe?
- (ii) Do promotional offers on social media have impact on sales volume in the automobile batteries in Zimbabwe?
- (iii) Do influencer endorsements on social media have impact on sales volume in the automobile batteries in Zimbabwe?
- (iv) Does posting frequency on social media has impact on sales volume in the automobile batteries in Zimbabwe?

## **1.6 Assumptions/Hypothesis**

### **1.6.1 Assumptions of the Study**

The study assumed that:

- (i) The target audience will be receptive to marketing messages delivered through social media.
- (ii) The target audience has reliable and affordable internet access to engage with social media content.
- (iii) The target audience own smartphones, enabling them to access social media.
- (iv) The target audience has some level of awareness of the major automobile battery brands in Zimbabwe.

- (v) Relevant data, such as, social media analytics and consumer behaviour data, is accessible and reliable.
- (vi) The sample of respondents will sufficiently be well-informed to provide meaningful and useable responses.
- (vii) The respondents will provide objective as well as honest responses, views, attitudes and experiences in relation to social media marketing to proffer quality findings of the study.

### **1.6.2 Hypotheses of the Study**

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

- H1:** Higher levels of social media engagement are positively associated with sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.
- H2:** Promotional offers on social media are positively associated with sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.
- H3:** Influencer endorsements on social media are positively associated with sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.
- H4:** Posting frequency on social media is positively associated with sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study will be significant to several constituencies. These include the researcher, the automotive battery sector, Africa University and users.

### **1.7.1 To the Researcher**

The research can contribute to the growing body of knowledge on social media marketing, particularly in emerging markets like Zimbabwe. The study will assist the researcher to gain knowledge on social media marketing, social media content development and consumer behaviour. The research can identify gaps in the existing literature and suggest potential avenues for future research.

### **1.7.2 To Automobile Battery Firms**

The insights from the research will help marketing managers to have an in-depth understanding of this increasingly important aspect of marketing communication and its impact on consumer behaviour. The study will assist marketing managers to know what must constitute media content for it to be turned into sales. By understanding the most effective social media content developing strategies, companies can optimize their marketing efforts and maximize return on social media marketing investment. Effective social media campaigns can help build strong brand awareness, improve sales, enhance brand reputation, and foster customer loyalty. By leveraging social media to drive engagement and conversions, companies can significantly boost sales and revenue. There is need to go beyond social media presence.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

The study sought to examine the impact of social media content on sales volume of automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe. Four (4) major players in the sector were chosen, namely, Exide, Battery Warehouse, Raylite and

Ducelier based in Harare only. Other players in the battery industry, such as, solar and lithium batteries retailers were not part of the study. Furthermore, Harare was geographically selected due to its diversity in terms of customers who converge in the country's capital for various reasons.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The research was militated by the following limitations:

- Access to information from the organisations in the automobile battery industry.
- Time constraints. The time required to carry out the research was limited due to other commitments.
- The findings of the research may not be directly generalizable to other industries with different cultural, economic and technological contexts.

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter looked at the background of the study, statement of the problem, the research objectives, and delimitations of the study, among other important issues related to the research. This chapter critically reviewed related literature relevant to social media marketing, social media content development, and its connection with consumer buying behaviour and sales. The related theories that underpinned the study, empirical studies as well as the research gaps were also covered.

### **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

The Uses and Gratification Theory and AIDA model underpinned this study. The basic premise of the uses and gratifications theory is that individuals seek out media that fulfil their needs and leads to ultimate gratification (Lariscy et al., 2011). The AIDA model is widely used in marketing to explain the stages a consumer goes through before making a purchase. It can be applied to analyse how social media content captures attention, generates interest, creates desire, and ultimately drives action (sales).

#### **2.2.1 Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT)**

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) have its roots in media studies. The theory is premised on the notion that audiences are attracted and held by media and content that satisfy their psychological and social needs. Various research dating back to the hundred years ago examined the motives and

selection patterns of audiences for the new mass media that included radio, newspapers and comedy. Gratifications spanned across interest from music, news, cartoons etc (Hajdarmataj & Paksoy, 2022). Windahl and MyQuail (1997) asserts that's according to the uses and gratifications approach, it is necessary to focus on mass media content to meet needs and provide satisfaction.

People choose media based on four categories of needs that include personal relations, diversion, personal identity and surveillance. Surveillance needs refer to information that assist an individual to accomplish something. With the proliferation of social media, the uses and gratifications theory has gained more importance. Quan-Hasse and Young (2004) acknowledge that the uses and gratifications theory provides a basis of what motivates users to adopt social media as well as the gratifications they derive from their use. They also noted that individual reasons for adoption of social media may vary between individuals. With ongoing research "new gratifications" are being discovered as well as the importance of some gratifications. Some social media platforms offer more than one gratification.

Okazaki et al (2007) noted that successfully contacting consumers via social media is predicted to show great returns for marketers in the coming years. Similarly, marketers must develop social media content that bring gratifications to users of social media content that is converted to sales. Consumers actively seek information that relate to product information, product availability, prices and promotions from social media handles.

Whiting and Williams (2017) found out that eighty percent of respondents in their study reported that they use social media to seek out information about sales, deals or products or finding out information about business. Therefore, the ability to provide such surveillance needs provide gratification with an economic return on the business.

### **2.2.2 The AIDA Model**

Kusumawati (2019) assert that it is vital for business to understand the decision-making process that consumers undergo when making decisions to purchase goods and services. Knowledge of this process will assist the business to find strategies to influence the purchasing decisions that consumers may make at each of the stage during the process. The AIDA model is one model that explains the process of consumer purchasing decision making. The AIDA model is widely regarded as the gold standard for gauging the stages involved in consumer purchasing decision (Purbaningsih et al., 2022). The model was propagated by Elmo Lewis but has been reviewed multiple times in marketing and public relations (Makaure, Oni & Omonona, 2021).

Mackey (2005) explains that AIDA consists of Awareness (attentive to customer); Interest (improving customers' interest by focusing on profit and benefit and it is not focused on feature like in traditional advertisement); Desire (convincing the customers that the interest of a product or service can fulfil their needs); Action (main customer acts and or purchase products and services) (Li dan Yu, 2013). Hadiyati (2016) asserts that according to the needs of AIDA model, the aim of marketing is to attract potential consumers'

attention, to increase the consumers' interest and desire to do the last act (purchase), that is, the purchase intention.

Social media content must be developed in such a way that ensures that every piece of content has a purpose and is helping to move customers to have an intention to buy. Hassan et al (2015) noted that the AIDA model has different levels. The cognitive level is when the user's attention can be drawn. It is the first step in the communication process where the consumer needs to know about the existence of such a service. At the affective level, consumers have an interest in the services offered and in finding out more about what is being offered. This leads to the desire to acquire the product or service. At the level of behaviour, the action takes place. The consumer uses the service provided as a valued resource. Lagrosen (2005) argues that the AIDA model is practical in the context of social media usage especially for the "IDA" component.

### **2.2.3 Relevance of Theoretical Framework to the Study**

Zhang and Benyoucef (2016) assert that conducting business on social media platforms is expected to become the most widely used e-commerce platform. Dell Computers claim that it made nearly \$6.5 million by selling computers on X between 2007 and 2010 (Aydin, 2021). As a result, several businesses have worked to establish a strong presence and conduct real sales transactions on social media.

Studies based on UGT identified several gratifications that an individual achieves from using social media, that are relevant in s-commerce context (Yang & Li, 2014). These may include but not limited to information sharing,

habitual pass time, relaxing entertainment, escapism, cool and new trend, companionship, professional advancement, social interaction and meeting new people. However, Aydin (2021) summarise these gratifications into three basic needs, namely cognitive needs, like information seeking; affective/hedonic needs like escape, entertainment and passing time as well as social needs, such as socialisation gratification, cool or new trend.

Ultimately business owners, digital marketers and entrepreneurs vying to participate in social commerce must include these needs in developing social media content if they intend to gain economic returns to social media marketing. Having generated content that encompasses these needs as posited by Aydin (2021) the content must attract the attention of the users through various strategies, generate interest for your content or product or service in the mind of social media users, create a strong desire for the product or service by emphasizing its value and most importantly encourage the audience to take a specific action, such as making a purchase, signing up, or visiting a website. Yadav, Tripathi and Shukla (2025) concludes that appropriate application of the AIDA model increases audience engagement and the number of conversions in significant numbers. In the case of the attention stage, it would be to raise awareness and highlight a problem or need that possible customers may not have had knowledge of yet.

## **2.3 Key Constructs**

### **2.3.1 Social Media**

The concept of social media is multifaceted in scope due to the accelerated pace of technological innovations in the recent past. Social media has come to mean different things to different people. However, Aichner, Grunfelder Maurer and Jegeni (2021) regard social media a broad term that describes an array of online platforms, which include blogs, collaborative projects, business networks, enterprise social networks, microblogs, forums, photo sharing, social bookmarking, products review, social gaming as well as video sharing, among others. Aptly put, social media simply refers to an online gathering by the society or communities for a particular purpose (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Buttressing this view, Moedeen et al. (2024) regard social media as artificial intelligent driven platforms which allow high-quality content creation, interactive engagement, seamless multimedia sharing, fostering global connectivity as well as data-driven personalisation.

The advent of the internet has played an important role in bringing societies online to discuss matters that affect them (Kanyosa, 2025). Therefore, within the context of business, the business community make use of various online platforms to engage, converse, inform and attract prospective customers to do business with them. These different social media platforms have become important media for communication and have distinct characteristics, purpose and impact that firms should consider (Vingirayi, 2021). Lee & Jang (2019) argue that social media provides businesses with a cost-effective communication platform that facilitates a two-way dialogue with its

customers. In essence, the widespread use of mobile devices and social media has made mobile social media a more effective tool for carrying out marketing practices (Vingirayi, 2021). To this end, social media has arisen as a powerful marketing tool for marketers to satisfy the needs and expectations of customers which result in improved sales (Makoni & Chikobvu, 2021). In light of that, however, the study considered the major social media platforms which are predominantly used by automobile battery firms. These include among others, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok, as well as X (formerly Twitter).

### **2.3.2 Social Media Content**

One of the crucial features of social media has been its emphasis on generated content. This can be in the form sharing their perspectives, videos, photos, updates as well as articles with a global audience (Ausat, 2023). According to Kishokanth and Szymkowiak (2020), social media content refers to the creation, distribution as well as sharing important and timely information that engages customers at the opportune time of their buying decision processes, resulting in sales outcome. Put other way, Halligan and Shah (2021), also termed content marketing, social media content as an inbound marketing strategy for customers who have already done their research on a brand or product and can benefit from invaluable content to add to their decision making. Social media content is a digital environment where businesses build long-term relationships with its customers through communication without selling products directly but to amplify sales through such efforts (Holliman & Rowley, 2022). Resultantly, this communication that is created between the

business and customers boosts the brand's perception, creating engagement and trust, driving sales for the long run (Hollebeek & Macky, 2020). Buttressing this view, Vinerean (2023) cements that social media content is an important way of connecting as well as building strong relationships with customers owing to its unobtrusive nature.

Mittal and Shakya (2021) argue that as customers continue to live in the information era, providing information that adds value to them has certainly become increasingly important for sales performance. In today's fast-paced, digital as well as content world, content marketing has grown to be a powerful marketing strategy than ever before (Sundaram, Sharma & Shakya, 2020). By the same token, Upadhyay, Raghuvanshi and Raghav (2020) endorse that irrespective of marketing strategies adopted by organisations, content marketing, has been a critical element of the overall strategy and not an afterthought, as all forms of marketing unquestionably demand high-quality content. Essentially, Ali and Choudhury (2021) argue that as novel technologies have been constantly emerging in the recent years, traditional marketing has been rendered less and less effective. Notably, for reasons, such as, reduced costs, improved sales and revenues, customer loyalty, a number of businesses have been turning to content marketing (Jain & Gupta, 2021).

Paradova (2020) also reasons that content marketing has tremendously allowed marketers to swiftly develop, distribute and promote their businesses, products, services and brands, using numerous social networks, worldwide. Businesses have consequently bolstered their customer relations and posted positive sales figures (Jain & Gupta, 2021). However, Kalei (2020) argues

that, as is the trend in Africa, most social media sites queries are hardly responded timeously leading to customer frustration.

In light of the above definitions, social media content can therefore be understood as providing valuable and timely information to both the business or customers in order to make informed purchasing and business decisions that enhance business sales. However, Wang et al 2020) argue that social media content is either user-generated (UGC) or firm-generated (FGC). UGC refers to the content or information created by users in order to share opinions with other users. On the other hand, as the name suggests, FGC entails to content posted by firm or by its representatives on its official social media platforms for its target customers. Ausat (2023) argues that owing to the interactive nature of social media, users can significantly engage, communicate and converse on current events, brands and trends. In the recent past, social media has considerably emerged as the strategic new platforms for offering direct and active interaction between customers and businesses facilitating real-time communication, marketing and promotion, relationship building, advocacy, customer insights as well as and positive word of mouth (Shahbaznezhad, Dolan & Rashidirad, 2021). Accordingly, both UGC and FGC was adopted as social media content in this study.

### **2.3.3 Social Media Content Strategies**

The Firm-Generated Content theory asserts that firm-generated content (FGC) is a multi-dimensional concept. With regard to its content features, firm-generated content is classified into informative as well as persuasive in nature, which largely reflect entertainment value and information value

(Demmers, Weltevreden & van Dolen, 2020). However, marketers split social media content into information, entertainment, social as well as remuneration content and content user interaction, such as, likes and shares, differs according to the type of content (Chandrasekaran, Annamalai & De, 2019). Thus, social media content strategies entail content created by a brand on its official social media page but also include any cue that is deliberately designed to convey the brand's tone of voice and personality Colicev, Kumar & O'Connor, 2019).

Previous studies have revealed that the amount and category of content published on social media have an influence on sales performance through customer engagement (Labrecque et al., 2020). In essence, the degree to which social media content strategies affect sales through customer engagement differs. First of all, not all content strategies stimulate the same level of customer engagement and thus sales (Liu et al., 2021; Dhaoui & Webster, 2021; Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021). Further, Chandrasekaran et al. (2019) claim that the level of customer engagement varies by content category, with remuneration and social content category depicting considerable differential effects in the number of likes and shares. For instance, in the study by Dolan et al. (2019), informational content was found to have a positive influence on the number of likes and shares and then sales, while there was no evidence that informational content influenced the comments, while neither entertainment nor relational content, in the form of comment and then sales.

While the above looked at one content strategy, in particular, engagement through likes and shares, in this study, however, as a multi-dimensional construct, social media content was measured in terms of engagement, promotional offers, influencer endorsements as well as posting frequency as the independent variables, acting as proxies against sales volume.

#### **2.3.4 Social Media Marketing**

Tung, Dung and Thai (2018), argue that due to the proliferation of technologies, social media marketing has emerged as the newest communication trend at the disposal of brand managers. Essentially, Dwivedi et al (2020) allude that social media marketing entails a new business practice of engaging with promotion stuff, services and ideas through the latest social media. On the other hand, Li, Larimo and Leonidou (2021) argue that social media marketing is a type of communication that creates a connection between businesses and its customers. In light of that, Sagtas (2022) asserts that brands or businesses are using social media marketing to directly market, promote, and sell a variety of their goods and services at a price that is at least unthinkably cheaper than it has ever been. However, carefully developing social media content that trends, entertains and customized for different customer categories or social media platforms has become critical to stimulate sales (Liadeli et al., 2023).

Social media marketing has made it possible for businesses to gather customers comments directly from various platforms and also providing customers access to the brand (Callista, 2021). Further, the adoption of social media in marketing has made it possible for businesses to harness long term

relationships with the target market (Chusnaini & Rasyid, 2022). Users are offered a forum that enable them to ask questions, register complaints as well as make their voices heard and known. Moreover, it offers opportunities for brands to modify, react as well as adapt its procedures or products (ElAydi, 2018). The various social media platforms include Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat, among others (Kakumbi & Phiri, 2022). Each social media platform has own unique features that makes it more appealing to use than others. Additionally, customers can be able to view a company's multichannel message on various platforms (Karen & Zai, 2022). By and large, social media marketing has empowered businesses to achieve increased sales performance (Mazikana, 2023). Therefore, within this context, social media marketing can be understood as the adoption of various social media tools or platforms for the purpose of marketing the business to make profit or enhance sales.

### **2.3.5 Sales Volume**

Performance has been a universal construct within the business context for a long time, carrying different measurement dimensions, rendering it difficult to define. Nonetheless, Islami and Tiara (2020) define performance as level of accomplishment of results through undertaking given tasks. Therefore, sales volume performance is the achievement level of results in quantity terms (Pelsmacker, Tilburg & Holthof, 2021). Likewise, Belamhitou (2021) as well as Olusegun, Olympus and Olakunle (2020) agree that sales volume performance is the meeting of objectives in numerical or number terms within a given period of time by executing a set of strategies. It is a non-financial

way of measuring business performance (Amin, 2021; Giri, Thomassey & Zeng, 2019). In this study, however, sales volume will be represented by number of batteries sold or units sold amongst firms in the automobile sector in Zimbabwe. This is the dependent variable of the study.

### **2.3.6 Social Media Marketing and Sales Volume**

Ghoshal (2019) argues that in this age of social media networking sites, such as, Facebook and X, social media marketing has increasingly evolved to be the most crucial component of marketing strategy for the growth as well as survival of many retailers, including those in the automobile battery segment. The efficacy of social media marketing at boosting sales performance has thus intensified rapidly as social media thrives and penetrates deeper into consumer societies (Emeh, Ahaiwe & Okoro, 2019). As a result, customers now heavily rely on social media to acquire information on potential purchases, as firms utilise social media to promote their brands and interact with existing and potential customers; and improve sales numbers (Anne, 2020).

Studies by Muller and Peres (2021) as well as Joachim (2020) revealed that social media marketing positively influences sales volume. A significant number of customers pointed out that they visit the retailer's business pages before they purchase products and can engage with other customers through Instagram. Further, a study carried out by Adam, Yazeed, Dantsoho, Abdulkadir and Gemu (2021) discovered that social media is emerging to become a contemporary powerful medium for communicating, exchanging content as well as collaborating with customers, virtually. In this regard,

retailers adopting an active and engagement approach in social media have witnessed a positive and significant relationship with sales performance. As Vinerean and Opreana (2019) bemoan, soon, marketers and entrepreneurs alike need to be abreast with the changing business trends or they risk being out of business. Correspondingly, Syaifullah, Syaifudin, Sukendar & Junaedi (2021), exposed that particularly during the onset of the Covid 19 crisis, social media marketing had a positive link to the business performance of retailers, especially in enhancing sales quantities, productivity as well as customer relationships. Nevertheless, the findings indicated that social media marketing use was greatly influenced by perceived usefulness, compatibility, and perceived ease-of-use (Syaifullah et al., 2021).

Owino and Mutinda (2022) conducted a study on the influence of social media marketing platforms on sales performance of Safaricom Public Limited Company, Kenya. Technology. Using the descriptive research design and Safaricom Plc's marketing department, was the study population. The study's population consisted of 10 sales managers and 200 sales representatives from the marketing department of the organization. A simple random sampling method was used to select the respondents. There were 210 respondents in the sample, with 10 sales managers and 200 sales representatives. A questionnaire in a structured form was used in collecting data. Airtel Kenya was the organization where pilot study of 34 participants was done to evaluate the questionnaires' validity and reliability. Social media marketing platforms was found to have a positive and significant influence on the sales performance.

Similarly, Lawal and Adejuwon (2023) conducted a study on social media marketing and sales performance of selected small and medium enterprises in South-West Nigeria. The study examined the effect of social media marketing on the success of selected small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the South-West region of Nigeria. The study used a descriptive survey approach. Small and medium-sized enterprises that are official registered in South-West Nigeria SME offices made up the study population. The sample size of 376 was arrived at with the help of the Raosoft Sample Size calculator. Data was collected from the managers of the selected SMEs. Using questionnaire as the primary data collection method. With a 95% level of confidence, the PLS-SEM results showed that customization ( $\beta = 0.252$ ,  $t = 1.970$ ) and social interaction ( $\beta = 0.472$ ,  $t = 4.229$ ) are statistically significant, while branded entertainment ( $\beta = 0.017$ ,  $t = 1.1101$ ), customer engagement ( $\beta = 0.065$ ,  $t = 0.493$ ), and electronic word of mouth ( $\beta = 0.093$ ,  $t = 0.548$ ) are not. The data analysis showed a positive relationship between social media marketing and sales growth in the Southwest of Nigeria. The study found that SMEs in Southwest Nigeria saw a significant increase in sales after implementing social media marketing strategies, and it is recommended that business owners should build stronger relationships with their customers and produce more engaging content on their social media channels geared towards their brand to improve their sales performance.

#### **2.4 Social Media Engagement and Sales Volume**

Social media engagement is a multi-layered construct important for communication, appreciating user behaviour as well as predicting trends in

online settings (Kaur & Singh, 2023). It encompasses various aspects, such as, interactions on social media platforms, exhibiting its role in effective communication between business organisations and its customers (Ruiz & Cabigan, 2022). To this end, as Subramaniam (2020) argues, social media engagement, in today's digital ecosystem, has become increasingly an important strategic driver of sales performance. As Ozkent (2022) claims, the number of social media users has continued to rise yearly, standing at 5.25 billion active users, with Facebook commanding approximately 3 billion, YouTube (2.5 billion), Instagram (2 billion) as well as TikTok (1 billion), as at January 2025. This development has greatly necessitated engagement on various social media platforms. Resultantly, social media has evolved tremendously beyond being a communication platform to be a marketplace where brands converse with their customers, build loyalty as well as arouse demand (Liadeli et al., 2023). As Trunfio, Della Lucia and Campana (2021) argue, engagement on social media through comments, shares, likes, shares as well as content interaction go beyond visibility towards actively influencing purchase decisions. In that regard, understanding the relationship between social media engagement and sales performance is therefore critical for profitability as well as long-term brand sustainability (Barari, Eisend & Jain, 2025).

Dahlgren and Hill (2020) define social media engagement as a brand-user interaction on social media platforms. Wahyuni, Arifiansyah, Meidasari and Siskawati (2024) claim that numerous social media platforms, such as, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have been used to offer a unique interactive ecosystem where customer engagement acts as a proxy of possible sales.

Fundamentally, an engaged audience is more likely to convert into purchasing customers, especially when a brand succeeds in building communities of loyalty and trust (Rowi, Wahyudi, Oswari & Purwoko, 2024). Supporting this assertion, Wang, Yu and Foutz (2021) in their study corroborate that brands associated with strong and consistent social media presence report higher sales volumes. By the same token, Liadeli et al (2023) concede that customer engagement through owned media channels, like Facebook, positively impact on sales results, stressing the strategic importance of digital interaction.

Apart from the alluded contribution, social media engagement provides targeted marketing capabilities to organisations (Drummond, O'Toole & McGrath, 2020). Contrary to traditional advertising, social media platforms, such as, Instagram and Facebook utilise algorithms that enable businesses to offer customised messages according to their demographics, hereby enhancing relevance and conversion (Ali & Zeebaree, 2025). In equal measure, social media facilitates a two-way communication, allowing businesses to gather invaluable insights regarding consumer needs and expectations or gratifications. In addition to enhancing sales, such feedback loop significantly promotes product development as well as customer service responsiveness (Barari et al., 2025). Therefore, understanding engagement types on numerous platforms play an important role in enhancing engagements like replies, likes, retweets as well as quotes (Dahlgren & Hill, 2020).

Nyagadza (2022) argues that the viral potential of social media content also amplifies sales performance of businesses. Likewise, Krisprimandoyo, Sufa,

Wardeni and Widiyanto (2024) revealed that a significant focus on engagement and interaction on social media platforms enhance brand perception and subsequently its sales. Customers appreciated brands that actively engage them with interactive content on social media, responding to queries, concerns as well as fostering a sense of community. In fact, through interaction, brand visibility is increased and then translated to sales figures. For instance, a study by Wang et al (2021) exposed that interaction between consumers via social media platforms significantly improved offline vehicle sales, stressing the tangible sales influence of engagement strategies. However, Huang and Pape (2020) caution that not all social media engagements convert directly to sales. Engagement metrics, such as, shares and likes may be sometimes misleading, without any direct financial results (Candogan & Drakopoulos, 2020). Nevertheless, disregarding engagement has the detriment of overlooking its long-term profitability beyond instant conversion by fostering brand awareness, strengthening customer relationships as well as enhancing reputational capital (Liadeli et al., 2023). Thus, businesses that deliberately invest in nurturing open engagement with customers on social media are more likely to promote a sustained profitability and growth (Nkegbe & Abor, 2023). To this end, it will be hence be hypothesised that:

***H<sub>1</sub>: Higher levels of social media engagement are positively associated with sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.***

## **2.5 Promotional Offers on Social Media and Sales Volume**

The everchanging terrain of modern commerce has considerably acknowledged the critical role promotional offers on social media are playing towards influencing sales (Ramachandran, 2023). Essentially, in an age characterised by social media engagement, many businesses have continued to leverage numerous platforms, such as, Instagram, Facebook and X(Twitter) not simply for brand visibility, but equally as vital channels for driving consumer behaviour and subsequently sales performance (Pentina, Guilloux & Micu, 2020).

Promotional offers refer to short-term marketing incentives offered by businesses to customers to encourage them to purchase or repeat purchase of products or services, attract prospective customers, stimulate demand or boost sales within a given period of time (Bondarenko & Vyshnivska, 2023). Thus, promotional offers communicated on social media are essentially designed to draw customers attention as well as arouse purchasing decisions. As Alexandru and Andrei-Dorian (2024) assert, promotional offers include, discounts, exclusive offers as well as limited-time deals that encourage instant purchase action. According to Cialdini (2021), it is through such incentives that customers are psychologically exploited by scarcity and urgency principles triggering them to act impulsively to avoid missing out on a perceived opportunity. Similarly, the closeness of social media communications creates a sense of real-time engagement, prompting consumers to make impromptu purchasing decisions, thereby boosting sales volume (Kapoor, Dwivedi, Piercy & Reynolds, 2021).

A study by Bondarenko and Vyshnivska (2023) has shown a strong association between promotional offers on social media and increase in sales volume. In fact, a business that actively deploys social media promotions often register significant higher sales during the promotional periods comparable to non-promotional periods (Trunfio et al., 2021). Ellickson, Kar and Reeder (2023) however argue that promotional offers effectiveness is significantly improved when augmented with targeted marketing strategies that customise promotional messages for a specific demographic segment, promoting relevance and resonance. Targeted promotional offers generate higher engagement rates and subsequently more sales volume, as they provide unique interests as well as needs of the audience (Kapoor et al., 2021). Notwithstanding that, Liu and Karahanna (2020) warn that the inherent limitations of promotional offers should be taken into consideration as they may be misleading, creating a spike in sales just for a short period and not sustainable sales growth. Further, over reliance on promotions can lead to brand equity erosion and consumers value perceptions, potentially weakening long-term profitability (Adewole, 2024). Nonetheless, it is hypothesised that:

***H<sub>2</sub>: Promotional offers on social media are positively associated with sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.***

## **2.6 Influencer Endorsements on Social Media and Sales Volume**

Jhawar, Kumar and Varshney (2023) argue that the growing realm of social media has given rise a paradigm shift in marketing paradigms, predominantly through influencer endorsements. This trend has gained considerable traction in recent past, as brands seek to leverage the substantial followings of social

media influencers to augment their visibility and subsequently drive sales volume (Xu, 2025). However, Kutz (2024) argues that an investigation of the relationship between social media influencers and sales volume has shown the subtle dynamics, providing key insights into the efficacy of such marketing strategies.

Fundamentally, influencer marketing involves collaborations with popular individuals with a massive social media following that promote products to their audience (Migkos, 2025). The reach as well as engagement levels connected with these influencers lead to amplified brand awareness and, eventually, increased sales (Kour, 2025). A study by Xu (2023) confirms that influencer endorsements can promote consumer brand trust as well as credibility, which are key tenets in their purchasing process. Essentially, many consumers often perceive influencers as relatable as well as authentic, characteristics that can considerably promote purchasing intentions (Moodley & Ntobaki, 2024).

Hugh Wilkie, Dolan, Harrigan, & Gray (2022) have exposed that quantitative analyses have found a positive relationship between influencer marketing campaigns and sales volume. For example, brands that engage with influencers featuring prominently within their target demographic frequently report notable increases in sales following endorsements. These endorsements typically manifest in the form of product placements, sponsored posts or dedicated promotional campaigns, creating a direct association between influencer advocacy and consumer action (Siahaan, 2025). Supporting this, Migkos (2025) assert that immediacy of social media

promotes rapid dissemination of promotional content, which can bolster immediate purchasing behaviour among followers and subsequently boosting sales volumes.

Furthermore, influencer endorsements effectiveness is further augmented by the psychological principles of social proof and scarcity (Cheah, 2024). Essentially, consumers often display a propensity to follow the choices and behaviours of perceived popular figures, such as, influencers, particularly when confronted with a saturated market landscape (Xu, 2023). Moreover, campaigns that evoke a sense of urgency or exclusivity often facilitated by influencers can significantly improve conversion rates, therefore positively impacting sales volume (Alexandru & Andrei-Dorian, 2024). However, Kutz (2024) advises that it is critical to acknowledge the inherent challenges and limitations associated with influencer marketing which does not align with the brand ethos and target audience, leading to attitudinal dissonance among consumers, potentially undermining the intended effects. In addition, too much influencer endorsements can lead to consumer fatigue and desensitisation to promotional content (Cheah, 2024). Nevertheless, it is hypothesised that:

***H<sub>3</sub>: Influencer endorsements on social media are positively associated with sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.***

## 2.7 Posting Frequency on Social Media and Sales Volume

Studies on business-consumer engagement on social media highlights the essence of post frequency in order to maintain audience interest as well as fostering long-term relationships and subsequently improving sales volume (Hilong, 2023). A study by Su & Li (2023) underscores that finding the right balance between consistency as well as relevance in posting frequency is critical for brands. Although, some argue that higher posting frequency can increase visibility and engagement (Berbegal Mirabent & Caballero, 2023), others warn against overwhelming followers with excessive content (Byrd, Sanders & Lamm, 2023). Bazi, Filieri and Gorton (2023) however insist that a number of factors should be considered to optimise posting frequency without overwhelming followers and these include industry type, demographics, target audience as well as platform algorithms. Buttressing this view, Fan, Chan, Wang, Li and Prieler (2023) endorse that it is vital for brands to consider these factors in order to tailor their posting strategies effectively as well as sustain audience interest over time. It is henceforth hypothesised that:

**H4: Posting frequency on social media is positively associated with sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.**

## 2.8 Effect of Social Media Content on Sales Performance

The use of UGC in social media content is very critical in the automobile battery sector in order to share information and opinions with others (Chen, Wang & Wei, 2025). These include for instance, online ratings, reviews, blogs

as well as forums regarding product performance. Biswas, Sengupta & Ganguly (2022), however, argue that the perceived usefulness and sales can be influenced by the degree of informativeness, subjectivity, readability as well as language correctness, for instance, in consumer reviews. Essentially, high-quality content, which is relevant, accurate as well as timely, is increasingly being recognised as a critical driver of consumer engagement and purchase intention. In that regard, in the recent past, the growth in popularity of social networking platforms like Twitter and Facebook has led to various scholars to examine the impact of UGC on firm performance (Liu, 2020; Nisar, Prabhakar, Ilavarasan & Baabdullah, 2020). For instance, Lu, Dinner and Grewal (2023) examined the impact of Twitter on consumers' adoption of new movies. Likewise, Ruan, Xia, Wen and Dong (2025) conducted a study on the effect of Weibo, a popular Chinese microblogging outlet, on television show viewership. However, no similar studies have considered the effect of UGC on sales performance, especially for the battery market segment.

As the characteristics of durable goods like batteries differ significantly from non-durable goods, earlier findings present sectoral gap and nature of products under study. However, Wang et al (2021) in their study represented an exception of the impact of UGC through user comment across Facebook and YouTube, their findings revealed that neutral UGC indeed affect sales of durable goods, offline. Still, the authors ignored other viral impressions, such as, likes as well as shares, concentrating on user comments and disregarding

the synergistic effect of UGC and FGC and not underscoring the unique feature of durable goods within their model.

Unlike UGC, firms can also use FGC to enhance sales. In FGC, firms wield greater control because they can decide how, when as well as what they intend to communicate with customers (Al-Abdallah & Wright, 2025). Extant literature indicate that FGC positively influences marketing outcomes. For instance, Wang et al (2021) exposed that using Facebook page, FGC influences consumers' apparel purchase. In equal measure, Lee and Kim (2024) reported that artists' personal messages rather than automated messages generated by Myspace had a significant effect on online music sales. Likewise, Dong (2021) assesses how FGC on a firm's Facebook page influence offline sales of wine and spirits. Just like previous studies on UGC, the studies on FGC pay less attention to sales of durable goods offline and the effectiveness of both FGC and UGC. As purchasing durable goods like batteries entails a higher degree of perceived risk as well as product uncertainty (Li, Zhou, Yu & Liu, 2020), investigating both FGC and UGC could help managers tremendously to understand the impact of their social media efforts in the sector. This is predominantly true for durable goods as prospective customers often engage in extensive evaluation of diverse options (Sun, Bellezza & Paharia, 2021).

## **2.9 Empirical Studies on Social Media Content on Sales Volume in the Automobile Battery Sector**

There are no studies that have been conducted to examine social media content and sales volume in the automobile battery sector. However, attempts

have been made on social media and social media marketing around the world. For instance, Kanyosa (2025) investigated the impact of Instagram marketing, X (Twitter) engagement, and WhatsApp communication on sales performance among SMEs selling electrical devices in Dodoma City, Tanzania. Structured questionnaires and a simple random sampling technique to collect fresh quantitative data at once from 220 respondents was used. The collected quantitative data was analysed using multiple linear regression. The results signify that WhatsApp communication was revealed as the most extensively used platform and with strongest impact in enhancing sales performance. Its aspects, namely, multimedia sharing, document sharing, and voice messages exhibiting the strongest impact. Instagram marketing followed WhatsApp communication in showing a profound positive significant impact on sales performance. Its aspects, namely, Comments and Follower Growth, contributed the most to sales performance. X (Twitter) engagement had the smallest but with positive significant effect on sales performance. Its aspects, namely, like (favourites), reposts, and follows were the most influential factors in driving sales growth. The findings emphasise the importance of synchronising social media marketing strategies with platform-specific strengths to maximize business performance. Additionally, policymakers and business leaders should invest in digital literacy training and infrastructure improvements to foster SME growth in the digital marketplace. This study significantly enhances digital marketing literature by empirically demonstrating platform-specific marketing effectiveness within the underexplored electrical device sector in Dodoma City.

Likewise, Loubna, Khalil, Chrak and Fatima (2024) examined the influence of social media content quality on consumer purchase intentions, with a focus on Very Small Enterprises (VSEs) in Morocco. A quantitative methodology was used with a sample of 200 respondents to identify the key factors that shape consumer behaviour in response to social media content produced by VSEs. Specifically, the study examines the applicability of the Social Media Content Quality (SOME-Q) model, which delineates four key dimensions of content quality: attractiveness, interaction, relevance, and consistency. The findings reveal that three of the four content quality dimensions, namely; attractiveness, interaction, and relevance exert a positive influence on consumers' purchase intentions. In contrast, content that fails to meet these standards can adversely affect the performance and competitive standing of VSEs.

In equal measure, Pongwe and Churk (2024) examined the effects of social media marketing platforms on sales revenue in Tanzania Telecommunication Company Limited. Specifically, the study assesses the most used social media platform in sales revenue at Tanzania Telecommunication Corporation; and the contribution of the most used social media marketing platform to sales revenue in TTCL. The study is quantitatively designed involving the use of questionnaires in data collection. A cross-sectional study approach was used to gather data from a sample of fifty (50) respondents from Dodoma and Mwanza TTCL commercial regions. Data gathered were analysed through descriptive and inferential statistics. The results show that Instagram is the social media marketing platform that contributes the most to sales revenue. The study concludes that the use of Instagram promotes sales revenue more

than other social media marketing platforms. The study recommends that in order to promote the effective use of technology for sales revenue in public institutions, the government should enact regulations that push these institutions to use social media marketing platforms in advertisements.

Similarly, Liadeli et al (2023) conducted a meta-analysis of the impact of owned social media on social media engagement and sales. Whereas the findings support some current beliefs (e.g., owned social media are more effective to boost sales for new [vs. mature] products), it highlights several novel insights. Contrary to popular beliefs that owned social media mainly drive engagement and hardly affect sales, the results show the opposite, with an average elasticity of .137 for social media engagement and .353 for sales. In addition, the results suggest ways to better adapt owned social media content to communication goals. To create engagement, content needs to focus on emotional needs and steer away from deals, which are the least effective content type. To stimulate sales, content should be more functional, rather than emotional, in nature and communicate product benefits. Surprisingly, the authors find that growing a large social media community is not essential for boosting sales, as owned social media are more effective for brands with fewer followers. Furthermore, while using one global social media strategy is tempting, owned social media are more effective in countries with high power distance, calling for a less uniform approach.

Similarly, Silvano and Mbongo (2022) investigated the impact of Social Media Marketing on Small Businesses' Sales Performance: A Case of Women

Clothing Stores in Nyamagana District, Tanzania. The study used quantitative research approach. Data was collected through questionnaires, and the quantitative analysis was conducted using SPSS. ANOVA was applied to predict how use Facebook, Instagram and X(Twitter)) for marketing purposes influences the sales performance of small businesses engaging in women clothing retailing. In this study, regression analysis was applied to find out the relationship equation for the independent variable (use of Facebook, Instagram, and X (Twitter)). Through this the researcher was able to understand the effects of the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable of the study. The result obtained through regression analysis established that Facebook has impacts on the sales performance of small business. The results obtained in this aspect shows that the increase in the use of Facebook by 1 unit attributes increase of performance of small business by 0.20. On Instagram, the findings obtained through linear regression established that Instagram has a significant impact on the sales performance of small business. And on X(Twitter) the results obtained through regression analysis revealed that X(Twitter) has no direct relationship on the sales performance of small business. The study recommends further studies to be conducted on the strategies to be used to improve the application of social media in the small business.

Similarly, Wang, Guo, Suarla and Sambamurthy, (2021) carried out a study on the impact of social media on offline sales of durable goods, examining the dynamic relationships between firm-generated content (FGC), user-generated content (UGC), traditional media, and offline light vehicle sales in United States of America. Data were collected from the official Facebook

and X (Twitter) pages of thirty (30) US car brands from 2009 to 2015, and a panel vector autoregressive model was utilized to investigate the dynamic relationships among multiple time series variables, while controlling for influential durable goods characteristics. The results suggest that Facebook and X(Twitter) are heterogeneous in terms of their effect on offline vehicle sales; FGC was more effective than UGC for influencing offline light vehicle sales; viral impressions from Facebook and Twitter are essential, although effects vary for the various social media platforms, FGC, and UGC; and a firm's marketing efforts and UGC both have a long-term effect on sales, with the long-term effect of a firm's marketing efforts outlasting that of UGC. Improvements in predicting offline sales can be gained by incorporating FGC and UGC from Facebook and X (Twitter) and traditional media. The research also documented that within X(Twitter) synergistic effect between FGC and UGC for offline car sales and cross-channel substitution relationships between FGC and both Facebook and traditional media and Twitter and traditional media. Finally, it thus provides guidance for managers seeking to leverage multichannel marketing to boost offline sales of durable goods.

Sriram, Namitha and Kamath (2021) also conducted on social media advertisements and their influence on consumer purchase intention. The study sought to determine factors that influence how social media advertisements are perceived and their effect on customer purchase intention. Exploratory factor analysis was used to determine which characteristics significantly influenced how people perceived social media advertisements. Structural Equation Modelling was employed to investigate the effect of customer characteristics on purchase intention. The findings showed that creative

characteristics, emotional appeal, attention-grabbing details and celebrity endorsement had effect on how social media advertising was assessed. The study further exposed that elements, such as, attention-grabbing details, celebrity endorsement as well as emotional appeal have a considerable impact on customer purchase intention. A sufficient emphasis on the above-mentioned characteristics would aid in the development of effective social media marketing and increase consumer buying intent.

Equally, Sufian, Min, Murad and Aziz (2020) examined the impact of social media marketing on sales performance amongst small online firms. The study sought to discuss factors impacting the use of social media marketing on sales of the online small businesses in Malacca. The primary data was gathered by using explanatory survey. The sample consisted of 150 respondents who are online small business owners and who had experiences or non-experiences by executing social media marketing on their business in Malacca. The requirement analysis test adopted were pilot test, reliability analysis, validity analysis, descriptive statistical analysis, Pearson's correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis and hypothesis test analysis. The data analysis technique used was Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26.0 software. There were four independent variables, such as, customers feedback, communication, content sharing as well as customers' relationships which were measured to examine their influence on sales performance of the online small businesses. The research results show that customers feedback has no direct influence on sales performance, communication has directly influence on sales performance, content sharing has no direct influence on sales performance and customers' relationships has directly influence on sales

performance of online small businesses in Malacca. Overall, the customers' relationships has been proved to be the most significant factor that impacting the use of social media marketing on sales of the online small businesses because fostering relationships helps the online small businesses to build a positive rapport with customers within the community. Good customers' relationships can make customers to have a good impression for the business owners and willing to repurchase the products.

## **2.10 Research Gap**

In light of the above empirical review, it is quite clear that there is no study which has been conducted specifically to examine social media content impact on sales volume in the automobile battery sector in Zimbabwe. Although there has been an attempt by Wang et al (2020), in the US automobile sector, it focused on cars and not batteries. In essence, by and large, the majority of the studies were carried out in developed economies (US, EU) or other African countries (Morocco, Tanzania), presenting geographical gap compared to Zimbabwe's market dynamics, consumer behaviour and social media usage. Further, the existing studies present sectoral gap as they focused on retail (clothing), telecommunications, as well as electronics SMEs, while none focus on the automobile battery sector, which is industrial, technical, and essential in Zimbabwe's transport/logistics sector. In addition, the empirical studies present content-type gaps as they emphasise platform choice and engagement, but few directly assess content characteristics or dimensions in relation to sales volumes in emerging markets. Furthermore, the studies present some practical gaps as the automobile battery sector in Zimbabwe is faced with intense competition

from imported brands, making effective digital content strategies an important but under-researched area for sustaining sales. It is thus against this background that this study will seek to examine the impact of social media content on sales volume of automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe, particularly adopting engagement, promotional offers, influencer endorsements and posting frequency as dimensions of social media content.

## 2.11 Conceptual Framework

In light of the above research gaps, the following conceptual framework below has been developed to guide the study:

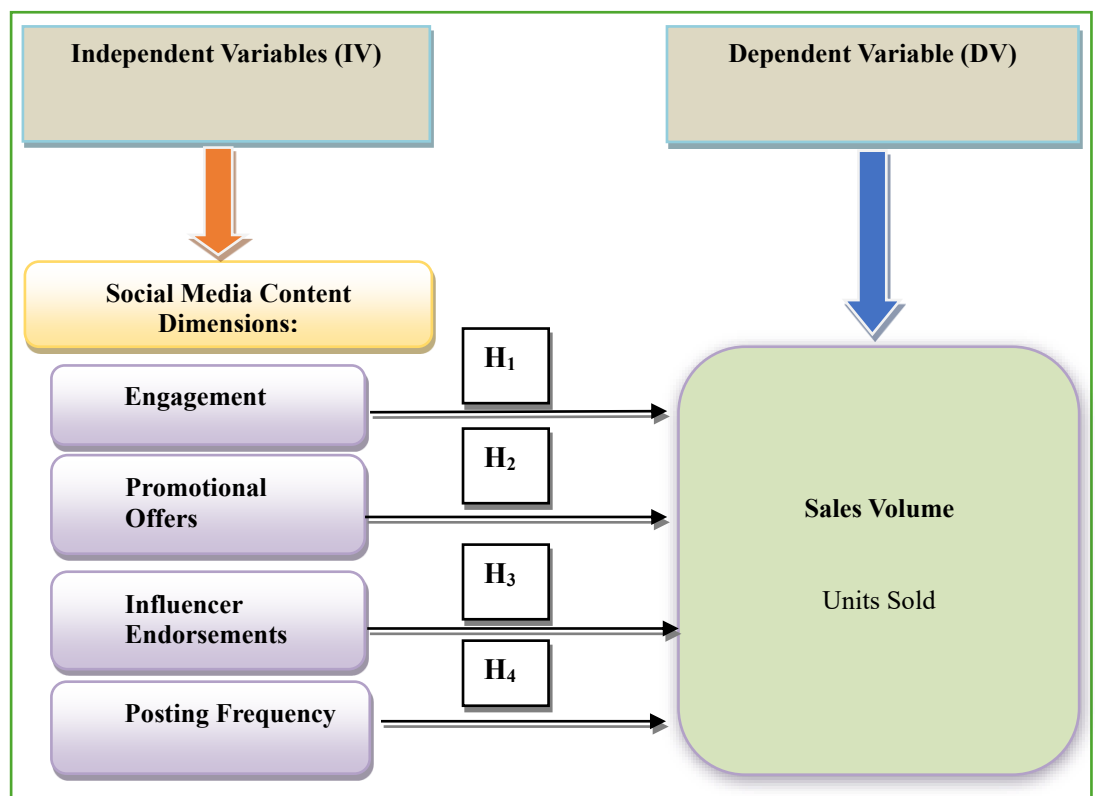


Figure-2.11-1: Schematic Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher (2025)

## **2.12 Chapter Summary**

The chapter has reviewed literature on social media content on sales performance. It discussed the theoretical foundation, empirical studies as well as the research gap. The study was underpinned by the Uses and Gratification Theory and the AIDA model. The chapter highlighted the role of social media content in relation to engagement, promotional offers, influencer endorsements as well as posting frequency in enhancing sales volume. In summary empirical studies exposed that social media engagement and content strategies can enhance brand visibility, build trust as well as increase sales. However, most studies were conducted in developed countries or other African contexts. Despite these insights, no prior research has specifically examined the impact of social media content on sales in Zimbabwe's automobile battery sector. To this end, the study sought to close the geographical, sectoral as well as content characteristics within the Zimbabwean context. The succeeding chapter will discuss the research methodology.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous has critically reviewed literature on the subject matter. This chapter however discussed the research methodology. In essence, it covered research design and the justification thereof. Further, it discusses the population, the sampling method, sample size, types of data, data collection methods, ethical considerations as well as other relevant issue.

### **3.2 The Research Design**

Christensen, Johnson and Turner (2015) regard a research design as a strategy employed to investigate a research problem. Similarly, Cooper and Schindler (2014) assert that a research design endeavours to answer research objectives. It is, however, regarded as the bedrock from which the research determines the collection, measuring and data analysis to be used to solve the problem (Zikmund, 2013). Research designs are generally classified as explanatory, narrative, descriptive, ethnography, phenomenology, and exploratory (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Zikmund; 2013). This study, however, adopted the explanatory and descriptive research designs.

#### **3.2.1 Explanatory Research Design**

Causal research is sometimes called an explanatory or analytical study. It delves into the fundamental cause-and-effect connections between two or more variables. Researchers typically observe how changes in one variable affect another related variable. An explanation tells us why something looks, changes, or varies as it does (Hestron, 2004). Researchers use this method to

understand why and how a particular phenomenon occurs the way it does. Since there is limited information regarding the phenomenon being studied, it's up to the researcher to develop fresh ideas and collect more data. In the research the researcher looked at four aspects or characteristics of social media content that generate sales. Explanatory research tests new theories and establishes cause-and-effect relationships between different study variables. It usually involves several data collection methods, including surveys, interviews, experiments, and observation.

### **3.2.2 Descriptive Research Design**

In addition to an explanatory design, the study adopted a descriptive design in order to answer research questions, quantitatively (Creswell, 2014). Fundamentally, a descriptive design aims to portray a bigger picture of the market thus developing the profile of the people and or events using statistics (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). More so, a descriptive design strives to use a relatively large sample in order to generalise and make probabilistic inferences of the findings in relation to the target population using surveys (McGivern, 2013). Therefore, in this study, a descriptive survey was thus adopted to quantitatively establish the views of automobile battery firms' customers with regard to the selected social media content strategies, in particular, engagement, promotional offers, influencer endorsement as well as frequent posting on sales volume in the sector.

### 3.3 Population and Sampling

#### 3.3.1 Population

Kumar (2011) regards population as all the elements that are similar in characteristics pertinent for the study. Equally, Smith and Albaum (2012) confirm that a population is a unit of analysis that is comprised of households, firms and or individual people to be part of a research study. Put other way, population include products, humans, people, conditions, firms and events connected to the research problem (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). In this study, a population of **400** customers was be targeted, drawn from the selected (4) key players in the Zimbabwean automobile battery sector in Harare, Zimbabwe as shown on Table 3.2.1.1 below. The daily sales register provided as sampling frame for the study population.

**Table 3.3.1-1: Population Distribution of Respondents.**

<b>Name of Company and Branch (Stratum)</b>	<b>Target Population (Average Daily Customers)</b>
Exide (Harare Street)	150
Battery Warehouse (Kaguvi Street)	120
Ducelier (Kaguvi Street)	80
Raylite (Graniteside)	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>

**Source:** *Companies Daily Sales Registers (2025).*

### **3.3.2 Sampling Approach**

Sampling refers to defined principle used in coming up with the target population members to be engaged in the investigation (Creswell, 2018). Fundamentally, two sampling techniques can be adopted in social and market research fields, namely, non-probability and probability techniques (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). To that end, however, probability sampling method was utilised to select respondents from the total population. In essence, Probability sampling is a sampling approach which provides every respondent with equal known opportunity to be chosen from the population (McGivern, 2013). It is a process of choosing a representative sample of the target population (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Systematic, simple, cluster and stratified are the main probability techniques. However, in this study, stratified sampling was used to categorise respondents according to automobile battery firms they purchase from. Further, systematic random sampling was used to select participants to complete the survey questionnaire. For every 2<sup>nd</sup> participant who entered the shop, participants selected according to each firm's sample size as shown on Table 3.2.3.1 below.

### **3.3.3 Sample Size**

It is generally impractical to conduct a study of the entire target population due to time and financial constraints (McGivern, 2013). In that regard, through sampling, a subset of the target population will be selected to represent others (Wiid & Diggines, 2009). Collins et al. (2000), claim that there are no hard and fast guidelines when determining sample size, putting forward rather that this depends largely on the research design, target

population as well as purpose of the study. However, to determine the sample size of known (finite) participants, the Cochran's formula was used. As Riyanto and Hatmawan (2020) claim, Cochran's formula is statistically rigorous in determining the minimum required sample size that ensures results are representative of the target population in a specified margin of error and confidence level as computed on Table 3.2.3.1 below:

**Table 3.3.3-1: Size Determination Using Cochran's formula**

Step	Description	Formula	Substitution	Result
1	Determine total population (N)	-	-	<b>400</b>
2	Select confidence level (Z)	-	-	<b>1.96</b>
3	Choose estimated proportion (p)	-	-	<b>0.5</b>
4	Select margin of error (e)	-	-	<b>0.05</b>
5	Compute Cochran's sample size for infinite population (n0)	$n_0 = (Z^2 * p * (1-p)) / e^2$	$(1.96^2 * 0.5 * (1-0.5)) / 0.05^2$	<b>384.16</b>
6	Apply finite population correction (n)	$n = n_0 / (1 + (n_0-1)/N)$	$384.16 / (1 + (384.16-1)/400)$	<b>196</b>
7	Proportionate allocation: Exide	$n_i = (N_i/N) * n$	$(150/400) * 196$	<b>74</b>
8	Proportionate allocation: Battery Warehouse	$n_i = (120/400) * 196$	$(120/400) * 196$	<b>59</b>
9	Proportionate allocation: Ducelier	$n_i = (80/400) * 196$	$(80/400) * 196$	<b>39</b>

10	Proportionate allocation: Raylite	$n_i =$ $(50/400) * 196$	$(50/400) * 196$	<b>24</b>
11	Verify total sample size	$Sum(n_i) =$ $74+59+39+24$	-	<b>196</b>
12	Compute systematic sampling interval (k)	$k_i = N_i /$ $n_i$	Exide: 150/74, Battery Warehouse: 120/59, Ducelier: 80/39, Raylite: 50/24	Exide =2, Battery Warehouse=2, Ducelier=2, Raylite=2

In light of the above Table 3.2.3.1, a sample size of **196** participants was drawn from the target population, as distributed proportionally per each organisation.

### 3.4 Data Collection Instruments

Kolb (2008) and McGivern (2013) assert that a research instrument is a tool used when gathering data and that questionnaires and interviews are the main instruments. Fisher (2010), however, emphasises that it is important to select instruments for collecting data that yield quality results. As such, this research study adopted questionnaires due to their suitability for a quantitative study.

#### 3.4.1 Survey Questionnaire

Malhotra (2010) defines a questionnaire as a research instrument for collecting data from a relatively large sample. It contains well-structured and standardised questions for respondents to answer. Shui (2009) proclaims that with structured questions, the researcher can control the respondents' judgements. In addition, a questionnaire is a low-cost research tool for a relatively large sample. It also provides respondents with adequate time to

answer questions (Kothari, 2004). Questionnaires allow the researcher to design standardised and well-structured questions for the respondents. They also enable the researcher to control the judgments of the respondents using closed-ended type of questions (McGivern, 2013).

The survey questionnaire for customers was comprised of different sections; Section A consisted of five (5) questions pertaining to customers' demographic data. These include gender, age-group, educational level, period using social media, mobile service provider as well as primary social media platform used. The sections B-E comprised of seven (7) pertinent statements regarding the independent variables, namely; engagement, promotional offers, influencer endorsements and posting frequency. Section F comprised of five (5) pertinent statements regarding sales volume (dependent variable). See Appendix I attached. To measure the extent to which participants agree or disagree that these constructs have an effect on sales volume, a five-point Likert scale was used of 1-5 whereby 1= Strongly Disagree (SD); 2 = Disagree (D); 3 = Neutral (N); 4 = Agree (A) and 5= Strongly Agree (SA).

### **3.5 Pilot Study**

Cooper and Schindler (2014) regard a pilot study as the initial test of the research instrument to respondents in order to improve its validity and reliability. The object of a pilot study is to establish errors or flaws that may arise during the questionnaire designing stage before it is distributed to actual participants. In that regard, in this study, a pilot study was carried out with six (6) customers in Harare. The questionnaires were then collected, corrected and finally distributed to the wider sample of respondents.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedure**

Questionnaires were utilised to gather data from customers at the four automobile battery company branches in Harare. They were distributed to the selected shops of the four (4) automobile battery companies under study. They then distributed the questionnaires to their customers, through systematic random sampling as alluded above under sampling. Customer service counters were used to distribute the survey questionnaires. The instruments were numbered before they were distributed for accountability purposes reasons. The questionnaires were left for a week and then collected for analysis.

### **3.7 Analysis and Organization of Data**

Wiid & Diggines (2009) regard data analysis as the transformation of raw data into information. It entails editing, reducing and summarizing data into a manageable size, to establish trends using statistical methods (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; McGivern, 2013). In view of that, quantitative data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Studies (SPSS) version 26 as well as Microsoft Excel. SPSS was used to undertake univariate and bivariate descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to produce frequency counts, graphs and tables expressed as ratios or proportions.

Further, correlation analysis was adopted to establish the existence of any statistical significance between independent variables and the dependent variable. Moreover, regression analysis was employed to understand the relationships between these independent variables and the dependent variables. The regression equation employed was as follows:

$y' = b_0 + b_1x'_1 + b_2x'_2 + b_3x'_3 \dots$ , where y is a dependent variable (sales volume) while  $b_0$  was the regression constant and  $b_1, b_2, b_3, \dots$ , were the independent variable coefficients (engagement on social media, promotional offers, influencer endorsements and frequent posting).

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

- **Ethical Clearance**

Ethical clearance was sought from Africa University Research Ethics Committee (AUREC) before gathering data.

- **Confidentiality**

Respondents were informed about the purpose of the research and consent was sought before any responses are gathered from them. The researcher informed the respondents during the first stage of data collection on the confidentiality of their identities. Respondents were notified that they were voluntarily requested to answer to the research questions and that they were free to disengage at any stage of the process. Further, the respondents were informed that their names and addresses would not be published, and that they will remain anonymous.

- **Objectivity**

Bias was reduced during the research through avoiding the exclusion of minority or any group during data gathering. Focusing on respondents' actual point of view will reduce acquiescence bias.

- **Respect of Intellectual Property**

Permission was obtained to include copyright information in the form of referencing or acknowledging contributions from other researchers and authors. Africa University uses APA Referencing.

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

The chapter discussed research methodology, research design, population and samples, sampling methods, data analysis as well as research instruments used, among other related issues. In essence, the study adopted an explanatory research design, a stratified and systematic random sampling techniques as well as survey questionnaires to gather data from the respondents.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This previous chapter discussed the research methodology used and justifications. The study adopted an explanatory research design, stratified and systematic sampling methods, quantitative data, survey questionnaires for gathering data as well ethical considerations, among others. This chapter however presented, analysed and interpreted data gathered in the field guided by the following research objectives:

- (i) To examine the effect of social media engagement on sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.
- (ii) To assess the influence of promotional offers on social media on sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.
- (iii) To evaluate the impact of influencer endorsements on social media on sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.
- (v) To determine the effect of posting frequency on social media on sales volume of automobile batteries in Zimbabwe.

### **4.2 Response Rate**

Out of 196 survey questionnaires administered to automobile battery firm customers in Harare, 188 were fully completed and eight (8) were incomplete, as shown on Table 4.2.1 below. In that regard, 95.92% response rate was therefore achieved. As Mugena (2016) argues, a response rate that is above 75% yields reliable results and is acceptable. In this chapter, data was

presented as graphs and tables. SPSS Version 26 was employed for analysing quantitative data gathered from respondents.

**Table 4.2-1: Survey Questionnaire Response Rate**

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Administered</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Incomplete</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
Survey Questionnaires	210	198	08	<b>95.92%</b>

*Source: Primary Data (2025)*

### 4.3 Reliability Analysis

A reliability test was performed to assess the reliability of social media content variables and sales volume performance as depicted on Table 4.3.1 below. The Cronbach's Alpha value was above 0.7 for all the items. As Wiid and Diggins (2009) argue, when the variables in a research instrument attain a value which is over 0.7, it indicates an acceptable measure of research instrument's internal consistency and can be generalised to represent the views of the respondents in the target population.

**Table 4.3-1: Reliability Analysis Statistics**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>
Engagement (ENG)	.992	7
Promotional Offers (PO)	.993	7
Influencer Endorsements (IE)	.990	7
Posting Frequency (PF)	.980	7

Sales Volume (SV) Performance	.985	5
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Source: SPSS Version 26.

#### 4.4 Data Presentation and Analysis

##### 4.4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic variables of the automobile battery firm customers for the study were customer type, gender, highest educational level, frequency of battery purchase as well as primary social media used for battery information.

##### Question 1: Customer Type of Respondents

=188

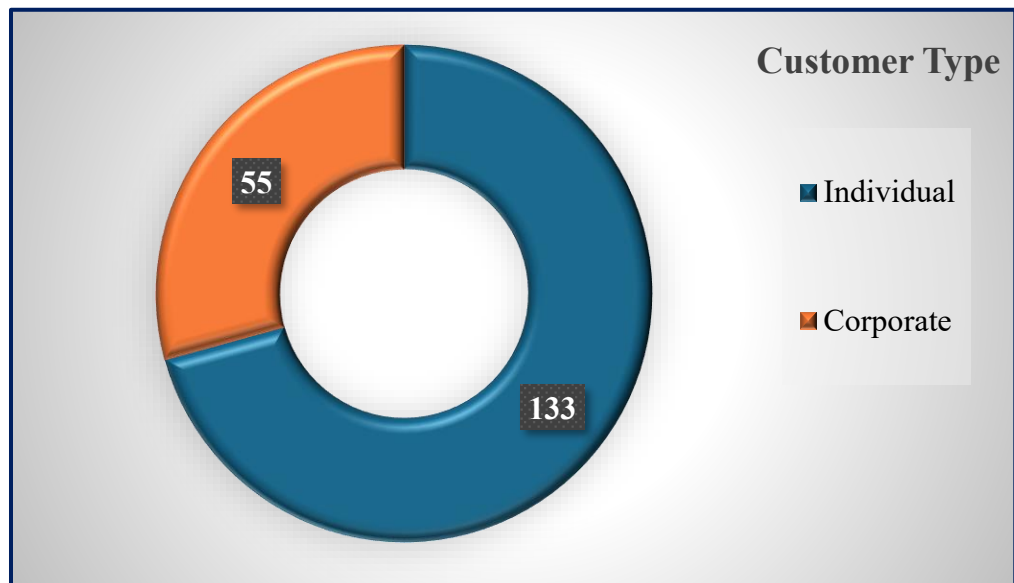


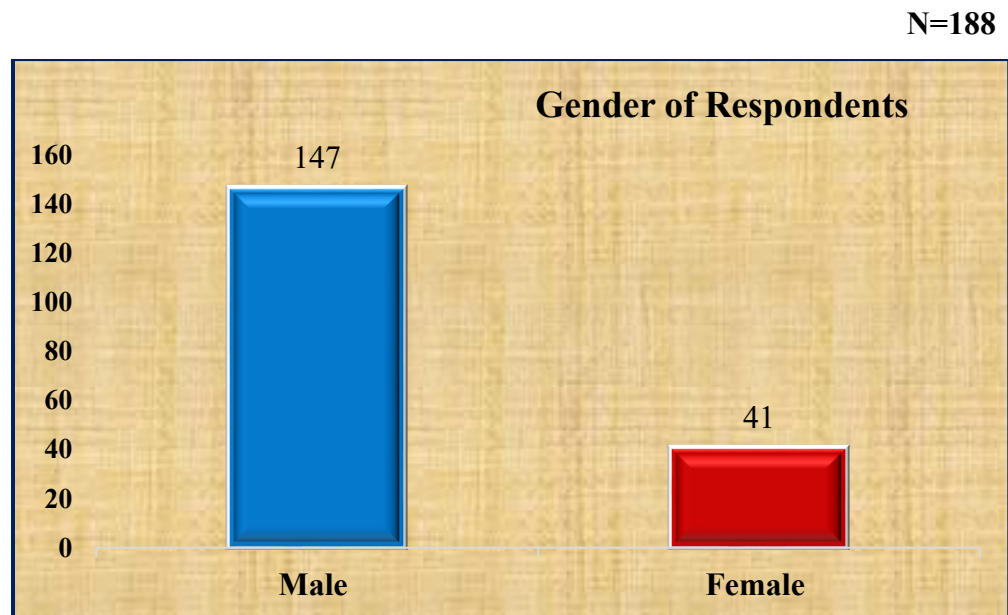
Figure 4.4.1-1: Customer Type Distribution of Respondents.

Source: Primary Data (2025).

Survey results on Figure 4.4.1-1 above highlight that the majority (133) of the respondents were individual customers while 55 were corporate customers. It can henceforth be inferred that the automobile battery sector is predominantly

purchased by individual customers compared to corporates. Nevertheless, the study managed to gather different views from both individual and corporate customers with terms of social media content and sales volume.

### Question 2: Gender of the Respondents



**Figure 4.4.1-2: Gender Distribution of Respondents.**

Source: Primary Data (2025).

Results on Figure 4.4.1-2 above show that the majority (147) of the respondents were males while 41 were females. It can therefore be noted that the automobile battery target market in Zimbabwe is largely dominated by males than their female counterparts. This may be attributed to the technical nature of the automotive sector. Nonetheless, the study managed to gather data from both gender with regard to social media content and sales volume.

### Question 3: Frequency of Battery Purchase by Respondents

Survey results on Figure 4.4.1-3 below portray that the majority (86) of the respondents purchase batteries less often, followed by (61) who purchase annually, twice a year (15), quarterly (14) and lastly those who purchase monthly (12). In light of view, it can thus be inferred in the Zimbabwean automobile battery sector, as consumer durable good, batteries are purchased less often. However, corporates also make frequent purchases during the course of the year.

N=188

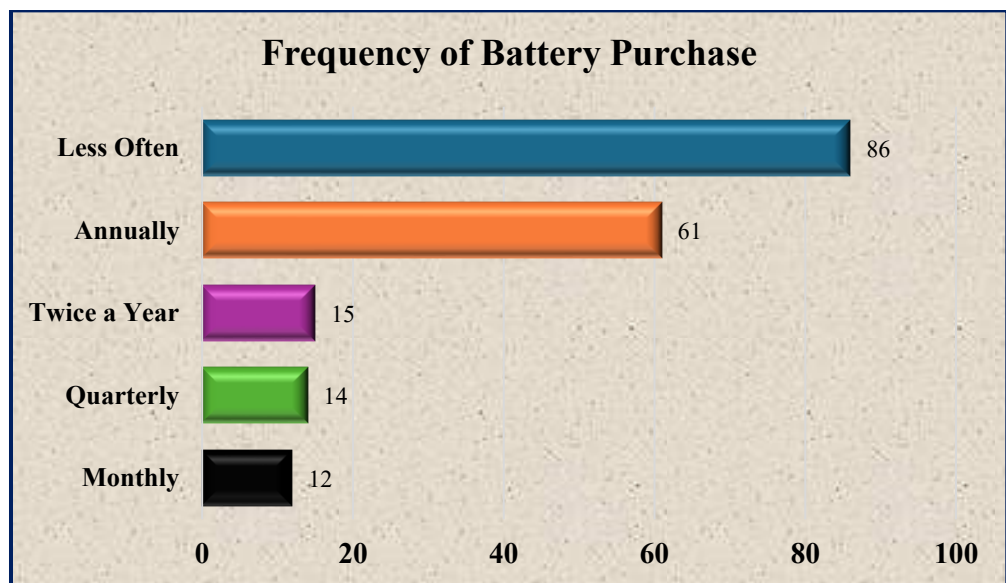
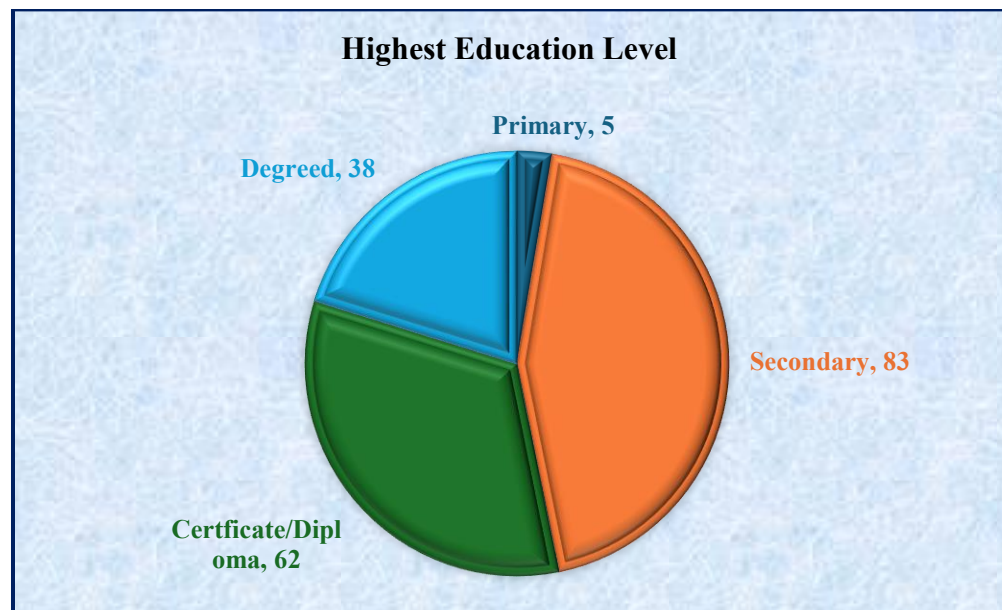


Figure 4.4.1-3: Frequency of Battery Purchase Distribution of Respondents

Source: Primary Data (2025)

#### Question 4: Highest Education Level of the Respondents

N=188



**Figure 4.4.1-4: Highest Education Level Distribution of Respondents**

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Survey results on Figure 4.4.1-4 above indicate that the majority (83) of the respondents had attended Secondary education, while (62) had a Certificate or Diploma, (38) had Degrees and (5) had Primary education. It can hence be said that the target group had an appreciation of the impact of social media content and sales volume in the automobile battery industry in Zimbabwe.

### Question 5: Primary Social Media Used for Battery Information by Respondents

N=188

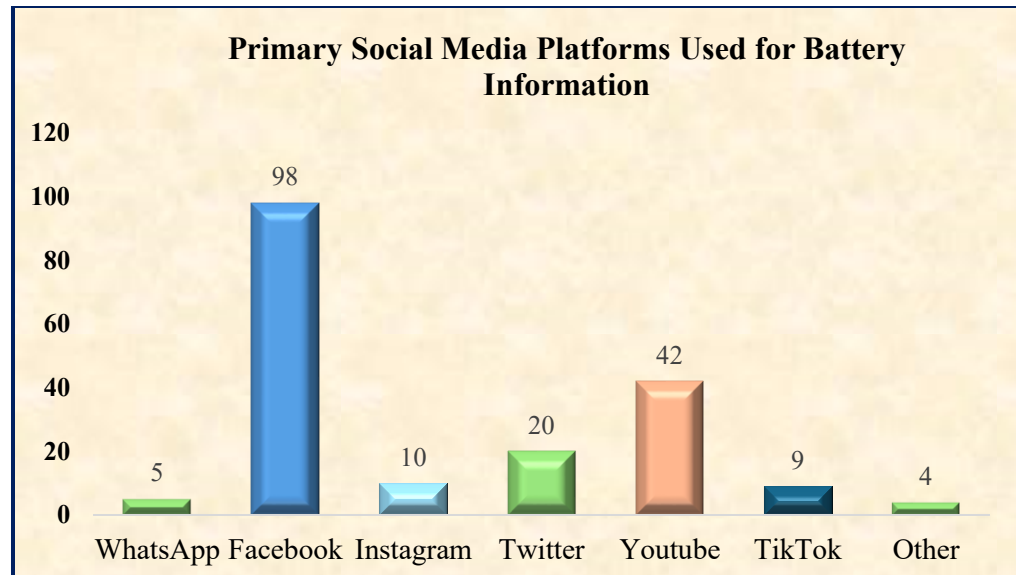


Figure 4.4.1-5: Distribution of Respondents by Primary Social Media Used for Battery Information

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Results of the survey on Figure 4.4.1-5 above highlights that the majority (98) of the respondents use Facebook as their primary social media platform for battery information, followed by (42) who use YouTube, Twitter (20), Instagram (10), TikTok (9), WhatsApp (5) and Other (4). It can thus be deduced that Facebook is the most ideal social media platform gaining battery information due to its ability to provide rich content to customers.

#### 4.4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Variables

In order to determine the extent to which the respondents (customers) agreed or disagreed that social media content variables (engagement, promotional offers, influencer endorsements and posting frequency) have impact on sales volume (units sold), within the Zimbabwean automobile battery industry, a 5-

point Likert scale was utilised to aggregate responses where 1 denotes Strongly Disagree (SD); Disagree (D) (2) Neutral (N) (3); Agree (A) (4); and Strongly Agree (SA) (5). The responses were represented as frequency tables.

#### 4.4.2.1 Impact of Engagement on Social Media on Sales Volume

**Table 4.4.2.1-1: Descriptive Statistics: Engagement on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
Following battery brands on social media has increased how often we buy batteries.	14	140	14	12	8	188
Liking, commenting on, or sharing brand posts has encouraged us to buy more batteries.	18	133	15	14	8	188
Receiving replies or solutions from battery sellers on social media make us more likely to purchase from them frequently.	14	139	15	12	8	188
Product demonstrations or customer-use videos on social media motivate us to increase purchases.	18	132	16	15	7	188
Interactive content, such as, polls, question and answer, encourages us to buy more batteries.	22	130	16	13	7	188
Observing sellers responding to customers questions online increases our confidence to purchase more batteries.	14	137	14	15	8	188

Our direct engagement with brands on social media (messaging, enquiries) has increased the number of batteries we purchase.	14	146	17	12	7	188
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Source: Primary Data (2025)

Table 4.4.2.1-1 indicates that the majority (140) of the respondents disagree, 14 strongly disagree, 14 were neutral while 12 agree and 8 strongly agree that following battery brands on social media has increased how often customers buy batteries. Likewise, the majority (133) of the respondents disagree, 18 strongly disagree, 15 were neutral as 14 agree and 8 strongly agree that liking, commenting on, or sharing brand posts has encouraged customers to buy more batteries. Similarly, the majority (139) of the respondents disagree, 15 were neutral, 14 strongly disagree, 12 agree while 8 strongly agree that receiving replies or solutions from battery sellers on social media make customers more likely to purchase frequently. Correspondingly, the majority (132) of the respondents disagree, 17 strongly disagree, 16 were neutral while 15 agree and 7 strongly agree that product demonstrations or customer-use videos on social media motivate customers to increase purchases. Congruently, the majority (130) of the respondents disagree, 22 strongly disagree, 16 were neutral as 13 agree and 8 strongly agree that interactive content, such as, polls, question and answer, encourages them to buy more batteries. Equally, the majority (137) of the respondents disagree, 14, apiece, strongly disagree and neutral, respectively while 15 agree 8 strongly agree that observing sellers responding to customers questions online increases their confidence to purchase more batteries. Alike, the majority (146) of the

respondents disagree, 17 were neutral, 14 strongly disagree while 12 agree and 7 strongly agree that their direct engagement with brands on social media (messaging, enquiries) has increased the number of batteries they purchase.

#### 4.4.2.2 Impact of Promotional Offers on Social Media on Sales Volume

**Table 4.4.2.2-1:: Descriptive Statistics: Promotional Offers on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
Special discounts on social media encourage us to buy batteries in larger quantities.	30	133	13	7	5	188
Time-limited promotions on social media motivate us to purchase sooner and in greater amounts.	27	131	9	11	10	188
Bundle promotions (battery plus installation/accessories) influence us to increase our purchases.	31	127	10	9	11	188
Promotional codes or special links from social media lead us to buy more batteries.	16	139	10	10	13	188
Discount information on social media makes us more willing to purchase additional batteries.	21	130	12	13	12	188
Repeated promotional campaigns on social media have increased the number of batteries we purchase.	23	132	10	13	10	188
Promotional posts that highlight warranty and after-sales support encourage us to buy in larger quantities.	13	143	13	11	8	188

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Table 4.4.2.2-1 indicates that the majority (133) of the respondents disagree, 30 strongly disagree, 13 were neutral while 7 agree and 5 strongly agree that special discounts on social media encourage them to buy batteries in larger quantities. Also, the majority (131) of the respondents disagree, 27 strongly disagree, 11 agree while 10 strongly agree and 9 were neutral that time-limited promotions on social media motivate them to purchase sooner and in greater amounts. Likewise, the majority (127) of the respondents disagree, 31 strongly disagree, 11 strongly agree, 10 were neutral and 9 agree that bundle promotions (battery plus installation/accessories) influence them to increase their purchases. Congruently, the majority (139) of the respondents disagree, 16 strongly disagree, 13 strongly agree while 10 were neutral and 10 agree that promotional codes or special links from social media lead them to buy more batteries. Correspondingly, the majority (130) of the respondents disagree, 21 strongly disagree, 13 agree while 12 strongly agree and 12 were neutral that discount information on social media makes them more willing to purchase additional batteries. Likewise, the majority (132) of the respondents disagree, 23 strongly agree, while 10 strongly agree and 10 agree and 10 were neutral that repeated promotional campaigns on social media have increased the number of batteries they purchase. By the same token, the majority (143) of the respondents disagree, 13 strongly disagree, 13 were neutral, 11 agree and 8 strongly agree that promotional posts that highlight warranty and after-sales support encourage them to buy in larger quantities.

### 4.4.2.3 Impact of Influencer Endorsements on Social Media on Sales

#### Volume

**Table 4.4.2.3-1: Descriptive Statistics: Influencer Endorsements on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
Recommendations from influencers on social media increase the number of batteries we buy.	13	145	10	8	12	188
Demonstrations of battery performance by trusted influencers make us more likely to buy larger quantities.	19	141	9	10	9	188
Endorsements from mechanics encourage us to spend more on batteries.	21	140	10	12	5	188
Installation or test videos by influencers have motivated us to purchase more batteries.	22	130	10	11	15	188
Endorsements from influencers make us confident to buy more batteries.	21	135	12	13	7	188
Influencer posts that show real test results encourage us to increase battery purchases.	18	142	10	14	4	188
Genuine influencer promotions motivate us to buy more batteries.	16	135	13	11	11	188

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Table 4.4.2.3-1 indicates that the majority (145) of the respondents disagree, 13 strongly disagree, 10 were neutral while 12 strongly agree and 8 agree that recommendations from influencers on social media increase the number of batteries they buy. By the same measure, the majority (141) of the respondents disagree, 19 strongly disagree, 10 were neutral, 9 agree and 9

strongly agree that demonstrations of battery performance by trusted influencers make them more likely to buy larger quantities. Similarly, the majority (140) of the respondents disagree, 21 strongly disagree, 12 agree, 10 were neutral and 5 strongly agree that endorsements from mechanics encourage them to spend more on batteries. Similarly, the majority (130) of the respondents disagree, 22 strongly disagree, 15 strongly agree while 11 agree and 10 were neutral that installation or test videos by influencers have motivated them to purchase more batteries. Correspondingly, the majority (135) of the respondents disagree, 21 strongly disagree, 13 agree while 12 were neutral and 7 strongly disagree that endorsements from influencers make them confident to buy more batteries. Likewise, the majority (142) of the respondents disagree, 18 strongly disagree, while 14 agree, 10 were neutral and 4 strongly agree that influencer posts that show real test results encourage them to increase battery purchases. In equal measure, the majority (135) of the respondents disagree, 16 strongly disagree, 13 were neutral, 11 agree and 11 strongly agree that genuine influencer promotions motivate them to buy more batteries.

#### 4.4.2.4 Impact of Posting Frequency on Social Media on Sales Volume

**Table 4.4.2.4-1: Descriptive Statistics: Posting Frequency on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
Brands that post regularly encourage us to buy more batteries.	30	134	12	6	6	188
Consistent posting schedules by brands make us more likely to increase purchases.	27	131	9	11	10	188

Frequent posting by brands keeps the brand in our mind and motivates us to buy more batteries.	31	127	10	11	9	188
Increased frequency of useful posts, such as, tips, demos, has led us to purchase more batteries.	25	130	10	10	13	188
Frequent promotional posts encourage us to respond with larger purchases.	23	128	12	13	12	188
Regular posting of new product information motivates us to buy more batteries.	25	130	10	13	10	188
Overall, brands that post more often on social media influence us to purchase more batteries.	19	140	10	11	8	188

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Table 4.4.2.4-1 shows that the majority (134) of the respondents disagree, 30 strongly disagree, 12 were neutral while 6 agree and 6 strongly agree that brands that post regularly encourage them to buy more batteries. Likewise, the majority (131) of the respondents disagree, 27 strongly disagree, 11 agree while 9 were neutral, 11 agree and 9 strongly agree that consistent posting schedules by brands make customers more likely to increase purchases. Equally, the majority (127) of the respondents disagree, 31 strongly disagree, 11 agree, 10 were neutral and 9 strongly agree that frequent posting by brands keeps the brand in our mind and motivates them to buy more batteries. Correspondingly, the majority (130) of the respondents disagree, 25 strongly disagree, 13 strongly agree while 10 were neutral and 10 agree that increased frequency of useful posts, such as, tips, demos, has led them to purchase more batteries. Similarly, the majority (128) of the respondents disagree, 23

strongly disagree, 13 agree while 12 strongly agree and 12 were neutral that frequent promotional posts encourage them to respond with larger purchases. Likewise, the majority (130) of the respondents disagree, 25 strongly disagree, while 13 agree and 10 strongly agree and 10 were neutral that regular posting of new product information motivates them to buy more batteries. In equal measure, the majority (140) of the respondents disagree, 19 strongly disagree, 11 agree, 10 were neutral and 8 strongly agree that overall, brands that post more often on social media influences them to purchase more batteries.

#### 4.4.2.5 Sales Volume Performance

**Table 4.4.2.5-1: Descriptive Statistics: Sales Volume Performance**

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
Social media activities by battery sellers have increased the frequency of our purchases.	62	100	6	7	13	188
Social media activities by battery sellers have increased the amount we spend on batteries.	43	115	10	12	8	188
Social media activities by battery sellers have increased the number of batteries we buy at a time.	37	117	9	16	9	188
Information from social media has improved our trust in certain brands, making us more willing to purchase batteries.	30	125	10	12	11	188
Social media updates on stock availability and prices have encouraged us to make more purchases.	36	110	10	15	17	188

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Table 4.4.2.5-1 indicates that the majority (100) of the respondents disagree, 60 strongly disagree, 13 strongly disagree while 7 agree and 6 were neutral that social media activities by battery sellers have increased the frequency of their purchases. By the same token, the majority (115) of the respondents disagree, 43 strongly disagree, 12 agree while 10 were neutral and 8 strongly agree that social media activities by battery sellers have increased the amount they spend on batteries. Equally, the majority (117) of the respondents disagree, 37 strongly disagree, 16 agree, while 9 strongly agree and 9 were neutral that social media activities by battery sellers have increased the number of batteries they buy at a time. Correspondingly, the majority (110) of the respondents disagree, 36 strongly disagree, 17 strongly agree while 15 agree, and 10 were neutral that social media updates on stock availability and prices have encouraged them to make more purchases. Likewise, the majority (100) of the respondents disagree, 62 strongly disagree, 13 strongly agree while 7 agree and 6 were neutral that social media activities by battery sellers have increased the frequency of their purchases.

#### **4.4.3 Correlation Analysis**

Pearson Correlation was adopted to determine the relationship between social media content strategies, vis-à-vis engagement (ENG), promotional offers (PO), influencer endorsements (IE), and posting frequency (PF) as independent variables versus sales volume (SV) as the dependent variable as represented on Table 4.4.3-1 below.

**Table 4.4.3-1: Bivariate Correlations Statistics**

		ENG	PO	EI	PF	SV
ENG	Pearson Correlation	1	.216(**)	.161(*)	.292(**)	.235(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003	.027	.000	.000
	N	188	188	188	188	188
PO.	Pearson Correlation	.216(**)	1	.216(**)	.310(**)	.255(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		.003	.000	.000
	N	188	188	188	188	188
EI	Pearson Correlation	.161(*)	.216(**)	1	.300(**)	.216(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.027	.003		.000	.003
	N	188	188	188	188	188
PF	Pearson Correlation	.292(**)	.310(**)	.300(**)	1	.220(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	188	188	188	188	188
SV	Pearson Correlation	.235(**)	.255(**)	.216(**)	.220(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.003	.000	
	N	188	188	188	188	188

**\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

Source: SPSS 26 (2025)

The results on Table 4.4.3-1 above highlight that there is a weak positive correlation between the independent variables (engagement (ENG), promotional offers (PO), influencer endorsements (IE) as well as posting frequency (PF) and the dependant variable (sales volume) (SV) in the Zimbabwe automobile battery sector as shown by the coefficients  $r = .235^{**}$ ,  $p = .000$ ;  $.255^{**}$ ,  $p = .000$  and  $.216^{**}$ ,  $p = .003$  and  $.220^{**}$ ,  $p = .000$ , respectively. The findings exposed that the significance of the correlation are all less than the recommended level 0.05. As such, at 95% confidence interval, the correlation was regarded as statistically significant and positively related with sales volume performance.

#### 4.4.4 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was used to ascertain whether the independent variables can significantly predict the dependent variable within the Zimbabwean automobile battery sector as shown on Table 4.4.4-1 to Table 4.3.4-3 below.

**Table 4.4.4-1: Model Summary**

**Model Summary <sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df 1	df 2	Sig. F Change	
1	.264 <sup>a</sup>	.218	.211	.537	.218	43.133	2	185	.000	1.158

a. Predictors (IVs): (Constant): ENG, PO.

b. Dependent Variable (DV): SV

Source: SPSS 26 (2025)

Table 4.4.4-1 above shows that  $R=0.264$ , denoting a weak positive correlation between the predictors and DV as well as that the model cannot be reliably be used to predict the outcome (SV). More so, the outcome variation is small ‘Adjusted R Square (21.1%). This thus means that a change in the predictors leads to a change in the outcome (SV) by only 21.1% in the Zimbabwean automobile battery sector. It is a small margin. Equally, the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.158), which is less 2.0, proves that the model does not contradict this assumption. The excluded variables (EI and PF) in the model after performing the regression analysis denotes that they are very weak or may have no significant relationship with the dependent variable. This finding is in sync with the correlation above that influencer endorsements (EI) has the weakest positive correlation, followed by posting frequency (PF), at least for now.

**Table 4.4.4-2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

**ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.837	2	12,419	43,133	000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	88.960	185	.481		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>113.801</b>	<b>187</b>			

a. **Predictors:** (Constant): ENG, PO

b. **Dependent Variable:** SV.

Source: SPSS 26 (2025)

Table 4.4.4-2 above displays that the regression model can be statistically used to predict the outcome variable as denoted by  $p=.000$ ), which is less .05. However, the model has a weak predict power ( $R^2 = 0.211$ ).

**Table 4.4.4-3: Coefficients Table**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.134	.108		10.479	.000					
PO	.180	.085	.263	2.129	.035	.265	.155	.148	.737	1.355
ENG	.063	.084	.088	.0748	.015	.253	.055	.053	.738	1.355

a. **Dependent Variable: SV**

The Coefficients Table 4.4.4-3 indicates that the independent variables contribute statistically significantly to the model as denoted by the ENG ( $p=.035$ ) and PO ( $p=.015$ ) which are all less the .05. However, their effect is relatively weak as denoted by PO ( $B = .180$ ) and ENG ( $B = .063$ ) to the outcome, SV, thus may need to be addressed seriously. For instance, for every one-unit increase PO, sales volume increases by only .180 units, and for every one-unit increase in engagement (ENG), sales volume increases by only 0.063 units, holding other variables constant. However, in line with the correlation results on Table 4.4.3-1, PO has a slightly stronger than others positive correlation with sales volume. The regression model equation is thus:

$$\begin{aligned}
SV &= \text{Constant} + B_1(\text{PO}) + B_2(\text{ENG}) \\
&= 1.134 + 0.180(\text{PO}) + 0.063(\text{ENG})
\end{aligned}$$

#### 4.4.5 Discussion and Interpretation of Results

##### 4.4.5.1 Impact of Engagement on Social Media on Sales Volume

In view of the survey results, it can therefore be said that the extent of engagement on social media by automobile battery firms is generally limited in Zimbabwe as demonstrated by all the engagement items (statements). This obtaining scenario affects sales volume. As also revealed by the correlation results, engagement on social media was found to be statistically significant but positively weakly correlated with sales volume, denoted by ( $r = .235^{**}$ ,  $p = .000$ ). This depicts that the potential of engagement is not being fully leveraged on social media by the firms hence not contributing significantly to sales volume rather than its ineffectiveness. In that regard, the alternative hypothesis **H<sub>1</sub>** was therefore not rejected. This finding was in tandem with that by Kanyosa (2025), Liadeli et al. (2023) and Wang et al (2021) that customer engagement through owned media channels, like Facebook, positively impact on sales results, stressing the strategic importance of digital interaction. However, a study by Huang and Pape (2020) as well as Candogan and Drakopoulos (2020) revealed that not all social media engagements convert directly to sales as some engagement metrics, such as, shares and likes may be sometimes misleading, without any direct financial results.

#### **4.4.5.2 Impact of Promotional Offers on Social Media on Sales Volume**

In light of the survey results, it can therefore be inferred that the extent of promotional offers on social media is generally limited amongst automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe as evidenced by all the promotional offers statements. This obtaining scenario affects sales volume. As equally exposed by the correlation results, promotional offers on social media were found to be statistically significant but positively weakly correlated with sales volume, denoted by ( $r = .255^{**}$ ,  $p = .000$ ). This represents that the potential of promotional offers is not being fully leveraged on social media by the firms, resulting in its less (weak) contribution to sales volume rather than its ineffectiveness. To this end, the alternative hypothesis  $H_2$  was hence not rejected. This finding was in line with that by Bondarenko and Vyshnivska (2023) that has shown a strong association between promotional offers on social media and an increase in sales volume. Similarly, a study Trunfio et al. (2021) exposed that a business that actively deploys social media promotions often register significant higher sales. However, a study by Liu and Karahanna (2020) revealed that the inherent limitations of promotional offers should be taken into consideration as they may be misleading, creating a spike in sales just for a short period and not sustainable sales growth.

#### **4.4.5.3 Impact of Influencer Endorsements on Social Media on Sales Volume**

From the survey results, it can thus be said that the extent of influencer endorsements on social media on sales volume is generally limited by automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe as evidenced by all the influencer endorsements statements. This obtaining scenario may affect sales volume of

these firms. As also exposed by the correlation results that influencer endorsements on social media are statistically significant but positively weakly correlated with sales volume, signified by ( $r = .216^{**}$ ,  $p = .003$ ). This demonstrate that the influencer endorsements are not being fully leveraged on social media by the firms, resulting in its less (weak) contribution to sales volume rather than its ineffectiveness. To this end, the alternative hypothesis **H<sub>3</sub>** was thus not rejected. This finding was similar to that by Hugh et al (2022) that there is a positive relationship between influencer marketing campaigns and sales volume. Likewise, Migkos (2025) found out that immediacy of social media promotes rapid dissemination of promotional content, which can bolster immediate purchasing behaviour among followers and subsequently boosting sales volumes.

#### **4.4.5.4 Impact of Posting Frequency on Social Media on Sales Volume**

In view of the survey results, it can hence be said that the extent of posting frequency on social media by automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe is generally limited as proved by all the posting frequency statements This obtaining scenario may impact on sales volume. As was also revealed by the correlation results that posting frequency on social media are statistically significant but positively weakly correlated with sales volume, shown by ( $r = .220^{**}$ ,  $p = .000$ ). This reveals that the posting frequency is not being fully leveraged on social media by the firms, resulting in its less (weak) contribution to sales volume rather than its ineffectiveness. Accordingly, the alternative hypothesis **H<sub>4</sub>** was therefore not rejected. This finding was also found by Hilong (2023) that business-consumer engagement on social media

highlights the essence of post frequency in order to maintain audience interest as well as fostering long-term relationships and subsequently improving sales volume. Similarly, a study by Su & Li (2023) underscores that finding the right balance between consistency as well as relevance in posting frequency is critical for brands towards enhancing sales volume.

#### **4.4.5.5 Sales Volume Performance**

From the survey results above, it can thus be said that social media content activities by automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe have not been able to contribute meaningfully to sales volume of batteries as confirmed by all sales volume statements. As also supported by the correlation results that all the independent variables have statistically significant and weak positive correlation with sales volume in the Zimbabwe automobile battery industry. This means that although the independent variables tend to move in line (positively) with the dependent variable, the relationship is weak (insignificant). However, influencer endorsements have the weakest and promotional offers has a slightly stronger than others positive correlation with sales volume. Notwithstanding that, the finding was however in tandem with that by Wang et al (2021) which established that firm-generated content (FGC) and user-generated content (UGC) enhance sales volume in United States of America's durable goods (light motor vehicle) sector. Likewise, Silvano and Mbongo (2022) revealed that an increased use of social media marketing enhanced sales performances of Women Clothing Stores in Tanzania.

Overall, the regression model showed that the model was statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, they have a weak predictive power, with an Adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.211. This shows that only 21.1% of the variation in sales volume is explained by the included predictors (ENG and PO), hence the model:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{SV} &= \text{Constant} + \text{B}_1(\text{PO}) + \text{B}_2(\text{ENG}) \\ &= 1.134 + 0.180(\text{PO}) + 0.063(\text{ENG}) \end{aligned}$$

#### 4.4.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter has presented, analysed as well as interpreted the research findings in line with the set study objectives. Primary data was quantitatively analysed using SPSS to produce graphs as well as frequency tables. SPSS was also used to perform correlation and regression analysis. The results exposed that independent variables (ENG, PO, EI and PF) have statistically significant and weak positive correlation with sales volume in the Zimbabwe automobile battery industry at least for now. In that regard, all the alternative hypotheses were accepted. The following chapter however delved into the summary, conclusions as well as recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This previous chapter has presented, analysed as well as interpreted the research findings in line with the set study objectives. Primary data was quantitatively analysed using SPSS to produce graphs as well as frequency tables. SPSS as also used to perform correlation and regression analyses. This chapter however delved into the summary, conclusions as well as recommendations of the study.

### **5.2 Discussion of the Study**

The study sought to assess the impact of social media content strategies, namely; Engagement (ENG), Promotional Offers (PO), Influencer Endorsements (IE), as well as Posting Frequency (PF) on sales volume of automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe. Both correlation and regression analyses was used to meet the research objectives.

#### **5.2.1 To Examine the Effect of Engagement (ENG) on Social Media on Sales**

##### **Volume**

Correlation analysis revealed a weak positive association between engagement on social media and sales volume. This was further buttressed by regression analysis ( $B = 0.063$ ,  $p = 0.015$ ). Notwithstanding its modest effect, the statistical significance points that firms that actively interact with their followers, through comments, replies, question and answers as well as polls, can positively influence their purchasing decisions. Engagement promotes

brand familiarity and trust which are imperative in product categories like automobile batteries where reliability is vital.

### **5.2.2 To Assess the Influence of Promotional Offers (PO) on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Promotional Offers emerged to have the slightly higher association though weak association with sales volume and was also statistically significant in regression analysis ( $B = 0.180$ ,  $p = 0.035$ ). This depicts that Zimbabwean customers tend to be responsive to social media posts that offer price discounts, bundle deals, or free services. In any case, in a market characterised with economic challenges like Zimbabwe, promotional incentives act as direct purchase influencers.

### **5.2.3 To Evaluate the Impact of Influencer Endorsements (IE) on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Influencer Endorsements (IE) exhibited a weak positive association with sales volume. Its contribution to the model was however statistically insignificant hence was excluded from the regression model. This suggests that there is limited implementation of influencer endorsements by automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe rather than its ineffectiveness. The businesses are not actively engaging relevant or credible influencers.

### **5.2.4 To Determine the Effect of Posting Frequency (PF) on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Posting Frequency (PF) equally showed a weak positive association with sales volume. However, the variable was also excluded in regression analysis

due to its insignificant contribution. This finding infers that there is limited implementation of posting frequency by automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe rather than its content quality, timing and relevance.

Overall, the regression model showed that the model was statistically significant. However, they have a weak predictive power, suggesting that that only 21.1% of the variation in sales volume is explained by the included predictors (ENG and PO), signifying that other factors, may also be playing an important role.

### **5.3 Conclusions of the Study**

In view of the research findings, it was thus concluded that:

#### **5.3.1 To Examine the Effect of Engagement (ENG) on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Engagement on social media has a statistically significant and positive association with sales volume in the automobile battery sector in Zimbabwe. The alternative hypothesis  $H_1$  was thus not rejected. However, the correlation is weak due to limited implementation of social media content which is engaging.

#### **5.3.2 To Assess the Influence of Promotional Offers (PO) on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Promotional Offers has a statistically significant and positive association with sales volume in the automobile battery sector in Zimbabwe. The alternative hypothesis  $H_2$  was thus not rejected. However, the correlation is weak due to

limited implementation on social media though it was found to have a slightly stronger than others positive correlation.

### **5.3.3 To Evaluate the Impact of Influencer Endorsements (IE) on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Influencer Endorsements (IE) has a statistically significant and positive association with sales volume in the automobile battery sector in Zimbabwe. The alternative hypothesis  $H_3$  was thus not rejected. However, the correlation is weak and insignificant due to limited implementation on social media at least for now.

### **5.3.4 To Determine the Effect of Posting Frequency (PF) on Social Media on Sales Volume**

Posting Frequency (PF) has a statistically significant and positive association with sales volume in the automobile battery sector in Zimbabwe. The alternative hypothesis  $H_4$  was thus not rejected. However, the correlation is weak and insignificant due to limited implementation on social media at least for now.

## **5.4 Implications for the Study**

### **5.4.1 Theoretical Implications**

This study adds to the existing body of academic knowledge in relation to the impact of social media content strategies on sales volume in Zimbabwe's automobile battery sector, with particular focus on engagement, promotions, influencer-driven and high-frequency content. It disputes the generalised

notion that all social media marketing tactics are collectively effective. Further, the study reinforces marketing communication theories that underscore interaction, value creation as well customer incentives. The study also challenges some assumptions in social media marketing literature, suggesting that effectiveness may be contingent on context, execution as well as product type.

#### **5.4.2 Practical Implications**

Automobile battery firms should allocate adequate resources toward enhancing engagement and designing attractive promotional offers that enhance sales. Further, firms should invest, restructure and effectively implement influencer marketing and posting strategies to prioritise relevance as well as timing over frequency to deliver value.

#### **5.4.3 Strategic Implications**

Marketing managers should employ data-driven decision-making through constant analysis of campaign performance as well as customer feedback to adjust their social media marketing strategies.

#### **5.4.4 Methodological Implications**

The correlation and regression results indicate the need for further studies beyond mere associations by applying models that control various variables. The study also reveals that lack of implementation of strategies, such as, influencer marketing, can lead to misleadingly low statistical significance, not owing to ineffectiveness, but as a result of non-use.

## 5.5 Recommendations for the Study

- The management should invest more in social media content strategies that encourage two-way communication and provide direct value to customers.
- The battery firms should partner with industry-relevant and technical stakeholders, such as, mechanics, battery specialists as well as auto-reviewers rather than generic influencers to promote influencer endorsements and subsequently boost sales volume.
- The battery firms should have a fully-fledged social media function with experienced experts for developing quality content that is more targeted and able to track actual sales from social media campaigns.
- The battery firms should build capacity in social media content strategy, customer engagement as well as analytics for better execution of campaigns.
- Social media staff should respond promptly as well as post relevant and quality content to bolster trust and brand awareness.
- The management should integrate social media campaigns with offline channels, such as, trade shows, workshops as well as partnerships with auto-service providers to enhance effectiveness.

## **5.6 Suggestions for Further Research**

This study examined social media content strategies, vis-à-vis, engagement, promotional offers, influencer endorsements and posting frequency on sales volume. It adopted a quantitative approach and used survey questionnaire to gather primary data amongst automobile battery sector customers in Harare. However, future studies should attempt to explore other variables, such as, product quality, brand loyalty, pricing and after-sales service to understand their effect on sales volume. Further, future studies should attempt to adopt qualitative or mixed methods to use different research instruments to gather data from different participants. In addition, similar studies should expand to other sectors and regions. Moreover, longitudinal studies should be pursued to establish the effects of these strategies over time to sales volume in the sector.

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## Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire for Customers

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Dear **Sir/Madam**

My name is BLESSMORE MADHANZI, an Executive Masters in Business Administration student with the Africa University, Mutare. I am carrying out research to examine the impact of social media content on sales volume of automobile battery firms in Zimbabwe. I am therefore kindly asking you to participate in this study by answering this survey questionnaire. Participating in this research survey is voluntary and you may opt out at any stage. Information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

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### Instructions

May you indicate your response by simply ticking [√] in the corresponding box provided.

### Section A: Demographic Profile of Participants

Question	Variable	Options	Tick [√]
1	Customer Type	Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Corporate	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Gender	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Frequency of battery purchase	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Quarterly	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Twice a Year	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Annually	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Less Often	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.	Highest Education Level	Primary	
		Secondary	
		Certificate/Diploma	
		Degreed	
5	Primary Social Media Platforms Used for Battery Information (You may tick more than one)	WhatsApp	
		Facebook	
		Instagram	
		Twitter	
		YouTube	
		TikTok	
		Other	

### Section B: Study Variables

May you please show by ticking, your level of agreement with each of statement, using the following scale: SD - Strongly Disagree; D- Disagree; N- Neutral; A- Agree; SA- Strongly Agree.

Variables ↓		Tick [√]				
		SD	D	N	A	SA
<b>Options →</b>						
<b>Effect Social Media Engagement (ENG) On Sales Volume</b>						
ENG1	Following battery brands on social media has increased how often we buy batteries.					
ENG2	Liking, commenting on, or sharing brand posts has encouraged us to buy more batteries.					
ENG3	Receiving replies or solutions from battery sellers on social media make us more likely to purchase from them frequently.					

ENG4	Product demonstrations or customer-use videos on social media motivate us to increase purchases.					
ENG5	Interactive content, such as, polls, question and answer, encourages us to buy more batteries.					
ENG6	Observing sellers responding to customers questions online increases our confidence to purchase more batteries.					
ENG7	Our direct engagement with brands on social media (messaging, enquiries) has increased the number of batteries we purchase.					
<b>Effect of Promotional Offers (PO) On Sales Volume</b>						
PO1	Special discounts on social media encourage us to buy batteries in larger quantities.					
PO2	Time-limited promotions on social media motivate us to purchase sooner and in greater amounts.					
PO3	Bundle promotions (battery plus installation/accessories) influence us to increase our purchases.					
PO4	Promotional codes or special links from social media lead us to buy more batteries.					

PO5	Discount information on social media makes us more willing to purchase additional batteries.					
PO6	Repeated promotional campaigns on social media have increased the number of batteries we purchase.					
PO7	Promotional posts that highlight warranty and after-sales support encourage us to buy in larger quantities.					
<b>Effect of Influencer Endorsements (IE) On Sales Volume</b>						
IE1	Recommendations from influencers on social media increase the number of batteries we buy.					
IE2	Demonstrations of battery performance by trusted influencers make us more likely to buy larger quantities.					
IE3	Endorsements from mechanics encourage us to spend more on batteries.					
IE4	Installation or test videos by influencers have motivated us to purchase more batteries.					
IE5	Endorsements from influencers make us confident to buy more batteries.					
IE6	Influencer posts that show real test results encourage us to increase battery purchases.					

IE7	Genuine influencer promotions motivate us to buy more batteries.					
<b>Effect of Posting Frequency (PF) On Sales Volume</b>						
PF1	Brands that post regularly encourage us to buy more batteries.					
PF2	Consistent posting schedules by brands make us more likely to increase purchases.					
PF3	Frequent posting by brands keeps the brand in our mind and motivates us to buy more batteries.					
PF4	Increased frequency of useful posts, such as, tips, demos, has led us to purchase more batteries.					
PF5	Frequent promotional posts encourage us to respond with larger purchases.					
PF6	Regular posting of new product information motivates us to buy more batteries.					
PF7	Overall, brands that post more often on social media influence us to purchase more batteries.					
<b>Sales Volume (SV) Performance</b>						
SV1	Social media activities by battery sellers have increased the frequency of our purchases.					

SV2	Social media activities by battery sellers have increased the amount we spend on batteries.					
SV3	Social media activities by battery sellers have increased the number of batteries we buy at a time.					
SV4	Information from social media has improved our trust in certain brands, making us more willing to purchase batteries.					
SV5	Social media updates on stock availability and prices have encouraged us to make more purchases.					

*Thank you*

## Appendix 2: AUREC Approval Letter



AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (AUREC)

P.O. Box 1320 Mutare, Zimbabwe, Off Nyanga Road, Old Mutare-Tel (+263-20) 60075/60026/61611 Fax: (+263 20) 61785 Website: [www.africau.edu](http://www.africau.edu)

Ref: AU3433/25

3 September, 2025

**BLESSMORE MADHANZI**

C/O Africa University  
Box 1320

**MUTARE**

RE: **BEYOND SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE: DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT TO PROMOTE SALES VOLUME IN THE ZIMBABWEAN AUTOMOBILE BATTERY INDUSTRY**

Thank you for submitting the above-titled proposal to the Africa University Research Ethics Committee for review. Please be advised that AUREC has reviewed and approved your application to conduct the above research.

The approval is based on the following.

- a) Research proposal
  - **APPROVAL NUMBER** AUREC 3433/25  
This number should be used on all correspondence, consent forms, and appropriate documents
  - **AUREC MEETING DATE** NA
  - **APPROVAL DATE** September 3, 2025
  - **EXPIRATION DATE** September 3, 2026
  - **TYPE OF MEETING:** Expedited  
After the expiration date, this research may only continue upon renewal. A progress report on a standard AUREC form should be submitted a month before the expiration date for renewal purposes.
  - **SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS** All serious problems concerning subject safety must be reported to AUREC within 3 working days on the standard AUREC form.
  - **MODIFICATIONS** Prior AUREC approval is required before implementing any changes in the proposal (including changes in the consent documents)
  - **TERMINATION OF STUDY** Upon termination of the study a report has to be submitted to AUREC.



Yours Faithfully

**MARY CHINZOU**  
**FOR CHAIRPERSON**  
**AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**