

Social Media and Consumer Buying Behaviour: Evidence from Southwest, Nigeria

Omobola. M Ajayi

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Abstract: *The study assessed the impact of social media use on buying behaviour of youths in Southwest Nigeria. Particularly, it explored the impact of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), and TikTok. A descriptive survey design was used and data were collected from 400 respondents through the Taro Yamane sampling method and proportionate stratified random sampling in the six states in the region. Descriptive statistics and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) were used to analyse the data. The findings showed that Facebook ($\beta = 0.286, p = 0.016$), Instagram ($\beta = 0.324, p = 0.003$), and TikTok ($\beta = 0.351, p = 0.001$) have significant positive effects on consumer buying behaviour, and while Twitter ($\beta = 0.191, p = 0.067$) has a positive effect, it is not statistically significant. The model showed acceptable predictive power, suggesting that the collective influence of social media plays a significant role in predicting consumer buying behaviour among the youth. The study also found that TikTok has the greatest impact, attributed to its short, attention-grabbing video formats and sharing potential. The study shows that social media has a substantial impact on consumer buying behaviour in Southwest Nigeria, but the impact differs among social media platforms. Businesses, especially SMEs, should focus on visual and interactive platforms like TikTok and Instagram to boost customer engagement and increase sales.*

Keywords: Social media, Consumer buying behaviour, TikTok, Instagram, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

In this ever-changing consumer environment, the role of social media is key to understanding consumer buying behaviour in Nigeria. Social media is an interactive computer-based technology that allows users to produce, share and distribute information and participate in real-time communities and networks. Eze, Okoye and Bello (2022) explained that social media platforms have transformed communication through direct consumer-brand engagement, impacting awareness, consumer perceptions, and buying behaviour. Major social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Twitter (X) have become popular among Nigerian youth for their user-friendly interfaces and interactive features. Ibrahim and Yusuf (2023) noted that Facebook is a general networking site for information sharing and marketing, whereas Instagram

is more geared towards aesthetic branding and storytelling and is therefore ideal for marketing products. Similarly, Adekunle (2024) suggested that TikTok has transformed digital marketing with short video clips that create trends and viral content, while Twitter enables real-time communication and brand interactions. Together, these platforms offer opportunities for targeted promotion, influencer promotion and consumer reviews, which play a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviour.

Despite the increasing digitisation of the Nigerian marketplace, consumer buying behaviour, especially among young people, has become more sophisticated, erratic and even irrational. A critical issue observed is the growing impulse buying phenomenon, in which young consumers engage in unplanned and undifferentiated purchases without considering the need, quality and affordability of the product. Nwosu and Chukwu (2021) attributed the rising trend among Nigerian youths to be more responsive to emotional and situational factors, which often leads to overspending and lack of financial responsibility. Likewise, Akinyele and Fasogbon (2024) noted that the convenience of online shopping and the continuous bombardment of online information have eroded traditional decision-making processes involved in the purchase evaluation process, including information search and comparison of alternatives. This has led to increasing brand-switching behaviour, where consumers continually switch brands due to short-term factors rather than long-term satisfaction. According to Okeke and Nwankwo (2023), this volatile consumer behaviour is a challenge for firms, especially small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) which face difficulties in fostering brand loyalty in a context of inconsistent and volatile consumption patterns.

Also, there is a shift in the factors influencing consumer behaviour from utility to social and psychological needs, which has led to further distortions in consumer behaviour of the youths. Balogun and Adeyemi (2023) explained that many Nigerian youths now consume products that boost social status and online visibility rather than those that fulfil basic utility needs. This has resulted in higher consumption of non-essential items, and hence, impacts savings and financial security among youths. Also, Olatunji (2025) highlighted that the pressure to consume has increased, particularly for both male and female youths seeking to gain social acceptance in their digital communities. A new concern is the reduction in post-purchase satisfaction and cognitive dissonance, as many consumers regret their purchases after being influenced by external factors. Uche and Nnamdi (2022) noted that this is primarily due to unmet expectations of digital media content, which consequently result in negative brand attitudes and distrust in marketing messages. Such problems underline the gap between the needs and the consumption pattern of consumers in Nigeria.

Most importantly, these issues can be traced to the increasing level and nature of social media use among young people, the main independent variables of this research. Social media addiction, as indicated by a high level of time spent, compulsive checking, high engagement and exposure to advertising, has changed the way consumers process information and make decisions. Eze, Okoye

and Bello (2022) explained that constant exposure to social media platforms shortens consumers' attention span and promotes impulsive decision-making based on emotional triggers. Similarly, Ibrahim and Yusuf (2023) argued that algorithmically driven content on social media sites like Instagram and TikTok exposes consumers to targeted advertising and influencer marketing, which in turn, reinforces habitual consumption behaviours. Similarly, Adekunle (2024) explained that excessive social media use leads to a dependency phenomenon where consumers feel compelled to follow trends; thereby engaging in forced and superfluous consumption. In addition, Ogunleye (2021) proposed that the interactive elements of social media, including likes, comments and shares, act as feedback loops that enhance users' engagement with these platforms, and thus their impact on consumer purchasing. While these effects have been observed, there is little empirical research that holistically explores how various aspects of social media addiction, in particular, influence these problematic consumption patterns among Nigerian youths in Southwest Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Media

Social media has been defined in much recent literature in Nigeria as a disruptive platform for communication and marketing, impacting on relationships between people and firms. Eze, Okoye and Bello (2022) described social media as digital and mobile technologies that facilitate the creation, sharing and dissemination of information in online communities and networks. Similarly, Adebayo and Olalekan (2023) explained that social media is an interactive medium that enables users to connect in real-time and exchange information through user-generated content and social networking. Social media plays a crucial role in consumer buying behaviour, as it offers access to product information, user reviews and targeted marketing that impacts on consumer attitudes, preferences and decisions. It also allows companies, especially SMEs, to connect with a larger audience, create brand awareness, and interact with consumers in ways that were previously impossible using traditional media. Additionally, social media facilitates interactive marketing, where consumers not only receive information but also create it and engage in brand promotion. Some of the popular social media platforms include Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter (now X), each with its own distinctive features that have made these platforms popular and impactful in shaping consumer buying behaviour, particularly among the young.

Facebook is one of the first and most popular social media platforms in Nigeria, enabling users to set up profiles, post updates, and interact with their network of friends, groups, and organisations. Eze and Okeke (2022) note that Facebook has a considerable impact on consumer buying behaviour due to targeted advertising, sponsored content and word-of-mouth referrals. Its large user community and group features make it an effective platform for reaching and influencing product exposure and buying decisions, particularly for young people and small business owners.

Instagram is a social media platform emphasising photography and videography, which is ideal for promoting lifestyle and branding. Adebayo and Olalekan (2023) noted how Instagram plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behaviour, through influencer marketing, visually appealing content and narrative building that connects with emotions and aspirations. Instagram's focus on visuals makes it a powerful tool for impulse purchases as the youth are drawn to lifestyle products.

TikTok is a micro-video sharing app that has become incredibly popular with Nigerian youths for its engaging, creative and fun content. TikTok has impact on consumer behaviour via viral challenges, trends and influencer marketing that drive consumer awareness of products, according to Ibrahim and Yusuf (2024). Its algorithmic recommendation system guarantees that users are constantly fed targeted and entertaining marketing content, which results in impulsive consumer behaviour.

Twitter (X) is a microblogging service that enables instant messaging, conversations and news. Ogunleye (2023) observed that Twitter (X) affects consumer buying behaviour by using trending topics, interactions with brands and user-generated opinions that impact the public opinion of brands and products. Its real-time nature enables consumers to get instant feedback and reviews, making Twitter (X) a major platform for influencing opinions, brand perception and purchase intentions among connected youths.

Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumer buying behaviour is the process, actions and psychological factors that affect the choice, purchase, use and disposal of products and services. Akinyele and Fasogbon (2024) explained that buying behaviour in today's market is influenced by internal factors such as motivation, perception, learning and attitude, and external factors such as social, cultural and marketing factors. In Nigeria, Okeke and Nwankwo (2023) noted that consumer buying behaviour has changed as a result of the growing influence of digital technologies, economic factors, and lifestyle choices driven by a younger population that is more responsive to online information and social influence. Also, Nwosu and Chukwu (2021) proposed that the emergence of digital media has further amplified the impulse buying behaviour, as the consumer is constantly exposed to persuasive brand information and interactive media content that continuously influence their buying behaviour. Likewise, user buying behaviour is dynamic and age-specific - it differs between individuals and across contexts, based on factors such as income, education, culture and media exposure. As such, it is vital for businesses, especially SMEs, to understand consumer buying behaviour as it allows them to develop marketing strategies, retain customers, and survive in an ever-growing digital and socially driven environment.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey design was employed in this study, which is suitable for the systematic collection of data from a sample of individuals in their natural environment to describe and explain their attributes, perceptions and behaviours without altering the variables of interest. The study's population is young people in the six states of Southwest Nigeria, namely; Lagos, Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti States. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2022) estimates that the population of the region is 45,504,800, which is a partly urbanised, tech-savvy population for this study. Using the Taro Yamane sampling technique, a sample size of 400 respondents was determined as calculated below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where: n = sample size, N = the population size, e = level of significance

$$n = \frac{45,503,800}{1 + 45,503,800(0.05)^2} = 400$$

The Kumara (1976) proportionate stratified sampling model was applied to ensure fair representation of each state within the sample, thereby enhancing the reliability and generalisability of the study findings.

$$n = \frac{ns Ni}{N}$$

Where n = number of respondents from the university; ns = total number of sample, Ni = number of academic staff in each class; N = population of the study.

Table 3.1: Summary of stratified sampling of each class

S/N	States	Population Size	Sampled Respondents
1	Lagos	17,803,700	$\frac{17,803,700(400)}{45,503,800} = 157$
2	Ogun	6,379,500	$\frac{6,379,500(400)}{45,503,800} = 56$
3	Oyo	7,976,100	$\frac{6,379,500(400)}{45,503,800} = 56$
4	Osun	4,435,800	$\frac{4,435,800(400)}{45,503,800} = 39$
5	Ondo	5,316,600	$\frac{5,316,600(400)}{45,503,800} = 47$
6	Ekiti	3,592,100	$\frac{3,592,100(400)}{45,503,800} = 32$
	Total	45,503,800	400

Source: Author's Computation, 2026

The study employed a multistage sampling technique covering all six states in Southwest Nigeria (Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti). Respondents were proportionately allocated to each state based on population size, while the capital cities were purposively selected due to their high concentration of youths and active social media users. Within these locations, youths aged 15 to 25 years were randomly selected to ensure equal representation. Data were collected using a structured, closed-ended questionnaire administered both physically and online via WhatsApp and email to enhance reach, accessibility, and response rate across the study area.

Model developed by Chan (2025) in his study was adapted as provided below:

$$CBB = f(FB, INS, TIK, TWI, YOU) \dots\dots\dots 3.1$$

Where:

CBB = Consumer Buying Behaviour, FB = Facebook, INS = Instagram, TWI = Twitter, YOU = Youtube.

However, the model was modified to suit the objectives of this study. YouTube was replaced with TikTok (TTK). The modified functional and linear regression models of this study are stated below:

Functional Representation:

$$CBB = f(FB) \dots\dots\dots 3.2$$

$$CBB = f(IG) \dots\dots\dots 3.3$$

$$CBB = f(TW) \dots\dots\dots 3.4$$

$$CBB = f(TT) \dots\dots\dots 3.5$$

Linear Representation

$$CBB = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 FB + U \dots\dots\dots 3.6$$

$$CBB = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 IG + U \dots\dots\dots 3.7$$

$$CBB = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 TW + U \dots\dots\dots 3.8$$

$$CBB = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 TT + U \dots\dots\dots 3.9$$

Where:

CBB = Consumer Buying Behaviour, FB = Facebook, INS = Instagram, TWI = Twitter, TTK = TikTok, α_0 = Intercept, $\alpha_1 - \alpha_3$ = Coefficient of independent variables, U = Error term

The data collected were carefully edited, coded and screened for accuracy, consistency and detection of errors. The demographic data of the respondents were analysed and presented using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages). Then, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was applied to test the proposed hypotheses and explore the inter-relationships between social media and consumer buying behaviour in Southwest Nigeria. .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers did not receive all the questionnaires from the respondents. The overall response rate was 92.25% with 369 correctly completed and returned questionnaires, while 31 questionnaires (7.75%) were not returned. As such, the 369 responses were analysed in this study.

Analysis of the Respondents' Biodata

Table 4.1: Bio-data of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	183	49.59
	Female	186	50.41
Age	15–18 years	64	17.35
	19–22 years	231	62.6
	23–25 years	74	20.05
Marital Status	Single	302	81.84
	Married	67	18.16
Religion	Christianity	194	52.57
	Islam	175	47.43
Level of Education	Secondary School (SSCE)	44	11.92
	OND/NCE	81	21.95
	HND/BSc	196	53.12
	MSc and above	48	13.01
State of Residence	Lagos	148	40.11
	Ogun	53	14.36
	Oyo	52	14.09
	Osun	38	10.3
	Ondo	46	12.47
	Ekiti	32	8.67
Social Media Usage Frequency	Less than 1 hour daily	42	11.38
	1–3 hours daily	118	31.98
	4–6 hours daily	141	38.21
	Above 6 hours daily	68	18.43

Source: Field Survey (2026)

Table 4.1 shows that the respondent's demographic profile is fairly equal in terms of gender, with the female gender (50.41%) marginally higher than the male gender (49.59%) in representation, suggesting gender balance. The age distribution shows that the majority of respondents (62.6%) are aged between 19-22 years, which indicates that the study primarily engaged young adults who are fairly active and highly susceptible to social media use and consumer behaviour. As for marital status, the majority of respondents are single (81.84%), consistent with the young age of those

surveyed. With respect to religious background, both Christians and Muslims are almost equally represented (52.57% and 47.43%, respectively), indicating a mix of religious backgrounds among the respondents.

In terms of educational background, the majority of the respondents have HND/BSc (53.12%) qualifications, followed by OND/NCE (21.95%), MSc or higher (13.01%) and SSCE (11.92%) qualifications, suggesting that the respondents are highly educated and likely able to understand and engage with online content and consumer purchase decisions. In terms of state representation, the highest number of respondents is from Lagos State (40.11%), followed by Ogun (14.36%) and Oyo (14.09%) states, while the least representation is from Ekiti State (8.67%) reflecting the urban nature of social media users. Finally, the results of social media usage patterns show that many respondents (38.21%) spend 4-6 hours on social media daily, with the next highest (31.98%) spending 1-3 hours, suggesting high engagement which is likely to have a positive impact on consumer buying behaviour among Southwestern Nigerian youth.

Measurement Model (PLS-SEM)

Table 4.2: Measurement Model Loading and Reliability Results

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading	CA	Rho-A	CR	AVE
Facebook Usage (FB)	FB1	0.79***	0.91	0.92	0.93	0.66
	FB2	0.83***				
	FB3	0.76***				
	FB4	0.81***				
	FB5	0.78***				
Twitter (X) Usage (TW)	TW1	0.75***	0.9	0.91	0.92	0.64
	TW2	0.80***				
	TW3	0.77***				
	TW4	0.82***				
	TW5	0.79***				
Instagram Usage (IG)	IG1	0.84***	0.92	0.93	0.94	0.68
	IG2	0.81***				
	IG3	0.79***				
	IG4	0.86***				
	IG5	0.82***				
TikTok Usage (TT)	TT1	0.83***	0.93	0.94	0.95	0.7
	TT2	0.85***				
	TT3	0.80***				
	TT4	0.87***				
	TT5	0.82***				
Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB)	CBB1	0.78***	0.91	0.92	0.93	0.67
	CBB2	0.81***				
	CBB3	0.76***				
	CBB4	0.84***				
	CBB5	0.80***				

Source: AMOS SPSS Output (2025)

*** $p < 0.001$; CA = Cronbach's Alpha; Rho-A = Dijkstra–Henseler reliability; CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

The measurement model findings in Table 4.4 show that all constructs, Facebook usage, Twitter (X) usage, Instagram usage, TikTok usage and Consumer Buying Behaviour are reliable and valid. All items have factor loadings higher than the acceptable level of 0.70 (ranging from around 0.75 to 0.87), meaning that each item is a good predictor of its constructs. The Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values for all constructs range from 0.90-0.93 and 0.92-0.95, respectively, suggesting that all constructs are highly reliable. Likewise, the Rho-A values are also above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating construct reliability. For validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for each construct range between 0.64 and 0.70, that is, above the acceptable threshold of 0.50, suggesting good convergent validity. This suggests that the constructs adequately explain more than 50% variance in their respective indicators..

Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

Table 4.4: Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

Constructs	AVE	Facebook (FB)	Twitter (TW)	Instagram (IG)	TikTok (TT)	CBB
Facebook (FB)	0.661	0.812				
Twitter (TW)	0.643	0.621	0.811			
Instagram (IG)	0.684	0.645	0.602	0.825		
TikTok (TT)	0.717	0.668	0.639	0.701	0.836	
Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB)	0.672	0.702	0.684	0.713	0.741	0.818

Source: AMOS SPSS Output (2025)

The findings of the discriminant validity of the constructs Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, TikTok and Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB) using the Fornell-Larcker criterion are shown in Table 4.4. The diagonal elements are the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (\sqrt{AVE}) and the off-diagonal elements are correlations among the constructs. The \sqrt{AVE} values for all the constructs (Facebook = 0.812, Twitter = 0.800, Instagram = 0.825, TikTok = 0.836, and CBB = 0.818) are greater than their inter-construct correlations, indicating sufficient discriminant validity. This suggests that the constructs are empirically different and capture different aspects of the model. Also, the low-to-moderate correlations among social media platforms indicate that, although they are related, they represent different aspects of social media use behaviour among young adults in Southwest Nigeria, thus confirming the validity of the measurement model.

Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio of Correlations**Table 4.5: Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio of Correlations**

Constructs	FB	TW	IG	TT	CBB
Facebook (FB)					
Twitter (TW)	0.692				
Instagram (IG)	0.711	0.674			
TikTok (TT)	0.728	0.701	0.739		
Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB)	0.742	0.715	0.748	0.763	

Source: AMOS SPSS Output (2025)

Table 4.5 shows the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations used to also evaluate discriminant validity of the constructs. The HTMT values range from 0.674 to 0.763, which is lower than the cut-off of 0.85, and supports good discriminant validity. This suggests neither the excessive intermingling of the constructs nor the overlap is present. Further, the values suggest that there are relatively stronger links between TikTok and Instagram and consumer buying behaviour (compared to Facebook and Twitter), which might suggest that platforms that are more visual and short-form video content may influence behaviour more than other platforms in Southwest Nigeria youths.

Structural Model (Path Analysis Results)**Table 4.5: Structural Model (Path Analysis Results)**

Hypotheses		Model Fit Indices: <i>SRMR=0.071, NFI = 0.935, RMS-theta = 0.098</i>					
Hypotheses	Relationship	Std. Beta	T-Value	P-Value	f ²	R ²	Decision
H1	FB → CBB	0.286	2.412*	0.016	0.061	0.548	Reject H0
H2	TW → CBB	0.191	1.834	0.067	0.034	0.548	Accept H0
H3	IG → CBB	0.324	2.987*	0.003	0.089	0.548	Reject H0
H4	TT → CBB	0.351	3.214*	0.001	0.102	0.548	Reject H0

Source: AMOS SPSS Output (2025)

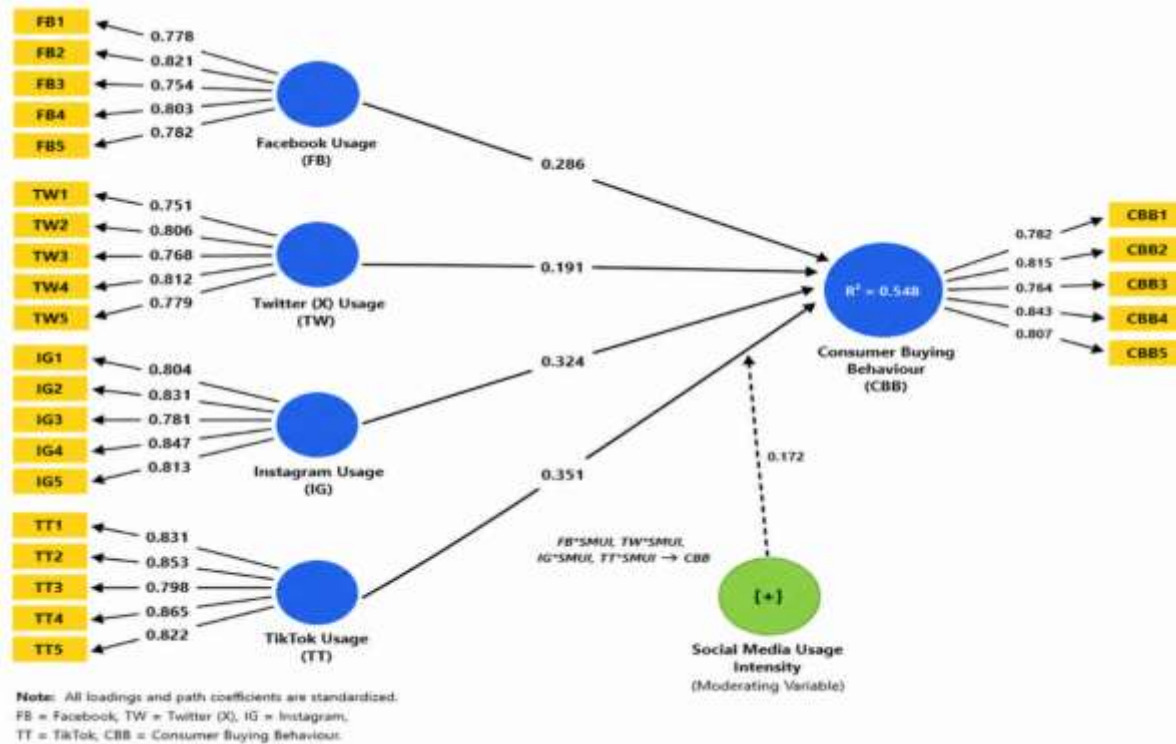


Figure 1: PLS- Structural Model (Direct Path)

The results of the structural model (Table 4.5 and Figure 1) show that Facebook, Instagram and TikTok usage have significant positive impact on consumer buying behaviour of youths in Southwest Nigeria, while Twitter (X) does not have significant impact. The effect of TikTok ($\beta = 0.351$) is the strongest, followed by Instagram ($\beta = 0.324$) and Facebook ($\beta = 0.286$), which implies that more visual platforms have a greater influence on consumer buying behaviour. The R^2 value of 0.548 suggests that 54.8% of the variance in consumer buying behaviour is accounted for by the model, and the model has a moderate to strong explanatory power. The model fit indices also suggest that the structural model is well-fitted and can be interpreted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first finding of the study suggests that using Facebook has a positive impact on consumer buying behaviour of youths in Southwest Nigeria, at a coefficient of $0.286(p=0.016<0.05)$. This suggests that the more involvement with Facebook, in the form of posts, advertisements, groups and influencer content, the higher the chances of purchase intention among the youths. This result suggests that Facebook continues to be a valuable marketing platform where consumers are exposed to brand information, which leads to greater brand awareness and purchase intentions. Theoretically, this finding is backed by the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which

proposes that intention is guided by attitude, perceived behavioural control and subjective norms. Facebook exerts an influence on these factors via peer opinion, advertising, and social proof, which lead to increased purchase intentions. This corroborates the work of Ukonu and Agu (2022) and Attih et al. (2024) that reported that Facebook plays a vital role in consumer purchase behaviour through interaction and peer influence. Similarly, Njoku and Nkamnebe (2023) and Ogunleye (2021) confirmed that Facebook usage enhances consumer awareness and buying intention among Nigerian youth. Eze et al. (2022) also found that Facebook exposure has an impact on consumer buying behaviour through targeted advertising and social influence. The studies above support the current finding that Facebook continues to play a significant role in shaping consumer behaviour in the digital environment.

The second finding that Twitter (X) has a positive but insignificant influence on consumer decision-making in Southwest Nigeria (0.191 $p=0.067$ greater than 0.05) suggests that although the youth are active on Twitter for communication and opinion-sharing, it does not translate into a significant impact on consumer behaviour. This implies that while young people use Twitter for social conversations, sharing news and following trends, this usage is not necessarily strong in influencing buying behaviour. This suggests that Twitter is more of an information and opinion platform than a marketing platform to influence buying behaviour. Theoretically, according to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), while Twitter may influence attitudes and subjective norms, it may not necessarily boost perceived behavioural control and purchasing intention because of its text-based and less visually persuasive nature. This conclusion is supported by Akinyele and Fasogbon (2024) and Balogun and Adeyemi (2023) who noted that text-based platforms have a lesser impact on impulse buying than visual platforms. Olatunji (2025) also observed that Twitter usage may lead to opinion formation more so than purchase behaviour among youths. Likewise, Ukonu and Agu (2022) report that the influence of social media platforms on consumer behaviour varies, and that Twitter has a relatively lesser effect than Instagram and Facebook. These findings confirm that Twitter (X) has little influence on consumer buying behaviour.

The third finding reveals that the use of Instagram significantly affects consumer purchasing behaviour in Southwest Nigeria with a magnitude of 0.324 ($p=0.003<0.05$). This suggests Instagram's visual media, influencer marketing, and brand lifestyles play a significant role in decision-making. This finding is backed by the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) as youths see influencers and peers promoting products and mimic them because of the perceived social benefits and acceptance. Previous empirical studies (Balogun and Adeyemi, 2023 and Ehichoya and Omoregbe, 2024) have reported that Instagram has a significant effect on impulse buying and switching intentions. Likewise, Njoku and Nkamnebe (2023) found that Instagram significantly impacts online purchase intention because of its visual nature and presence of influencers. Adaba et al. (2025) also reported that influencer marketing has a significant positive effect on purchase intention of young consumers. This finding is well supported by these studies that Instagram is a major player in the market for young consumers.

The fourth finding shows that TikTok has a positive significant influence on consumer behaviour in Southwest Nigeria (0.351, $p=0.001<0.05$). This means that the short video format, trendy content and the algorithms used by TikTok have a strong persuasive effect on buying decisions. This means that TikTok is the most convincing social media for youth because of its high entertainment value, engagement and spread of product trends. Theoretically, this finding is supported by the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which emphasises how TikTok enhances attitudes and subjective norms through viral video content and persuasion, thus influencing purchase intention. Likewise, the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) is well supported by this as youths repeatedly model the behaviours they see on TikTok, particularly when these behaviours are rewarded with likes and social acceptance. This is reflected in the works of Ladokun et al. (2024) and Ehichoya and Omoregbe (2024), who found that TikTok is a major contributor to impulse buying and product switching behaviour among youths. Balogun and Adeyemi (2023) also observed that the short video clips on TikTok are more influential on consumption behaviour than other platforms. Also, Ogunleye (2021) and Akinyele and Fasogbon (2024) reported that digital viral content has a strong impact on youth purchasing. This confirms the current finding that TikTok is the most impactful platform on consumer buying behaviour among youths in Southwest Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The research confirmed that social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, and TikTok, have varying effects on the consumer buying behaviour of youths in Southwest Nigeria. It was found that Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have positive effects on purchasing behaviour, with all three showing statistically significant impacts, with TikTok being the most influential platform because of its visually appealing, engaging and viral short video content. However, Twitter (X) had a positive but statistically insignificant impact, suggesting that while it plays a role in raising awareness and shaping attitudes, it has a limited influence on consumer behaviour. This difference implies that the characteristics of the platform (visual, interactive, content delivery) are important in influencing consumer behaviour, with more immersive platforms having greater impact. The research also suggests that elements like trust, credibility and perceived risk could influence the efficacy of platforms such as Twitter (X). Also, variations in geographic location and socio-economic environment in Southwest Nigeria were found to impact on the youths' response to social media marketing. The study concludes that social media has a statistically significant influence on the buying behaviour of the youth in Southwest Nigeria and that there are variations in the influence of different social media platforms, hence the need to focus on context-specific and platform-specific digital marketing strategies. Therefore, the following suggestions were provided:

- i. Businesses and marketers appealing to young people in Southwest Nigeria should focus on highly visual and engaging social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok, as these platforms proved to be most impactful and influential in affecting consumer purchases. A

focus should be placed on short video content, influencer marketing and visually engaging content that can trigger impulsive purchasing and increase brand engagement.

- ii. SMEs should follow an integrated social media strategy for Facebook by taking advantage of its simultaneous social and advertising features, ensuring that the marketing campaign integrates with peer influence features like reviews, comments and shares to build trust and purchase intentions of consumers.
- iii. Since the influence of Twitter (X) on sales is insignificant, businesses should shift its application from a direct conversion platform to a secondary communication channel aimed at brand promotion, engagement and real-time information sharing, rather than as the main sales conversion platform.
- iv. Government and marketers should take into account the impact of geo-socio-economic variations in Southwest Nigeria by developing region-specific and culturally sensitive online marketing strategies in line with the tastes, purchasing power and consumption habits of youths across states, to improve the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies.

Limitations of the Study

The study has a number of limitations that need to be taken into account in understanding the results. Firstly, the study was conducted in Southwest Nigeria, and the findings may not be applicable to other regions with varying socio-economic, cultural and technological attributes. Secondly, we only examined four of the most popular social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram and TikTok, while other platforms that could have a significant impact on youth consumer behaviour, such as YouTube, Snapchat, and WhatsApp, were not considered. Thirdly, the research used self-reported data through questionnaires, which can be susceptible to response bias, social desirability bias and recall bias. The cross-sectional study design also limits the potential for causal inferences to be drawn, with data collected at one point in time. The study also failed to include moderating and mediating factors such as trust, perceived risk, income and digital literacy, which may offer additional insights into the ways social media affect consumer behaviour.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Future studies should build on the current research by overcoming some of the limitations by including other regions in addition to Southwest Nigeria for better generalization and comparisons. Researchers should include other social media platforms (e.g. YouTube, Snapchat and WhatsApp) to gain a more holistic view of social media influence on consumer behaviour. Longitudinal research designs should also be used to determine causality and understand shifts in consumer behaviour. Additionally, future research should include moderating and/or mediating variables such as trust, perceived risk, digital literacy, and income level to provide a comprehensive understanding of how and why social media influence consumer purchase behaviour. Scholars can also consider mixed-method research, with both quantitative and qualitative methods, to better understand the motivations, attitudes and experiences of adolescents with social media marketing.

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