

Social Media Platforms and Consumer Buying Behaviour of Products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: This study was carried out to examine the relationship between social media platforms and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The survey research design was used for the study. Data for the study were obtained through questionnaire administered to the respondents. A convenience sampling technique was used to select 213 respondents for the study. Descriptive statistics basically mean, standard deviation, kurtosis and skewness were used to analyse the scores obtained on each of the variable while bivariate correlation between variable was carried out using Pearson correlation. Four hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance. Hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression model. The results clearly revealed that there is a significant relationship between Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour. Based on the findings, it was recommended that manufacturers of products should continuously create awareness about their products on social media platforms to ensure visibility in order to attract high consumers' patronage.

KEYWORDS: Social media platforms, Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp, consumer buying behaviour

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Social media platforms as valuable communication tools have become increasingly important to companies, marketers and consumers. Nowadays, most companies use social media to showcase their products and services to encourage consumer purchase. Atejahwari, Joshi and Mandhari (2020) opined that most companies use social media to encourage feedback; this shift away from traditional marketing methods has meant that customers have started to shop online using social media websites or applications.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) stated that consumers are increasingly using social media sites to search for information and turning away from the traditional media such as television, radio, newspapers and magazines. The Cambridge dictionary (2018) defined social media as websites or applications which allow users to participate in social networking by creating or sharing content. According to this definition, social media include networking sites or applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogging sites, Email, WhatsApp, chatrooms, Myspace, etc. The emergence of social media for the past few years provides companies with channels to contact consumers easily. It rapidly changed the way companies and marketers communicate to consumers and the way they promote their products and services.

Hajli (2014) asserted that social media have provided new opportunities to consumers to engage in social interaction on the internet. According to Lai and Turban (2008), the interaction through social media without physical contact has been facilitated by web 2.0 applications. Web 2.0 is a new advancement by introducing social media where individuals can generate content online. According to Devries, Genster and Leeflang (2012), social media offer different values such as enhanced brand popularity. Therefore, this study is basically to examine the relationship between social media platforms and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between social media and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were:

- i. To examine the relationship between Facebook and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State.
- ii. To ascertain the relationship between X (Twitter) and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State.
- iii. To assess the relationship between Instagram and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State.
- vi. To investigate the relationship between WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour of products in

Akwa Ibom State.

- v. To determine the relationship between Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, this research aimed at answering the following questions:

- i. What is the relationship between Facebook and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State?
- ii. To what extent does X (Twitter) relate with the consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State?
- iii. What is the relationship between Instagram and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State?
- iv. To what extent does WhatsApp relate with the consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State?
- v. What is the relationship between Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between Facebook and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between X (Twitter) and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant relationship between Instagram and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State.
- H₀₄:** There is no significant relationship between WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State.
- H₀₅:** There is no significant relationship between Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be useful to companies and marketers who are using social media to promote, showcase and sell their products and services. It will assist the manufacturers of products and services providers to know the social media platform in which consumers mostly use. The findings will also add to the existing body of knowledge on social media and consumer buying behaviour of products. It will serve as a reference material for researchers who want to carry out a study on similar or related topics.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study was restricted to the users of social media platforms in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. It focused on four (4) social media platforms; Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram and WhatsApp as independent variables as well as consumer buying behaviour as dependent variable. The unit of analysis was the users of social media platforms in Akwa Ibom State.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section covered the conceptual framework and empirical review of literature.

2.1 Social Media

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as internet based applications that aid consumers to share opinions, insight and perspectives. Parr (2010) described social media as the use of electronic and internet tools for sharing and discussing information and experiences with other human beings in more efficient ways. Kohli, Surri and Kapoor (2015) defined social media as consumer-generated media that covers a wide variety of new sources of online information with others regarding any topic of interest.

2.2 Social Media Platforms

Types of social media platforms include the following:

- i. Facebook:** Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg in February 2004. According to Wittkower (2010), the user of social media can create a personal profile, post and share elements such as photos and videos. Renu and Gupta (2020) asserted that Facebook is the popular social networking site worldwide. According to the author, marketers can make their personalized profile or page on this popular website for their customers through whom they can comment, post any query or information required regarding the product. Marketers can

upload pictures and videos about products on their Facebook page, which helps to advertise their products worldwide. Nair (2018) opined that Facebook is the extensively used social media network for marketing. It allows the companies to use a wide variety of media such as video, pictures, posters, audio clips etc.

ii. X (Twitter): X (Twitter) was developed by Jack Dorsey in March 2016 (Statista, 2019). According to Nair (2018), Twitter is social media platform which can create quick immediacy with the target crowd. This allows sending quick and short messages called tweets to the target crowd.

iii. Instagram: Instagram was developed by Kevin Systrom in 2010 and is now owned by Facebook. According to Renu and Gupta (2020), Instagram is a successful marketing platform that facilitates users with many interesting features like filtering and editing of videos and photos online. Nair (2018) stated that Instagram platforms allow the companies to make an engaging content by uploading high-quality photos of products. Instagram has a lot of options to add contents which can attract customers.

iv. YouTube: YouTube was founded in February 2005 by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley and Jawed Karim. It was later acquired by Google Inc. in November, 2006. YouTube is the most popular video based social media websites with over 1.8 million users per month. It allows all users to upload, rate, share and comment videos (Renu and Gupta, 2020).

v. WhatsApp: WhatsApp is a free messaging mobile app which allows the users to send different types of messages such as text, pictures, audio, videos, documents, etc. The rate at which WhatsApp can disseminate information about the products or services is very fast compared to other social media. WhatsApp does not allow paid promotions (Nair, 2018).

vi. LinkedIn: LinkedIn is a professional social network which allows connecting with professionals as well as customers. A company can create more visibility by posting daily updates and posts. LinkedIn facilitates target market through its feature of the creation of group where members with similar interest can join and share updates in the group (Nair, 2018).

vii. Blogs: Blogs are social media tools of personal web pages that can come in different variations such as describing the author's life or summarizing all relevant information in one specific area, product or service (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). According to Ryan and Jones (2009), people who are using blog to report local news, offer their opinions and sharing their visions and experiences about any purchasing product, service or brand. Ward and Ostrom (2006) stated that consumers may decide to engage in virtual complaints in the form of blogs because of their dissatisfaction and disappointment about a company's product offerings. According to Weber (2007), companies can also use their own corporate blog to show consumers a personal side about their businesses, give them valuable information that consumers use, provide answers and improve their overall experience of dealing with their company.

2.3 Consumer Buying Behaviour

Attih (2021) described consumer buying behaviour as behaviour exhibited by consumer to search, buy, and use goods and service to satisfy his/her needs and wants. According to Deliya and Parmar (2012), 'consumer buying behaviour is the process by which individuals search for, select, purchase, use and dispose of goods and services in satisfaction of their needs wants'. Rajesuari and Piratheeswari (2014) provided a different definition by explaining consumer buying behaviour as a behaviour exhibited by people in planning, purchasing and using economic goods and services in the satisfaction of their needs and wants. White (2015) defined consumer buying behaviour as the decision processes as well as the actions the consumer takes in buying and using products.

2.4 Review of Empirical Studies

Renu and Gupta (2020) examined the influence of social media on consumer buying decision in Chandigarh region. The survey research design was used to obtain data from the respondents. The sample size of 100 respondents was selected using simple random sampling technique. The hypotheses for the study were tested using regression model. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between social media and consumer buying decision. It was concluded that social media play a crucial role in influencing consumer buying decision in Chandigarh region.

Madhuhansi (2019) studied the impact of social media characteristics on consumer buying decision process in Western province, Sri Lanka. The quantitative survey research method was used in the study. The sample size of 147 respondents was selected using snowball sampling method. The primary data was used for achieving the research objectives and self-administered structured questionnaires were used for data collection. The hypotheses were tested using linear regression model. The findings of the study showed that social media characteristics influence on all stages of consumer buying decision process. It was concluded that consumers in Sri Lanka mostly rely on information through social media for sharing experiences of a product, for searching relevant information and evaluating alternative options before making a buying decision.

Arshad (2019) investigated the influence of social media marketing on consumer behaviour in Karachi, Pakistan. The quantitative survey research method was used in the study. The sample size of 250 respondents was selected using convenient sampling technique. The primary source of data collection was questionnaire. The hypotheses were tested using regression model. The findings of the study revealed that social media including Facebook and Twitter are mostly prevalent among people of Karachi, specially the students and professionals. It was concluded that social media such as Facebook and Twitter notification, information, news and entertainment related posts put a momentous influence on consumer behaviour in Karachi, Pakistan.

Nair (2018) examined the impact of social media on consumer buying decision towards financial assets among IT professionals in Kerela. The survey research design was used in the study. The sample size of 403 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling technique. The hypotheses were tested using one-sample t-test model. The findings of the study showed that social media significantly influence the purchase behaviour of even high involvement products like financial products among IT professionals in Kerela. It was concluded that social media play an important role in influencing the consumers' purchase decisions of financial products in Kerela.

Khatib (2016) studied the impact of social media characteristics on purchase decision: Empirical study of Saudi Arabia customers in Asser region. The quantitative research method was used in the study. The sample size of 310 of individuals in Asser region was selected using convenient sampling technique. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression model. The findings of the study revealed that consumers in Saudi Arabia are actively utilizing social media platforms as a tool in validating of the purchase decisions. It was concluded that social media are playing greater role in influencing consumer purchase decision in Asser region, Saudi Arabia.

Akhar, Tahir and Asghar (2016) investigated the impact of social media on consumer purchase intention in Okara, Pakistan. The survey research design was used in the study. The sample size of 83 respondents was selected using simple random sampling technique. The primary source of data collection was questionnaire. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression model. The findings of the study showed that there is a positive relationship between social media and consumer purchase intention. It was concluded that social media play a crucial role in influencing consumer purchase intention in Okara, Pakistan.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section focused on the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing data for the study. It consists of research design, population, sample size/sampling technique, conceptual specification of model, source and nature of data, reliability of the research instrument and methods of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

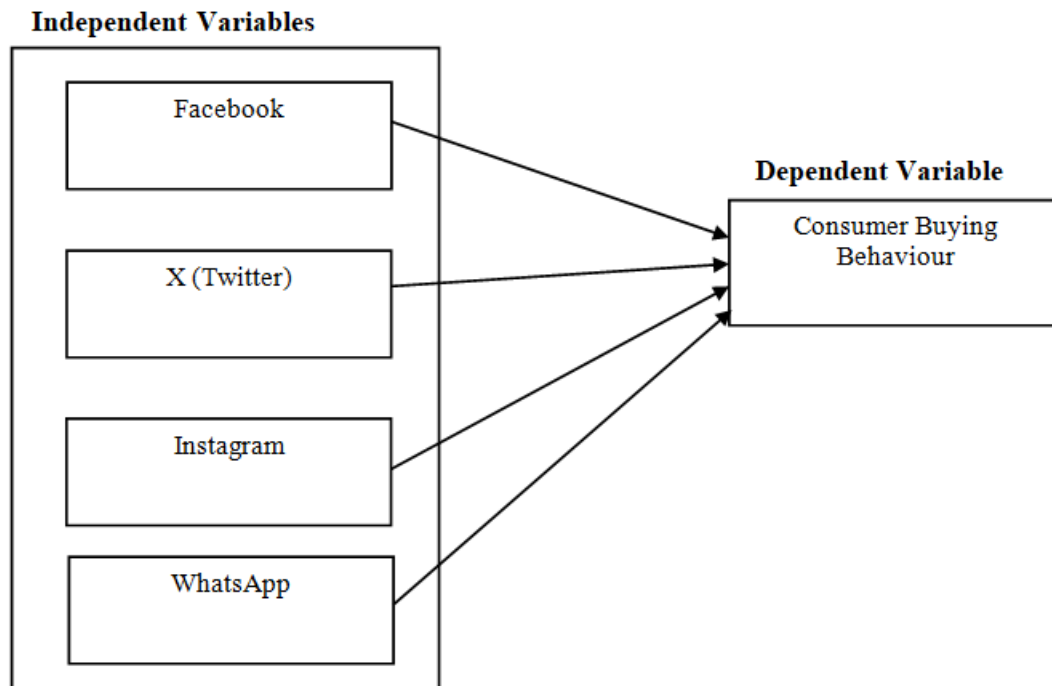
The survey research design was used in this study. It involved gathering primary data through a structured questionnaire administered to respondents

3.2 Population, Sample Size/ Sampling Technique

The population of the study comprised users of social media platforms in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The sample size of 213 users of social media platforms in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria was selected using convenience sampling technique.

3.3 Conceptual Specification of the Model

Based on the research hypotheses, conceptual model was developed to determine the relationship between social media platforms and consumer buying behaviour as dependent variable. The model specifies that consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria is a function of Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram and WhatsApp.



Source: Author’s Conceptual Model (2023).

3.4 Source and Nature of Data

Data for this study were obtained using primary source. The primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to respondents.

3.5 Reliability of the Research Instrument

To determine the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha method of reliability was employed and the result reveal reliability coefficients of .840, .913, .960 and .955 for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp respectively. For consumer behaviour, Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of .960 was obtained. These reliability coefficients were all greater than .70 which indicates that the instrument is reliable.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics basically mean, standard deviation, kurtosis and skewness were used to analyse the scores obtained on each of the variable while bivariate correlation between variable was carried out using Pearson correlation. The hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression model. Data computation was carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20.0) and p-value less than .05 was considered statistically significant.

IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Table 1: Summary of the descriptive statistics for social media variables and consumer buying behaviour

Variables	No. of items	N	Mean score	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Facebook	3	213	10.00	1.43	-0.85	2.22
X (Twitter)	3	213	8.77	2.04	-0.31	-0.30
Instagram	3	213	9.75	1.94	-0.59	-0.28
WhatsApp	3	213	9.62	1.92	-0.65	0.22
Consumer’s buying behaviour	3	213	9.27	1.77	-0.71	0.84

SD- standard deviation, n is the number of observation.

Result in Table 1 presents summary of the descriptive analysis for social media variables (Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram and WhatsApp) and consumer buying behaviour. Result shows that among the social media variables, Facebook was more rated than other social media platforms (mean score = 10.00) while twitter was the least rated (Mean score 8.77). The standard deviation obtained for Twitter (SD = 2.04) was higher than that obtained for other social media meaning that the scores obtained for X (Twitter) was less consistent compared with other social media platforms considered in the study. The mean score of 9.27 was obtained for consumer

buying behaviour which implies that the respondents demonstrated some level of positive buying behaviour. The skewnesses obtained for all variables were less than 0 meaning that these variables are skewed to the left while Facebook reported the highest Kurtosis of 2.22 than other variables. The result of the bivariate relationship between social media dimension and consumer buying behaviour is presented in Table 2. Result shows that consumer buying behaviour has significant positive relationship with Facebook ($r = .221, p < .01$), Twitter ($r = .409, p < .01$), Instagram ($r = .285, p < .01$). Result obtained for WhatsApp shows insignificant positive relationship with consumer buying behaviour ($r = .126, p > .05$). This indicates the use of these three social media platforms has the ability to trigger positive consumers' buying behaviour. Further analysis was carried out using multiple linear regression and the results obtained are as presented in Table 3.

Table 2: Summary of the bivariate relationship between Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
Facebook	1				
X (Twitter)	.115	1			
Instagram	.191**	.217**	1		
WhatsApp	.203**	.138*	.216**	1	
Consumer buying behaviour	.221**	.409**	.285**	.126	1

**Significant at 1% ($p < 0.01$), *Significant at 5% ($p < 0.05$)

Table 3: Summary of the multiple linear regression results for the relationship between social media advertisement and consumers' buying behaviour

Variables	β_{uns}	SE	β_s	t-calc.	P-value	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	3.123	.965		3.237	.001		
Facebook	.178	.078	.144	2.284	.023	.933	1.072
X (Twitter)	.307	.055	.353	5.615	.000	.941	1.063
Instagram	.163	.059	.178	2.779	.006	.900	1.111
WhatsApp	.009	.059	.010	.155	.877	.920	1.087
Model summary performance and diagnostics							
R ²	.228						
R ² adjusted	.213						
F-calc.	15.370						
P-value	0.0000						
p-value for Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey	0.8165						
P-value for Breusch-Godfrey Serial Correlation LM Test	0.4549						

SE= standard error, VIF- Variance Inflation Factor, β_{uns} = unstandardized coefficients, β_s = Standardized coefficients, **significant at 1% ($p < 0.01$).

Result of multiple linear regression in Table 3 reveals Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values of 1.072 for Facebook while for X (Twitter), Instagram and WhatsApp, the VIFs of 1.063, 1.111 and 1.087 respectively. The VIFs are all less than 5 indicating that there is no evidence of multicollinearity. This is also supported by the tolerance values with the tolerance values of .933, .941, .900 and .920 for Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram and WhatsApp which are all greater than 0.20 which implies that there is also no evidence of multicollinearity. To test for heteroscedasticity, the Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey test was used and the p-value of 0.8165 meaning that there is no evidence of heteroscedasticity and hence the variance of the errors are constant (homoscedastic) ($p > .05$). For serial correlation, Breusch-Godfrey Serial Correlation LM Test was used and the p-value of 0.4549 which is greater than .05 was obtained which implies that there is no evidence of serial correlation. The adjusted

R^2 of .213 was obtained which means that 21.3% of the variation in consumers' buying behaviour was accounted for by social media marketing variables (Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram and WhatsApp). Result also yielded F-calculated of 15.370 with p-value of 0.000 ($p < .05$) which indicates that the regression result is significant.

Furthermore, the result reveals that Facebook ($\beta = .178$, $SE = .078$, $t\text{-cal.} = 2.284$, $p = .023$, $p < .05$) has a positive relationship with consumers' buying behaviour. The t-calculated of 2.284 and t-critical of 1.97 at the 0.05 level of significance was obtained. The t-calculated is greater than the t-critical which implies that there is a significant relationship between Facebook and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom state. Result also shows that twitter ($\beta = .307$, $SE = .055$, $t\text{-cal.} = 5.615$, $p = 0.000$, $p < 0.05$) has a positive relationship with consumers' buying behaviour. The t-calculated of 5.615 is greater than the t-critical of 1.97 at the 0.05 level of significance which implies that there is a significant positive relationship between X (Twitter) and consumer buying behaviour. Similarly, for Instagram, the result also shows that Instagram ($\beta = .163$, $SE = .059$, $t\text{-cal.} = 2.779$, $p = .006$, $p < .05$) has a significant positive relationship with consumer buying behaviour. Hence, there is a significant positive relationship between Instagram and consumer buying behaviour in Akwa Ibom State, For WhatsApp ($\beta = .009$, $SE = .059$, $t\text{-cal.} = .155$, $p = .877$, $p > .05$), the relationship it has with consumer buying behaviour was positive but not significance. The t-calculated (.155) is less than the t-critical (1.97) at the 0.05 level of significance which implies that there is no significant relationship between WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour. For the joint relationship of the four social media platforms, the F-calculated of 2167.551 with p-value of 0.000 were obtained. The F-calculated (15.370) is greater than the F-critical of 2.42. The null hypothesis is rejected and hence there is a significant relationship between Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour. Result also shows that among the three social media platforms that were significant, X (Twitter) was found to have more significant positive relationship with consumer buying behaviour than Facebook and Instagram.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study was carried out to examine the relationship between social media platforms and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The results clearly revealed that there is a significant relationship between Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour. Therefore, it is concluded that social media platforms play an important role in influencing consumer buying behaviour of products. Based on the findings, it was recommended that manufacturers of products should continuously create awareness about their products on social media platforms to ensure visibility in order to attract high consumers' patronage. The implication of this study is that the manufacturers of products can further influence the level of consumer buying behaviour by aggressively advertising their products on social media platforms.

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