
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER AND CUSTOMER IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOUR: A STUDY OF MTN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The swift pace of change in online marketing had brought real-time reach and real-time experience to the marketers and customers. Social media platforms had been used as new promotional tools because of its appeal to celebrities, user's experience and the use of influencer marketing. Although there is enough literature available of growing interest among scholars with respect impulse buying behavior of customers; still there is a gap which could explain the relation of social media with impulse purchase intention. Thus, the study examined the effect of social media influencers on consumer impulse buying behavior in MTN in Lagos metropolis. Survey research design was used while sample of 263 customers of MTN in selected areas of Lagos metropolis were considered. Questionnaire was adopted as tool of data collection, while data was analyzed using regression analysis where SPSS 20.0 was used to process the data. The study revealed that all the social media influencer variables of source credibility, source attractiveness and source product match up significantly affected impulse buying behaviour in Lagos metropolis. The study recommends that MTN should grasp insights of impacts and effects of influencer towards brand purchase decision of consumers in order to establish marketing strategies that fits consuming tendency as well as exploit effectively influencer marketing.

Keywords: social media influencer, impulse buying behavior, source credibility, source attractiveness

Introduction

Impulse buying is an unprepared choice to purchase a product or service. Since the past few years, the significance of impulsive buying behavior has become clear. According to the previous researches in both the professional and academic fields,

impulse buying represents about 40 to 80 percent of entire purchases made by the customers . It also depends on the type of product. Impulse buying has provoked the interests of organizations and researchers to understand the psychological strengths behind this behavior. Moreover, it also attracts the researchers to understand the impulse temptations which supports in boosting sales of the company (Aragoncillo & Orus, 2018).

The life has become revolutionized due to communication technology; it has introduced many latest innovations such as social networking websites. However, people use these platforms primarily for social networking, but they also discuss and share their ideas and experiences regarding a product or service on these social media platforms. Furthermore, online product or service purchasing and searching have become a common practice across the world. Now, product promotion is not restricted to traditional ways of advertisement, for instance main stream print and electronic media. Now social media platforms have become reliable and rewarding sources of sales promotions for the organizations (Rehman, Saif, Khan, Nawaz, & Rehman, 2014).

Based on the tenets of influencer marketing, companies generally invite social media influencers such as bloggers with thousands of followers in their social media accounts as their brand ambassador (Tapinfluence, 2017). Messages proclaimed by social media influencers are often perceived as more reliable and compelling to consumers, and have been substantiated by 82% of followers' polls, in which consumers are reported to be more likely to follow their favorite influences' recommendations (Talaverna, 2015). Compared to celebrity endorsement promotion strategy, the use of social media influencers are regarded as more credible, trustworthy and knowledgeable due to their amiability in building rapport with consumers especially for businesses that target the younger generations (Berger, 2016). Sharma, Mishra and Arora (2018) further added that social interactions among people are the base of online social networks where people build social relationship to share their common interest.

Although there is enough literature available of growing interest among scholars with respect impulse buying behavior of customers some of these studies are ; still there is a gap which could explain the relation of social media with impulse purchase intention. Moreover, social media influencers are perceived as more sincere in delivering and demonstrating the endorsed product to their followers (Tapinfluece 2017). However, Lim, Radzol, Cheah and Wong (2017) provides a comprehensive understanding towards measuring social media influencers' effectiveness by using four constructs which are: source credibility which is widely used to analyze the effectiveness of endorsement. Information presented by a credible source, such as social media influencers can affect consumers' beliefs, opinions, attitudes and behaviours.

In the same vein, source attractiveness which shows physical attractiveness of social media influencers is perceived to have a high tendency in driving the acceptance rate of advertising. This focuses on an endorser's physical attributes or characteristics. Thus, source attractiveness directly influences the effectiveness of an endorsement. An

attractive social media influencer is able to affect consumers with positive outcomes. In addition, product match-up which explains the congruency between an endorser and the product is vital to achieve excellent results. The match-up hypothesis explores the fit between an endorser and the brand. Establishing an appropriate fit between an endorser and the brand may serve as a successful marketing strategy which means that a significant match-up relation often arises with emergence of a strong association between an endorser with the product. In other words, social media influencers as the spokesperson for a brand must exhibit an appropriate match with the product features. An ideal match-up will result in positive attitude towards the endorsed brand. Lim, Radzol, Cheah and Wong, (2017) stressed that a match-up between an endorser and the brand is the most fundamental goal in achieving consumers' purchase intention. Thus, a perfect match between social media influencers and the product will significantly strengthen the advertising results. Therefore, identifying the effectiveness of social media influencer components, such as source credibility and source attractiveness on impulse buying could potentially offer valuable insights to marketing practitioners, where they can develop promotional strategies to shape positive and impactful customers' decision-making towards their product and services.

However, Xin, Aifa, JunHwa and Mun (2018) explained that there were arguments among scholars whether social media influencers really influence customer behavior toward purchasing the particular product. Meanwhile, the studies of Lim, Radzol, Cheah and Wong (2017), Hermanda, Sumarwan and Tinaprilla (2019), Johansen and Guldvik (2017) show negative and insignificant influence both social media influencer towards the purchase intention. In contrary, the studies of Nam and Dan (2018), Godey (2016), Hassan and Jamil (2014), Hariyanti and Wirapraja (2018) specified that consumers tend to trust in influencers strongly which influence consumer's purchasing intention. Thus, the mixed results from the previous studies motivate this study which tends to examine the effect of social media influencers on the customer impulse buying behaviour with specific reference to MTN.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

This section provides a review of previous studies on the study variables and brief discussion on the theory underpinning the model of this study. The section begin with conceptualization of variables of the study, this is followed by review of previous related empirical studies. Afterwards, the underpinning theory was explained and the section was concluded with the model of the study.

Concept of Impulse Buying

The term impulse buying has been important to economics, consumer behavior, clinical and development psychology, educational researches and criminology in theory and implication con, and this term has identified differently from each other perspectives. Many shoppers' purchases are unplanned, sudden, initiated on the spot, associated with a strong desire, feelings of pleasure, and excitement. Impulse buying is an unprepared choice to purchase a product or service .

Concept of Social media influencer

According to Dizon (2015), there are four categories of social media influencers, and they are celebrity influencer, micro-celebrity, industry expert, bloggers and content creators. Solomon (2013) opined that companies adopt celebrity influencers in four different ways such as promoting a product or services; product endorsement; acting strategies such that the influencer will be asked to perform a role with respect to a product and the last category of social media influencer entails influencing the purchase of a consumer by acting as a spokesperson for the brand. Social Media Influencers are also known as (SMIs), they are self-governing third-party endorsers, who through posts on Instagram, or other social media platforms, convey their message, knowledge and ideas to influence the communal attitude regarding brands, products and relevant related cases or topics (Dizon, 2015).

However, Kotler and Keller (2009) argues that an influencer is an active individual that has a reasonable influence on their network and surroundings because of their intellectual capacity. Subsequently, Wong (2014) describes social media influencers as influential people who have been perceived to be an expert in a chosen field, and as such, they attract many followers. A social media influencer influences a follower's behaviour and attitudes through content creation, podcasts, pictures, videos etc.

More so, Nandagiri and Philip (2018) revealed that brand endorsement by a social media influencer has a positive influence on their followers. Furthermore, the ability of the social media influencer to convey a brand message meaningfully to their consumer goes a long way in influencing consumer buying behaviour and purchase intention. Irrespective of the fact that consumer purchase decisions can be affected by their personality, their creativity and the ability to convey brand messages is also another vital determinant (Peetz, Parks & Spencer, 2004)

Review of empirical studies

Nam and Dan (2018) sketched the literature of social media Influencer marketing and conducted a survey in Ho Chi Minh City. The authors find that consumers tend to trust in influencers strongly and the consumer's purchasing intention is significantly impacted by four factors including the trust of influencer, the quality of content, the relevance between influencer and product, the involvement of consumer. Kwak (2015) used three factors such as the number of followers, the rank of the Instagram, and the number of re-tweets to measure the influence of the social media influencers on Twitter and it was discovered that the rank of the web-page is the most significant influencing factor on social media.

studied the impact of personality on impulse buying behavior. Personality was measured using five personality traits, of Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. The findings study disclosed a significant effect of Openness, Extraversion, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism while agreeableness was not significant in predicting impulse buying behavior. The study of Cha (2016) using three factors such as the number of followers, the number of mentions, and the number of retweets to measure the influence of the social media influencers. The study

revealed that the number of followers is the most significant influencing factor on social media.

examined the effect of social media on impulse purchasing behavior of customers. The study employed explanatory and descriptive methods, the result of the regression analysis revealed that Social Media has significant direct effect on impulse buying among customers. Lim, Radzol, Cheah and Wong (2017) investigated the effectiveness of social media influencers, focusing on source credibility, source attractiveness, product match-up, and meaning transfer. Consumer attitude is proposed to mediate between both the exogenous and endogenous relationships. All hypotheses are found to be supported except for source credibility. Mediating effects of consumer attitude are also determined.

Hermananda, Sumarwan and Tinaprilla (2019) examined social media influencers influence on the brand image, self-concept and the purchase intention of cosmetic consumers. The social media influencers became the third party which provided information about cosmetic products to the social media audience. The research resulted in the significant negative influence of both social media influencer and self concept towards the purchase intention, in contrast with the brand image which had a significant positive effect. The findings of Nandagiri and Philip (2018) revealed that brand endorsement by a social media influencer has a positive influence on their followers. Furthermore, the ability of the social media influencer to convey a brand message meaningfully to their consumer goes a long way in influencing consumer buying behaviour and purchase intention. Irrespective of the fact that consumer purchase decisions can be affected by their personality, their creativity and the ability to convey brand messages is also another vital determinant (Peetz, Parks & Spencer, 2004). In the study of the effect of social media influencers on intention to buy, utilized source credibility, source attractiveness product match up and meaning transfer dimensions and employed attitude of the consumers as an intervening variable. The findings revealed that all the dimensions captured in the study except for source credibility were significant in predicting purchase intention. investigated and analyze the effect of micro-influencer marketing and brand image concurrently and to purchase intention cosmetics Focallure in Karawang. In the result of the study, it can be seen that partial, influencer marketing micro variables significantly affects the purchase intention while the brand image variable significantly affects the purchase intention.

Godey (2016) stated that the marketing practice through social media influencers would result in a positive connection with the brand image, as the information shared through the social media were more effective in affecting the behaviors and purchase intention of consumers. Labrecque, Esche, Mathwick, Novak, Hofacker (2013) result of the research stated that social media users indirectly viewed social media influencers as role models in terms of lifestyle, as consumers could view similarities between them and the influencers through the social media Thus, a consumer obtained a self-concept of satisfaction when using the same product as their idols, while the self-concept of perception was reflected through the consumer's behavior. Johansen and Guldvik

(2017) stated that there were no significant relationships between the influencers towards the purchase intention, but there would be an indirect influence through the attitudes toward behavioral variables. Hassan and Jamil (2014) suggested that influencers could not attract consumers directly to commence purchases, but after watching good reviews from influencers, consumers would relate their perceptions with their own on the brand image, encouraging consumers to purchase the products. The second result showed that there was a significant positive relationship between social media influencers and the brand image.

Meanwhile, Hariyanti and Wirapraja (2018) specified that social media influencers could increase the sales significantly and display a good brand image for consumers. In other words, they acted as intermediaries between companies and consumers in order to convey the product information to the consumers well.

According to Anggraeni and Asnawati (2017), a brand image could be implemented as an intervening variable between the endorsement and purchase intention because of the significant positive relationship between the brand image and consumers' purchase intention. Another research by Vien, Yun and Fai (2017) stated that the brand image was one of the factors of brand attitude with a significant positive relationship to the purchase intention. In accordance with Octaviani and Kartasasmita (2017), the self-concept did not significantly influence a consumption behavior. Another research by Gumulya and Widiastuti (2013) stated that the self-concept only represented the 0.6% of the consumers' behaviors. Moreover, Khan (2016) stated that consumers did not only match products with the self-concept in determining a purchase, but also matched products with the perception of brand image before having the purchase intention. Based on the review of empirical studies, we have hypothesized as follow:

Source credibility has no significant effect on impulse buying behavior of MTN in Lagos metropolis.

H₀₂: Source attractiveness has no significant effect on impulse buying behavior loyalty of MTN in Lagos metropolis.

H₀₃: Source product match up has no significant effect on impulse buying behavior of MTN in Lagos metropolis.

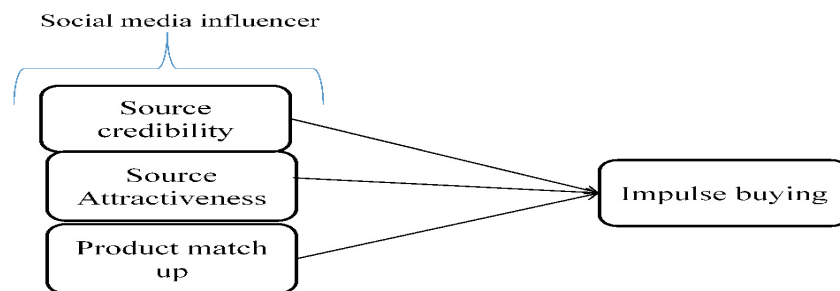
Theoretical framework – Social learning theory

Social learning theory by Bandura (1963) has been widely applied in academic research, particularly in communication and advertising fields (Bush 2004). It acts as a theoretical framework to provide ideas of socialization agents that can predict consumption behaviors (Martin & Bush 2000). Social learning theory justifies that an individual derives motivation and consequently exhibits favorable attitude from socialization agents via either direct or indirect social interaction (Subramanian & Subramanian 1995). Meanwhile, Makgosa (2010) revealed that social learning theory can convincingly explain the impact of celebrities on consumption behaviours. Aligned with Makgosa's assertion, social learning theory is proposed as a contextual

foundation in understanding social media influencers as they represent a novel type of independent third-party endorser (somehow similar to celebrity endorsement), who can shape audience attitudes and decision-making through the use of social media. Thus, social learning theory posits that an individual's intention to purchase products is highly influenced by the respondents' attitude and effectiveness of social media influencers (i.e., source credibility, source attractiveness, product match-up and meaning transfer) in promoting the products.

This theory was considered appropriate to underpin the model because in SLT, a learning process can be classified into observational learning and reinforcement learning. Observational learning indicates that an individual learns how to perform a specific act via observing other people's behaviors and imitate their behaviors. The social features of adverts on Facebook and other social media become the sources of observational learning for users to learn and imitate other consumers' viewing and post-viewing behaviors and this can consequently trigger consumers' intent to buy the product.

2.5 Research model



Adapted from Makgosa (2010)

Figure1: research model (

The model in figure 1 above depict the direct relationship between the proxies of the independent variables, source credibility, source attractiveness and product match up and the dependent variable, impulse buying. We expect positive relationship between the proxies of the social media influencer and impulse buying,

Methodology

This involves the procedure the researcher used to carry out a research work. It includes research design, population of the study, sample size, method of data collection among others. The study utilized cross-sectional research design with the main objective of acquiring the knowledge to the subject matter and it involves a largely quantitative approach and hypotheses were statistically tested. The population of this study comprises of the customers of MTN service in Lagos metropolis which are infinite in nature. Panichpathom (2016) specified that when the numbers of customers cannot be ascertain for patronizing/ used a particular products/ services at a specific point in time, they can be refers to as infinite. Since the sample size is infinite, the study would adopt Godden (2004) formular for infinite population.

The formular state thus:

$$n = Z^2 X (P) X (1-P) / C^2$$

Where: n = sample size

Z = z value for level of significance

P= Percentage of population being picked

C= Confidence interval level

$$n = (1.96)^2 X (0.5) (1-0.5) / (0.05)^2$$

$$n = 3.8416 X 0.5 X 0.5 / 0.0025$$

$$n = 77104 / 0.0025$$

$$n = 238.41$$

The study added 30% of the sample size to cater for possible unreturned/invalid questionnaires.

Thus, sample of 309 customers (238 + 30% of 238) was randomly selected from the 5 (five) major dealers in Lagos metropolis. Meanwhile, the researcher adopted stratified Sampling Technique for the study. Stratified Sampling Technique is a probability sampling technique wherein the researcher divides sample into different sub groups or strata, then randomly selects the final subjects proportionally from different strata location selected. More so, the questionnaire that will be used in this study will be adapted from the study of Lim, Radzol, Cheah & Wong, (2017) where constructs of source credibility, source attractiveness and source product match up were specified and impulse buying (five items) from Verhagen and van Dolen (2011) was adapted. In this sense, the quantitative data collected from respondents through questionnaire will be analyzed and presented using regression analysis while the data was processed by statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20.0 through which the formulated hypotheses were tested. Regression analysis will be adopted because the technique gives a precise and level of the impact of independent variable (s) on dependent variable. Thus, the tool is more appropriate because the study seek to examine the impact of social media influencers on impulse buying behaviour.

Results and Discussion

In this study, a total of 309 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 263 were returned duly completed. The data were screened for missing values and outliers, normality and homoscedasticity test was conducted. The missing values noted were replaced using serial mean.

Model summary

This section explains the overall effect of variables and show whether the model used in the study was fitted for use in the study.

Table 1: Model summary of the study

Model	R	R ²	Adj R ²	F	Sig
	0.592	0.353	0.337	4.139	0.009

Source: SPSS 20.0 Regression result

In table 4.1, R explains the collective relationship between the dependent and all the independent variables. This is explained up to 0.592 which is 59.2%, showing that social media influencer variables adopted by the study are positively related to impulse buying behaviour on average.

In the same vein, the co-efficient of determinations (R^2) reveals a value of 0.353 (35.3%), indicating that all social media influencers variables of source credibility, source attractiveness and source product match up which are independent variables adopted by the study affected up to 35.3% of the variation in impulse buying behaviour of MTN in Lagos metropolis while the remaining 64.7% can be attributed to other social media influencers factors that can affect impulse buying behaviour which are beyond the scope of this study.

In addition, the summary of the model shows that the model is fit and all independent variables have been carefully selected as this is confirmed by F-statistics of 4.136 which is significant because the p-value is 0.009 which is less than 5% level of significance.

Test of Hypotheses

This section presents and analyses the result obtained from regression result for testing the formulated hypotheses. The table below depicts the summary of the regression result.

Table 4.2: Summary of Regression result

Variables	Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant			
	4.353	5.756	0
SC	0.15	0.1	0.021
SA	0.272	1.906	0.002
PM	0.197	0.635	0.028

Source: SPSS 20.0

From the analysis in table 4.2 above, the result of hypothesis one shows that the null hypothesis which states that 'Source credibility has no significant effect on impulse buying behaviour of MTN was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis is due to the fact that p-value which is 0.021 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. In testing the second null hypothesis which states that which states that "Source attractiveness has no significant effect on impulse buying behaviour of MTN was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis is due to the fact that p-value which is 0.017 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. In testing the third null hypothesis which states that which states that "Source product match up has no significant effect on impulse buying behaviour of MTN was rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis is due to the fact that p-value which is 0.002 is less than the 0.05 level of significance.

Discussion of Research Findings

Data collected from primary source was presented, analyzed, and interpreted to

give meaning to the research and the following findings were made: In the first instance, it was discovered that social influencers credibility has significant effect on impulse buying behaviour of MTN in Lagos metropolis. This can be attributed to the fact that customers always tend to support their influencers which has a huge impact towards their buying decisions. This means that information presented by a credible source such as social media influencers can affect consumers' beliefs, opinions, attitudes and behaviours. Additionally, influencers who have been viewed as experts tend to be more persuasive and capable of driving consumer purchase intention and loyalty. Thus, endorser who is perceived as highly trustworthy and expertise would lead to consumers' indifference towards the advertising message, resulting in higher acceptance of the delivered message. Relatively, social media influencers who are held with high expertise and trustworthiness are viewed as being more influential on their followers' behaviours and loyalty.

In the same vein, it was discovered that social influencers attractiveness has significant effect on impulse buying behaviour of MTN in Lagos metropolis. This can be attributed to the fact that the physical attractiveness of social media influencers is perceived to have a high tendency in driving the acceptance rate of advertising. Thus, an attractive social media influencer is able to affect consumers with positive outcomes. Also, endorsers with attractive features can exert a positive attitude on consumers subsequently with a purchasing intention and social media influencers with amazing appearance are more inclined to capture followers' attention toward patronizing and be loyal to a product. In addition, the study revealed that social influencer product match up has significant effect on impulse buying behaviour of MTN in Lagos metropolis. This can be attributed to the fact that the factor of relationship between influencer and product has a remarkable effect on consumer intention to brands. The reason for that implication is that selecting a relevant influencer that fits brands, products and services has core significance towards affecting consumer trust and their purchase intention. Meanwhile, congruency between an endorser and the product is vital to achieve excellent results. The match-up hypothesis explores the fit between an endorser and the brand which emphasized on establishing an appropriate fit between an endorser and the brand may serve as a successful marketing strategy. A significant match-up relation often arises with emergence of a strong association between an endorser with the product. In other words, social media influencers as the spokesperson for a brand must exhibit an appropriate match with the product features. Thus, a perfect match between social media influencers and the product will significantly strengthen the advertising results of loyalty to the product.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study represents an effort to provide an integrative view of impulse buying behavior by examining the multi- dimension factors of social media influencer on impulse buying behavior of MTN customers. The foremost contribution of this study to academia is integrative view of the factors such as source attractiveness, source credibility and product match up that influence the impulse buying behavior of MTN customers. Based on the finding, the study conclude that there are significant positive

effect of influencer credibility, influencers attractiveness and influencers product match up on impulse buying behavior of MTN customers in Lagos metropolis. In the first place, the study suggest that MTN should grasp insights of impacts and effects of influencers towards purchase decision of consumers in order to establish marketing strategies that fits consuming tendency as well as exploit effectively influencer marketing. Also, the company should continue to promote influencer marketing capable to reach many customers, so as to help save more advertising and promotion costs than traditional marketing activities a, consequently maximize company's resources. In addition, the company should know the way they can create value when setting up a marketing strategy that includes influencers by planning their collaborations more strategically to remain authenticity and credibility in their encounter with customers

Limitations and Suggestions for further studies

Limitation of the study regards to sample size and composition of data that had been collected. The data collection is restricted and the sample size of 263 numbers of participants is relatively small in representing an infinite population of MTN customers. Therefore, the result obtained from this study might not reflect the entire population of MTN customers. Future research should consider larger sample sizes that extract from the whole state or country. Also, the study is cross sectional which constitute another limitation of the study, future research can be done via a longitudinal study, spread over a couple of years. Such study will possibly be affected by the continuous development of technology and social media platforms and communication. Another interesting aspect for a future research can be to look upon the different levels of social media involvement of the consumers, as different levels might affect differently the purchase intent.

Future research can consider administering a fictitious brand or social media influencers to eliminate the potential bias that could influence the respondents' questionnaire answers. Similarly, intention to purchase can be introduced as a mediator in the relationship between social media influencer and impulse buying behavior.

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