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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND CONSUMER PATRONAGE OF FAST FOOD BUSINESSES IN CALABAR METROPOLIS

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Cite this article:

Christian A., Joseph A. M., Samson E. A. (2024), Social Media Marketing and Customer Patronage of Fast Food Business in Calabar Metropolis. British Journal of Management and Marketing Studies 7(2), 1-25. DOI: 10.52589/BJMMS-ML0UM7V2

Manuscript History

Received: 12 Jan 2024 Accepted: 28 Mar 2024 Published: 29 Apr 2024

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ABSTRACT: The study examines social media marketing and consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis. It was aimed at finding out if Facebook marketing, Twitter marketing, *Instagram marketing, YouTube marketing and WhatsApp have any* influence on consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis. To achieve these objectives, the research made use of the survey research design, with a sample population of 200 respondents chosen through the judgmental sampling technique. The data collected were presented in a table using simple percentages and analysed by the use of a simple regression model. Based on the analysis, the study found that there is no significant relationship between Facebook marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis; also, there is no significant relationship between Instagram marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis; that there is significant relationship between YouTube marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis; specifically, that there is significant relationship between WhatsApp marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis. In light of the above, the study recommended that Fast food joint should conceptualise their social media page to it wider audience so as to gain more patronage.

KEYWORDS: Social media, marketing, Facebook marketing, Instagram marketing, YouTube marketing and WhatsApp marketing

Article DOI: 10.52589/BJMMS-ML0UM7V2 DOI URL: https://doi.org/10.52589/BJMMS-ML0UM7V2

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INTRODUCTION

The idea of fast food is not new in the Nigerian cultural environment. Traditionally several food vendors and hawkers offer different types of 'ready to eat' and 'take away' meals and snacks. However, Mr. Biggs, owned by a conglomerate in Nigeria (United African Company, UAC) is the first modern fast-food outlet in Nigeria (Akinbobola, Alawo and Akinola, 2020). The outlet became operational in 1986 in Lagos state, and the brand has expanded to over a hundred and seventy outlets in almost fifty different Nigerian cities and towns.

The success story of these new quick-service restaurants has attracted and transformed several indigenous and international brands resulting in hundreds of brands in the country today with the South-South zone playing host to most of them. The fast-food business in Calabar was initially known for sales of snacks, pastries and, other intercontinental foods but, with the gained acceptance, the business performance expanded to offering traditional cuisines. (Fakokunde, Awolusi and Mustapha, 2014) identified the fast-food business in Nigeria as a promising venture that is bound to give good profit despite any unpredictable economic, political, or social occurrence. The emergence of new entrants into the Nigerian fast-food market is changing the face of competition in this sector. Also, the influx of international brands, increase in franchises, and recent listing of some indigenous brands on the floor of the Nigerian stock market may also be responsible for the amplified expectations from customers.

As new entrants are registered, some existing Fast Food Restaurants are closing down, and others are struggling for survival have become a shadow of their past in terms of patronage and popularity. Fast-food restaurants need therefore to promote repeat patronage (Nyakweba, Wasonga and Bosire, 2015). Traditional methods of advertising such as radio, direct mail, cold calls, billboards, signage, television, magazines, newspapers, and brochures have become less important since the emergence of new technologies in the early 2000s. Some businesses have shifted to social media (Bennett, 2017). Business owners attribute revamped marketing, operations, and management to social media (Rauniar, Rawski, Yang and Johnson 2014). Meanwhile, in recent decades, the use of social media has increased tremendously. Different organisations are using social media as their vital tool to deal with their business. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp have been increasing day by day and the acceptance rate has been on the increase, extraordinarily delivering an enormous number of users in less than 10 years (Hendricks and Noor, 2011).

Social media has enlarged the approach to how organisations develop their business strategies affecting in such a way that it creates impression to connection among potential customers leading to the prosperous building and managing the company (Timilsina, 2017). Social media is a relatively low-cost marketing tool businesses can use to reach out to customers in less time than other marketing tools. New businesses can succeed due to the low cost of social media marketing (Hassan, Nadzim and Shiratuddin, 2015). Using social media offers opportunities for businesses because of the significant user base and because social media supports interaction with consumers, employees, and other stakeholders versus traditional media, which is one-way communication (Rauniar, Rawski, Yang and Johnson 2014).

Social media marketing is marketing using online communities, social networks, blog marketing and more. It is the latest "buzz" in marketing. Global companies have recognized Social Media Marketing as a potential marketing platform, utilised them with innovations to power their advertising campaign with social media marketing (Neti, 2011). Social media

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ISSN: 2689-5072

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marketing enables companies to achieve a better understanding of customers' needs to build effective relationships (Mozammel et al., 2018; Cox, 2012). Social media marketing (SMM) takes advantage of social networking to help a company increase brand exposure and broaden customers' patronage. The goal is usually to create content compelling enough that those users will share it with their social networks (Cox, 2012). It is in the light of the above background that this present study intends to examine social media marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar metropolis.

The rapid adoption and evolution of social media networks across all countries of the world today has spurred many businesses to devising strategies in order to invite millions of active users of the networks to their product offerings usually on their own websites. Nigeria is not exempted of this growing phenomenon. Many businesses in the country now strive to replicate those online dealings and transaction patterns which their counterpart abroad practice. An example of this is McDonalds the world's largest online Fast Food retailer, selling a broad range of fast food brands of products to customers at their doorsteps across many countries.

In Calabar, a good number of similar online fast food retailers such, as Cruches, Domino's Pizza, Sweet Sensation, Tastee Fried Chicken, Mama Cass, etc. have now emerged and some are still up coming. They also offer a broad range of Fast Foods such as pizza, snacks, burgers, etc. also at customers' doorsteps but within few locations only. Apart from the rising competition among the currently existing rivals, there seems to be a daunting tendency that Nigerians would never dare transact business via the internet with any unseen person who displays many attractive pictures of fast foods, tagged with prices and might not physically exist anywhere but prompting prospective buyers to pay upfront so that the foods would be delivered at their doorsteps anywhere in the country. This has always been a questionable issue as a result of the pervasive menaces of *Yahoo-Yahoo* internet frauds and has shaped the perception of many Nigerians toward being careful when operating on the internet especially when it comes to their supply of certain personal information.

Meanwhile, many online retailers have provided sufficient rooms for any likely doubt about the authenticity of their transaction via the social media networks with any prospective customers by allowing them to pay for any product of their choice on delivery. But still, other numerous problems proliferate thus, impeding against the patronage tendencies of Nigerians. Some businesses are reluctant to engage in social media to connect with customers because of their lack of knowledge and awareness on social media marketing strategies (Bennett, 2017). Taneja and Toombs (2014) stated that only 26% of small businesses used social media effectively to reach potential customers and increase sales. The general business problem is that some business owners do not use social media as a means of marketing. The specific business problem is that some small restaurant business owners lack strategies to support social media marketing.

The main objective of the study is to examine social media marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to: examine the effect of Facebook marketing, twitter marketing, Instagram marketing, YouTube marketing and WhatsApp marketing on consumer patronage of fast foods in Nigeria. The following research questions were formulated for the study; What is the effect of Facebook marketing, twitter marketing, Instagram marketing, YouTube marketing and WhatsApp marketing on consumer patronage of fast foods in Nigeria. Based on the research objective, the following hypotheses are developed:

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H0₁: There is no significant relationship between Facebook marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between Twitter marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between Instagram marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

H04: There is no significant relationship between YouTube marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

H05: There is no significant relationship between WhatsApp marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term Social Media covers the usage of online tools and web sites that allow interaction between users to share information, opinions and interests. The opportunities of social media for corporations and are the eases of reaching out to target audience groups, taking easier action and putting out their messages through the communication tools it provides (Adomako-Kwakye, 2017). The nature of social media tools also provides swift and open participancy in communication within organisations themselves (Reyneke, et al., 2016). Apart from social media being a personal communication medium and a social sharing network, Social media also reflects that the internet is a new public domain. Having the characteristics of being a public domain, Non-Governmental organisations uses this medium of social network as a tool to openly discuss their ideologies, put out and spread their messages, and to mobilize their supporters and/or members (Altarifi, et al., 2015).

Social media are a "group of internet-based applications built on the ideological and technological foundation of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of user generated content," according to (Khanagha, et al., 2018). Since "Social media is a broad term that describes software tools that create user generated content that can be shared (Adiele, et al., 2015). Social media and social networking sites are frequently used interchangeably. Social media, on the other hand, differs because it enables users to connect by creating personal information profiles and inviting friends and coworkers to access those profiles. (Baena, 2016). Social media is therefore the setting in which social networking occurs and has changed how consumers gather information and make purchasing decisions (Haenlein et al., 2017). Social media is the layout of applications and technologies that ease the productive interaction between new business forms, the encouragement of social forms and technological presentations using humans, content and data it is an online platform where the participants convey their ideas, mutual interest and experiences by conversing with each other in a natural and sincere way. The basis of this is that it enables the communion and participants to integrate within a shared (Turan & Kara, 2018).

Similar opinions have been expressed regarding the various social media platforms that small and medium sized businesses can use as a marketing tool. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, Instagram, Google Plus, and YouTube are among them (Husnain & Toor, 2017). These websites are used for posting reviews and details about a company's commercial activities, in addition to being used for social activities. In addition to describing what sets their products

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ISSN: 2689-5072

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apart from competitors, posting reviews and information on their websites can help SMEs gain customers' trust and loyalty. This is due to the fact that more reviews a small- and medium-sized business had; the more confident another customer will be in their choice (Chan, et al., 2019). Scholars empirical investigation are evaluated below to help us bridge a gap in knowledge. Oztamur (2014) emphasized the connection and relationship between SMEs' performance and online community marketing or social media marketing. The study showed that SMEs worldwide were adopting the idea of social media marketing. However, since this is a conceptual review, no context or analysis is provided. The relationship between social media marketing strategies and campaigns and sales growth for the targeted SMEs in Nairobi County, Kenya, was the subject of a 2017 study by Olonde. Even though the study found a significant positive correlation, it only considered sales growth, whereas performance includes both financial and non-financial aspects.

University students were the focus of a study by Masinde (2012) that was carried out in Nairobi County. It examined how they react to social media marketing. The study, which was quantitative and descriptive, sought to determine whether social media campaigns affected student brand awareness and loyalty. The study's findings suggested that social media did, in fact, have a beneficial effect. Increased levels of brand loyalty, improved attitudes toward the brand, and increased brand awareness all occurred. The study's main limitation is that it only looked at how social media marketing directly affected consumers who were most likely to choose to use the company's services, rather than how it affected the company itself. Additionally, it doesn't explain how marketing strategy affects a company's organisational performance. This study's focus on university students, a very distinct demographic, presents another drawback. This is a special group of people who are generally adept at using social media and who have invested a lot of time on those platforms looking for their interests and tendencies to follow trends. Because of this, the influence of social media on this population cannot be viewed as a generalization of the market. By focusing on a more representative population, this study hopes to eliminate this bias.

Njeri (2014) conducted a study to assess the impact of social media on Kenya's banking sector. The study generally sought to ascertain how social media interactions affected the financial performance of all operating commercial banks. Based on the study's conclusions, it was determined and confirmed that social media has improved all of the banks' financial standing. They were able to attract a sizable customer base through social media at a reasonable cost. Due to a rise in loan applications, revenue also increased. The overall result was thus very favorable. The study has a number of drawbacks. A knowledge gap exists for all other industries using social media marketing campaigns based on online interactions as a marketing tool because it first targeted a particular industry. Second, the same study's review was unable to conclusively determine whether the financial advantages were due solely to social media marketing or to a variety of other factors, such as the year's economic performance in the finance sector. In another related study on the impact of advertisement and consumer perception on consumer buying behaviour conducted by Malik, Ghafoor, Iqbal, Unzila and Ayesha (2014) it was revealed that advertising and consumer perception had a positive and significant relationship with consumer purchase decision. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents and a sample of 150 respondents was obtained. Data analysis was done using correlation and ANOVA using SPSS software.

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Junco, Heibergert and Loken (2010) investigated the Twitter use by students and its influence on their academic engagement and their final grades. 125 students participated in a carefully designed study. The results demonstrated that Twitter can influence positively, both students' engagement as well as their final grades. Duffett (2017) examined how social media marketing influence young consumers' attitudes in South Africa. The study critically investigates how usage and demographic factors influence the attitudes of young consumers towards social media marketing communication. The study was carried out in colleges and high schools in South Africa by administering questionnaires to 13,000 students that are within the age bracket of 13-18 years. The study found that social media marketing communication positively influences consumers' cognitive, affective and behavioural attitude. It was also found that teenagers are frequently on social media platforms to keep themselves abreast with global occurrences and exposed to an online advertisement. In the study of Sonkusare (2013) empirically found that Television advertising is one of the main source advertising to interact with target audience in Nigeria. This is an effective way to give information about the product with audio and video both. Hence Television advertising is an important medium to make people aware of any product. In this study, they found the impact of television advertisements on consumer buying behaviour than other sources of media advertising

Adomako-Kwakye (2017) ascertains the effect of social media promotion on consumer patronage in the creative design industry in Ghana. Data were collected through a questionnaire from 274 users of Facebook in Ghana. The study found that promotion carried out on Facebook significantly influences patronage by consumers; hence, the need for business enterprises to be responsive to the needs of consumers by promptly getting in touch with them to resolve their complaints. Tanjum and Dayal (2018) examined the usage of Whatsapp on smartphones among young people. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches via the use of an interview schedule and questionnaire administration to one hundred and fifty (150) students of Guru Jambheshwar University, Hisar. The study found that students who access information on products and services actively use WhatsApp. The study also found that WhatsApp is commonly used by students because the application is cost-effective, users' friendly, less technical, convenient to use, helps to share views and promotes social influence among users.

Ekwueme and Okoro (2018) analysed the use of social media advertising in Nigeria using Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. The study examined one hundred (100) business enterprises in Nigeria and the frequency of their social media platforms. The study found that the sampled social media platforms are preferred in the following order: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. It was also found that these platforms are used because they are less expensive, have a wider reach, high return on investment and establish brand authority". Challenges identified in using social media platforms in promoting products and services in the study include lack of technical know-how, inimical government policies, bad reputation due to fraudulent activities, high time involvement, and too many competing platforms. Okolo, Okafor, Obikeze and Nduka (2018) investigated on influence of online advertising on consumer brand awareness and patronage of financial institutions in Enugu, Nigeria. A purposive sampling technique was adopted and a survey method was used to gather primary data using a questionnaire instrument. Findings revealed online advertising significantly influences customer brand awareness of UBA products. Also, it was discovered that online advertising had no significant influence on consumer purchase behaviour. Also, online advertising had no significant influence on consumer brand recall of UBA products.

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Social media marketing

The marketing communications medium has evolved from print media, electronic media, and then to social media in cyberspace. Consumers in the new millennium are not only changing interest in shopping online but also finding information through social media marketing before making purchase decisions (Altarifi, Al-Hawary & Al Sakkal, 2015). This trend shows that consumers tend to trust their friends and contacts in social media over the ads displayed by business organisations (Woodcock, et al., 2014).

Social media marketing has resulted in significant changes to the strategies and tools used by business organisations to communicate with users. Social media marketing tools can be used by business organisations of various sizes and types as a marketing tool (Birkner, 2016). Social media marketing enables business organisations to connect with customers at the right time, directly with lower cost and higher efficiency than other traditional communication tools. This allows social media not only to be monopolized by large business organisations but also by small and medium enterprises (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2017). In addition, social media marketing sites such as Facebook and Twitter allow users to follow their favourite brands and to comment or post questions related to related products or services. With social media sites, business organisations are able to identify what is being said about their brands and communicate directly with consumers (Ogwo & Igwe, 2012).

According to Badiru and Afolabi (2016), Social media marketing is a new marketing strategy which almost every business is adopting to reach their consumers on virtual networks. If you have an idea and you want it to reach millions, at a very little cost, then social media is the only way out. Entertainment companies were the first to adopt social media as a promotional tool (Jenyo & Soyoye, 2015). Adomako-Kwakye (2017) defined 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. So if we keep it simple, social media marketing is the process where organisations use social media websites to build rush on their company's official websites. It does not stop here organisations also inform the potential customers of happenings in the organisation, the launch of a new model or product and the latest news about the organisation through social media applications (Baena, 2016).

Facebook marketing

Facebook is an internet-based social network which hosts a community of users making it easy for users who want to get connected and communicate with other users. Facebook enables users to share experiences and helps to get connected with friends, and families regardless the geographical barriers. Launched by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 while he was a student at Harvard, Facebook is the largest and most dominant social site today. Facebook is one such medium that facilitates its users for global interaction and sharing their ideas and experiences. Facebook is a social media marketing that is a "Web-based site which brings different people together in a virtual platform and ensures a deeper social interaction, stronger community and implementation of cooperation projects" (Felix, et al., 2017). Waheed & Jianhua (2018). defines Facebook as "the online platform that people use to share their ideas, experience, and perspectives and communicate with each other". Millions of people are using Facebook daily. By the end of 2010, Facebook had 500 million active users around the globe. In 2012, the number of active users has almost doubled to reach 955 million (Baena, 2016).

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Facebook is the preferred social media site (Polo-Pena, Jamilena, et al., 2016)). As of January 2013, Facebook was the most used social media in the United States (Aichner and Perkmann, 2013). It is easier to access Facebook through smartphones and other mobile devices (Fan & Gordon, 2014), which contributes to its popularity with over 1.49 billion monthly active users as of 2015 (Niedermeier, Wang, and Zhang, 2016). Facebook users post pictures and updates about their daily lives while businesses post about products and services offered (Go and You, 2016). Other businesses use Facebook as a way to get information to many customers and clients in a short amount of time (Badiru & Afolabi, 2016). organisations not engaged in Facebook miss valuable chances to communicate with customers (Badiru & Afolabi, 2016).

Twitter Marketing

Twitter is a social networking website used to post or tweet about the latest stories, ideas, opinions, and news on topics that interest the user and their followers (Malhotra and Malhotra, 2016). A tweet can only have 140 characters; users have to send short bursts of information at a time (Yıldırım, Üsküdarlı, and Özgür, 2016). If an organisation chooses, it can bypass restrictions on the number of characters used for the presentation of detailed information with hyperlinks (Badiru & Afolabi, 2016). Twitter includes email, instant messaging, texting, and blogging. Tweets may also contain links to stories, images, and videos (Badiru & Afolabi, 2016). In addition, individuals and organisations may share information through retweets, build information communities, and demonstrate responsiveness with the use of public messages (Malhotra and Malhotra, 2016).

Instagram

Instagram is an application, which allows users to take photos and share them with their followers along with other social sites like Facebook. The petition of Instagram lies in the fact that the user can select the pictures and change them to admirable beautiful images and make them fancier accords the desire. Launched in 2010, Instagram initially was made available just to the iPhone users. However, the Android version was launched in 2011 and its popularity started like a rocket where between July 2011 and July 2012 the number of users of Instagram increased by 17,319% resulting in an extraordinary growth in the history of social media (Badiru & Afolabi, 2016).

With a total user of 600 million, Instagram is a perfect medium for sharing fresh stories where a clean interface lets users emphasise the pictures and is the best platform to speak to influencers and trendspotters. It is the most recognisable place for global branding in today's social world (Jamie, 2019).

Instagram is an ideal tool for small and non-profit businesses as it is the best storytelling platform to create brand awareness and get connected to your audience, which is useful for a business, mentioned Katie Keating, a Social Content & Engagement Strategist of IBM. Moreover, Nichol's Instagram for employee engagement, introducing products, builds relationships as well as other functions which she believes to influence the revenue of the company. ((Leung, Bai & Stahura, 2015).

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a free social media app for mobile phones launched in 2009. It uses the phone's Internet connection to allow chatting as well as the sharing of files and images and permits the

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making of free voice and video calls with other WhatsApp users. Initially, it was for mobile phones only. Later on, the web version of the app was introduced (Mazereeuw, 2018; Dove, 2020). The term "WhatsApp advertisement" is a coinage from two words WhatsApp and advertisement. To properly conceptualize this term, it is inimical to define each term distinctly. As stated above, WhatsApp, simply put, is a free social app used to share text, pictures, voice and video using the Internet. On the other hand, advertisement means a notice or announcement in a public medium promoting a product, service, or event or publicizing a job vacancy (https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/). Also, the Advertising Association of the UK defines advertisements as paid-for messages by those who send them with the intention of informing about products and services as well as influencing people who receive them. (Therefore, WhatsApp marketing can be defined as the use of WhatsApp to send out messages – text, voice notices, pictures and videos – to promote and create awareness for products and services. Since WhatsApp is free, WhatsApp advertisement changes the dynamics of advertisement; those who send WhatsApp advertisements do not have to pay for them (Beri & Ojha, 2016).

YouTube marketing

It has also been established that consumers have come to find YouTube marketing content to be useful and helpful in improving their knowledge of products, product usage and making purchase decisions. In a study by Chen & Dermawan (2020), and Mpuon et al (2022) consumers were reported to have perceived YouTube content as informative and empowering as they learnt the application of makeup products, new beauty techniques and how to sell products within a short timeframe. Ananda & Wandebori (2016) also revealed that undergraduates perceive YouTube influencers' videos as being valuable for product information search and purchase decisions. According to Takumi (2020), the perceived information-based value attributable to YouTube marketing can be connected to YouTube's inherent capacity to host detailed reviews and high-quality videos, leaving a lasting impression on the audience. However, critics believe that some influencers are overly focused on endorsing products even when they are to the detriment of the consumers. Reviews are sometimes not considered genuine as consumers do not enjoy the product experience and benefits promoted by the influencers (Abraham et al 2022; Chen & Dermawan, 2020).

It is discernible from extant literature that social media marketing through content creators tends to influence consumer purchasing behaviours positively. Studies have established that social media influencer marketing increases the willingness of consumers to purchase a product (Abraham et al 2022; Isyanto et al 2020; Le et al 2021; Lee & Lee, 2022; Marjerison et al 2020; Masuda, Han & Lee, 2022; Takumi, 2020). This impact is critical in assessing the effectiveness of influencer marketing as purchase intention is a prerequisite for actual patronage. Abraham et al (2022) reported that marketing determined the purchase intention for beauty and cosmetic products among customers in the Philippines. In a study by Takumi (2020), consumers in the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Germany were reported to have been influenced to patronise various brands as a result of their exposure to YouTube content (Asemah, et al., 2017).

Consumer patronage

When consumers have attained the highest level of satisfaction, they frequently trade with one another, which is known as customer patronage. Retailers and marketers must be aware of the

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factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions because consumers are increasingly creating content and brands that were once under corporate control (Wood, 2015). As a result, recent research has looked at the social media site feature that influences consumers' spending.

Zimmerman (2013) investigates the relationship between brand-related group participation on Facebook, responses to advertisements, and the psychological aspects of self-disclosure and attitudes among Facebook users and non-users. According to the study, Facebook users who are members of groups are more likely to share their personal information than those who are not. According to Zimmerman (2013), Facebook users in their 20s and 30s have the most positive attitudes toward social media advertising, and this demographic is also the fastest-growing. This suggests that social media sites are a potentially rich platform for online advertising campaigns, particularly for businesses with a younger target market (Asad, 2014).

Irbo and Mohammed (2020) also looked into the relationship between attitude and age and discovered that social network users' preferences for online ad formats (such as blogs, videos, and brand channels or pages) varied to some extent by age group. According to her, users between the ages of 18 and 28 had a generally favourable opinion of blogs, videos, and the brand channel ad format. This was a result of users finding the ad format to be interesting, eyecatching, and humorous. Because they were more attention-grabbing, informative, and better placed, the 35-54 age group preferred the video and brand channel ad formats.

There are five stages in the conventional consumer decision model: need awareness, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase behaviour. In online communication, banner advertisements and online promotions may draw customers' attention and pique their interest in the product, according to Miles (2014). They use online resources to conduct searches when they don't have enough information (Laudon and Traver, 2009). After gathering sufficient information, customers compare products and services using online product or service reviews and comments to determine which brand best meets their needs. At this point, a well-structured website is crucial to convincing visitors to purchase the goods and services (Miles, 2014 & Mpuon et al 202. During the purchasing process, customers must be assisted in making decisions by way of product selection, sales assistance, and reliable information. According to Duffett (2017), the internet facilitates the pre-purchase stage and the nature of information sources may have an impact on consumer behaviour. Consumers engage in post-purchase behaviour when they are unhappy with a product and may want to exchange it or return it. At this point, the return and exchange services are crucial (Duffett, 2017). By providing customers with flexible pricing and promotions or a one-stop shopping service, a company uses the components of the marketing mix as a strategy in social media, which helps their business succeed (Duffett, 2017).

Consumer Patronage through Social Media Networks

Retailers are increasingly using internationalization strategy in order to enhance their competitiveness, increase sales and make good profits Mpuon et al. (2022a). One of which is today's proliferating usage of Social Media Networks. Since the 1990s, many retailers across the world have been entering this enterprising marketplace and as a result, the rivalry between domestic and foreign retailers has become fiercer every day (Duffett, 2017) and Mpuon (2019). With the increasing expansion of these foreign retailers and shifts in consumers' attitudes and behaviour, domestic retailers feel stronger pressures to make their competitive strategies more effective so that they can compete against the foreign retailers who are already utilising social

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media networks to penetrate the domestic retailers' established markets. A good example of this in Nigeria is the emerging competition among foreign online retailers like Amazon and domestic counterparts like Jumia, Konga, Buyrite, Deealdey, etc.

Strategic positioning has now become a critical issue for gaining both sustained long-term growth and persistent customer patronage. The key question now has been how these domestic retailers can get Nigerian consumers to visit their online stores more frequently and buy more merchandise on each visit. Since the success in the retailing industry depends on consumers, most domestic retailers are now also moving into social media which their counterparts abroad exploit (Chaney and Gamble, 2008). For consumers to patronise domestic retailers, the study of Tanjum and Dayal (2018) suggests that a country's image affects consumers' product evaluation (attitudes to a product) through their beliefs about the product's attributes such as quality, reliability and pricing. Attitude theory may explain how countries are seen in the minds of the consumers, what beliefs and emotions towards a country they have, and how this information affects their reactions towards a country (Tanjum and Dayal, 2018).

Attitudes are complex systems comprising the persons' beliefs about the object, their feelings towards the object, and action tendencies with respect to the object. As such they include cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects, and represent the way people react to a stimulus. Consumers mentally process objective information about the product or retailer and form an impression of the benefits they provide (Beri and Ojha, 2016). They express their preference or lack of preference for stores, brands and other marketing stimuli by reflecting a favourable or unfavourable attitude, which might affect their purchasing intention and purchases.

Determinants of customer patronage in fast-food restaurants

Restaurant Image

These are the overall impressions a restaurant and its offerings give to its patrons and other public. A favorable corporate image can boost sales, through increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. Some identifiable key elements of corporate identity that can influence the customer's perception of the company's image include the company name, logo, price charged for services, and level and quality of advertising placed in the media. Inclusive is reputation which is the consistency of an organisation's actions over time created through the guarantee of reliable service at zero defects tolerance (Marcus and Isaac, 2020).

Food Quality

In the quality of a menu, food offering is considered the highest driver or otherwise of a dining experience. Food quality is the major influencer of customer choice, patronage of a restaurant, and ultimately loyalty enforcer. When food quality is compared with other aspects of a restaurant, including service quality and environmental components, it remains the key element of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Namkung and Jang (2017) tested the influence of food quality on customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions and found a positive correlation between the two variables

Personnel quality

A firm's personnel are the employees who work for the company. Their attitudes to work and how professional or pleasant they interact with or attend to customers of the firm suggest their

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quality level. Interaction with the service employee is the most important influence on customer service quality assessment and overall service satisfaction. Marcus and Isaac (2020), suggested that the behaviour of service employees when serving the needs and wishes of existing customers creates an impression that either increases customer satisfaction or subsequent continuous patronage or causes dissatisfaction and less patronage (Felix et al., 2017)

Restaurant's Atmosphere

Atmosphere is the air surrounding the sphere of a business house. Contextually, it signifies the quality of the surroundings of the restaurant. Words such as "good", "busy" or "depressing" are used to describe an atmospheric situation of a given location. The research by Namkung and Jang (2018) showed that the atmosphere of a restaurant evokes a number of feelings, such as excitement, pleasure or relaxation, quality, aura and character. This may be a result of neatness, the display of assorted foods in neat warmers, the arrangement of flowers, the arrangement of tables, the lighting, the music and colour displays on the interior (Ekwueme and Okoro, 2018).

Price fairness

Price represents the perceived value of a product/service at which the seller and buyer are ready to do business. From the perspective of the consumer, it is what the customer pays in exchange for a product or service. Price as an important marketing factor has been noted to be a serious influencer of consumer behaviour. Consumers tend to search for products and services that are fairly priced and would deliver maximum desired value.

Customer Trust

Trust has been viewed as one of the critical elements in the creation of successful relationships, whether for a business-to-business market or a business-to-consumer market. Trust can be behavioural and seen form of reliance on a partner, which results mainly in positive outcomes.

Conceptual model of the study

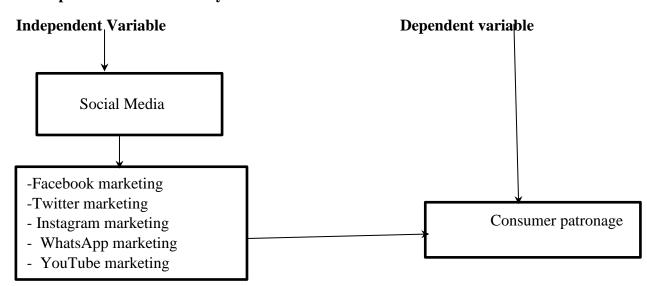


FIG I: Research framework variables

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Fig. 1 above shows the dependent variables as social media while the independent variables include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Whatsapp and YouTube, with consumer patronage proxy for level of satisfaction. The arrow shows a direct relationship between the explanatory variable to the dependent variable. The study is anchored on the following theories

Chaffey's Theory

The theory, according to Chaffey (2012), views social media marketing as a casual marketing strategy. The foundation of human behaviour, and ultimately customer behaviour, is communication and human networking. To promote positive engagement with a company and its brands and to create commercial value, monitoring and facilitating customer interaction, participation, and sharing through digital media is necessary. Interactions may take place on a business website, social media platforms, and other outside websites. (2002) Chaffey Thus, social media marketing makes use of these channels to sway users' perceptions of various goods and services, encourage purchases, and even encourage brand loyalty. This theory is used on social media as a tool for fostering relationships. Such interactions help to build a strong bond between a company and its customers. This theory is significant because it offers a fresh perspective on the effects of social media marketing (Heinze, Fletcher, Rashid, and Cruz, A. (2016). Long-term relationships with customers not only have an impact right away but also increase the rate at which customers use the brand consistently.

According to another well-founded opinion, Chaffey's theory of social media takes a sociological approach to the subject. Ashley and Tuten concur with Chaffey's (2012) claim that one-on-one interactions between brands and customers on social media platforms help cultivate long-term relationships that will ultimately be profitable for the company (2015). Ashley and Tuten (2015) expanded on Chaffey's (2012) assertions by highlighting the importance of communication as the foundation of any marketing strategy. This theoretical justification claims that social media accomplishes this by actively involving users on various social media platforms. They find this appealing, which raises their level of satisfaction with the company's offerings and, ultimately, its productivity. SMEs in the Lagos Metropolitan Area have made the most of the chance to grow their companies by interacting with both potential and current clients' online (Ogaji et al., 2017).

Theory of Service Quality Gap

The authors Parasuraman, Zeithalm, and Berry put the Service Quality Gap Model idea (1985). The theory of the service quality gap describes the essential conditions for providing high service quality. Customers frequently make comparisons between the services they "experience" and those they "expect." The discrepancy between customer expectations and perceptions is known as the customer gap. Customer expectations are what a customer expects given the resources at their disposal. These resources include information online as well as information about the customer's cultural background, family lifestyle, personality, demographics, and advertising (Jamie, 2019).

Based on the customer's interaction with the product or service, customer perception is wholly subjective. Customer satisfaction with a particular good or service and the calibre of the service provided determine perception. The most significant gap is with the customer, and the expectation and perception of the customer should be nearly identical. Delivering a quality service for a particular product should be based on a clear understanding of the target market

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in a customer-oriented strategy. The best way to close the gap might be to understand customer needs and expectations. The knowledge, policy, delivery, and communication gaps must be understood. The difference between social media and consumer patronage is known as the knowledge gap.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted in this study was the survey design. The survey design was used to obtain data to enable the researchers to test the hypothesis. The choice of design was to enable the researcher to draw inferences from the opinions of the respondents to establish a relationship between the variables without influencing the outcome of the relationship. The population of the study comprised registered fast joints in Nigeria which are 17 in number with an estimated population of 120,000 customers. The study adopted discrete random sampling in the selection of sample members. This was to enable the researcher to include only persons (management staff) who are adjudged to know about social media and consumer patronage. All members of management staff were included in the study as well as major distributors to represent customers. In all, the sample was 200 consisting of 20 management staff, 56 marketing staff and 124 consumers from the 15 fast food outlets in Nigeria. The study used primary data, which were obtained from respondents using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed with two sections for three categories of respondents. The instruments were scaled using a 5 Likert point scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). The respondents were required to indicate the extent they agreed with the statement as it apply to them. In all, 200 copies of the questionnaire were issued while 186 copies (93.0%) were retrieved

Based on the nature of this research work, the researcher employed a questionnaire as a necessary instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was tailored in simple English and pre-tested for comprehension. The questionnaire consisted of sections A and B. Section A contained items seeking information on the personal demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as age, sex, educational qualification years of service, etc., and section B contained items, seeking information on the two major variables (social media marketing and consumer patronage) and were designed on a five-point Likert scales with SA for strongly agree, A, Agree, U, undecided, D, Disagreed, SD for strongly disagree. To validate the research instrument, the construct validity method was used to ensure the face validity of the instrument used, the items on the questionnaire were drawn up and given to an expert in research in the faculty of management sciences for checking. It was necessary to determine whether the instrument measured what it was supposed to measure.

In most cases, except for a few, the statements were straightforward and important. However, those that tended to be ambiguous were detected. It few mechanical errors were identified and corrections were made by the supervisor before it was administered. To ensure that the instrument consistently measures what it was supposed to measure, a pre-tested exercise was carried out in the studied area. Reliability was established through a pilot test. This test was intended to determine the consistency of their responses to the questionnaire. A test re-test reliability was carried out in the study area to ensure that the instrument developed consistently measures what it was supposed to measure, a trial study was carried out in the study area, and ten (10) subjects were used for the trial study. The same group of respondents was retested after two weeks. To obtain the reliability coefficient of the instrument, the scores for the first and second tests were correlated using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient. The

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correlation coefficient of the instrument for the two sets of scores yielded 0.75 revealing a strong positive correlation between the two sets of scores. This result revealed that the instrument was highly reliable.

The multiple regression analysis was applied in the analysis of data. The technique is considered suitable for analysing cause and effect relationship which was the focus of this research. The technique enabled the researcher to analyse social media and consumer patronage of fast food outlets in Calabar Metropolis. This was statistically computed using a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

The simple linear regression model was given as

$$Y = a + bx_1 + bx_2 + bx_3 + bx_4 + bx_5 + \varepsilon i$$

Where

Y = Dependent variable (Consumer Patronage)

 X_1-X_5 = Independent variable (Social Media)

a = Constant

b = Slope of the regression line

Ei = Tolerable error

RESULTS

This section considered the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected for this research work. It highlights both the mathematical and statistical techniques adopted in testing the research hypotheses of the study which sought to investigate social media marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Nigeria

Response rate

TABLE.1

Distribution of questionnaire and response rate

Questionnaire	Respondents	Percentage	
Number returned	186	93.0	
Number not returned	14	7.0	
Total	200	100	

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

In carrying out the study, a total of two hundred (200) questionnaires were produced and administered to the target respondents. A total of 186 were correctly filled and returned giving a response rate of 93 percent, while the respondents did not return 14 copies with a rate of 7 percent. The analysis was therefore based on the total of one hundred and eighty-six (186), copies correctly and filled and returned

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Demography data

TABLE .2

Distribution of respondents according to gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percent	Cumulative percentage
Male	96	64.0	64.0	64.0
Female	54	36.0	36.0	100.0
Total	186	100	100	

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 4.2 shows that out of the total respondents, 96 respondents represent 64.0 per cent were male, while female was 54 respondents representing 36.0 per cent.

TABLE .3

Distribution of respondents according to age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Valid 21-30	51	27.4
31-40	68	46.6
41-50	37	19.9
51yrs and	30	16.1
above		
Total	186	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 4.3 revealed that 21-30 years were 51 respondents representing 27.4 per cent, 31-40 years were 68 respondents representing 46.6 per cent, 41-50 years were 37 respondents representing 19.9 per cent, while 51 years and above were 30 respondents representing 16.1 per cent.

TABLE .4

Distribution of respondents according to educational qualifications

Educational qualification	Frequency	Percentage
WAEC/SSEC/GCE	31	16.7
ND/NCE	48	25.8
HND/B.Sc.	54	29.0
PGD/M.Sc./M.Ed	31	16.7
Ph.D	22	11.8
Total	186	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 4.4 shows that out of the total respondents, 31 respondents representing 16.7 per cent were WAEC/SSCE/GCE holders, ND/NCE holders were 48 respondents representing 25.8 per cent, HND/B.Sc. were 54 respondents representing 29.0 per cent, PGD/M.Sc./M.Ed were 31



respondents representing 16.7 per cent, while, Ph.D was only 22 respondents representing 11.8 per cent

TABLE .6

Distribution of respondents according to level of management

Level	of	Frequency	Percentage
managemen	nt		
Junior staff		61	32.8
Senior staff		77	41.4
Managemen	t level	48	25.8
Total		186	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 4.6 revealed that 61 respondents representing 32.8 per cent were junior staff; senior staffs were 77 respondents representing 41.4 per cent, while management staffs were 48 respondents representing 25.8 per cent.

Reliability analysis

This was done using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. Table 4.8 shows the result.

TABLE 8

Reliability analysis

	Cronbach Alpha	Number of items
FCB	0.632	3
TWT	0.812	3
INS	0.748	3
YOT	0.678	3
WAP	0.663	3
COP	0.651	3

Source: Researcher's estimation

Since, it a new instrument, a reliability index of 0.60 is acceptable. Hence, the above reliability index is acceptable.

Multi-collinearity

Multi-collinearity is the condition in which one or more independent variables can be expressed as a linear combination of other independent variables. This test is used to determine whether there is a correlation between the independent variables. If there is a correlation, then there is a problem called multicollinearity. To detect the multicollinearity, we use variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance for each independent variable. The limit value of tolerance and VIF limit is 10 (Ghozali, 2006).



The calculated result output co-efficient VIF shows that all independent variables have a value of VIF more than 0.1 and the VIF value of each variable is not more than 10. It can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity between the independent variables in the study.

Table 9: Test of multicollinearity

	VIF	Tolerance
FCB	1.278	.762
TWT	1.276	.775
INS	1.177	.864
YOT	1.165	.754
WAP	1.154	.654

Source: Researcher's estimation

Regression analysis

The multiple regression analysis was adopted to examine the relationship among the variables. Table 4.10 shows the regression result

TABLE .10

Table of	of co-e	efficients
I WOIC (,, ,, ,	

Model	Unstandardised co-efficients		Standardized co-efficient	T	Sign
	В	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	3.641	0.532		7.051	0.00
					0
FCB	0.062	0.083	0.043	0.578	0.55
					4
TWT	-0.036	0.074	-0.036	-	0.50
				0.538	0
INS	0.238	0.063	0.254	3.878	0.00
YOT		0.054	0.231	2.891	0
WAP	0.345	0.041	0.141	2.642	0.00
					1
	0.232				0.00
					2

a. Dependent variable: COP

b. Independent variables: FCB, TWT, INS, YOT, WAP

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TABLE .11

Model summary

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted	R	Std. Error of the estimate
			square		
1	.32	.213	.108		.72312

a. Dependent variable: COP

b. Independent variables: FCB, TWT, INS, YOT, WAP

The coefficient of determination R² shows to what extent the independent variables are able to explain the variation in the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.213, this implies about 21.3 per cent of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the explanatory variables induced in the model. The remaining 78.7 per cent represents the unexplained percentage and accounts for other independent variables not captured in the model.

Also, the adjusted R² shows that if an independent variable with the least co-efficient (say TWT with 0.036 co-efficient) is dropped from the regression line, the remaining independent variable, FCB, TWT, INS, YOT and WAP can still explain the variation in COP (dependent variable) to the extent of 10.8 per cent.

In addition to the above, a test on the statistical significance of the overall variable in the model was carried out. This is shown in table 4.12 below.

TABLE .12

ANOVA

Model	Sum	of	Df	Mean square	F	Sign
	square					
1	23.645		2	5.321	6.21	0.000^{b}
regressio					4	
n						
Residual	164.863		184	662		
Total	188.508		186			

Source: Revercher estimation, 2023

a. Dependent variable: COP

b. Independent variables: FCB, TWT, INS, YOT, WAP

From the ANOVA table, the significant value (0.000) is less than 0.05; hence, the explained variables (FCB, TWT, INS, YOT and WAP) in the model predict the COP. This also means that the data has a better goodness of fit for the study.

Article DOI: 10.52589/BJMMS-ML0UM7V2 DOI URL: https://doi.org/10.52589/BJMMS-ML0UM7V2

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Test of hypotheses

In testing the hypotheses formulated, it is important to re-state the hypotheses for the test. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 or 5% level of significance. The corresponding statistic was the co-efficient and standard p-value or significance.

Hypothesis one	
$\ensuremath{H_{\text{o}1}}\xspace$: marketing and consumer patronage	There is no significant relationship between Facebook of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis
H_{A1} : marketing and consumer patronage	There is a significant relationship between Facebook of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis
(0.554) at 0.05 level of significant consumer patronage, although the return There is no significant relationship fast foods in Calabar Metropolis	Facebook (FCB) is positive (0.062), but not significant te. This implies that Facebook contributes positively to esult is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis that between Facebook marketing and consumer patronage of is accepted. This implies that there is no significant rketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar
Hypothesis two	
H_{02} : marketing and consumer patronage	There is no significant relationship between Twitter of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis.
H_{02} : marketing and consumer patronage	There is a significant relationship between Twitter of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis.
(0.500) at a 0.05 level of significations consumer patronage in Calabar Metricular null hypothesis that there is no sconsumer patronage of fast foods in	f Twitter (TWT) is negative (-0.036), and not significant nce. This implies that Twitter contributes negatively to ropolis, although the result is not significant. Therefore, the significant relationship between Twitter marketing and Calabar Metropolis is accepted. This implies that there is Twitter marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in
Hypothesis three	
$H_{\rm o3}$: marketing and consumer patronage	There is no significant relationship between Instagram of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis
H_{A3} : marketing and consumer patronage	There is a significant relationship between Instagram of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

From the table 4.10, the co-efficient of instagram is positive (0.238) and significant at (0.000) which is less than the significant level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between Instagram marketing and consumer patronage of fast food in

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Calabar Metropolis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between Instagram marketing and consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis.

Hypothesis four

 H_{o4} : There is no significant relationship between YouTube marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

H_{A4}: There is a significant relationship between YouTube marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

From the table 4.10, the co-efficient of YouTube is positive (0.345) and significant at (0.001) which is less than the significant level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between YouTube marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between YouTube marketing and consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis.

Hypothesis five

H₀₅: There is no significant relationship between WhatsApp marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

H_{A5}: There is a significant relationship between WhatsApp marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

From table 4.10, the co-efficient of WhatsApp is positive (0.232) and significant at (0.002) which is less than the significant level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between WhatsApp marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between WhatsApp marketing and consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis.

Discussion of findings

The hypothesis tested that there is no significant relationship between Facebook marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis. It was tested based on the coefficient and p-value/significance at 0.05 level of significance and the null hypothesis was accepted, while the alternative hypothesis was rejected. This implies that There is no significant relationship between Facebook marketing and consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis. This finding is in line with the findings of Okolo, Okafor, Obikeze and Nduka (2018) when they found out that Facebook has a negative effect on consumer patronage

Hypothesis two tested that there is no significant relationship between Twitter marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis. It was tested based on the coefficient and p-value/significance at 0.05 level of significance, and the null hypothesis was accepted, while the alternative hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is no significant relationship between Twitter marketing and consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis. Duffett (2017) supported this finding when he suggested that Twitter has a positive but insignificant effect on consumer patronage.

Hypothesis three tested that there is no significant relationship between Instagram marketing and consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis. It was tested based on the

British Journal of Management and Marketing Studies

ISSN: 2689-5072

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coefficient and p-value/significance at 0.05 level of significance, and the null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between Instagram marketing and consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis. This finding is in line with the finding of Njeri, 2014 (2009) who found a significant positive effect of Instagram on consumer patronage of fast food.

Hypothesis four tested that there is no significant relationship between YouTube marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis. It was tested based on the coefficient and p-value/significance at 0.05 level of significance, and the null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This implies there is a significant relationship between YouTube marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis. This finding is in line with the finding of Ekwueme and Okoro (2018) who found a significant positive effect of YouTube on consumer patronage of fast food.

Hypothesis five tested that there is no significant relationship between WhatsApp marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis. It was tested based on the coefficient and p-value/significance at 0.05 level of significance, and the null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This implies there is a significant relationship between WhatsApp marketing and consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis. This finding is in line with the finding of Oztamur (2014) who found a significant positive effect of WhatsApp on consumer patronage of fast food.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Based on the findings from the study, it was concluded that there is no significant relationship between Facebook marketing and Twitter on consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis. However, there is a significant relationship between Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp marketing on consumer patronage of fast food in Calabar Metropolis. The study therefore recommended that social media marketing has positive and negative effects on consumer patronage of fast foods in Calabar Metropolis

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are made;

- 1. Fast food joint should conceptualise their Facebook page to its wider audience so as to gain more patronage.
- 2. It was recommended that the management of Facebook should find wider customer and integrate them into their Twitter account.
- 3. The Instagram page should be well advertised to reach a wider audience
- 4. The YouTube channels of fast food should advertise for more customers to subscribe for better patronage
- 5. Finally, it was recommended that a WhatsApp group be created for loyal customers, this will help create more audience for a fast food joint



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