

The Role of Social Media Marketing For Qatar Airways That How It Is Helping Them To  
Capitalise the Market Share

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### **Abstract**

This research was based on the analysis of social media marketing in Qatar Airways. The research was based on the quantitative research methodology. The use of quantitative research methodology is effective because it provides an objective view of the research. Data has been gathered from the consumers of Qatar Airways through convenience sampling method. Data analysis has been carried out with the help of MS Excel. The frequency analysis has been performed by using Ms Excel. The use of frequency analysis helped in understanding the perceptions of consumers about the social media marketing of Qatar Airways. Data analysis has revealed that Qatar Airways uses social media for the purpose of promotion. The use of social media strategies by Qatar Airways is not effective for increasing the engagement of consumers. Therefore, Qatar Airways has been recommended to utilise social media marketing strategies that result in an increase in the engagement of consumers.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This research is based on the analysis of social media marketing in Qatar Airways. The introduction chapter has discussed the background of the research, aims and objectives, research rationale, and research questions. The outline of the research has also been presented in the introduction chapter.

### 1.1 Background of the Research

The topic of this research is exploring the role of social media marketing for Qatar Airways that how it is helping them to capitalise the market share. The response of consumers towards social media marketing is a well-researched topic. Pookulangara and Koesler's (2011) highlighted that consumers' sentiment towards marketing can be defined as a concept that is referred to the general feelings of consumers. According to Sinclair and Clinton (2011), the perceptions of consumers about overall marketing play an important role in motivating them to consume a particular product or service. As per Yang and Wang (2015), in order to create a successful marketing campaign, it is important to utilise technology. In the current era, it is important for organisations to get information about factors that are affecting attitudes and motives of consumers as revealed by Heinonen (2011). The rationale for choosing the research is the increasing popularity of social media among consumers. Pietro and Pantano (2012) discussed that the increased awareness of consumers about social media marketing has resulted in an active contribution of consumers towards online communication. As a result, businesses are required to be creative when utilising social media marketing strategies. When consumers develop a positive attitude towards social media marketing strategy, they develop a positive attitude towards the organisation. Chu (2011) has provided important findings related to social media marketing. Their research has highlighted that there is a positive association between consumer engagement and social media marketing strategy. Another important research that has provided background information related to social media marketing is Cox (2010). According to the research, the social media marketing strategy of business allow them to develop a positive attitude towards the organisation. The popularity of social media has been increased in the current era. The use of social media marketing results in an increase in the effectiveness of promotion and advertising. The use of social media is not only beneficial for businesses but also for consumers.

## **1.2 Rationale of the Research**

This research was based on the rationale that the role of social media marketing is critical in the current business environment. The role of social media marketing is important because it has an impact on the aims and objectives of business. The use of social media marketing by Qatar Airways could result in an increase in the market share. The research of Chu (2011) and Cox (2010) has provided important information about social media marketing and consumers' engagement. Their research has highlighted that the use of social media marketing results in the development of positive attitude in the minds of consumers. The secondary research has highlighted that there has been an increase in the awareness of consumers about social media marketing. The higher awareness of consumers has resulted in an increase in the pressure on businesses to utilise effective social media marketing strategies. Therefore, it is important to conduct research to determine the utilisation of social media marketing by Qatar Airways.

## **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this research is to explore the role of social media marketing for Qatar Airways in capitalising the market share. To achieve this aim, the analysis of social media marketing of Qatar Airways will be carried out. The research is based on the collection of primary data related to social media marketing of Qatar Airways. The satisfaction of customers with social media marketing of Qatar Airways will be analysed.

The objectives of this research are as follow:

- To study the significance of social media marketing in the current business environment of Airline industry
- To identify and evaluate different social media marketing strategies used by the company including Facebook and Twitter
- To develop recommendations for organisations operating in this industry to successfully leverage social media in order to capitalise the market.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

Following research questions have been developed for this research:

- What is the significance of social media marketing in the current business environment of the Airline industry?

- What are different social media marketing strategies used by Qatar Airways?
- How Qatar Airways and other airline companies can increase market share using social media marketing?

To seek answers to research questions, primary data has been gathered with the help of the questionnaire. The items on the questionnaire have been developed according to the research questions.

### **1.5 Outline of the Research**

The research consists of five chapters including the introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, and conclusion. The aims and objectives of the research have been discussed in the first chapter. The rationale of the research and the research questions are also included in this chapter. The second chapter has discussed the literature review where the secondary research analysis has been carried out. The research methodology has been performed in the third chapter. The methodology chapter has discussed the choice of research method, data analysis method, and sampling technique. The research findings have been presented in the findings chapter. In the conclusion chapter, the conclusion of the research has been given and recommendations have presented.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this research is to understand the significance of social media in the current business environment. The focus of this research is on the effectiveness of social media for the airline industry. The research also aims to evaluate different social media marketing strategies. The literature review has helped in developing a background of the research. It has also helped in reviewing different studies, which have been conducted on the topic. The literature review section involves an analysis of various studies, which have been conducted on the topic of social media marketing in the retail sector.

There are different arguments presented by researchers related to the role of social media. One of these arguments has been presented by Chu (2011). Chu (2011) discussed that consumers who use social media are likely to develop a favourable attitude towards social media marketing strategies of companies. When consumers have a positive attitude towards social media marketing strategy, they are more likely to join the group of organisations to receive promotional messages. Chu (2011) further highlighted that there is a link between the use of social media by consumers and consumer engagement with applications. The relationship between the use of social networking websites and the engagement of consumers with social media marketing also influences the effectiveness of social media advertising.

Cox (2010) also investigated the role of social media marketing and found that social media users develop a positive attitude towards organisations utilising social media marketing strategies. The research also revealed that young consumers have a strong positive attitude towards social media marketing. The consumers who are 18 to 28 years old find social media advertising as informative. The perceptions of users about advertising depend on the use of social networks. Moreover, the motivations of users for social networking plays an important role in determining their response towards social media marketing. On the other hand, it has been discussed by Pookulangara and Koesler's (2011) and Harris and Dennis (2011) that the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a framework that defines that consumers hold a hierarchy of trust when they use social media. When using social media, consumers are more likely to trust their real-life friends than social media friends.

Pietro and Pantano (2012) have revealed in their research that one of the most important factors affecting the decision of consumers to rely on social media advertising is enjoyment. The researchers found that consumers find it enjoyable to use social media for asking suggestions from others. Facebook has promoted the consumer to consumer approach where consumers are allowed to share their experiences with others. This allows consumers

to get common knowledge about products and services. On the other side, this allows organisations to maintain direct communication with customers. According to Sinclair and Clinton (2011), in order to increase the effectiveness of social media advertising, organisations can add appeal to their Facebook page by sharing content, adding games, and utilising other strategies to attract more consumers. However, it is also important that organisations increase their awareness regarding the attitude of consumers towards social media marketing. A deeper understanding of social media marketing is required in order to ensure that marketing strategies are developed and utilised in an effective manner. Moreover, the understanding of consumers' attitudes and perceptions is important in order to increase the effectiveness of social media marketing.

Heinonen (2011) discussed that the activities of consumers are associated with different motivational factors. The awareness of consumers' motives is important to develop an understanding of influences of marketing on their behaviour. When purchasing products online, consumers look for retail stores that they can trust. As per Harris and Charles (2011), the social media marketing brings in developing new elements into shopping experiences. Social media websites allow retail stores to reach a large target audience. The organisations can develop a customisable environment in order to use social media advertising to reach a large target market.

According to Yang and Wang (2015), in recent years, the popularity of social media has been increased in popularity. The Facebook and Twitter are used for social and professional networking. The online social networks have made it easier for people to share information. Fan et. al. (2015) argued that the use of social media has resulted in the popularity of different marketing practices; such as promotion and advertising. It has been suggested by Benson (2016) that the influence of social media on the purchase behaviour of consumers is significant. The social media has not only offered benefits to consumers but also for businesses. The business has the opportunity to connect with customers and develop relationships. The other functions of social media include influencing the perceptions and attitudes of consumers. The consumers like the idea of creating and joining communities to feel socially connected. As per Milewicz and Saxby (2013), there are many customers who simply enjoy interactions with like-minded customers. The efficiency of social media is higher as compared to traditional advertising and marketing channel. In the current environment, it has become imperative for businesses to participate in social media marketing to achieve success in the online business environment. Therefore, there has been an increased in the participation of businesses in social media. Gazal et. al (2016) highlighted that in the



businesses make use of social media to interact with potential customers. According to Taylor, Lewin, and Strutton (2011), in the modern business environment, the loyalty of customers can vanish quickly. The cost of switching to other brands is low for customers. The retention of customers in the competitive business environment is a challenge.

As per Denys and Mendes (2013), social media is two-way communication platforms that enable the free flow of information and values on the Internet. In the social media marketing environment, the information is generated and distributed in different directions. The research of Sankaran and Ravikumar (2011) has revealed that the social media has allowed users to interact with each other in real time. The social media websites have provided a suitable environment for spreading word-of-mouth communication. Chanthinok, Ussahawanitichakit and Jhundra-indra (2015) discussed that the advancement in the Internet has resulted in the development of new systems. Social media is a good example of the advancement of technology. The widespread availability of the Internet has provided several new opportunities to users. As per Huotari et. al., (2015), the users can now use Facebook and Twitter to communicate with others. The online communities and social networking are effective for sharing information. The consumers make social connections with the use of social networking websites. There are several implications of social media marketing because it facilitates the involvement of customers. Milewicz and Saxby (2013) pointed out that the social media offers different tools to firms such as advertising, word-of-mouth communication, and customer feedback. Ashley and Tuten (2015) revealed that the networking of customers through social media results in a positive impact on customer trust. The businesses can make use of social media to develop interactive marketing strategies.

As per Pani and Moharana (2013), the use of social media platforms has resulted in an effective share of information and content. The business makes use of social media to facilitate different business activities. One of the most widely used social media tools is the review. The argument of Ananda, Hernandez-García and Lamberti (2015) has suggested that the social media allows customers to give their reviews for various products and services. The firms encourage customers to rate and review products. These activities result in word-of-mouth communication that is an effective marketing tool. The word-of-mouth communication plays a key role in guiding the decisions of customers. As per Angella and Eunju (2012), the online communities and platforms are good examples of social media. These tools allow customers to share information and gain knowledge. It has been found from the research that customers are more interested in the recommendations of other users than the product information provided by the vendor. Hence, it can be agreed that the reviews

of customers on social media result in the development of trust among customers. Kilgour, Sasser, and Larke (2015) stated that the customers use online communities to seek social support from other customers. The social media offers two dimensions of support including informational and emotional. The social media also attracts individuals to visit the pages of businesses to gather information. Choi and Thoeni (2016) revealed that the social media is an effective tool for facilitating social interactions on the Internet. The social interactions are facilitated by social media communities, reviews, and recommendations (Harris, 2012).

Murad (2014) argued that the businesses make use of social media as a communication strategy. The high level of interest in social media is based on an increased use of this medium for different purposes. The use of social media is effective for building personal relationships. The social media marketing can be referred to as direct or indirect marketing activities that are used for building awareness and recognition. Social media marketing facilitates interaction with the help of social media conversations. Neiger et. al., (2012) reflected that the businesses are spending a significant portion of their budget on social media campaigns. There are different ways through which social media can be used for businesses. One of these ways involves relationship building. This involves the building of relationships by engaging customers. The brand building is also an important objective of social media. Whiting and Deshpande (2016) highlighted that the social media is used for the purpose of brand awareness, recognition, and brand loyalty. The businesses can make use of social media to develop positive perceptions in the minds of customers. The social media is also used for the purpose of market research. The businesses make use of social media to gather data about customers. Huotari et. al., (2015) explained that the businesses make use of social media to get information about customer demographics and future trends. The argument of Whiting and Deshpande (2016) has revealed that the information about competitors is also obtained with the help of social media. In the current era, the awareness of customers about products depends on social media marketing strategies of businesses. The social media marketing is used for the purpose of increasing the awareness of customers. Also, social identity is also created with the help of social media marketing websites.

Dixon et. al., (2015) suggested that communication is an important part of social media strategy. The social media provided the opportunity for customer-to-customer and customer-to-company communication. Pan, Vorvoreanu, and Zhou (2014) pointed out that the use of social media gives more control to customers regarding communication. The recommendations from friends on social media have a significant impact on the purchases of customers. Pani and Moharana (2013) suggested that the word-of-mouth communication is

also an important part of social media strategy. The social media marketing is considered to be an effective way of targeting and influencing customers. Chanthinok, Ussahawanitichakit, and Jhundra-indra (2015) have also supported above arguments by discussing that there are several advantages of social media marketing for businesses. The social media marketing allows businesses to persuade customers. As compared to traditional media, the use of social media marketing is more effective. The strong brands retain their effectiveness through the use of social media. It is because the use of social media marketing results in increasing the engagement of customers (Benson, 2016).

According to Anjum, More and Ghouri (2012), the companies that participate in social media marketing can achieve significant competitive advantage. It is because social media marketing can result in developing a strong presence and promoting brand awareness. The use of social media also results in the development of strong customer relationships (Parsons, 2011). The use of social media marketing results in engaging customers in such a manner that result in adding value to the brand. The social media firms can result in the attainment of competitive advantage. However, for the effective use of social media, it is important to customise ads according to the needs of customers. Denys and Mendes (2013) highlighted that the use of social media allows customers to give feedback. The companies can make use of social networking websites to communicate with customers and get feedback about latest products and services. Gümüs (2016) supported the above arguments by revealing that the fastest communication between marketers and consumers can be achieved with the help of social networking websites. The companies can make use of comments and feedback provided by customers to improve their products and services. The customers provide both positive and negative feedback about the product. It is recommended that firms do not delete negative comments to ensure that an open communication channel is built and maintained (Gazal et. al., 2016).

The argument of Harris (2012) has revealed that the continuous exposure to the brand results in a positive exposure of the customers. The use of social media results in enhancing brand awareness and promoting a positive brand attitude. Gazal et. al., (2016) found in their research that when customers like a page or suggest it to friends, the brand awareness is created. Another supporting argument has been presented by Huotari et. al., (2015) who claim that the effectiveness of social media marketing is measured by the consumption of content and engagement of customers. The likes, shares, and views of customers highlight their engagement. It is important for businesses to encourage open communication through

social networking websites. This can result in increasing the level of brand awareness and building trust.

Taylor, Lewin, and Strutton (2011) have discussed that customers have a positive perception of social media advertising. The advertisement on social media is more effective when it offers explicit value to the customers. The communication between customers and companies should not only be based on product information but also on customer experiences. Harris (2012) highlighted that communication with customers should be integrated with the marketing strategy. Sankaran and Ravikumar (2011) highlighted that it is important for businesses to listen to online conversations. The argument of Anjum, More and Ghouri (2012) has also supported the above arguments by highlighting the significance of social media. The customers get attracted towards businesses that make use of social media marketing strategy. It has been discussed by Kilgour, Sasser, and Larke (2015) that the advertisement through social networking websites has been gaining popularity in the current era. The social media marketing has now become an important trend in the business environment. The importance of social media marketing has been increased because the demands of customers have been evolving with time. The customers no longer demand static data. In fact, they need interactive content to make their purchase decision. Parson (2011) highlighted that in the current era, customers are expected to make a presence on the social network. It is a challenge for customers to make the presence in the social media. It is also important to integrate social media marketing with traditional marketing to achieve positive outcomes.

Neiger (2012) discussed that the main purpose of social media is to increase the engagement of people. The engagement of customers can be referred to as the level of involvement of customers with the brand. There are different aspects of social media marketing strategy that result in an increase in the engagement of customers. These components include communication, education, and collaboration. The social media marketing also has a positive impact on brand reputation. Angell and Eunju (2012) also supported this argument by discussing the role of brand preference and social media marketing strategy. According to the researcher, the use of social media marketing strategy results in an increase in the engagement of customers with the brand. This has a positive impact on the purchase decision of customers. These arguments suggest that the use of social media can result in increasing trustworthiness. It can also be agreed by these findings that social media marketing can result in better branding (Harris, 2012).

Ashley and Tuten (2015) discussed that the brand attitude is also a positive feeling that is associated with social media marketing. The use of social media marketing strategy can result in the development of a positive brand attitude. It is important for businesses to develop positive brand attitude because of their association with the purchase decision of customers. Aral, Dellacrocas and Godes (2013) argued that the development and management of customer relationships is an important benefit of social media marketing. However, to manage successful relationships with customers, it is important to positively respond to the needs of customers. The reviews of products and services over social media websites have been growing in importance. The social media has enabled third-party endorsements. The customers can view what others are saying about products and services of businesses. As per Taylor, Lewin, and Strutton (2011), the engagement of customers with social media marketing strategies of businesses depends on the needs and motives of consumers. It is important for businesses to design interactive content for customers. The branding activities carried out on social media can result in increasing the engagement of customers. Yang and Wang (2015) argued that these activities can also result in promoting word-of-the-mouth communication. These activities can involve ongoing customer-customer dialogue and social content. Although there are various objectives of social media marketing, customer engagement is the most common objective. According to Mahoney (2015), a majority of marketers utilise social media marketing strategies to increase the engagement of customers. The creative social media marketing strategies can be used by businesses to bridge the gap between the demands of customers and products and services offered by businesses. The creative strategies include both content and design of communication. The brand marketers have a high level of interest in creative strategies. The creative strategies can result in enhancing the motivation and opportunities for consumers. Although the use of social media offers several benefits to businesses, there is limited research regarding the impact of social media on businesses. The research has provided evidence that businesses have started to use social networking websites; such as Twitter and Facebook, to engage with customers. The area that needs more attention of researchers is the measurement of the effectiveness of social media marketing strategy. Aral, Dellacrocas, and Godes (2013) highlighted that there is a lack of best practices for the use of social media marketing in businesses. There is a need to develop metrics to help businesses develop effective social media marketing strategies. The effective utilisation of social media marketing strategy requires business expertise.

The literature review has helped in developing an understanding of the role of social media in marketing. The arguments of researcher have highlighted that social media

marketing is an effective marketing strategy for businesses. The use of social media marketing can result in increasing the engagement of customers. The social media marketing strategy has also enabled businesses to get customer feedback. The feedback provided by customers can result in improving existing products and services. The literature review has also highlighted that there is a need to develop metrics to improve the effectiveness of social media marketing strategy.

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## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### CHAPTER 3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research aims to analyse the role of social media marketing in capitalising market share of Qatar Airways. This chapter has discussed the methodology used in this research. The chapter has covered a description of research philosophy, research methodology, data collection methods, data analysis methods, and research ethics. In the end, the conclusion of the chapter has been presented.

#### 3.1 Research Philosophy

According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012), the research philosophy deals with the source and nature of knowledge. The research involves the creation of knowledge; therefore, it is important to be concerned about knowledge creation. The research philosophy helps in understanding important assumptions about research. In research, four kinds of research philosophies can be used including interpretivist, realism, pragmatism, and positivist. The pragmatism approach involved mixed research methods. In this philosophy, the researcher uses both quantitative and qualitative methods. The second type of philosophy is positivism. This type of philosophy is used in a highly structured research with a large sample size. The third type of realism in which the subject matter decides the type of methodology and data collection. The fourth type is interpretivist in which the sample size is small. This involves an in-depth investigation of the topic (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). The roots of positivist are in natural science. The main goal of positivist is to carry out a highly structured research. This philosophy is associated with the observation of facts. The realism philosophy is one in which the positivism is applied to the social context. In this research, the positivist methodology was used. In this methodology, the existing theories and models are used to develop and test hypotheses. The positivist philosophy is recommended for the research conducted in the field of social science.

#### 3.2 Research Methodology

Bryman and Bell (2011) revealed that there are three types of methodologies used in research including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research. The qualitative research methodology is one which involves subjective evaluation of a research topic. The quantitative research is used to understand the cause and effect relationship between variables. The

qualitative research is one in which the social interactions are understood and interpreted. In qualitative research, the small groups are selected while in the quantitative research, large sample size is selected. The type of data collected in qualitative and quantitative research is also different (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In quantitative research, as highlighted by Wilson (2013), data is gathered in the form of words and objects. Data gathered in qualitative research is in the form of numbers and statistics. The data analysis methods used in quantitative and qualitative research are also different. The quantitative data analysis technique involves statistical relationships while in qualitative research, data analysis is done with the help of themes and patterns (Bajpai, 2011). Wilson (2013) added that the mixed research method is one in which a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods is used. The mixed research method is used to increase the reliability and validity of research findings (Wilson, 2013). In this research, the quantitative research methodology has been used. The use of quantitative research method is beneficial because it allows the researcher to gather numeric data that can be easily transformed into statistics. The use of quantitative research methodology, in this research, has helped in quantifying the attitudes of customers about the role of social media in Qatar Airways. The quantitative research methodology has also helped in generating results from the sample size. As per Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012), the benefit of quantitative research methodology is that it allows the researcher to apply research findings to a large population. Therefore, findings of this research can be used to understand the role of social media marketing in Qatar Airways and its impact on market share. Another benefit of quantitative research methodology is that it is more structured than qualitative research. It involves the use of different methods; such as online surveys, questionnaires, and others (Baxter, Hughes and Tight, 2004).

### **3.3 Data Collection Methods**

Creswell and Clark (2011) highlighted that there are different types of data collection methods used in researches. The methods used for gathering data are different in qualitative and quantitative research. In quantitative research, data is gathered by conducting surveys. On the other side, in qualitative research, data is gathered through interviews and observation (Baxter, Hughes and Tight, 2004). In this research, both primary and secondary data has been used.



### **3.3.1 Primary Data Collection**

For primary data collection, close-ended questionnaires were used. The questionnaires were administered on the customers of Qatar Airways. The questionnaire consisted of items related to the role of social media marketing in the case of Qatar Airways. There are different benefits of using the questionnaire for data collection. As per Creswell and Clark (2011), one of the benefits of this method is its practicality. Another benefit is that it allows researchers to gather a large volume of data in a short period. The use of the questionnaire for data collection is also convenient because its results can be quantified easily. Data gathered through questionnaires can be analysed in an objective manner. Although the use of the questionnaire is beneficial for the collection of objective data, there are some limitations of this method (Creswell and Clark, 2011). Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) added that the questionnaires provide a relatively simple and straight forward approach to data collection. One of the limitations of the questionnaire is that it does not measure subjective factors such as emotions and behaviours (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012).

### **3.3.2 Secondary Data Collection**

For secondary data collection, a range of secondary data related to the role of social media marketing was accessed. For accessing secondary data, the relevance of the topic and data for publication were used. In this research, the secondary data were collected from peer-reviewed journals, newspaper and magazine articles, books, case studies and government reports.

### **3.3.3 Sample Size and Selection**

Once the researcher defines the research problem, Wilson (2013) argued that the next step involves the choice of population and sample. It is important for the researcher to clearly define the population of a research and the research sample (Wilson, 2013). In this research, the research population consists of the customers of Qatar Airways. Moreover, a sample of 100 customers of Qatar Airways has been chosen. According to Bajpai (2011), there are two techniques used for sampling technique. As per Khan (2014), the probability sampling technique is one in which every member of the population has an equal chance of getting selected. Therefore, in probability sampling technique, the results can be generalised on a larger sample size. There are different sampling techniques using probability sampling including random, systematic, and stratified sampling (Khan, 2014). On the other side, Silverman (2011) argued that the non-probability sampling technique is one in which every

member of the population cannot be selected. In this research, the sampling technique which has been used for sample selection is non-probability sampling technique. The non-probability sampling technique is one in which respondents are not selected by probability as highlighted by Neuman (2011). Bryman and Bell (2011) revealed that the non-probability sampling technique could be further classified into three types including quota sampling, purposive sampling, and convenience sampling. Quota sampling is one in which the researcher sets a targeted number of sample. The purposive sampling is also referred to as expert sampling or judgmental sampling (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Wilson (2013) added that the objective of purposive sampling is to select a sample purposefully that can represent the population. The convenience sampling technique is one in which the judgment of the researcher is not used to select the respondents. In this research, convenience sampling technique has been used to gather data from the sample. The researcher has gathered data from respondents who can be accessed easily.

### **3.4 Data Analysis Methods**

Data analysis method used in this research is frequency analysis. For Frequency Analysis, MS Excel has been used. The frequency analysis method has been chosen for this study because it allows the researcher to understand the perceptions of respondents about different aspects of social media marketing.

### **3.5 Research Ethics**

The researcher has also considered ethical aspects in this research. This research involved the collection of primary data from respondents. To gather data from these respondents, prior consent was obtained. The respondents were asked to sign the consent form before filling the questionnaire. Before data collection, the researcher explained procedures and methods involved in the research. The researcher also explained the aims and objectives of the research to the participants. The participants were also informed that the findings of this research would be shared with them. It was also ensured by the researcher that the identity of respondents remains confidential. An important ethical aspect, which should be considered in research is plagiarism (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). In this research, the researcher has prevented plagiarism by using information context and point of views.

### 3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology used in this research. This research is based on the use of quantitative research methodology. The philosophy used in this research is the positivist. The research involves the collection of primary and secondary data. The primary data has been gathered from questionnaires whereas secondary data has been gathered from academic articles and journals. For data analysis, frequency analysis method has been used. The methodology chapter has also discussed the sample selection and sampling technique. The research ethics have also been discussed in this research.

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## CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The topic of this research is to examine the role of social media marketing for Qatar Airways. The research aimed to determine how social media marketing influences market share. The research was based on the quantitative research methodology. The research was based on the collection of primary data. The primary data was gathered with the help of the closed-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered on the customers of Qatar Airways. The items on the questionnaire were based on the analysis of literature review. The primary data was gathered from a sample of 100 customers. Data analysis was carried out with the help of frequency analysis.

### 4.1 Gender



Figure 1 Gender

The first question was related to the gender of respondents. There were 60% respondents who were female while 40% male. This shows that a majority of respondents were female.

## 4.2 Age

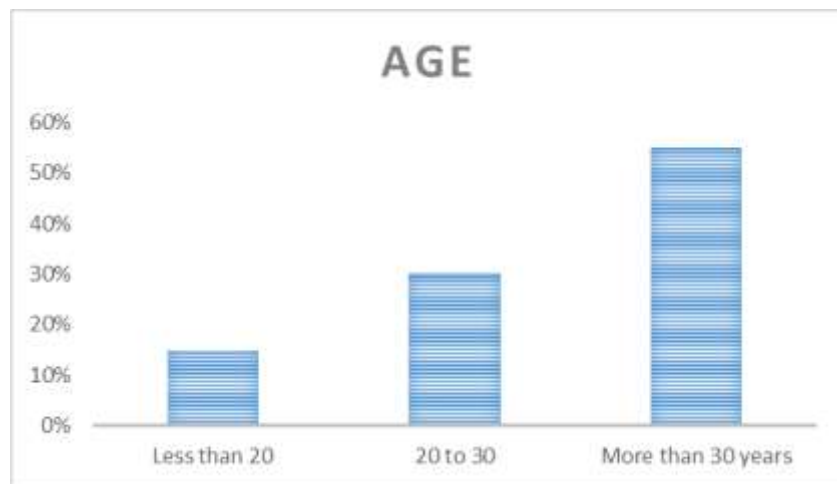


Figure 2 Age

There were 15% respondents who were less than 20 years old, 30% respondents were 20 to 30 years old, and 55% respondents were more than 30 years old. This shows that a majority of respondents were more than 30 years old.

## 4.3 Social Media and Customer Engagement

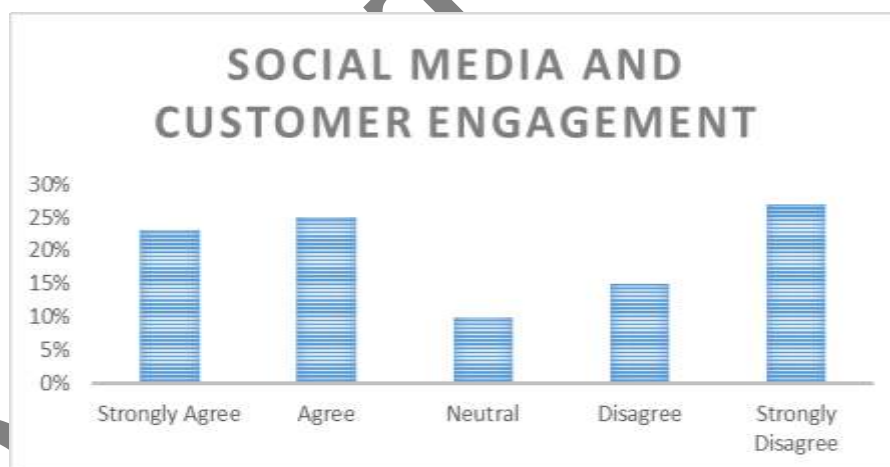


Figure 3 Social Media and Customer Engagement

The impact of social media on customer engagement was also assessed through the questionnaire. There were 23% customers who strongly agreed, 25% agreed, and 10% were neutral. This shows that there were 48% customers who agreed that social media has an impact on the engagement of customers. On the other side, there 15% customers who disagreed and 27% strongly disagreed with the statement. This shows that 42% respondents disagreed that social media has an impact on the engagement of customers. The percentage of respondents who agreed was 48% while the percentage of respondents who disagreed was 42%. This shows that the percentage of respondents who agreed was higher than the

percentage of those who disagreed. However, the difference between the participants who disagreed and agreed was not significant. This shows that the impact of social media on customer engagement is not strong in the case of Qatar Airways.

#### 4.4 Social Media and Promotions

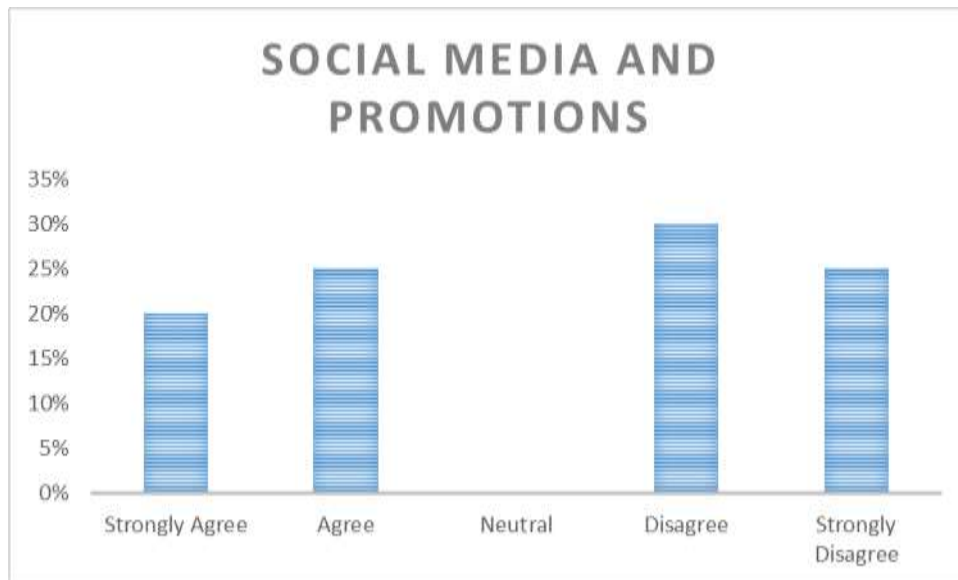


Figure 4 Social Media and Promotions

The impact of social media on the promotion of Qatar Airways was also highlighted in the research. The respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement that the social media is reviewed by consumers to get latest updates about promotions of Qatar Airways. There were 20% respondents who strongly disagreed, and 25% disagreed with the statement. On the other side, there were 30% respondents who disagreed and 25% respondents who strongly disagreed with the statement. There were 45% respondents who agreed, and there were 55% respondents who disagreed with the statement. This shows that the impact of social media marketing of Qatar Airways is not strong on the promotions on the business. The customers believe that the social media marketing of Qatar Airways is not effective for the purpose of promotion. Chu (2011) supported this finding by arguing that the use of social media strategy results in the development of effective marketing messages. The companies use social media strategies to promote their latest offerings. However, a majority of respondents agreed that Qatar Airways' customers do not rely on social media to get information about latest promotion and offerings.

#### 4.5 Social Media and Customer Loyalty

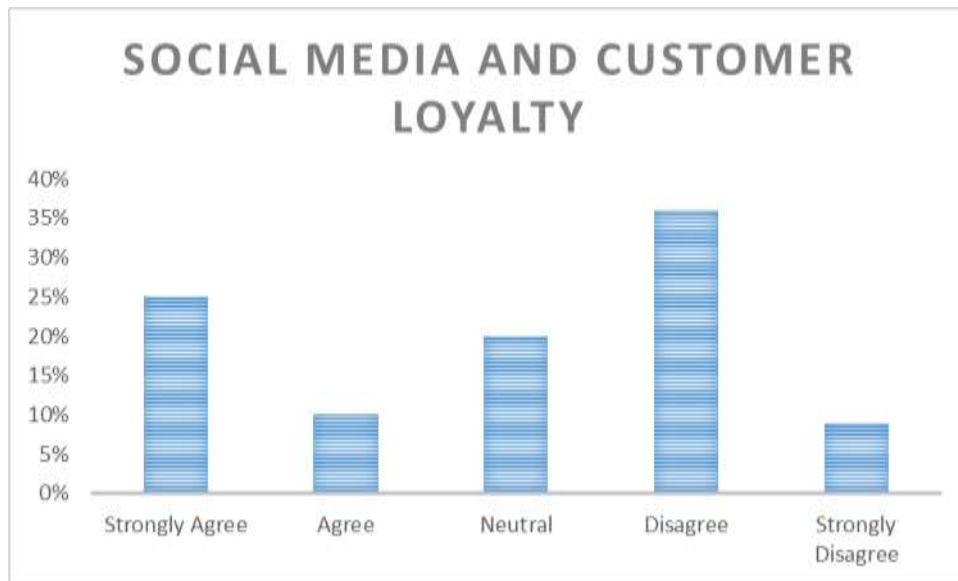


Figure 5: Social Media and Customer Loyalty

In the next question, the respondents were asked about the impact of social media marketing on customer loyalty. The respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement that social media marketing of Qatar Airways has resulted in an increase in customer loyalty. There were 25% respondents who strongly agreed, and 10% agreed. There were 20% respondents who were neutral. On the other side, there were 36% respondents who disagreed and 9% strongly disagreed. There were 35% participants who agreed and 35% participants who disagreed. The percentage of participants who disagreed was higher than those who agreed. This shows that a majority of respondents agreed that social media marketing of Qatar Airways does not impact customer loyalty. The importance of customer loyalty has been highlighted by Taylor, Lewin, and Strutton (2011). In the current era, the loyalty of customers is important because it involves significant cost. In a highly competitive environment, it is important to take measures to increase the retention of customers. Whiting and Deshpande (2016) believe that the social media marketing is used by businesses to create brand awareness and recognition. The social media marketing also has an impact on the brand loyalty of customers. The businesses use social media marketing to develop positive perceptions in the minds of customers. The findings of the primary research have opposed the findings of secondary research where it has been highlighted that social media marketing is associated with an increase in customer loyalty.

#### 4.6 Social Media and Market Share

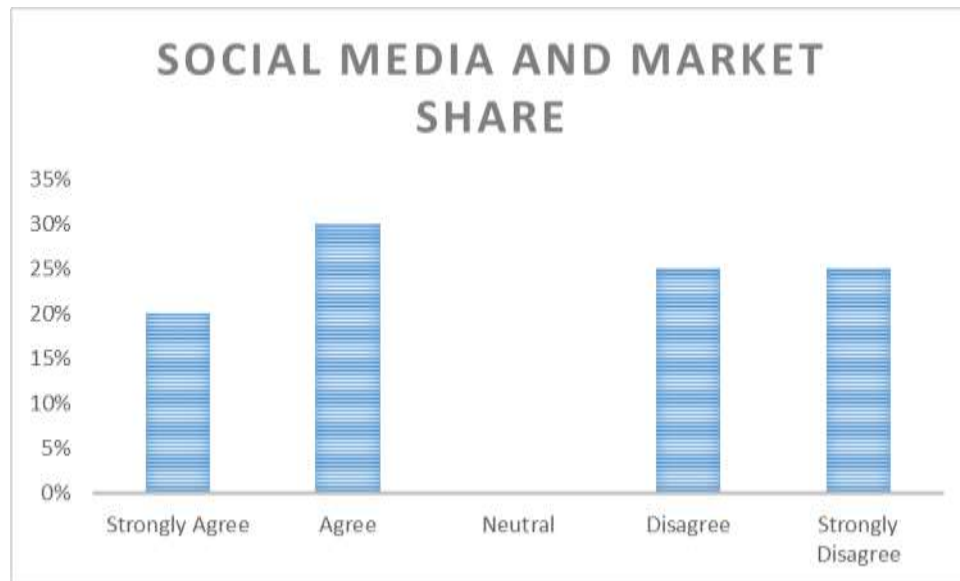


Figure 6: Social Media and Market Share

The next question was related to the role of social media marketing on the market share of Qatar Airways. There were 20% respondents who strongly agreed that there is an association between social media marketing strategy and market share of Qatar Airways and 30% agreed. On the other side, there were 25% respondents who disagreed, and 25% strongly disagreed with the statement. The findings that 50% of respondents agree that social media marketing has an impact on market share and 50% disagree that there is an association between these variables.

#### 4.7 Customer Likes and Comments

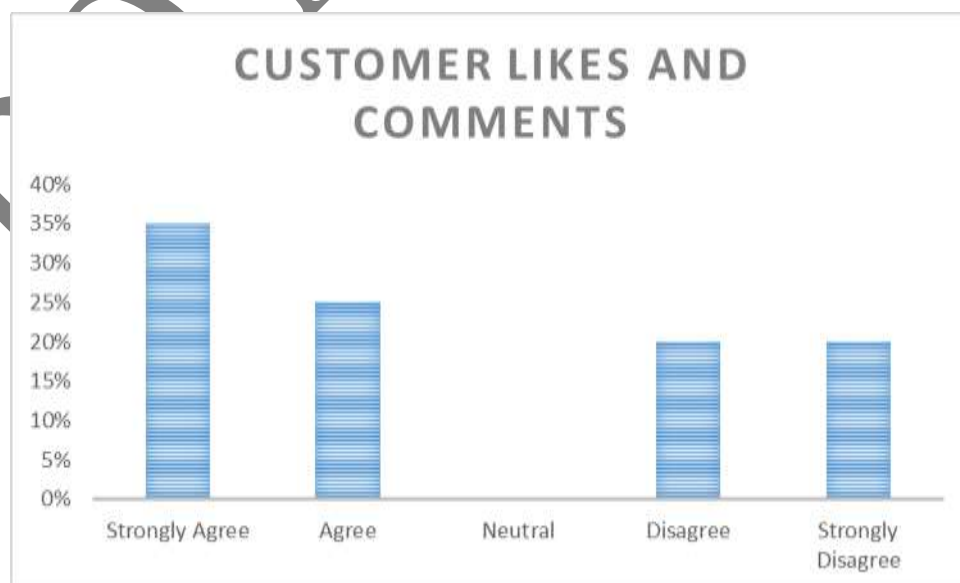


Figure 7: Customer Likes and Comments



There were 35% respondents who strongly agreed, and 25% agreed that customer likes and comments on the social media pages of Qatar Airways had been increased with time. There were 35% respondents who strongly agreed, and 25% agreed with the statement. On the other side, there were 20% respondents who disagreed, and 20% disagreed with the statement. This shows that there were 60% respondents who agreed with the statement. The findings suggest that the exposure of customers to the social media of Qatar Airways has been increased with time. An important argument regarding the role of social media marketing has been highlighted by Harris (2012). According to the research, the social media marketing strategy results in an increase in brand exposure. The use of social media marketing is also associated with brand awareness and the promotion of positive brand attitude. Gazal et. al., (2016) have further revealed that the awareness about a brand is increased when customers like a page or suggest it to the friends. Huotari et. al., (2015) further supported this argument by revealing that the effectiveness of social media marketing is measured by the consumption of content and the response towards it. Therefore, the likes and comments of customers suggest that they are getting engaged with the social media strategy.

#### 4.8 Customer Response Social Media Marketing

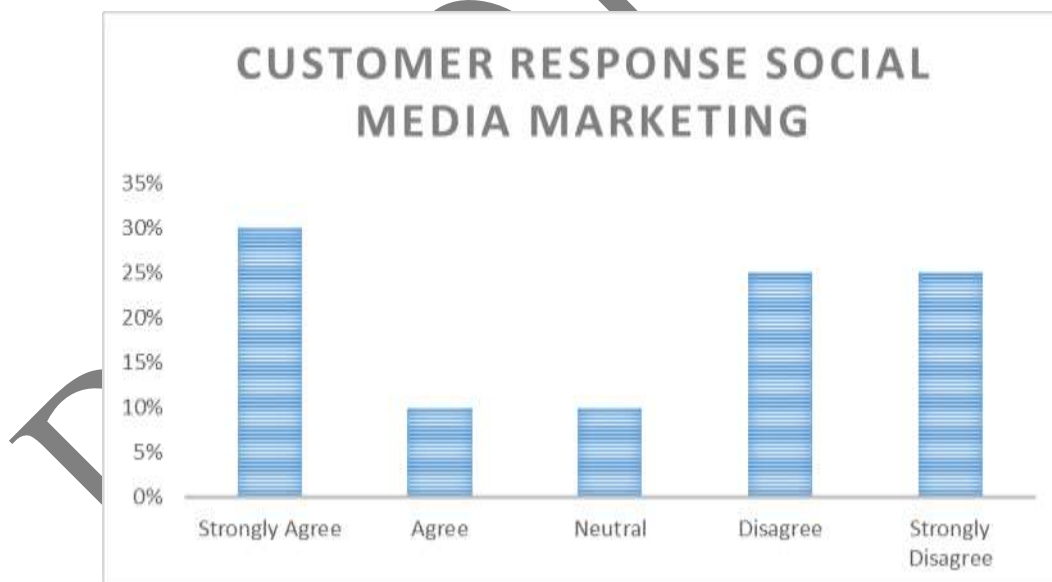


Figure 8: Customer Response and Social Media Marketing

In the next question, respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement that social media marketing strategy of Qatar Airways has generated a positive response from the customers. There were 30% respondents who strongly agreed, and 10% agreed with the statement. On the other side, there were 25% respondents who disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed. There were 50% respondents who disagreed with the statement and 40% agreed

with the statement. The percentage of respondents who agreed was higher than the percentage of those who disagreed. It can be understood from these findings that a majority of customers believe that the response of customers to social media marketing strategies of Qatar Airways is not positive.

Pietro and Pantano (2012) have discussed that customers often get engaged with the social media because of the enjoyment it provides. The engagement of customers cannot be improved if the content shared on social media is not enjoyable. In addition to this, if customers do not find social media strategies attractive, they do not get engaged. Facebook has promoted the consumer to consumer approach where consumers can share their experiences. Sinclair and Clinton (2011) suggested that to increase the effectiveness of social media advertising; it is important to add appeal to social media pages by sharing content and using other strategies. The analysis of social media strategies of Qatar Airways has revealed that they are not effective regarding generating a positive customer response. Therefore, the business needs a deeper understanding of social media marketing to ensure that the strategies and developed and utilised in the most effective manner.

#### 4.9 Social Media for Promotion

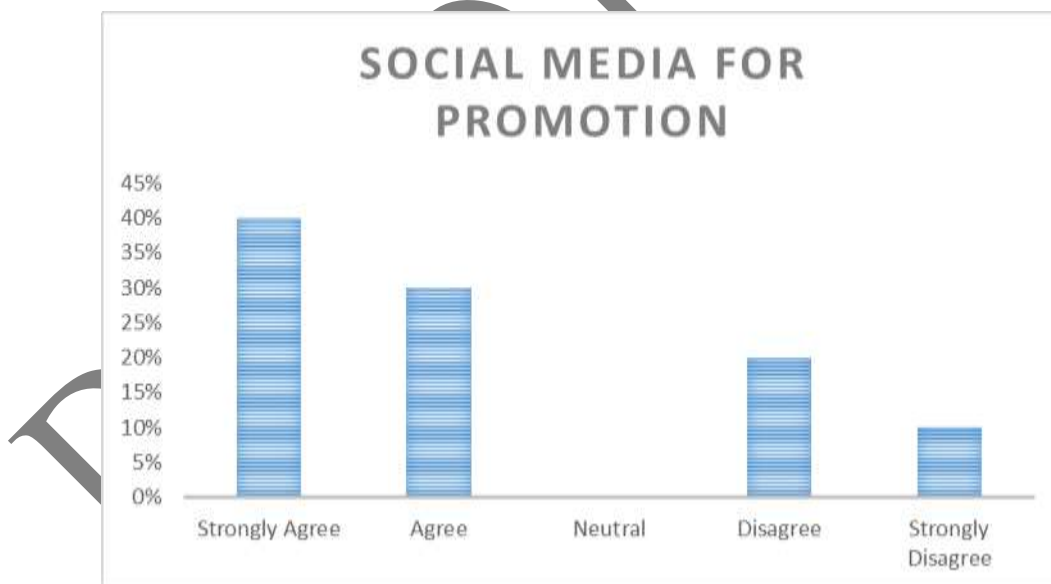


Figure 9: Social Media for Promotion

In the next question, the respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement that social media is used by Qatar Airways to promotional content. There were 40% respondents who strongly agreed with the statement and 30% agreed. On the other side, there were 20% respondents who disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed. There were 70% respondents who agreed and 30% who disagreed with the statement. The findings have

revealed that a majority of respondents agreed that social media is used by Qatar Airways for the purpose of sharing promotional content. Hence, social media marketing is an important strategy used by businesses to share promotional content. Fan et. al. (2015) discussed that the use of social media is associated with promotion and advertising. Benson (2016) further highlighted that the use of social media has a significant impact on the behaviour of consumers. The social media has not only offered benefits to the customers but also for businesses. The focus of Qatar Airway's social media is on sharing promotional content. However, the strategy does not focus on increasing the engagement of customers. Milewicz and Saxby (2013) have revealed that customers enjoy engaging and interacting with other customers on social media to get information about brands. Therefore, Qatar Airways need to focus on involving customers in its social media marketing strategy. The social media pages of Qatar Airways must share content that results in an increase in the engagement of customers. For instance, the business can arrange quiz competition on its Facebook page and reward winners.

#### 4.10 Social Media and Engagement

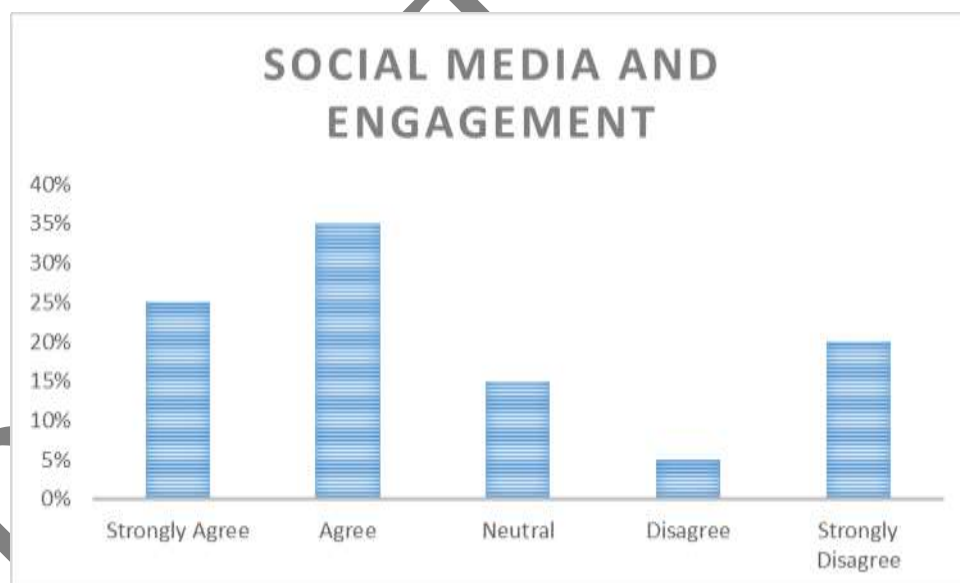


Figure 10: Social Media and Engagement

The next question inquired participants about the impact of social media marketing strategy of Qatar Airways and the engagement of customers. There were 25% respondents who strongly agreed, 35% agreed, and 15% were neutral. On the other side, 5% disagreed and 20% strongly disagreed with the statement. A majority of respondents agreed that the use of social media marketing strategy results in an increase in the engagement of customers with Qatar Airways. These findings of primary data have also been supported by the research of

Benson (2016) who highlighted that the use of social media is more effective than traditional media in terms of increasing the capability of brands to retain customers. Benson (2016) also highlighted that the use of social media marketing results in an increase in the engagement of customers. Huotari et. al., (2015) have also highlighted that the Likes, Shares, and Views of customers highlight the engagement of customers. The social media marketing of businesses should focus on increasing the engagement of customers. The main purpose of social media is to increase the engagement of customers. The engagement of customers can be defined as their involvement with the brand. The component of social media marketing strategy that results in an increase in customer engagement is communication. A majority of respondents agreed that Qatar Airways uses different interactive programs on social media to increase the engagement of customers.

It can be comprehended on the basis of these research findings that Qatar Airways needs to improve its social marketing strategy. There is a need to give attention to sharing interactive content over social media pages such as Facebook. The customers must be kept engaged through different activities and games. The customers should be motivated to share the content with their friends and acquaintances to increase brand awareness. Qatar Airways is also recommended to allow customers to provide feedback about their overall experience with the airline.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This research was based on the analysis of the analysis of the role of social media marketing for Qatar Airways. The research also aimed to analyse how social media marketing can be used for capitalising the market share. The research is based on social media marketing because of an increase in the use of social media among marketers. The increase in the popularity of social media has resulted in an increase in the competition faced by businesses. Hence, it has become imperative for businesses to determine how different social media marketing strategies should be utilised to increase customer retention. The research was based on three objectives. The first objective was to study the importance of social media marketing in the Airline industry. The second objective was to identify and evaluate different social media marketing strategies used by Qatar Airways. The third objective was to develop recommendations for Qatar Airways and other organisations operating in the Airline industry.

### 5.1 Importance of Social Media Marketing in the Airline Industry

The first objective of the research was to understand the importance of social media marketing in the Airline industry. The respondents of the research were the customers of Qatar Airways. The customers were asked about the role of social media marketing in Qatar Airways. A majority of respondents revealed that the social media marketing has an impact on an increase in the engagement of customers with Qatar Airways. The research findings have also revealed that social media marketing has an impact on the promotion of business. The customers of Qatar agreed that social media marketing has resulted in the promotion of the business. Qatar Airways uses social media to share promotional content. Hence, social media marketing is used by businesses to share promotional content. Fan et. al. (2015) have also highlighted the importance of social media. According to the researchers, the role of social media is critical for the promotion of business and an increase in customer engagement. Benson (2016) believe that social media marketing has an impact on the behaviour of customers. The social media marketing is not only beneficial for customers but also for businesses. Milewicz and Saxby (2013) highlighted that the engagement of customers is increased because of the use of social media marketing strategy. Qatar Airways uses social media marketing to increase customer engagement.

## 5.2 Social Media Marketing Strategies Used by Qatar Airways

The second objective of the research was to evaluate different social media marketing strategies used by Qatar Airways. The analysis of primary data has revealed that Qatar Airways uses social media marketing to promote the business. The businesses share promotional content with the customers on social media pages including Facebook and Twitter. In addition to this, Qatar Airways also uses strategies that result in an increase in the engagement of customers. The importance of different social media marketing strategies results in an increase in the engagement of customers. The social media marketing strategy is often used by businesses to promote word of mouth communication. To achieve these goals, businesses share promotional content on Facebook. In addition to this, businesses also organise different activities that result in an increase in the engagement of customers.

The use of social media platforms has resulted in an increase in the effectiveness of information sharing. The social media is used by businesses to facilitate different activities. The social media is used by businesses to encourage customers to give reviews about different products and services. The customers give reviews about the products and services of business. The reviews can be used by businesses to improve products and services. The customers are interested in the recommendations of other customers to share information and gain knowledge.

## 5.3 Recommendations for Social Media Marketing Qatar Airways

The third objective of the research was to provide recommendations for social media marketing Qatar Airways. Following are some of the recommendations for the utilisation of social media marketing by Qatar Airways as well as other airlines operating in the industry:

- Qatar Airways is recommended to use social media marketing to improve the loyalty of customers. The analysis of the social media marketing strategy of Qatar Airways suggests that it is currently using social media only for promotional purpose. In the future, Qatar Airways should consider encouraging customers to give their reviews about their services with Qatar Airways. The reviews will be used by customers to develop perceptions about the services of Qatar Airways
- Qatar Airways should increase the engagement of customers by organising different contests. The winners of contests should be rewarded with free tickets to different destinations. The contest should involve tagging the friends and share the Facebook page of Qatar Airways.

- The social media marketing strategy of Qatar Airways should not only focus on sharing photos but also on generating user-generated content. The Airline Company is recommended to initiate discussions with customers on Facebook and Twitter. The company should focus on two areas during the discussion including the experiences of customers about traveling and their opinions about the services or news from the company.
- Qatar Airways should also consider utilising other social media platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube. This will result in encouraging online conversations with customers. This will also allow Qatar Airways to improve engagement with customers and gather their feedback. The feedback will be utilised by Qatar Airways to make improvements in existing services.
- The findings have revealed that the current social media marketing strategies are not effective regarding increasing the market share. Therefore, there is a need to improve social media marketing strategies to increase the market share.

#### **5.4 Limitations**

The research was based on different limitations. One of the limitations of this research was that the data collection was based on convenience sampling. The convenience sampling has an impact on the implications of research findings. It is because, in this sampling method, respondents are not provided with the equal opportunity of getting selected. Another limitation of this research is that it was based on the case study of Qatar Airways. Therefore, the findings of this research cannot be applied to other airlines operating in Qatar.

## 6 APPENDIX

### Questionnaire

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age

- Less than 20 years
- 20 to 30 years
- 30 to 40 years
- More than 30 years

3. The social media marketing posts of Qatar Airways are effective in increasing the engagement of customers

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4. The customers review the social media marketing posts of Qatar Airways to get latest updates about promotions

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5. The social media strategies of Qatar Airways have resulted in increasing customer loyalty with Qatar Airways

- Strongly Agree
- Agree



- Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
6. The social media marketing strategies has resulted in an increase in the market share of Qatar Airways
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
7. The number of likes and comments of customers on social media posts of Qatar Airways has been increased with time
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
8. The response of customers on social media marketing campaigns of Qatar Airways is positive
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
9. The social media is used by Qatar Airways to share latest promotions of the business
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree

- Strongly Disagree

10. The social media strategy of Qatar Airways include arranging different competition and programs to keep customers engaged

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

DO NOT

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