

EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MARKETING PLATFORMS AND CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF AKWA IBOM STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TOWARDS SELECTED ONLINE PRODUCTS

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effectiveness of e-marketing Platforms and buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University (AKSU) towards selected online products. It was carried out based on a paradigm shift in product positioning from conventional ways to online platforms. The study objectives were to determine the relationships between independent variables (Facebook usage, Instagram usage, and Twitter usage) and the buying behaviour of AKSU students. It employed a survey research technique to collect data from a sample of 384 to draw inferences on the total population of 9254 students. The data were collected through an online Microsoft link, and descriptive data were analyzed using frequency tables and simple percentages. The regression analysis in (SPSS Version 21) was used to test the hypotheses. Findings from the results revealed that all three null hypotheses were rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter usage and buying behaviour of AKSU students. The authors recommended that; marketers on the Facebook platform should create Facebook groups in order to find a niche within their customers' interests and

also to give them a space to connect. Furthermore, marketers on the Instagram platform should endeavour to apply an attractive design on their advertised product with a simple and understandable description of the product in order to attract positive buying behavior among students. Finally, the study recommends marketers using the Twitter platform should endeavor to retweet their tweets at least every day in order to keep their online target audience updated with their products related tweets.

Keywords: *e-Marketing Platforms, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Akwa Ibom State University (AKSU) Students, Selected Online Products.*

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Online platforms are gradually replacing conventional business operations. This emerging business tool has shifted the focus of most modern businesses and most products offered are now sold online; it is evident that these improvements are a result of easy access to the internet (Ainin & Jaafar, 2003), Nigeria is not an exemption. From a global perspective, the world's economy is moving from a commodity-based economy to a more vibrant one in which employment, value creation, and economic wealth are paramount. A general analysis of the internet highlights that, online platforms are not only places for clients to carry on their businesses on the global market but also networking agencies. Today, consumers seek online information to make a brand purchase decision and share their experiences about a brand through a global computer network via the online space (Adjei, Noble & Noble, 2009; Zhu & Zhang, 2010) as cited in (Eze, Nnabuko & Etuk, 2014).

According to Dharmappa, (2018), the global economy has witnessed a paradigm shift in the last three decades with technological advancement, particularly in information and communication technology (ICT). ICT has continued to dictate strategies for modern business. It has challenged existing theories and principles of marketing, such that any organization that fails to be positioned for advancement and innovation in ICT, will be disadvantaged to compete in the twenty-first-century business environment (Preeti, 2018; Belch & Belch, 2004). Responding to the current realities, firms are developing strategies to develop and manage their brand equity (Uford, 2017), via social media platforms.

Social media platforms have since become pivotal tools in reaching global audiences at a minimized cost (Devi & Konti, 2011), and are revolutionizing

sales techniques and perceptions of leading brands (Uford, 2018). For clarity of terminologies, online marketing is a form of e-marketing, and it refers to all marketing activities carried out on the internet to reach the customers as opposed to the traditional way of reaching the customer via print media, sales promotion, and adverts on television and on the radio (Goldfarb & Tucker, 2011). Thus, e-marketing uses online and other electronic platforms otherwise called electronic marketplaces (Etuk & Akpan, 2016), to deliver promotional messages to consumers (Pawar, 2014).

Furthermore, Constantinides, (2004) mentioned that consumers use e-marketing platforms for different reasons. Some of the reasons include a desire to maintain relationships with relatives or colleagues/friends. When this is the case, it allows consumers to establish, as well as maintain a personal connection with other electronic users. Consequently, e-marketing platforms exert a noticeable influence on the buying behavior of consumers. For example, Ventola (2014) mentioned that social media sites provide an electronic forum that gives individual consumers the opportunity in commenting personally about the product, as well as access to product information that facilitates their purchase decisions. Thus, social media marketing (e-marketing) platforms such as (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), have been seen to have a significant influence on consumer buying behavior. It is, therefore, necessary that the effectiveness of each platform be given serious consideration within a less developed economic environment, like Obio-Akpa, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Organizations have employed electronic marketing to provide services to their customers regardless of the limits of time and geography. This provides an opportunity for result optimization and profit maximization while reaching limitless markets (Dharmappa, 2018, Etuk Anyadighibe, James, & Egemba, 2022a)

Unfortunately, not all organizations have fully explored the opportunities presented by e-marketing channels to gain a competitive advantage by understanding consumer buying behaviours. Furthermore, the advertising fees vary from one e-platform to another, and it has an impact on the overall business profitability (Undie, Akpan & Adamu, 2020), because the advert fees charged must be justifiable with the effectiveness and efficiency of the platform in order to improve business profitability.

It is against this background that this study attempts to examine the effectiveness of some of the e-marketing platforms and their influence on consumer buying behaviour among students at Akwa Ibom State University towards selected online products. The results of this study will provide marketing strategists with information on the effectiveness of some online marketing platforms in stimulating consumption and serve as a reference for further research.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to examine the relationship between e-marketing platforms and buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University towards selected online products. Specific objectives were:

- i. to examine the relationship between Facebook usage and buying behaviour of students in Akwa Ibom State University towards online products.
- ii. to evaluate the relationship between Instagram usage and buying behaviour of students in Akwa Ibom State University towards online products.
- iii. to measure the relationship between Twitter usage and buying behaviour of students in Akwa Ibom State University towards online products.

Research Hypotheses

- H0₁: There is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and buying behaviour of students in Akwa Ibom State University towards online products.
- H0₂: There is no significant relationship between Instagram usage and buying behaviour of students in Akwa Ibom State University towards online products.
- H0₃: There is no significant relationship between Twitter usage and buying behaviour of students in Akwa Ibom State University towards online products.

Scope and Significance of the Study

This study focused on measuring the effectiveness of e-marketing platforms on consumer buying behavior with particular reference to students in Akwa Ibom State University. In the course of undertaking the study, some online brands marketed via the three social media platforms were adopted for this research. **Jumia** online stores, **Konga** online stores, and **Kara.com** were considered competitive brands. Uford & Duh (2021) define a competitive brand as important an intangible asset from which benefits flow. Their adoption was

based on their advertising presence on the three e-platforms selected for this study.

The findings of this research will significantly create awareness of the impact of online marketing on the buying behaviour of students, and will specifically serve as a source of information, directing business organizations wishing to market their products via online platforms to be aware of the most effective channel(s) to adopt. It will also be beneficial to web designers who are instrumental in the designing and launching of online stores. Finally, this study will be of importance to academia as additional literature in the understanding of online marketing and its effects on people's buying behavior.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of e-Marketing

Abu and Abdel (2006) stated that e-marketing involved the use of digital technologies including but not limited to the internet to achieve the marketing goals of the company, more freely and easily than in other traditional marketing methods. More so, Dehkordi Javadian, Marzuki, Langgat and Fabeil (2012; Uford and Joseph 2019), stated, e-marketing involves the use of the internet like the World Wide Web (www) and electronic mail, mobile phones, intranet and extranet, and other digital technologies for marketing.

E-marketing helps organizations to identify and target market clusters, study needs and position themselves to satisfy those needs (Reynolds, Mark, & Anodal, 2004; Saffar & Obeidat, 2020). The result is that companies are able to reduce costs while increasing their customer reach using e-marketing. According to Banerjee and Dash (2011), companies earned up to double their initial returns as a result of e-marketing, than using traditional techniques. Other benefits of e-marketing as identified by the South Kesteven District Council (2009) include; global reach with little investment, trackable and measurable results of marketing techniques, 24-hour marketing, shorter lead times, personalization, one-to-one marketing with the help of devices like mobile phone, more interesting campaigns with games and trailers and better conversion rate. Furthermore, e-marketing allows two-way communication between the customers and the seller (Etuk, Awah and Akpan 2022b), allowing for iterative strategies to achieve a competitive advantage (Obeidat, et al., 2021).

2.2 Dimensions of e-Marketing Platforms

Facebook Platform

Facebook is a social media platform, where people with common interests share ideas and comments virtually (Weber, 2009). Kemp (2022) reported that Facebook ranks as the most used social media platform, with almost 3 billion users as of 2022. The number continues to grow steadily with a 6.2 percent increase in 12 months to October 2021. This represents an average daily addition of 465,000 users per day. More so, Meta (2022), mentions that Facebook supports 65 million business pages and over 5 million active advertisements. Customized solutions for businesses help existing and potential customers to learn about businesses, visit websites, send, and receive messages from the business, and download apps. On the business side, companies are able to monitor and improve the effectiveness of their adverts with comparison, performance, and recommendation dashboards easily and quickly.

According to Lukka and James (2014), Facebook allows for one-to-one marketing and personalization of marketing solutions. Based on the customer's profile, companies are able to target customers with products on the basis of demography, interest, and previous purchases. The result is that companies can create market niches on Facebook and reach these targeted people in a cost-effective and interesting way instead of traditional marketing channels.

Essentially, organizations use their Facebook pages to strengthen two-way communication with the customer, mediate customer-to-customer interactions, and enhance the word-of-mouth promotion of the business, which has been found to be the most effective form of business promotion (Gallaughier and Ransbotham 2010).

Twitter Platform

Twitter, which is popularly called the home of hashtags, has been ranked by Kemp (2022) as the 14th most-used social media platform as of January 2022. According to Guttman (2022), Twitter connects users through trending and exciting topics and provides a platform for governments and public figures to communicate with the 436 million active users of Twitter.

Brands have also relied on Twitter to reach their customers. According to Twitter (2023), people want to hear from brands on Twitter and which creates an already engaged audience for organizations to reach. Twitter further asserts that people spend 26% more time viewing advertisements on Twitter than on any other social media platform. Such great advert performance has led to a rise in the number of organizations advertising on Twitter. These

Organizations rely on Twitter to build brand awareness, stimulate customer consideration, and drive conversations and sales (Twitter, 2023).

Twitter provides a platform for companies to reach large audiences at a relatively low-cost (Kwon & Sung, 2011). Organizations rely on increasing the number of their Twitter handle followers as a way to ensure a larger audience for their messages (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). However, based on the work of Soboleva, (2018), not all Twitter handle followers actively read the tweets, as such organizations also have the task of keeping their Twitter conversations engaging and relevant to get the required, reads and retweets and in turn build brand awareness.

Secondly, Twitter provides a platform to receive customer feedback for marketing, either directly or through data mining from various tweets (Culotta & Cutler, 2016). Hewett, et al., (2016) encouraged organizations to adopt a personalized approach to responding to individual complaints in order to gain more control over the brand's related word-of-mouth (WOM) promotion. This is particularly necessary today as more customers are seen, turning to Twitter to publicly call out firms for bad service delivery and spread corporate disinformation (Soboleva, 2018).

Instagram Platform

According to Statista Research Department (2022), Instagram is the 4th most used social media platform with 1.4 billion users using the app on a daily basis. Instagram was founded in 2010 as a platform that allows users to share videos and photos with their followers (Dubovik, 2013). By setting up a professional account, a business can create and monitor the performance of its adverts (Meta, 2023).

According to an article published on BBC News (2012), study has said that a large amount of the top brands around the world are using Instagram as one of their marketing strategy. Instagram is the second most popular social media platform for advertisements only behind Facebook (Statista Research Department, 2022).

Based on research done by Statista Research Department (2022), Nearly 80% of the responding marketing professionals integrated Instagram into their digital marketing campaigns in 2021. By applying a visual strategy of sharing photos and videos, Stories, Reels, an integrated shopping tab, and other features, companies are able to engage audiences across many generations (Lim & Yazdanifard, 2014). They can also receive direct feedback from

customers while staying up to date with trends in their industries (Herman, 2014).

Furthermore, Instagram uses influencer marketing more than any other platform to encourage purchases as a result of the influence of the app's most recognizable faces (Statista Research Department, 2022). Influencers are paid by companies to advertise their brands and they often post giveaways, offer personalized promo codes to their followers, or take control of a company's Instagram account for a day. Characteristically, influencers showcase an exclusive lifestyle to the followers, aimed at motivating positive purchase decisions (Asdecker, et al., 2021).

2.3 Consumer Buying Behaviour

Sharma (2014), Consumer Buying behavior is the decision processes and activities of people involved in the purchase and use of goods and services. Kardes, Cronley, and Cline (2017), further asserted that it comprises all activities associated with the purchase, use, and disposal of products, including the consumer's emotional, mental, and behavioural responses associated with these activities. The study of consumer buying behaviour is based on the fact that behind the visible act of purchasing a product is a decision process (Mfon & Uford, 2022), which can be broken into three major components: Input, process, and output (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1997).

The input component comprises the external stimuli that provide information on a given product and influence a consumer's purchase decision (Lawan, and Zanna, 2013). These inputs range from information received from family and friends to society in general including brand influencers and opinion leaders.

The process component begins with the problem/need recognition, the strength of which, then drives the entire decision process (Armstrong, 1991). The next stage is the information search. With the advent of the internet, digital ads and e-marketing product and price information have become so readily available, thereby raising consumer awareness (Clemons, 2008).

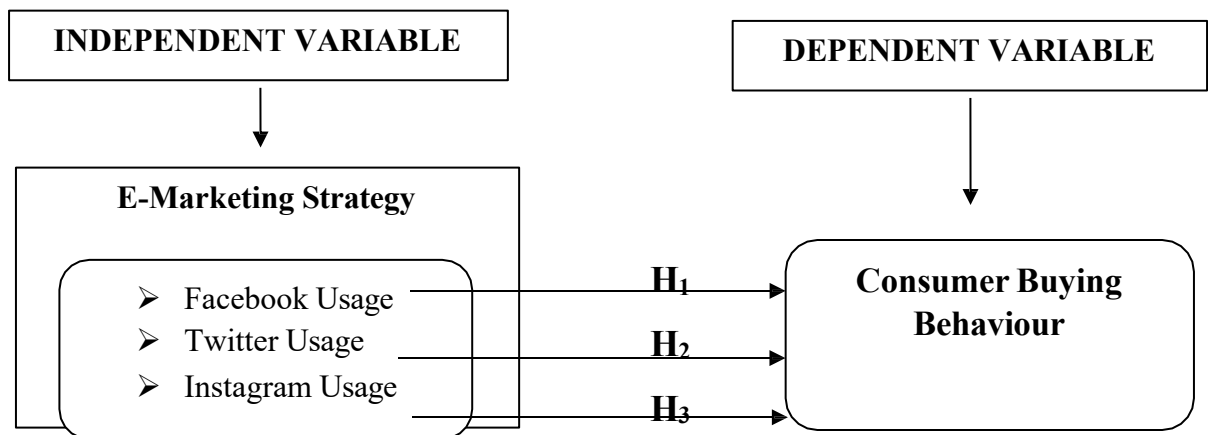
The output of the evaluation of alternatives is whether the consumer makes a purchase intention or not, which may or may not translate into an actual purchase (Morwitz, Steckel, and Gupta, 2013). The conversion rate of these purchase intentions is a major task for marketers. Organizations improve their conversion rates by providing discounts, using social evidence as in the case of influencers, or using scarcity attraction. (Andrea and Soderberg, 2011). Post-purchase evaluation takes place after the consumer has purchased and

experienced the product or service. Foxall (2005) postulated that post-purchase evaluation is an important stage of consumer buying behaviour as it influences future purchase patterns and consumption activities.

2.4 Conceptual Model

Fig. 1 portrays the conceptual framework of e-marketing strategies and consumer buying behaviour of AKSU students, and the subsequent sections provide theoretical and empirical support for the constructs and the hypothesized relationships.

Fig.1: Conceptual Framework of E-Marketing Strategies and Consumer Buying Behaviour of AKSU students.



Source: Researchers' Model (2022).

2.5 Theoretical and Empirical Framework

Theoretical

The Flow Theory or Optimal Experience as postulated by Csikszentmihalyi (1997) forms a theoretical basis for this study. He described flow as the state of total involvement in activity to the extent that other activities do not matter anymore. It involves total concentration on a task, such that the task and artifact gain the full attention of the person (Bedassa, 2014). Thus, Facebook can be seen as an artifact and the users as persons engaging in tasks that prompt their flow on the platform. Novak, et al. (2000) found that such a flow resulted in intrinsic pleasure and keen interest, which further led to a repetition of the activity.

Empirical

Gupta and Chopra (2022) found that social media users in New Delhi, India are actively utilizing social media platforms like Facebook as a tool for validating their purchase decision on based the reviews of past consumers of

the product. Also, Sema (2013), found that the use of social media to plan trips increased the actual travel experience. These indicate the use of social media as a purchase intention validator and not as a purchase stimulus due to usage. Thus, a negative relationship between the usage of Facebook and the buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University towards online products ($H0_1$) was hypothesized.

The para-social interaction theory can be used to describe the relationship between influencers and followers on Instagram (Ward, 2016). According to Horton & Wohl (1956), a para-social relationship is an obvious personal connection between a spectator and a performer based on a unidirectional, nondialogue-oriented interaction, stirred by the performer, and not expected to lead to mutual development. On Instagram, influencers can be seen as performers and followers as spectators (Ward, 2016). Influencers project an exclusive lifestyle intended to emotionally trigger their followers (Kramer, et al., 2014). The question is whether the buying behaviour of Instagram users or spectators in AKSU is affected by their usage of the platform. For instance, Rondon (2012), found that though social media platforms provided a good platform for users to get other consumer opinions, these tools were not significant for them during their decision to purchase clothes online. Thus, a negative relationship between the usage of Instagram and the buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University towards online products ($H0_2$) was hypothesized.

Lastly, Wang, Liu, and Zhang (2021) study on the most diffused tweets and retweeting dynamics of crisis information amid Covid-19 to provide insights into how Twitter is used by the public and how crisis information is diffused on Twitter. Their results showed that verified Twitter users enjoy seven times as high value as that of unverified users. In other words, users with the same verification status are more likely to connect and comment on topical issues which could influence their future buying intentions. Rui and Whinston (2012) study on Twitter user profiles to evaluate the cross-sectional characteristics of user behavior; they also monitored 521 active Twitter users over a period of 282 days to carry out time-series analyses and a panel data analysis of user behavior. Their empirical results consistently suggest that people's search for attention is an important motivation for them to contribute content on Twitter. Both findings support our conceptual view of the relationship between the usage of Twitter and an individual's buying behaviour because social broadcasting services as innovative platforms connect people's need for information, attention, and intentions. Thus, a negative relationship between

the usage of Twitter and the buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University towards online products ($H0_3$) was hypothesized.

3 Research Methodology

The study adopted a Survey Research Method. According to Check and Schutt (2012:160), survey research is "the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions". This method also allows researchers to study people, and the entire situation directly (Akpan, Charles, & Robinson, 2022 & Uwah, Udoayang, & Uklala, 2021). The population of this study was made up of all the students of Akwa Ibom State University. According to the official statistics obtained from the Record Units, Registrar's Office Akwa Ibom State University has a total of 9,254 registered students in 2020/2021 academic session. (AKSU ICT, 2022). This constitutes the population of the study. The convenience method of the non-probability sampling technique was used for this study. The choice of the technique was to allow the researchers to select the respondents at their convenience For the purpose of this study, the researcher chooses to determine the sample size using Taro Yamani formula.
$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$1+N(e)^2$$

Where: n= Sample size; N= Population size = 9,254; e= Margin of errors = 5%
= 0.05

Hence: 9254

$$\frac{1+9254(0.05)^2}{1+9254(0.05)^2} = 383.5 = 384$$

Therefore, 'n' represents the sample size = 384. Consequently, 384 questionnaires were administered through the use of Microsoft online survey forms. Data for this research were obtained from primary and secondary sources. The primary source comprises information relevant to this study that was obtained through the use of questionnaires and personal observation. The secondary source refers to information obtained from existing materials. These include; the AKSU ICT database, textbooks, journals, articles internet, and other publications related to the subject matter of study.

Descriptive statistics such as percentages tables were used in analyzing the data obtained and regression analysis was used to test the extent and effect of the relationship between variables using the Statistical Package Social Science (SPSS version 21). The questionnaires administered were 384, out of which 313 were retrieved and usable, indicating an 81.51% response rate.

4 Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Facebook and the buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University.

Independent Variable: Facebook; **Dependent Variable:** Buying behavior.

Simple regression Analysis was used to analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the variables using Statistical Package Social Science (SPSS version 21).

Table 4.1 **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.877 ^a	.769	.765	1.43233

a. Predictors: (Constant), Facebook.

Table 4.2 **ANOVA^a**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	88.178	1	88.178	476.638	.000 ^b
Residual	11.843	312	0.185		
Total	100.021	313			

a. Dependent Variable: Buying_beh.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Facebook

Table 4.3 **Coefficients^a**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.798	.276		6.521	.000
Face_book	.977	.0068	.877	8.532	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Buying_beh.

From the result in Table 4.1 above, the R-square of the regression analysis is .769. This finding suggests that 76.9% of the variance in buying behaviour is explained by Facebook media variables. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) confirmed the existence of a positive significant impact and the study found that the regression model is best fit for predicting the relationship between Facebook and buying behavior of students in Aksu [F = 476.638, t = 8.532 and p<0.05]. Given this result, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a positive and significant relationship between Facebook and buying behaviour. Similarly, the study revealed that every unit change in Facebook media would cause a variance of 87.7% in buying behaviour (Beta= .877, p=0.000).

Hypothesis Two

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Instagram and the buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University.

Independent Variable: Instagram; **Dependent Variable:** Buying behavior

Simple regression Analysis was used to analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the variables using Statistical Package Social Science (SPSS version 21).

Table 4.4

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.822 ^a	.675	.674	.55520

a. Predictors: (Constant), Instagram.

Table 4.5 ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	49.445	1	49.445	62.587	.000 ^b
Residual	50.576	312	.790		
Total	100.021	313			

a. Dependent Variable: Buying_beh.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Instagram

Table 4.6 Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.570	.089		6.430	.000
Instagram	.766	.021	.822	12.827	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Buying_beh.

From the result in Table 4.4 above, the R-square of the regression analysis is .675. This finding suggests that 67.5 % of the variance in buying behaviour is explained by Instagram media variables. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) confirmed the existence of a positive significant impact and the study found that the regression model is the best fit for predicting the relationship between Twitter and buying behaviour [F = 62.587, t = 12.827 and p<0.05]. Given this result, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a positive and significant relationship between Instagram and buying behaviour. Similarly, the study revealed that every unit change in Instagram media would cause a variance of 82.2% in buying behaviour (Beta= .822, p=0.000).

Hypothesis Three

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Twitter and the buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University, Akwa Ibom State.

Independent Variable: Twitter; **Dependent Variable:** Buying behavior.

Simple regression Analysis was used to analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the variables using Statistical Package Social Science (SPSS version 21).

Table 4.7 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.652 ^a	.425	.425	.73723

c. Predictors: (Constant), twitter.

Table 4.8 ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	39.872	1	39.872	41.582	.000 ^b
	Residual	60.149	312	0.940		
	Total	100.021	313			

a. Dependent Variable: Buying_beh.

b. Predictors: (Constant), twitter

Table 4.9 Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.840	.096		19.253	.000
	Twitter	.550	.023	.652	24.306	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Buying_beh.

From the result in Table 4.7 above, the R-square of the regression analysis is .425. This finding suggests that 42.5 % of the variance in buying behaviour is explained by Twitter media variables. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) confirmed the existence of a positive significant impact and the study found that the regression model is best fit for predicting the relationship between Twitter and buying behavior [$F = 41.582$, , $t = 24.306$ and $p < 0.05$]. Given this

result, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a positive and significant relationship between Twitter and buying behaviour. Similarly, the study revealed that every unit change in Twitter media would cause a variance of 65.2% in buying behaviour (Beta= .652, $p=0.000$).

Discussion of Findings and Conclusion Remark

From the findings and analyses above, the results are hereby discussed based on the objectives of the study:

The first objective was to examine the relationship between Facebook usage and buying behaviour of students at AKSU. The result of the study shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between the variables in H1, with correlation (r) =.877. This implies that goods and services on Facebook appeal to about 87.7% of online users. That is to say, that Facebook media not only influence the buying behaviour of AKSU students but also return a positive effect on the business despite advertising charges. It is an efficient channel of advertising for an online target audience. This result is in support of the study and findings of Akpan, Nwankpa and Agu (2015) who investigated the influence of Facebook advertisements on young people's buying behavior and their results show Facebook advertisements influence undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria, Nsuka.

The second objective was to measure the relationship between Instagram and the buying behaviour of AKSU students. The result shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between the variables in H2, with correlation (r) =.822. This implies that products on Instagram pages usually arouse the interest of about 82.2% of online users. That is to say that the result established that the use of Instagram media strongly influenced the buying behaviour of AKSU students. This result is in support of the study and findings of Astuti (2018), who investigated the effect of Instagram on consumer purchase intention. The researcher's result revealed that Instagram has a significant, positive effect on consumer trust in doing online shopping; that consumer trust has a significant, positive effect on purchase intensity and perceived usefulness; that perceived usefulness has a significant, positive effect on purchase intensity.

The third objective was to examine the relationship between Twitter usage and buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University. The result of the study shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between the variables in H3, with correlation (r) =.652. This implies that 65.2% of online users prefer using the Twitter platform when looking for what to buy and are also motivated to use Twitter handles to shop online. The result established that the use of Twitter strongly influenced the buying behaviour of AKSU students. This

result is in support of the study and findings of Al-Jahwari, et al. (2020), who investigated the impact of social media on the online buying behavior of consumers in Oman. The findings of their study suggested that the Twitter platform has a positive impact on consumer buying behaviour in Oman.

In summary, this research makes a huge contribution to the field of service marketing, by supporting the significant influence of e-marketing platforms tested (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) on the buying decisions of students and also providing relevant literature on this field of study.

Recommendations

The conclusion of this study affirms the relationship between all three dimensions of e-marketing Platform and buying behaviour of students in Akwa Ibom State University. Given this assertion, the study recommends as follows:

- i) Based on the findings that there is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and buying behaviour of AKSU students, users of the Facebook platform, such as organization or individual who advertises their products using Facebook should create a Facebook group in order to find a niche within their customer's interests and also to give them a space to connect.
- ii) Following the findings that there is a significant relationship between Instagram usage and buying behaviour of AKSU students, and the current reality that about 70.7% of businesses use Instagram for their marketing which counts for 8 million business profiles on Instagram, marketers using the Instagram platform should therefore endeavour to apply an attractive design on their ad pages with a simple and understandable description of the product in order to attract positive buying behavior among students.
- iii) Following the findings, that there is a significant relationship between Twitter usage and buying behaviour of AKSU students, marketers using the Twitter platform should endeavor to retweet their tweets every day in order to get the attention of those who were not online on the time the last tweet was tweeted and keep them updated with positive speculations about the advertised brand or product.

Limitations of the Study

Notwithstanding the contributions of this research, some limitations and challenges were encountered in the course of carrying out this study, but the researcher was compelled by zeal to surmount them. In summary, some of the

challenges encountered were but not limited to the following: poor attitude to present honest answers, the unwillingness of respondents (AKSU students) to provide accurate information, limited study area (AKSU campuses only) as well as contaminated views by respondents with biases, among others. Despite these challenges, the research was successfully carried out.

Suggestion for Further Research

- i. Since the study sample was limited to AKSU students only, future research should obtain responses from a sample size drawn from a city or state, using larger data to enhance generalization.
- ii. Using the same variables, a similar study should be on physical products transacted offline to further evaluate the effectiveness of e-marketing platforms on offline products as well.

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

Table I: Demographic data of the respondents

Gender Distribution of the Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Male	163	52.1
Female	150	47.9
Total	313	100
Age Distribution of the Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Less than 20 years	140	44.73
20-30 years	78	24.92
31- 40 years	47	15.01
41-50 years	28	8.95
51 and above	20	6.39
Total	313	100
Respondents' Educational Level		
Undergraduate	202	64.54
PGD	42	13.42
Masters	46	14.70
Doctorate	23	07.35
Total	313	100

Source: (Field Survey, 2022).

Table II: Percentage analysis of the Responses on Facebook Media

Dimensions of Facebook Media								
	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
Goods and services on Facebook appeal to me	157 (50.2%)	38 (12.1%)	26 (8.3%)	54 (17.3%)	38 (12.1%)	313 (100%)	3.201	1.268
Facebook media is an authentic channel of advertising for the users	155 (49.5%)	64 (20.4%)	36 (11.5%)	32 (10.2%)	26 (8.3%)	313 (100%)	3.437	1.122

The advertisements on Facebook are mostly on issues that reach students quickly and motivate them	193 (61.7%)	66 (21.1%)	36 (11.5%)	4 (1.3%)	14 (4.5%)	313 (100%)	4.341	1.035
Total	505	168	98	90	78	939		
Proportion of N	168	57	32	30	26	313		
Percentage of Proportion	(53.8%)	(17.9%)	(10.4%)	(9.6%)	(8.3%)	(100%)		

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Dimensions of Twitter Media								
	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
I prefer using Twitter media when looking for what to buy	88 (25.1%)	130 (41.5%)	33 (10.5%)	40 (12.8%)	22 (7.0%)	313 (100%)	3.651	1.304
I am motivated to use twitter media to shop online.	80 (25.6%)	89 (28.4%)	52 (16.6%)	22 (7.0%)	70 (22.4%)	313 (100%)	3.099	1.382
The advertised products on Twitter media are usually appealing, enticing, and alluring.	152 (48.6%)	64 (20.4%)	32 (10.2%)	40 (12.8%)	25 (8.0%)	313 (100%)	2.111	1.345
Total	320	283	117	102	117	939		
Proportion of N	107	94	39	34	39	313		
Percentage of Proportion	(34.0%)	(30.1%)	(12.5%)	(10.9%)	(12.5%)	(100%)		

Table III: Percentage analysis of the Responses on Twitter Media

Source: (Field Survey, 2022).

Table IV: Percentage analysis of the Responses on Instagram Media

Dimensions of Instagram Media								
	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
Advertisements on Instagram media influence students to buy the products.	100 (31.9%)	87 (27.8%)	74 (23.9%)	28 (8.9%)	24 (7.7%)	313 (100%)	2.702	1.304

Product on Instagram page usually arouse my interest which makes me click on them.	150 (47.9%)	69 (22.0%)	42 (13.4%)	42 (13.4%)	10 (3.2%)	313 (100%)	2.019	1.200
This media gives students a great platform to listen to the feedback we receive from marketers.	122 (39.0%)	113 (36.1%)	42 (13.4%)	22 (7.0%)	14 (4.5%)	313 (100%)	2.019	1.200
Total	372	269	158	92	48	939		
Proportion of N	125	90	52	30	16	313		
Percentage of Proportion	(39.6%)	(28.6%)	(16.8%)	(9.8%)	(5.1%)	(100%)		

Source: (Field Survey, 2022).

Table V: Percentage analysis of the Responses on Buying Behaviour

Dimensions of Buying Behaviour								
	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total	Mean	Std. Dev.
Social media helps me to be aware of the newly launched products to shape my buying behavior	102 (32.6%)	106 (33.9%)	18 (5.8%)	27 (8.6%)	60 (19.2%)	313 (100%)	3.520	1.493
Social media influence my decision to buy a given product	148 (47.3%)	84 (26.8%)	36 (11.5%)	12 (3.8%)	33 (10.5%)	313 (100%)	3.964	1.301
I can get the information on the latest products through social media that shape my buying behavior	66 (21.1%)	172 (55.0%)	55 (17.6%)	6 (1.9%)	14 (4.5%)	313 (100%)	3.862	0.921
I felt like patronizing the products after viewing them on social media.	120 (38.3%)	152 (48.6%)	22 (7.0%)	11 (3.5%)	8 (2.6%)	313 (100%)	4.166	0.894
Social media shopping allows me to save time	86 (27.5%)	144 (46.0%)	7 (2.2%)	50 (16.0%)	26 (8.3%)	313 (100%)	3.821	1.115
Total	522	658	138	106	141	1565		
Proportion of N	104	131	28	21	29	313		
Percentage of Proportion	(33.4%)	(42.0%)	(8.8%)	(6.9%)	(9.0%)	(100%)		

Source: (Field Survey, 2022).