



INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ON CONSUMER BUYING DECISION PROCESS OF SELECTED MADE IN ABA PRODUCTS IN UMUAHIA METROPOLIS, ABIA STATE, NIGERIA

Aniuga, Chukwuma, Ph.D

Department of Marketing, College of Management Sciences, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State

Iwuji, Kevin Ekene

Department of Marketing, College of Management Sciences, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State

Ekwe, Blessing Ngozi Ph.D

Department of Marketing, College of Management Sciences, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State

Okonkwo Raphael Valentine, Ph.D

Department of Marketing, College of Management Sciences, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State

Abstract

This study examined the influence of social media networks on consumer buying decision process of selected made in Aba products in Umuahia metropolis, Abia State, Nigeria. The Specific objectives include: influence of Facebook on consumer buying decision process, influence of Instagram on consumer buying decision process and influence of YouTube on consumer buying decision process. The study used non-probability convenience sampling to survey 362 consumers. Simple linear regression model was employed for data analysis. The findings indicate that social media networks (Facebook, Instagram and YouTube) have significant influence on consumer buying decision process. The study aligns with previous research that highlights the importance of these factors that influence consumer buying decision process. Based on the major findings and conclusion, the study recommends as follows: Businesses should simplify their messages, presentations and contents to arouse more interest in their consumers when reviewing their product for purchase, government and online business owners should ensure that consumers are protected since many of them are concerned with the security and protection of their personal details and their privacy when it comes to online shopping in Nigeria and Social media networks, messages and contents of organisations should have fun features and applications to stimulate purchase from online consumers. Online retail companies'/e-commerce companies should specifically describe the quality and quantity of their products to online consumers for easy decision making.

Keywords: *Influence, social media networks, consumer, buying, decision process, products, Umuahia metropolis*

Introduction

The global spread of social media platforms has transformed the marketing landscape. This is accomplished by providing firms with unparalleled worldwide chances to connect with consumers (Jun and Steven, 2025).

These social media networks have irreversibly altered the communication landscape, ushering in a time of hyper-connectivity and dynamic participation. Social media, defined as interactive online platforms that enable users to create and share content while fostering social interaction (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, cited in Shrestha, Karki, Bhushan, Joshi, and Gurung, 2023), has rapidly evolved from



its infancy (e.g., MySpace) to a constellation of digital behemoths: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Also, these networks have become a vital element of modern society, and their impact on consumer purchasing decisions has been extensively explored. Social media is described as a collection of internet-based apps that enable the creation and sharing of user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, referenced in Shrestha et al, 2023). Social media also allows consumers to compare the pricing, quality, features, services, and usability of products and services given by different companies of the same type (Rafiq and Javeid, 2014). Several studies have been conducted to analyze the impact of social media on consumer buying behavior, purchase intention, purchase decision, customer happiness, and online shopping behavior from the views of customers all over the world (Jeenefa, 2022). Asma and Misbah (n.d.) provided a link between social media marketing and consumer purchasing behavior, demonstrating that social media marketing is a successful marketing technique that influences customer perception and, ultimately, purchase decisions.

Consumer behavior can be defined as the attempt to understand more about how people, groups, or organizations choose, protect, utilize, and discard items, services, experiences, and ideas (Raorane and Kulkarni, 2011). Forecasting consumer behaviour is critical because understanding client loyalty improves client Relationship Management (CRM). Consumer behavior aids the customer's model building process, as well as the evaluation of CRM efforts. It will also help to increase client acquisition success rates, earnings, and competitiveness (Qiu, Lin, and Li 2014). Consumer loyalty is a combination of attitude and conduct that results in recurrent purchases. In industrial and service marketing, behavioral loyalty is defined as brand retention and repeat business (Abhishek, 2019).

As a result of social media's rise, consumers are now engaged in a variety of electronic activities such as blogging, chatting, gaming, and texting. Consumers can access social networks via the Internet to gather information and advice, and marketing organizations now have a new medium to engage with consumers thanks to the fast increasing social media, particularly in developed nations (Ola and Reem). Today, social media allows people to express their thoughts, emotions, and beliefs with others. It is also about empowering people to interact in the same way they have always done. But the important thing about social media is that (a) the location and time constraints inherent in traditional communication methods have been eliminated; (b) online channels have been created that allow multimedia content to be shared one-on-one; and (c) simple interfaces that even non-experts can share and communicate through. Thanks to information and current communication technology, consumers can shop online via a range of social media networks and websites (Ekwueme and Akagwu, 2017). Many businesses throughout the world have joined social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google+, and others to connect with and build relationships with their customers. However, only Facebook and Twitter have linked with their customers by joining the fastest expanding networks (Trattner and Kappe 2012). The social media network is an ideal platform for businesses to use social media connections to drive traffic or to promote their websites. It works just as effectively in mass marketing as conventional word-of-mouth. Corporate communications in the media are swiftly spreading and will most likely resonate in the company's favor (Deis and Hensel, 2010). Social media networks have emerged as the new paradigmatic medium of the twenty-first century for businesses to exploit and influence their customers' purchase decisions. Almost half of Facebook's 400 million active users log in every day and spend more than 500 billion minutes every month on the Internet, and almost every business today employs social media to supplement their corporate marketing plan, notably in retail marketing (Chukwu and Uzoma, 2014). As a result, social media enables consumers to retake their place at the heart of business, while businesses get access to a new set of resources for connecting with customers and incorporating them into goods in unique ways. As a result, businesses must understand how social media has influenced consumer purchase decisions (Ola and Reem, 2018). As a result, an increasing number of Nigerian businesses are now using these platforms. The current study uses these quickly increasing social media networks in Nigeria to investigate the influence of social media on consumer purchasing behavior in Nigeria, specifically from firms that use the media for marketing reasons.

As a result of the world's exponential expansion in social networks, many businesses have devised plans to welcome millions of active social media customers to their product collections, generally on their own pages. Nigeria is not immune to the ongoing pandemic. Similar online retailers



in Nigeria have developed, with more to come, including Jumia, Konga, Dealdey, 3Stiches, Taafoo, Buyright.bz, and more. They also offer a variety of lifestyle products brands to consumers, such as electronics, computers, telephones, books, home appliances, and toys. Prospective purchasers are, however, encouraged to pay quickly so that the things can be dispatched as soon as possible. Because of internet fraud, this has always been a concern, and it has influenced many Nigerians' perceptions of how cautious they are when using the internet, particularly when personal information is shared.

Meanwhile, some Nigerian internet shops have provided prospective buyers with enough room to be certain that their purchases made through social media are genuine, by allowing them to pay for whatever item they choose on delivery Chukwuma (2021).

As a result, there are numerous other issues that impede Nigerians' purchasing habits. According to planned behaviour theory, the retailer will face a service quality difference, so there will be no direct interaction between the vendor and the customer on this growing social media site, which will assist the retailer in understanding what prospective customers want and can do, as well as how to reach them. Retailers do not know what prospects want or prefer because they are dissatisfied with the product specifications and attributes that they have submitted, or because information about the goods accessible is not constantly updated. So, in order to sustain consumer loyalty and loyalty to consumers, as well as to limit the risk of losing loyal customers, it is critical to analyze the impact of social media on consumer purchasing behavior in Nigeria.

Despite an increasing amount of study on the influence of social media networks on consumer buying decisions, there is still a paucity of research on the trend of social media influence when purchasing a product online in developing nations such as Nigeria (Neupane, 2021).

Thus the influence of social media platforms on consumer buying decision process of selected made in Aba products (shoes and clothes) in Umuahia metropolis, Abia state, Nigeria seeks to:

- a) ascertain the influence of Facebook on consumer buying decision-making process.
- b) examine the influence of Instagram on consumer buying decision process.
- c) determine the influence of YouTube on consumer buying decision process.

The following null hypotheses are formulated to guide the study:

H₀₁: Facebook has no significant influence on consumer buying decision process.

H₀₂: Instagram has no significant influence on consumer buying decision process.

H₀₃: YouTube has no significant influence on consumer buying decision process.

Review Of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework

Social Media Networks

Social media networks are inextricably linked to modern consumerism, significantly changing how people discover, assess, and purchase goods and services. This section examines the distinct characteristics of significant platforms and their substantial influence on consumer behavior. Small chat was a form of social contact between persons who shared common interests in the early nineteenth century. Written correspondence conveyed by hand was used in groups that were geographically confined. Until 1972, when the telegraph was introduced, small messages were sent large distances. In the subsequent centuries, with the progress of technology and the new technical breakthroughs, communication between people across enormous distances was not difficult (World 101). In the twentieth century, technology began to change swiftly, with the creation of the first computer in the 1940s and the first blogging sites that became popular in 1999, which may be viewed as the foundation for modern social media development. People use social media because it contains informative content (Aaron, Laura, Courtney, Kyle, & Jingjing, 2019). Social media users found it possible to stay in touch with their friends and family. As a result, the number of people who utilize the internet steadily grows year after year. Year after year, research on virtual communities has produced new definitions of social networking. As Alan (2013) stated, "A search of the Internet and trade literature will generate hundreds of definitions of social media, supplied by bloggers, industry analysts, and various types of wikis. For the purposes of this volume, social media refers to the technology or programs that people use to create and manage social networking sites. This includes the publishing of multimedia material (e.g., text, photos, music, video), location-based services (e.g., Foursquare), games (e.g., Farmville, Mafia Wars), and many other topics discussed in this chapter." Social media is made up of a variety of



user-driven platforms that enable the spread of captivating information, discourse creation, and communication to a larger audience. It is fundamentally a digital place produced by people and for people, and it creates an atmosphere conducive to contacts and networking at multiple levels (for instance, personal, professional, business, marketing, political, and societal) (Moser and Eijkeren, 2016). Social media is described as a digital platform that enables people to discover and learn new information, share ideas, and connect with others or organizations (Maya, 2021). It has transformed the way people live today, making communication much more accessible (Zaryn, 2013). It allows users to share data, photos, and movies (Tahir, 2020).

Types of social media networks

Facebook:

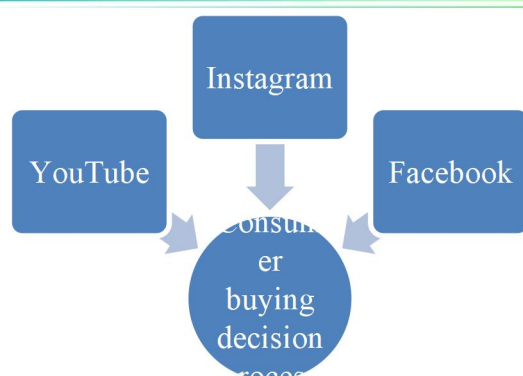
Facebook, a social media behemoth, with 4.9 billion monthly active users (Statista, 2024), reinforcing its position as a pillar of digital human contact. While Facebook was originally designed as a network for making social connections (Boyd & Ellison, 2007), it has evolved into a powerful economic engine. However, the steady march of technological progress necessitates continuous adaptation. The fading influence of organic reach, along with video content's growing dominance, as demonstrated by Reels' ascent, needs a deliberate move toward targeted advertising strategies (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Facebook, a master of social proof, gradually influences customer decisions via peer recommendations and endorsements. Its powerful advertising algorithms enable advertisers to accurately target specific groups, increasing brand engagement and nurturing long-term client loyalty (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). To remain competitive as video content becomes more popular, marketers must strategically connect it with the changing consumer landscape.

Instagram

With its visually driven ethos, Instagram is the chosen channel for marketers targeting aesthetically minded customers. It has evolved as a dominant influencer marketing force, particularly among young people. The platform's concentration on attractive picture and video content, such as Stories, Reels, and IGTV, enables companies to create compelling narratives that connect with their target audience (Shrimpton & Milne, 2013). Instagram has a significant impact on customer behavior by encouraging product discovery and spontaneous purchasing. The allure of visually stunning information, along with the persuasive power of authoritative endorsements, inspires customers and influences fashion, beauty, and lifestyle trends. This visual emphasis is especially effective in companies that rely on aesthetic appeal, confirming Instagram's critical role in modern consumer decision making (Shrimpton & Milne, 2013).

YouTube

YouTube is more than just an entertainment platform; it is also a powerful engine for consumer discovery. This video-sharing juggernaut features a wealth of in-depth material, including intriguing product evaluations, instructive lessons, and enthralling unboxings. Beyond amusement, YouTube is a trusted oracle, providing a variety of educational information that equips users with knowledge. Fueling Desires and Driving Decisions: YouTube stokes consumer interest by providing authentic and useful content that creates steadfast brand loyalty. Compelling product reviews, expertly created how-to videos, and intriguing unboxings all have a big impact on purchasing decisions. Furthermore, YouTube's immersive video format allows marketers to weave compelling narratives, fostering deeper connections with customers and energizing them to take action.



Researcher's conceptual framework, 2025

Consumer

Consumers are persons or groups who buy products or services for personal use. They are the final users in the distribution chain of goods and services. Buyers are individuals who purchase a product or service but may or may not use it. The consumer is the individual who actually uses the goods or service. The ultimate target audience for services or products is the consumer. (Chhat et al., 2020).

Consumer buying decision process

The consumer decision process begins when the customer becomes aware of and identifies their demand, then collects information, makes a decision, and evaluates their purchase as well as alternative purchases (Mateja, 2011). During his studies on the consumer process, John Dewey, an American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer, proposed five stages of decision-making that every customer goes through when buying:

- Identifying a problem or need
- Searching for information
- Evaluating alternatives
- Making a purchase
- Post-purchase behavior

The purchasing process starts when a consumer perceives a need or a problem, or when a need arises. It can be triggered by either internal or external events. The need recognition stage is the first step in the buyer decision-making process. In this situation, the customer observes a requirement or problem and notes a difference between the current and planned states. They are looking for things that match these specifications. This leads to the second step in product research: learning more about the product itself. The buyer makes an effort to understand as much as possible about the different product brands. In the third phase, the buyer compares the data to different brands. In the fourth phase, the buyer chooses the best product to purchase. The most important phase is the post-purchase evaluation, which occurs after the product is acquired. Customers will grow loyal to or actively avoid the brand based on their happiness or dissatisfaction, and they will inform others via online evaluations or word-of-mouth recommendations.

Five (5) Stages of Consumer Buying Decision-Making Process

I. Problem recognition/ need recognition

Problem recognition is the first and most significant step of the process; need recognition occurs when customers become aware of their wants for products or services; in contrast, he or she is generally unable to proceed to the next stage (Gordon, 1988). The customer recognizes a contrast between their existing state and the desired state. Internal triggers, such as hunger or thirst, may cause the urge. This occurs when a person's basic desires, such as hunger, thirst, or sex, become harmful (Lumen, 2021). External factors such as advertising or word-of-mouth might also spark a demand.

ii. Information search

The next stage in the buying process is to conduct some research. When a need is established, the client is driven to seek more information and begin the research process (Lumen 2021). The customer may be more aware or actively searching for information. How much searching a customer does is

determined by several factors, including the amount of information that the consumer must begin with, how easy it is to acquire more information, how much he values the extra information, and how satisfied he is with his results (iEduNote, 2021).

iii. Alternatives evaluate

Consumers can now proceed to alternative evaluation, in which they use the knowledge collected to evaluate several brands in the selection set (Lumen, 2021). The third phase in the purchasing process is to assess the available options. Different alternatives and their appeal are assessed using information acquired from various sources (iEduNote, 2021). Different clients use diverse criteria to evaluate goods and services. Buyers frequently consider the benefits and downsides of multiple options based on the product's characteristics, importance, brand credibility, and other aspects in order to make an informed selection (Lucid, 2021).

iv. Purchase decision

At this stage in the purchasing process, the consumer makes their purchase. Consumers make purchasing decisions after considering their options. When it comes to purchasing, they prefer the most reputable brand. However, the attitudes and situational factors of others would influence their decision. Typically, kids will choose the brand with which they are most familiar. However, two factors can influence buying intention and choice. The first thing to think about is how others see the consumer. The second factor to examine is any unexpected situational circumstances. Variables such as the product's estimated price and benefits may influence the consumer's purchasing intention. (iEduNote,2021).

v. Post – purchase behavior

Post-purchase behavior reflects whether a consumer is satisfied or dissatisfied with their purchase. When faced with a difficult decision, many people wonder if they made the right decision. Customers decide whether to proceed with the purchase at this stage based on their level of happiness. If the product does not meet expectations, the consumer is disappointed; if it does, the client is satisfied; and if it exceeds expectations, the customer is overjoyed (iEduNote, 2021).

Social media networks and consumer

Using social media for marketing, a company can attract new consumers, satisfy existing ones, and keep existing ones by incorporating marketing into its business plan. The core of the marketing concept is the management and analysis of a brand's interactions with its current and potential customers. As marketing has grown throughout time, a number of marketing tactics have emerged, including digital marketing. With over 4 billion people connected and spending an average of six hours a day online, digital has become an indispensable part of our life (Simon, 2021). There are several uses for this connectivity, such as monitoring data and conversing with pals. This means that in order for a brand's audience to be identified, it must be fully digitally integrated. Social media marketing is a form of digital marketing. Weinberg (2009) characterized "social media marketing as the process that empowers individuals to promote their websites, products, or services through online social channels and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional channels". As a digital platform for "socializing," social media has evolved into one of the 22 most successful marketing strategies currently available to businesses and corporations. It has proven to be a very cost-effective method for advertising and promotion (Risqo, 2020). Gordhamer (2009) discovered a correlation between social media marketing and the transition from "trying to sell" to "creating connections" with customers; developing relationships with potential customers is the key to repeat purchases and improved brand loyalty. "Social Media is an innovative tool that organisations use for creating a very strong public relation with customers on virtual networks" (Jan as well as Khan, 2014). As Web 2.0 and the number of individuals utilizing social media expanded, so did social media marketing. Weinberg (2009) noted that because of the way social media engages consumers, businesses may use it to promote their products and reach a broader audience than would otherwise be possible through traditional marketing tactics. The purpose of social media marketing is to communicate useful information with a company's customers and prospects (Muhammad, 2021). A message that the customer appreciates is more likely to be shared with others in their network. As a result, social media marketing may be likened to a big word-of-mouth promotion.



The Influence of Social Media networks on Consumer Buying Decision Process

As technology advances, new social media platforms emerge, attracting an increasing number of users. Consumer buying journeys are multi-channel, multi-step itineraries that represent the specific motivations and dynamics of a certain transaction. The consumer journey increasingly includes social media in the stages of awareness, consideration, and purchase. Consumers utilize social media because it provides benefits to them. They can readily access a vast amount of information on the Internet, which helps them make purchasing decisions. Many research have shown that people agree that receiving good feedback about products increases their purchasing power. Social media, in addition to serving as a source of information, allows users to stay up to date on the current trends and new products or services. They discovered new brands, products, and potential purchases thanks to social media. Furthermore, social media allows them to share their favorite items and brand experiences. With its ease and timesaving features, social media allows users to begin and end their purchasing journeys on it. Social media is also considered as a bridge between customers and brands, which plays a role in increasing customer awareness of the company. Nguyen (2021).

Theoretical Framework

The Theory of Rational Action (TRA) is a broad theory of human behavior that investigates the relationship between ideas, attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) hypothesis sought to analyze, explain, forecast, and influence human purchasing behaviour, arguing that one's attitude toward a behaviour can lead to an intention to act. The TRA may be useful in identifying characteristics that influence client purchasing behavior. The hypothesis is utilized in business and social psychology literature to explain why people behave the way they do (Ajzen 1991). According to TRA, behavior is founded on a rational purpose to participate in an act, known as the behavioural intention Towler and Shepherd (1992). Shappard et al. (1988) describe TRA as a sophisticated model used to forecast consumer purchasing behavior, noting that the model appears to predict customer intentions and actions well. People's desire to behave in a given way is driven by positively rating a product (Hassandoust & Perumal, 2010); that is, if the consumer is pleased with the product's packaging, they are more likely to acquire it. The TRA model includes attitude and behavior as relevant and comparable components. our theory is pertinent to our study because it explains how social media can impact customer purchasing decisions.

Empirical Review

Dzreke and Dzreke (2025) did research on the impact of social media on customer behavior. They looked at how social media platforms influence consumer purchase decisions and loyalty in Washington, DC, USA. They proposed that social media has emerged as a dominant factor in shaping consumer behavior, with significant influence over purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. This survey emphasizes the importance of social media, indicating that a stunning 70% of consumers are influenced by it when making shopping decisions, with 54% methodically studying products on these platforms before making a purchase. Influencer marketing has emerged as a crucial actor in this changing landscape, appealing to 63% of younger customers. Furthermore, the rise of social commerce is obvious, with 42% of consumers smoothly shifting from social media surfing to direct purchases. TikTok has become linked with entertainment and lifestyle purchases, while Instagram dominates the fashion and beauty sectors. However, this growing landscape poses ethical challenges. Transparency in influencer marketing remains a major concern, with 58% of consumers questioning the validity of sponsored content. This study indisputably underscores the critical importance of authenticity, openness, and cultivating unshakeable consumer trust for the long-term success of social media marketing efforts.

Jun and Steven (2025) investigated how social media marketing affects client decision making in the new digital environment of Ivory Coast. The study used a qualitative approach, collecting data from five retail outlets in Ivory Coast through electronic or telephone interviews and desktop research. The sample included staff and customers from those retail outlets. A total of 100 participants were chosen using convenient and snowball sampling approaches. The study discovered that social media use increases consumer happiness during the stages of information search and alternative evaluation, with satisfaction increasing as the consumer progresses through the process to the final buy decision



and post-purchase review. This article seeks to provide beneficial insights for businesses wishing to better their understanding of customer behavior in the digital age and optimize their social media marketing tactics by conducting a detailed review of empirical data and theoretical frameworks. The study concluded that firms seeking to compete in the digital marketplace must now understand social media's influence on customer decision making due to its extensive use and critical role in marketing methods.

Sindhuja, Panda, and Krishna (2023) investigated the relationship between social media and customer purchasing decisions in their study "Influence of Social Media on Consumer Buying Behavior". The study conducts quantitative research using an online survey to investigate the influence of social media in consumer purchase decisions related to information seeking and decision-making. The study found that active social media participation, dependable customer service, and information availability are critical variables in earning consumer trust in the purchasing process.

Devamaindhan and Felix (2023) conducted a study on the impact of digital marketing on customer purchasing behaviour for consumer products in Chennai City. They believe that marketing is a commercial activity that involves communicating value to clients, a firm, or an organization. Digital marketing is the use of digital tools and procedures to provide value to customers. Digital marketing makes use of social media, search engines, and content marketing, which includes the creation of videos, blog posts, email marketing, and online advertising. Traditional marketing uses techniques and platforms such as television, magazines, newspapers, billboards, direct mail, and other printed materials. The goal of this research is to investigate the significance and impact of digital marketing on customer purchasing habits. Based on 100 responses to the administered questionnaires, the study's findings indicate that digital marketing is an important tool in consumer decision making, which enhances organizational productivity and allows for a larger market share. As a result, digital marketing can be viewed as having a positive impact on consumer purchasing behaviors, allowing traditional marketplaces to disappear from the competitive landscape.

Sony and Mansi (2021) did research on the "Impact of Social Media on Consumer Buying Behavior". The study's goal was to learn how social media influences consumer purchasing behaviour and how businesses might use it to boost brand value. Data were gathered from 200 respondents using a standardized questionnaire and a suitable sampling procedure. It was shown that social media had a favorable impact on customer behaviour, increasing the possibility of acquiring products promoted through discounts and influencers. According to the report, consumers who are persuaded by social media spend four times more than they normally do. The allure to the products is so powerful that people purchase them on the same day through social media.

Companies should prioritize online marketing methods to effectively attract and engage a larger customer base, resulting in increased brand awareness. The study concluded that social media is the most effective platform to generate more leads and sales if the quality of content is high.

Makudza, Mugarisanwa, and Siziba (2020) looked into the causal relationship between social media and consumer purchasing behaviour in Zimbabwe's mobile telephony business. The study was motivated by a strong desire to translate social media use into positive purchasing behavior. Social media was investigated using four variables: firm-generated communication, user-generated communication, word-of-mouth, and social media platform. The sample size is 329, and data were collected by a questionnaire. The study's findings show that social media is a significant driver of consumer purchase intention. Consumer purchasing behavior is primarily influenced by social media word of mouth, while firm-generated content was found to be inversely connected to purchase intent. User-generated social media communication had a somewhat weak correlation with purchase behavior, whereas there was no significant association found between social media platform and consumer purchase intention. The findings suggest that social media is an excellent tool, but it needs to be modified to reduce the generation of content that distorts good consumer behavior. The experts consequently advocate a cautious social media effort that generates more desired viral material.

Chukwuma (2021) investigated the impact of social media on consumer purchasing behaviour, with a focus on wakanow, Jumia, Kaymu, and Konga in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study's main objective was to determine the influence of social media networks on customer patronage; investigate the influence of social media on the consumer buying decision-making process; identify the factors that influence consumer purchase intentions as a result of social media; and investigate the role of



mediating influence of social media marketing platforms on customer buying behavior. To fulfill these objectives, data was collected through the dissemination of a questionnaire generated on Google Forms, these quiz respondents were online buyers who made purchases on the e-commerce sites Wakanow, Jumia, Kaymu, and Konga. The study used a quantitative research design, positivist theory, and a descriptive research design to reach its goal. The collected data was presented in tables and charts, with an interpretation, and the hypotheses were checked using a statistical program (SPSS). The study discovered that social media networks have a significant impact on consumer patronage; social media influences consumer buying decision making; social media influences consumer purchasing intentions; and the social media marketing channel has a mediating effect on consumer buying behavior in Wakanow, Jumia, Kaymu, and Kongo, Lagos State, Nigeria. Based, on these findings, the study recommended that online retailers/e commerce companies ensure that customer information is kept confidential, because online purchases are less likely to be made by consumers who believe their online transaction is vulnerable to fraud, and many consumers in Nigeria are concerned about the security and protection of their personal details and privacy when shopping online.

Hasan, Haq, and Rahman (2018) explored the impact of social networks on purchasing decisions among Bangladeshi teenagers. They maintained that social networks have facilitated unprecedented growth in our daily interactions with one another, making them the modus operandi of the twenty-first century. With the rapid development and acceptance of this platform, it currently plays an important part in consumer buying decisions, with teenagers serving as the changing agents. This study seeks to identify the characteristics of social networks that influence purchase decisions among Dhaka youths, taking Online Peer Communication, Social Networking Groups, Brand Fan Pages, and Social Network Advertising as antecedents and Purchase Decision as the outcome. The hypotheses were created and tested using Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS 20. According to a poll of 381 college and university students in Dhaka, Social Networking Groups, Brand Fan Pages, and Paid Advertising all have a favorable influence on Purchase Decisions, however Online Peer Communication was shown to be inconsequential. They research provides a guideline for the advertisers of Bangladesh who are willing to promote their product, and brand through Social Networking platform.

Methodology

The research design was survey-based. The survey research design was chosen because it allows us to describe the characteristics of a large population in a way that no other research method can, resulting in a more accurate sample from which to draw conclusions and make important decisions (Kendra, 2020 and Ponto, 2015). It also allows us to investigate, describe, and record information in its natural setting. This study used structured questionnaires developed on a 5-point Likert scale to examine respondents' responses on the influence of social media platforms on consumer buying decision process of selected made in Aba products (shoes and clothing) in Umuahia metropolis, Abia state, Nigeria. Data were collected from 362 consumers. A simple linear regression model was employed to examine the provided assumptions using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 27. The study used the test-retest technique to establish how dependable the instrument is. The Cronbach Alpha (α) was calculated to assess test reliability before administering the questionnaire to the sample size's different components.

Descriptive Statistics

The rate of questionnaire administration and retrieval percentage are presented in table 1 below;

Table 1: Questionnaire Administration

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage
Returned and Useable	362	94
Returned but not Useable	8	2.1
Not Returned	15	3.9
Total	385	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The questionnaire administration details as explained in Table 1 revealed that, a total of three hundred and eighty-five (385) copies of questionnaire were administered to consumers in Umuahia Metropolis of Abia State to examine how social media have influenced consumer buying process. However, from 385 administered copies, 362 copies were properly filled and retrieved by the researchers and were used for the study, eight (8) were returned but not usable while (15) copies of the questionnaire were lost in the process. Hence, 362 respondents became the valid sample size of the study. Thus, 94.0% (362) copies of the administered questionnaire were retrieved.

Table 2: The reliability test of the instrument

Items	Number of Items	Reliability coefficient
Facebook	5	0.8615
Instagram	5	0.8713
YouTube	5	0.8892
Consumer buying decision-making process	5	0.7493

The table 2 showed that all the Cronbach’s α value are more than 0.7 and indicates all the measure items are reliable according to Nunnally (1978). These instruments had achieved acceptable reliability for business and social science research. For this research work, the decision rule was to reject null hypothesis if the P-value is less than 0.05, and accept the alternate hypothesis, but where P-value is greater than 0.05, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis.

Discussion of Results/Findings

The following null hypotheses are formulated to guide the study:

H₀₁: Facebook has no significant influence on consumer buying decision process

Table 3: Regression analysis on influence of Facebook on consumer buying decision process

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.383	.460		5.468	.000
Facebook	.842	.071	.483	.5.158	.002

Source: Field Study, 2025.

The following equation represents the regression of influence of Facebook on consumer buying decision-making process

$$CBDMP = 4.383 + .842FB + e$$

$$CBDMP = a + b_1FB + e$$

Where:

CBDMP = Consumer buying decision process

FB= Facebook

β_1 = Coefficient of x

e = error margin

Facebook was taken in this study as the independent variable used to test the influence of Facebook on consumer buying decision process. From table 2, it is depicted that when Facebook online shopping is increased by one unit, consumer buying decision process increases by 84.2 %. It can be seen from the result that the Facebook has significant effect on consumer buying decision-making process as the significance level of t test is less than 0.05. Regression analysis led the researcher to reject the null hypothesis which states that Facebook has no significant influence on consumer buying decision process.

Based on result from table 3 above, it was showed that Facebook has a significant influence on consumer buying decision process. This implies that the more consumers make use of Facebook, the more they are more likely to be influenced in their decision to make a purchase. However, consumers'

propensity to buy as a result of Facebook is influenced by their positive experiences with that product in the past. Alsubagh (2015) examines the impact of social media networks on consumer behavior and decision-making processes. The study highlights the role of online social media networks in facilitating communication, connecting people, and improving interactions among consumers. Also, Jade (2021) evaluated the influence of social media marketing on consumer buying behavior, particularly among consumers who predominantly use social media websites for purchasing products and services. The study identifies social media network as a predictor of consumer buying behavior.

Test of hypothesis ii

Test ii is based on hypothesis 2 projected in null form thus:

H0₂: Instagram has no significant influence on consumer buying decision process.:

Table 4: Regression analysis on the Instagram and consumer buying decision process.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.458	.520		868	.387
Instagram	.627	.048	.179	3.043	.003

Source: Field Study, 2025.

The following equation represents the regression of influence of Instagram on Consumer buying decision process.

$$CBDMP = 0.458 + .627INSTA$$

$$\text{Consumer buying decision-making process (CBDMP)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1$$

Where

β_0 = Constant

β_1 = Coefficient of independent variable

INSTA = Instagram

Instagram was taken in this study as the independent variable used to test the Instagram on consumer buying decision-making process. From table 3, it is discerned that when Instagram online shopping is increased by one unit, consumer buying decision process is influenced by 62.7%. It can be seen from the result that the Instagram has significant influence on consumer buying decision process as the significance level of t test is less than 0.05. Regression analysis led the researcher to reject the null hypothesis which states that Instagram has no significant influence on consumer buying decision-making process. Therefore, researcher concluded that Instagram has significant influence on consumer buying decision-making process.

Based on result from table 4 above, it was showed that Instagram has a significant influence on consumer buying decision process. This implies that the more consumers make use of Facebook, the more they are more likely to be influenced in their decision to make a purchase. However, consumers' propensity to buy as a result of Instagram is influenced by their positive experiences. Kostov (2020) analyzes the impact of social media marketing on consumer attitudes. The study reveals that social media marketing influences consumer attitudes, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a positive brand image through constant online presence. Neupane (2019) investigates how social media networks influence the purchasing intentions of consumers in Nepal. The study highlights the differences in social media usage patterns between men and women, which may be attributed to various factors such as lifestyle choices and living standards.

Test of hypothesis iii

Test iii is based on hypothesis 3 projected in null form thus:

H0₃: YouTube has no significant influence on consumer buying decision-making process.

This test was analyzed using simple linear regression model and it is shown on table 4 below:

Table 5: regression analysis on influence of YouTube on consumer buying decision process.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	9.787	.987		9.918	.000
YouTube	.374	.041	.579	9.6453	.000

Source: Field Study, 2025.

The following equation represents the regression of influence of YouTube on consumer buying decision-making process.

$$\text{CBDMP} = 9.787 + .383\text{YT}$$

CBDMP = consumer buying decision process.

$$(\text{YT}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1$$

Where

β_0 = Constant

β_1 = Coefficient of independent variable

YT = YouTube

YouTube was taken in this study as the independent variable used to test the YouTube on influence of consumer buying decision process. From table 5, it is discerned that when YouTube online shopping is increases by one unit, consumer buying decision process is influenced by 37.4 %. It can be seen from the result that the YouTube has significant influence consumer buying decision-making process as the significance level of t test is less than 0.05. Regression analysis led the researcher to reject the null hypothesis which states that YouTube has no influence on consumer buying decision process. Therefore, researcher concludes that that the YouTube has significant influence consumer buying decision-making process.

Based on result from table 5, it was revealed that YouTube has a significant influence on consumer buying decision process. This implies that the better the use of Instagram will increase brand loyalty. That higher levels of YouTube are associated with strong consumer buying decision-making process. YouTube is an expectation with confidence from the reliability of products in situations that involve risk. The study found out that Social Media use had significant effect on the purchase decision process of consumers (students). Boda, Goyit, Msheliza ,Echu, Vem, and Bogmeta, (2021). Carried out a study on effects of social media on consumer purchase decision process. They study found out that Social Media use had significant effect on the purchase decision process of consumers (students).Therefore, it was recommended that, consumers should engage and research more on a company's social media presence, its products and services before making a purchase decision, establish emotional connection with these businesses from their brand story and images on their social media platforms, participate in online surveys created by brands on their new or existing products as these feedbacks help the business to create better products, brands and services, among other recommendations. Sony (2021) focuses on the impact of social media on the buying process of complex purchases. The study emphasizes the positive influence of social media influencers on customers' buying decisions

Conclusion and recommendations

The primary goal of this study was to examine the impact of social media networks on the buying choice process. To achieve the stated objectives, the study used a survey research strategy that included the dissemination of an online questionnaire. Based on the empirical findings, it is possible to conclude that Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube have a major influence on consumer purchasing decisions. This finding is consistent with prior study by Chui and Manyika (2012), Rockendorf (2011), and Forbes & Vespoli (2013), who concluded that social media have a favorable influence on customer buying decision-making. The use of social media platforms allows consumers to connect with others, gather information, and seek recommendations, which can ultimately impact their purchasing decisions Based on the major findings and conclusion, the study recommends as follows:



- i. Businesses should streamline their communications, presentations, and information to pique consumers' interest when reviewing their goods for purchase.
- ii. The government and online business owners should ensure that consumers are safeguarded, as many are concerned about the security and privacy of their personal information when purchasing online in Nigeria.
- iii. Organizations' social media networks, communications, and content should include engaging features and applications to encourage online purchases. Online retail/e-commerce enterprises should precisely define the quality and quantity of their products to online consumers so that they may make an informed selection.

The study contributes to the body of knowledge regarding the influence of social media networks on consumer buying decisions. The study's analytical results show how social media platforms influence customer purchase decisions. As a result, this study has added to our understanding. The findings of this study indicate that social media networks (Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube) have a considerable impact on consumer buying decisions in Umuahia Metropolis, Abia State, Nigeria.

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