

## Online Advertising and Customer Purchase Intention for Smart Phones in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State

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**Abstract:** The study examined the effect of online advertising on customers purchase intention for smart phones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State. A cross sectional survey research design method was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of 325 customers of smart phones dealers in Yenagoa Bayelsa State. A total number of 179 respondents were selected as the sample size for the study. The sampling technique employed in this study was the stratified sampling technique. The study used questionnaire as an instrument to collect data. To establish the reliability of the instrument, a test-retest method was employed. In this study, the statistical technique that was used is descriptive statistics and Spearman rank correlation analysis. Findings showed that social media ( $r = 0.261$ ), e-mail marketing ( $r = 0.499$ ) and electronic word of mouth ( $r = 0.538$ ) had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention. The study concluded that online advertising had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention for smart phones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State. The study recommended that smartphones operators should actively respond to comments, messages, and mentions on social media platforms. Engaging with audience shows that they value their input and can build brand loyalty.

**Keywords:** Online Advertising, Customer Purchase Intention, Social Media, Email Marketing, Electronic Word of Mouth.

### INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital era, the Smartphone industry stands as a remarkable testament to the rapid evolution of technology and the pivotal role of consumer electronics in modern life. With smartphones becoming indispensable tools for communication, productivity, entertainment, and much more, the market has grown exponentially, and competition among manufacturers and retailers has intensified. In this landscape, the effectiveness of marketing strategies, particularly online advertising, has taken center stage in shaping consumers' purchase intentions. The advent of the internet and the proliferation of digital platforms have transformed the way businesses engage with their target audiences. Online advertising offers the opportunity to reach users through multiple digital platforms, promote product awareness, and potentially boost future sales (Dhore & Godbole, 2019). In addition, the flexibility of online advertising enables companies to easily modify their offerings, services, and data (Afzal & Khan, 2015). Online advertising, encompassing a diverse range of digital marketing tactics, has emerged as a powerful tool to reach and influence consumers. Smartphone manufacturers and retailers have eagerly embraced these digital channels to promote their products and engage with potential buyers.

The increasing demand for understanding and insights into consumers' online purchasing behaviour has emerged as a result of the significant transformation in electronic commerce,

also referred to as e-commerce (Bhakar, *et al*, 2019). In contemporary times, there is a growing emphasis on the dynamic nature of customer relationship management within organizations, as well as the need to determine the most suitable marketing approach for engaging with customers (Ahmad, *et al*, 2022; Guarin, A. Y. L. 2021). In contemporary times, the internet serves a dual purpose, functioning not only as a medium for accessing information but also as a virtual marketplace facilitating the exchange of goods and services between buyers and sellers (Danish, *et al*, 2016). In order to thrive in the increasingly diverse market landscape, organizations must embrace various internet-based marketing technologies as a means to attract and engage their customer base.

The customer's preference level is subject to continual change as a result of the increasing influence of technology on their lifestyle (Islam & Rahman, 2017). As a seller, it is imperative to recognize the significance of technology in the functioning, marketing, and sales divisions (Gul, *et al*, 2022). Therefore, in the contemporary digital age, the phenomenon of online shopping has emerged as an intriguing factor for managers and entrepreneurs seeking to enhance their market share and consumer happiness within a competitive market, as well as ensuring the long-term viability of their respective companies (Nwokah & Ngirika, 2017). Several investigations have also demonstrated that possessing accurate knowledge about customer preference data is

crucial for establishing a direct and enduring interaction with customers. Therefore, a considerable number of multinational corporations and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) focused their efforts on developing online advertising strategies with the aim of attracting a large consumer base within a limited timeframe (Mehmood & Sabeeh, 2018).

According to Rabeea, Aslam, Azeem, Sobia, Afzal, and Luqman (2019), a significant number of customers engage in online product research prior to making a purchase. This behaviour is not limited to seeking out things for purchase, but also includes a desire to acquire relevant information about the specific products. Regrettably, a significant disparity exists between the appearance of things offered on social media and their actual presentation. The proliferation of fraudulent advertisements on social media platforms has a detrimental impact on the corporate image and reputation. Moreover, the impact on customer confidence is negative, leading to a significant level of discontent among consumers with respect to online purchasing and deceptive advertising practises (Ismail & Alawamleh, 2017). The prevalence of online shopping and the subsequent provision of personal information on websites have contributed to the escalation of cybercrimes. The present-day customers are increasingly adopting e-commerce as their preferred mode of conducting transactions due to the pervasive impact of technology on their daily activities (Danish *et al.*, 2016, Kim *et al.* 2017) there is need for retailers to channel their effort into the digital market environment. The study therefore, aims to examine the effect online advertising on customer purchase intention for smart phones, with a particular focus on the mediating role of sustainable brand knowledge.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The relationship between online advertising and consumers' purchase intentions is a critical area of study, not only for the Smartphone industry but also for marketers and advertisers across various sectors. Understanding how online advertising impacts the likelihood of consumers choosing one Smartphone over another is not only relevant but also timely, given the ever-evolving nature of the digital landscape. This study aims to delve into the multifaceted dynamics of online advertising and its effect on customers' purchase intentions for smart phones. It seeks to explore the nuances of this relationship, examining not only the overarching

impact but also the specific factors and mechanisms that mediate or moderate this influence. By doing so, this research endeavors to shed light on how businesses can craft more effective and persuasive online advertising strategies, ultimately enhancing their ability to connect with consumers and drive sales in a competitive and technologically-driven market.

## Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to examine the effect of online advertising on customers purchase intention for smart phones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State. The specific objectives are to:

- i. determine the effects of social media on customers purchase intention for smart phones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State.
- ii. ascertain the effects of e-mail marketing on customers purchase intention for smart phones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State
- iii. evaluate the effects of electronic word of mouth on customers purchase intention for smart phones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State

## Research Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Social media has no significant relationship with customers purchase intention for smart phones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** E-mail marketing has no significant relationship with customers purchase intention for smart phones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Electronic word of mouth has no significant relationship with customers purchase intention for smart phones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Online Advertising

Online advertisement, also known as online advertising or digital advertising, refers to the practice of promoting products, services, or messages to a target audience through digital channels and platforms on the internet. This form of advertising leverages various online mediums, including websites, search engines, social media platforms, email, display ads, and video ads, to reach potential customers or viewers. Online advertising is a promotional strategy that aims to persuade customers to make purchasing decisions and disseminate information to the target audience. According to Mishra and Mahalik (2017), the acceptance of information is facilitated when it is presented in a positive context. Online advertising marketing is a marketing approach that leverages the Internet to generate website traffic and disseminate promotional messages to the appropriate target audience (Budiman, 2021). In

light of the diverse range of products and services available, coupled with the increasing desires and demands of consumers, manufacturers are compelled to seek expeditious and efficacious means of securing customer loyalty (Aqsa & Kartini, 2015). The efficacy of online advertising in influencing purchasing decisions, including those of users, is a widely acknowledged phenomenon. This is particularly evident in the favorable disposition of users towards online advertising. According to Al-Azzam and Al-Mizeed (2021), the Internet has gained recognition as a platform for advertising due to its ability to facilitate continuous interaction between advertisers and users, which is available round the clock.

The realm of online advertising encompasses various forms, including online display advertising that comprises banners, plain text, media-rich content, and video ads (Goldfarb, 2014). Paid search advertising, on the other hand, pertains to online advertising that appears alongside organic results on search engines like Google. Offline advertising, in contrast, refers to non-Internet-based advertising, which encompasses television, radio, and print ads. Both display and paid search advertising possess several fundamental similarities. These similarities include the capacity to convey brand information, similar to offline advertising. Additionally, both forms of advertising incorporate a direct response component, which elicits an immediate reaction from the consumer. Furthermore, individual targeting is a shared characteristic, allowing firms to approach consumers at the optimal stage of the purchase decision and guide them towards online purchases. This, in turn, enhances consumers' responsiveness to such advertising (Guarin, A.Y.L. 2021). According to Goldfarb (2014), online advertising, also known as Internet-based advertising, is a type of dynamic communication that is facilitated by technology and allows for two-way interaction. In general, online advertising is characterized by superior targeting and tracking capabilities, whereas offline advertising is known to be more effective in terms of brand building, as it allows for greater control over placement context.

According to Khan and Islam (2017), one of the primary benefits of online advertising is the ability to promote products without being limited by geographical boundaries. Online advertising is an integral component of digital marketing. This marketing strategy is commonly referred to as

online advertising, whereby companies disseminate promotional messages regarding their goods or services. One of the primary benefits of display advertising is its capacity to effectively reach and engage with specific consumer segments through the utilization of behavioral targeting technologies. In contrast to offline advertising, which employs a broad demographic or psychographic approach to target consumers, display advertising leverages individual-level behavioral data to achieve its targeting objectives. Matz *et al.* (2017) present empirical support for the efficacy of psychological targeting in the realm of online display advertising. Specifically, persuasive appeals tailored to the psychological profiles of sizable cohorts of individuals yielded a 40% increase in clicks and a 50% increase in purchases compared to non-personalized or mismatched counterparts.

Many researchers have worked to elaborate on the direct relationship between online advertisement and customer satisfaction levels. According to Hanif and Asgher (2018), an online advertisement depicts that now, the majority of the advertisements are occurring through the internet by using different platforms, like Email, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Daraz.com, and other advertisement supporting websites. An online advertisement is one of the most significant marketing tools in today's digital world, even though most organizations do not think of capturing the market share without advertisement. In the current era, the style of marketing research is becoming modernized because of the impact of upgraded communication technology on the advertisement factor which adds value to the buyer's choice (Hanif *et al.*, 2018a).

Businesses are extensively using such virtual advertisements to promote versatile products and services. It is hard for an advertiser to maintain the effectiveness of online advertisements to get a positive reaction from consumers (Ahmad & Gul, 2021; Bukhari *et al.*, 2021b). According to Nazli *et al.* (2018), the growth of media and communication networks has altered the business landscape of advertising, so now an online advertisement becomes an essential approach to increase the profit margin of a company (Nazli *et al.*, 2018). Advertising properties, such as the design, quality, duration, or location of an advertisement, can affect the effectiveness of such ads. Such an attractive source of marketing helps a company to maintain its position in the market. E-

commerce promised a “perfect” arrival in the market by introducing product and price comparison websites, the so-called shopping robots (Phillips *et al.*, 2017). Technology is about to achieve what economists could only undertake in the past: “near perfect information. Nunan *et al.* (2018) stated that customer satisfaction is an accumulated attitude based on his or her experiences. There must be a feeling of a customer that can be gauged directly. Customer satisfaction is directly related to a firm’s profitability. Customers may be satisfied by different factors, e.g., product design, product advertisement, etc. There are three obstacles to online shopping namely failure to buy, security, and service fear hindrances. The more and more people have to shop online or indeed provide information to web providers for access to information (Ali *et al.*, 2021; Gul *et al.*, 2021b).

### **The Benefits of Online Advertising: Perceived Personalization and informativeness**

Online advertising, often known as online behavioural advertising (OBA), is the act of monitoring individuals' online behaviour and utilising the gathered data to display personalised advertisements to them (Boerman, Kruikemeier, & Zuiderveen, 2017). The underlying principle of this notion is to see each recipient of a communication as an individual and customise the message according to the recipient's specific qualities (Li & Liu, 2017). Various types of data, including demographic information, interests, online activity, media consumption, and communication content, can be employed to ascertain the content of advertisements and the target audience (Aguirre *et al.*, 2015; De Keyzer *et al.*, 2019).

Hence, online advertising is perceived as being customised according to the specific requirements of customers and exhibits a high degree of personalization. It is important to acknowledge that the term “personalised,” despite appearing to be objective in determining what should be considered personalised, has been legally and regulatory defined. Furthermore, its interpretation can vary as individuals view certain forms of data to be more sensitive (Walrave, Poels, Antheunis, Van den Broeck & van Noort, 2016).

Hence, the perception of personalization, rather than the objective degree of personalization, plays a pivotal role in influencing individuals' perceptions and responses towards online advertising. In the past several years, there has

been an increasing level of attention towards the concept of personalization in the context of internet advertising (Boerman, Kruikemeier, & Zuiderveen, 2017). Research has indicated that the use of personalisation has the potential to enhance the effectiveness of advertisements. This includes benefits such as increased brand engagement, higher click-through rates, positive views towards the advertisement or brand, and an increase in purchase intentions (Boerman *et al.*, 2017; De Keyzer, Dens, & De Pelsmacker, 2022). One aspect that has been examined in relation to personalization is the concept of informativeness. This pertains to the consumers' impression of the advertisement's content as being informative with regards to the product or service being promoted (Lee, Lee, & Yang, 2017). When consumers perceive an advertising communication as being pertinent to their needs and preferences, they are more inclined to perceive it as valuable and beneficial. Considering that online advertisements are customised using consumers' data, such as information obtained from social media (Walrave, Poels, Antheunis, Van den Broeck, & van Noort, 2016), it is expected that these ads will offer consumers the information they are looking for and enable them to efficiently concentrate on their desired content. Consequently, it is anticipated that when consumers encounter online advertising, the degree of personalization in the commercials would positively correlate with the perceived level of informativeness.

The basic objective of advertising to clients is to acquire information pertaining to products or services. Based on Ducoffe's (1996) advertising value model, the component of informativeness was found to significantly influence consumers' opinions regarding the relative value or usefulness of advertising. In a broader context, it is commonly expected by consumers that advertising would possess a higher degree of informational content rather than solely serving as a means of product promotion (Gangadharbatla & Daugherty, 2013). When individuals perceive advertisements as providing timely and appropriate information, or as being informed about products at the moment when they require such information, they tend to regard these advertisements as worthwhile. Previous studies have established a positive correlation between the level of informativeness and consumers' attitudes towards advertisements in various situations, such as mobile marketing (Martins, Costa, Oliveira, Gonçalves & Branco,

2019) and Facebook (Alsamydai&Khasawneh, 2013).

### Consumers Purchase Intention

After evaluating alternatives, purchasing decisions are the next step in the consumer decision-making process. Currently, consumers gain preference between brands, products/services being considered and intend to purchase the brand of choice (Stefan, 2019). Furthermore, Purchase decisions have been influenced by previous stages of the decision-making process, but marketers still have the opportunity to affect consumers who are already at the purchasing stage (Iblasi, Bader, &ALqurini, 2016). At this level, marketers should provide their consumers with their products and ensure that the purchasing process is easy and convenient for consumers (Bui, Nguyen, Nguyen, & Tran, 2021). By using digital technology, digital marketing channels such as email marketing, social media, online advertising, and mobile services can improve the consumer spending experience at the purchase level by making ordering, purchasing, and payment of products easier so as to save customers' time and money (Qazzafi, 2019). While buyers may have gone through all the steps carefully, purchasing decisions often depend on the accessibility of store management influences.

Purchase intention holds an important place because organizations intend to increase sales of a specific brand or product in order to earn a lump sum amount of profit (Abrar, 2020). Purchase intention relies on a number of factors such as customer satisfaction, loyalty and retention. A brand has certain features or advantages that instill intention to purchase in customer. These features include the image of the brand, quality, and knowledge of the product, product involvement and attributes. In purchasing, there is a process of consideration from consumers (Kurniasari&Budiatmo, 2018), there is searching for product or brand information, references and promotion. Purchase decision is a process decision making by consumers in choosing goods or services offered in the market (Ansari, Ansari, Ghori, &Kazi, 2019). Purchase decision is the stage where the buyer has made his choice and make purchases of products, and consume them (Upadana&Pramudana, 2020). There are six stages of purchase decision according to Consumer Decision Making Process theory by Engel *et al.*, (2006): 1. Need recognition, 2. Information search, 3. Evaluation of alternatives, 4. Purchase

decisions, 5. Consume and 6. Post purchase behaviours.

Online purchase intention originated from purchase intention is the readiness of customers to purchase from the internet (Kamalul, Mohan, &Goh, 2018). The intent of the customers plays a pivotal role in adopting technology and eventually summing to actual purchase and online purchase intention is an indicator to reach the goal of actual purchase (Dewi, Mohaidin, &Murshid, 2020). A study conducted by Huang, Guo, Wang, & Yan (2019) based on four empirical studies in China examined the role of online review tactile clues in consumer's purchase intention in absence of direct experience in online shopping revealed that online reviews tactile clues had a favorable and significant effect on purchase intention. If a consumer has a positive attitude towards eWOM information, it has a strong and significant impact on behavioral intention, such as purchase intention (Abedi, Ghorbanzadeh, &Rahehagh, 2020). Another study conducted by Prasad, Garg, and Prasad (2019) articulates there exists a stronger association between eWOM and purchase intention if mediated by a firm's brand reputation.

Purchase intentions mean a customer's plan to buy a good or attain a service, it refers to the desire of customers to buy a product or service from a brand. Customer purchase intentions depend on the level of satisfaction, that the customers expect and receive (Chaffey, 2021). Customer purchase decision will be the most preferred brand, with the two factors in between the purchase intention and purchase decisions (Switala, Reformat, Reformat, &Gamrot, 2018). The five sub decisions to make a purchase intention are brand, dealer, quantity, timing, and payment. Two general factors can intervene in the purchase intention, the first is the attitudes of others. The more intense the other's person negativism and the closer the consumers to the brand, the more they will adjust to purchase decisions. The second factor is unanticipated situational factors that may erupt the purchase intentions (Romaniuk, & Faulkner, 2017).

Purchase intention may arise because the contents of advertising in social media are more attractive (Suprpto, Hartono, &Bendjeroua, 2020). Ads can be displayed in various forms, such as videos or just pictures that are uploaded and given information. The power of visual influence of advertisements displayed on social media can significantly increase consumer purchase intentions. Research from Wang Ampiah, Xu, and

Wangs (2014) also explains that advertising that appears too often on social media will actually inhibit the purchase intention. This is because these advertisements are seen as disrupting consumer pleasure, interrupting surfing activities, even in the frequency that these advertisements are often considered annoying.

Consumers can also feel compelled to buy the advertised product because the advertisements displayed are arranged in such a way by social media applications. Sophisticated algorithms that exist in social media programs enable the application to identify each owner of a social media account based on hobbies, preferences, and activities (Suprpto, *et al* 2020). The increase in purchase intention will make the seller's marketing scope also increase. Consumer purchase intention can be influenced by other things, such as consumer perception (Konuk, 2015). Consumer perception is formed as a result of visual input received by consumers. An example is an advertisement that often appears on social media. Wang *et al.* (2014) describe that advertisements that appear on social media can be the ones that are paid services or indeed social media accounts that intentionally upload product advertising content owned by the account. All forms of advertisements that appear are visual inputs that have different perceptual effects for each consumer but found that many consumers can feel annoyed or bored with these advertisements. However, when the advertisement is displayed in an attractive form, it can lead to purchasing intention. In short, consumer perceptions of advertisements that appear on social media can influence consumer purchase intentions on the advertised product.

### **Brand Knowledge**

Anusha (2019) conducted a study based on brand knowledge and its importance in enhancing the brand image in the customer market. Brand knowledge is a newly introduced term, which refers to the experiences, thoughts, and feelings of a customer regarding the brand and its operating activities. One of the most important objectives of product and brand management is to build a powerful brand and its loyalty factor within a customer market. Strong brand results in greater income streams, both in short term and long term (Gul *et al.*, 2021a). Von Wallpach and Kreuzer (2019) evaluated the two major types of brand knowledge: brand awareness and image. The two dimensions of brand knowledge have been previously examined in marketing research. The

first one is brand awareness and the second one is the brand image. According to them, brand awareness is defined as the strong point of product bulge in memory, i.e., how easy it is for the customer to recall that brand (Bukhari *et al.*, 2021a). Brand recall is the most common way to measure brand awareness. Many brand knowledge and behavioral variables, using one product category like “candy bars,” plays an important role in strengthening a customer’s and company’s relationship.

Brand image creates a strong, favorable, and unique brand reputation in the mind of the customers and other stakeholders (Cheung *et al.*, 2019). The perceived quality, positive attitude, and overall profitability ratio in a company are generated due to enhancing the standard of marketing and sales channels (Cheung *et al.*, 2020). The influence of perceived social media marketing elements on consumer–brand engagement and brand knowledge. Hanif *et al.* (2018b) study on online advertisement and customer satisfaction depicted that brands used different advertisement channels to attract their customer as well as to satisfy their needs and desires. Nowadays, it is impossible to capture market share and satisfy their customer without advertisement. For this purpose, brands used different media for advertisement, and in today’s world, online advertisements through social media and other websites, etc., are very popular to deliver products to their customers (Hanif *et al.*, 2017). Brand knowledge is also a very important factor that mediates the relationship between online advertisement and customer Purchase intention because the individual’s perceptions and feelings about their brand matter a lot in customer satisfaction.

### **Social Media**

Social media marketing is a contemporary trend that has rapidly gained momentum as an effective means of reaching specific consumer demographics with ease and efficiency. Furthermore, social media marketing can be succinctly characterized as the utilization of social media platforms to promote a business and its offerings, as posited by Bansal *et al.* (2014). The marketing approach in question can be categorized as a component of online marketing endeavors that supplement conventional web-based promotional tactics, such as online advertising campaigns and email newsletters (Omar &Atteya, 2020). Consequently, through the implementation of this novel strategy for outreach and marketing,

businesses are creating and improving various avenues for communication and promotion. Nur (2021) asserted that social media marketers are enhancing their understanding and effectiveness by incorporating analytics applications provided by the official social networking website platform. Social media refers to any software platform that facilitates and promotes active participation in dialogues. The social media landscape encompasses various platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube, as noted by Al-Azzam and Al-Mizeed (2021). Currently, social media serves as a medium for marketers to engage in dialogues with their target audience. In addition, it has been observed that contemporary brands are utilizing social media platforms as a means to engage and entice potential consumers (Budiman, 2021).

In contemporary times, social media is frequently perceived as a means of exchanging information, akin to a digital manifestation of marketing's word-of-mouth strategy. In contemporary times, business owners frequently utilize social media as a marketing mechanism to advertise their merchandise. Shahid's (2019) asserted that there exists a positive correlation between the effectiveness of social media marketing and both the quality of content and customer engagement. Customer engagement is positively impacted by the user experience and the frequency of visits. The efficacy of social media employment is contingent upon the methodologies employed in social media marketing.

The utilization of social media has become a fundamental component of the daily routines of numerous individuals worldwide. Ajina (2019) opined that the utilization of digital and social media marketing enables organizations to attain their marketing goals at a comparatively reduced expense. In contemporary times, the prevalence of the Internet and its associated social media platforms has led to the recognition of social media advertising as a crucial factor in the achievement of business success (Gaber, Wright, & Kooli, 2019). The market is saturated with numerous enterprises that cater to identical consumer demographics. In contemporary times, social media serves as a digital platform for companies to engage in marketing activities. It allows for active consumer participation, enabling them to easily access, comment on, share, and obtain information regarding the product or service being offered (Ansari *et al.*, 2019). Kurniasari and Budiarmo (2018) posited that numerous

corporations assert that social media marketing is a valuable, effective, and efficient strategy for promoting a product or brand and increasing consumer preference for the products or services being offered.

### **Email Marketing**

Email marketing refers to the practice of transmitting a promotional message, usually to a collective audience, through electronic mail. Email marketing can be defined as the practice of sending brand messages to potential or existing customers with the aim of promoting a product or service. In a wider context, any email communication directed towards a customer can be classified as email marketing. Email marketing is a promotional strategy that entails the use of electronic mail to disseminate advertisements, request business, or solicit sales or donations. Email marketing refers to the practice of utilizing electronic mail as a means of promoting goods or services, while simultaneously cultivating connections with prospective customers or clients. Electronic direct mail is essentially a digital version of traditional direct mail, which is typically sent through the postal service. In the realm of business communication, the act of sending an email, with the exception of order confirmations and customer inquiries, may be classified as a manifestation of email marketing. Email marketing, when executed optimally, enables enterprises to keep their clientele updated and customize their promotional communications to suit their target demographic. In its most unfavorable manifestation, this type of marketing strategy has the potential to repel customers through the incessant dissemination of bothersome spam emails.

Email is a crucial mode of communication in marketing, enabling businesses to disseminate brand value propositions to their desired target audience. In addition, customers establish a connection between their requirements and the businesses through electronic mail, as stated by Reimers *et al.* (2016). In order to optimize the effectiveness of email marketing, personalized email correspondence is utilized to convey favorable promotional messages. However, comprehending the requirements, timing, and captivating content tailored to the consumer's preferences can potentially foster a favorable disposition towards email advertisements that serve as reminders of challenges faced by professionals (Bokde&Seshan, 2019).

Broadly speaking, email marketing pertains to the transmission of electronic messages via email to a potential or current client. According to Fariborzi and Zahedifard (2012), email marketing is a type of direct marketing that entails the transmission of commercial or fundraising messages to a targeted audience through electronic mail. Typically, an email marketing strategy aims to achieve three primary objectives. The primary objective is to cultivate a strong bond between a commercial entity and its existing or former clientele, with the aim of inspiring customer allegiance. The secondary objective is to procure novel clientele or incentivize existing clientele to engage in a subsequent transaction. The ultimate objective is to enhance brand recognition through the strategic placement of advertisements within emails disseminated by external entities to their respective clientele. The employment of email marketing is comparatively cost-effective in comparison to other available options, however, it yields the most substantial return on investment. According to Taylor's (2020) assertion, email marketing offers a significant advantage in terms of meaningfulness, as it allows brands to tailor messages to individual customers and provide them with relevant content and promotions based on their profiles.

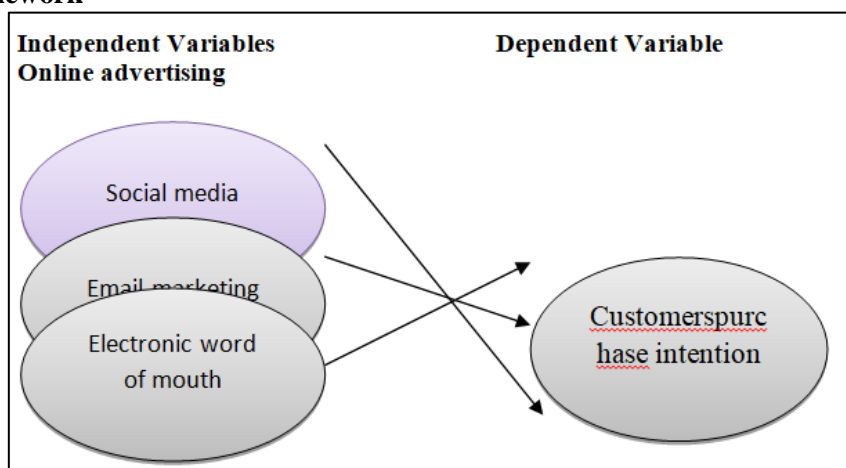
**Electronic Word of Mouth**

The electronic word of mouth Regardless, the commitment of a social network consumer through a like, a comment, a share or a retweet enhances the relationship of the client with the brand. Step by step instructions to expand the opportunity of online publication to produce commitment and collaboration with the brand has been concentrated from the viewpoint of communication plan among different systems. The idea of electronic WOM gets vital. Social systems become centre points in which consumers connect through remarks and

communicating perspectives and emotions that they are eager to share on subjects of intrigue. This has a basic effect in brand image and familiarity/awareness with a brand (Zhang, Sobel&Chowdury, 2009). Apart from the electronic WOM is vital, repeated exposure of online advertising along with media tends to increase brand awareness and ultimately the purchase intent. This effect can be regarded as the Halo effector a media multiplier effect of buying online advertisements. In other words, if web users have been exposed to online adverts, the response to paid search may also increase and hence a more chances of the conversion over the website (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Remarks on social media are turning out to be recycled sources to help the consumer decision-making process since they need the value of their money. Individuals can see reviews about each great, costly product, modest goods, cosmetics, books, vehicles, hotels, and even nail polish. These reviews can inspire buys or bolster purchasers' dynamic by bringing in money more reasonable (Gurbanov&Karaduman, 2020).

A study conducted to measure the effectiveness of campaigns using digital marketing found out that a very small portion of 3% out of the total population studied get the information of the new product releases via newspapers and hence leading to the fact that today, there aren't many who read the printed or the physical newspapers. Whereas 8% receive information through their family or friends. The study concluded that today not many discuss the latest product launches with their friends or even family members and to be precise 72% of the people are connected through digital world and receive information through digital channels that is online advertising, mobile applications, emails etc. (Ghai, &Rahman, 2018).

**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 2.1:** Is an illustration of how the components of online advertising affect customers purchase intention.

*Source: Researcher's Model (2026)*

### **Social media and customers purchase intention**

The utilization of social media marketing has been found to have a direct and favorable influence on the level of brand awareness. According to Kingsnorth (2016), social media marketing is the second most influential factor in terms of enhancing brand awareness, following the mobile channel. It has been demonstrated that social media marketing has a noteworthy and constructive influence on brand awareness, as evidenced by a positive correlation and significant association (Cizmeci&Ercan, 2015). The impact of social media marketing on consumer purchase intention is significant due to the bi-directional communication facilitated between companies and customers. This phenomenon has been found to have a positive effect, as noted by Laksamana (2018). Bhandari and Bansal's (2018) research provides evidence that social media marketing has a noteworthy influence on consumers' purchase intentions. Consumers rely on social media content to inform their purchasing decisions, and subsequently utilize these platforms to disseminate the acquired information to their peers. According to Al Amin, Nowsin, Hossain, and Bala (2020), social media platforms have a noteworthy role in facilitating communication and providing updates to clients regarding the company in the context of Digital Bangladesh. The utilization of social media marketing has the potential to effectively contribute to the enhancement of brand recognition, consumer feedback, and the practice of crowdsourcing. Additionally, marketing initiatives offer a multitude of opportunities for branding purposes (Al-Abdallah, Khair, &Elmarakby, 2021). According to Lăzăroiu, Neguriță, Grecu, Grecu, and Mitran (2020), social media has the potential to identify thought leaders, enhance brand visibility, offer targeted insights, foster customer acquisition, and cultivate trust. According to Al Amin *et al.* (2020), these factors have the potential to increase brand confidence and improve brand perception.

### **E-mail marketing and customers purchase intention**

Email marketing is a marketing strategy that aims to inform customers on an email list about new products, discounts, and other services. Educating the audience on the brand's value proposition or maintaining their engagement in between purchases can be perceived as a less aggressive marketing approach. Email marketing is a digital

marketing strategy that involves the dissemination of targeted messages or orders to a specific audience at an opportune moment. According to Ugonna, Victor, and Jeft (2017), businesses have the ability to send emails that cater to the specific needs of their customers through the use of email communication. Email marketing is a form of direct marketing that employs electronic mail to disseminate promotional messages with the aim of engaging target audiences (Lodhi&Shoaib, 2017). Yang, Min, and Garza-Baker (2018) have demonstrated that email marketing campaigns have a significant impact on organizational performance and are crucially evaluated in domains such as user registration form design, database quality, and industrial sectors. The present study showcases the advantages and effects of email promotion and aims to reaffirm systematic findings that acknowledge the boundless potential of mail marketing and digital advertising utilization.

### **Electronic word of mouth and customers purchase intention**

Another study aimed at comparing the influences of friend's recommendations on social media and anonymous reviews on shopping websites in the context of online purchase intentions. It was observed that eWOM information on the shopping websites in the form of online reviews had a significant impact on the purchase intention when compared to a friend's recommendation over the social media. These eWOM on the company websites are found out to be better in terms of quality as well as the credibility of information, usefulness and adoption of the information. It was hence inferred in this study that anonymous reviews are more influential on the buyer's purchase intentions and ultimately over they purchase decisions (Ismail & Evans, 2016). Marketers consider E-WOM to increase brand popularity and consumer purchase intention (Kala &Chaubey, 2018). Consumers frequently search for information about the product or service they want to purchase through related reviews or comments (Abubakaret *al.*, 2016). Hence, suggestions or comments from other customers on platforms and communities can have an impact on purchase intention (Jalilvand&Samiei, 2012). It is supported by prior research, which discovered that E-WOM had a significant effect on purchase intention (Alrwashdeh, 2019).

### Related Theories

The study was anchored on Diffusion of Innovations theory and Regulatory Focus Theory.

### Diffusion of Innovations Theory

The Diffusion of Innovations theory, developed by Everett Rogers in 1962, explains how new ideas, products, or technologies spread and are adopted by individuals and groups within a society or social system. This theory provides insights into the factors influencing the adoption and diffusion process, including the characteristics of the innovation, the communication channels used, the social system's structure, and the individuals' attributes. The theory identifies five categories of adopters based on their willingness to try new innovations: a. Innovators: The first to adopt new ideas, typically risk-takers and open to change. b. Early Adopters: Follow the innovators and are influential opinion leaders. c. Early Majority: Adopt innovations when they see positive results from early adopters. d. Late Majority: Skeptical of innovations and adopt them only when they become mainstream. e. Laggards: Resistant to change and slow to adopt innovations. Key factors influencing the diffusion of innovations include the perceived attributes of the innovation (relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability), communication channels, social systems, and time

### The Regulatory Focus Theory

The study also used the Regulatory Focus Theory by Higgins, 1997, to better understand and identify buyer's characteristics (For example, personalities, beliefs and motivational states) through their goal orientation. Specifically, this study proposes the idea that regulatory emphasis can be a valuable technique for recognizing buyers' differences. The Regulatory Focus Theory focuses on how individuals pursue goals and make decisions based on two primary regulatory focuses: a. Promotion Focus: Individuals with a promotion focus are motivated by the pursuit of positive outcomes and aspirations. They are more concerned with achieving gains, taking risks, and seeking rewards. b. Prevention Focus: Individuals with a prevention focus are motivated by avoiding negative outcomes and maintaining safety and security. They are more concerned with avoiding losses, being cautious, and following rules. Regulatory focus can influence various aspects of decision-making, including goal setting, risk perception, and the evaluation of options. People can have a dominant regulatory focus, a chronic disposition,

or a situational focus that changes depending on context. The theory has applications in areas like marketing and communication, where understanding a person's regulatory focus can help tailor messages and strategies to be more effective.

### Empirical Studies

Beti, Afifah, Listiana, and Fauzan (2023) investigated the influence of Online Advertising and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on Brand Image. This, in turn, was found to have a significant effect on Purchase Intention for domestic cosmetic items in the Indonesian market. A purposive sample strategy was employed to select 210 respondents, to whom a questionnaire was then sent. Afterwards, the data were subjected to analysis using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with the use of AMOS 26 software. The main outcome of this study revealed that Online Advertising and Electronic Word-of-Mouth (E-WOM) exerted a favourable impact on Brand Image and Purchase Intention. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Brand Image shown a noteworthy and substantial impact on Purchase Intention, while also serving as a significant mediator in the relationship between Online Advertising and Electronic Word-of-Mouth (E-WOM).

Mo, Zhang, Lin, Yuan, and Peng (2023) examined the influence of perceived personalization of internet advertising on consumers' views towards advertising in the context of China. A comprehensive set of 472 questionnaires were distributed and afterwards subjected to analysis employing the methodology of Structural Equation Modelling. The findings indicate that the perception of personalisation has a favourable effect on perceived informativeness, while simultaneously having a negative effect on privacy concerns. However, it was found that the favourable effect was stronger, indicating that perceived customization had a generally good impact. Furthermore, the findings indicated that both effects were mediated by the phenomenon of flow experience. The discussion encompassed the practical and theoretical ramifications of the findings.

Salameh, Ijaz, Omar, and Zia ulHaq (2022) examined the influence of online advertising on consumer satisfaction, with a specific focus on the mediating role of brand knowledge. The survey's sample size is determined by the inclusion of 100 participants from the Multan region. This study gathers data through the implementation of diverse

unstructured interviews. In the present investigation, a qualitative data gathering technique was employed. The findings indicate that the influence of online advertising on customer satisfaction is not statistically significant. However, the inclusion of brand knowledge as a criterion leads to an increase in the link between online advertising and customer happiness. Online advertising has emerged as a novel advertising method that is widely adopted by numerous organisations. This article aims to assist practitioners in making informed decisions on the use of online promotion tools, while also employing a range of recognition strategies to enhance their understanding of brand knowledge. This study has revealed that establishing customer trust in product quality is a very beneficial strategy for business owners, as it promotes customer happiness through the improvement of brand reputation. This study is distinct in that prior research has examined many aspects of brand knowledge as variables, but neglecting to establish a direct correlation between internet advertising and customer happiness. This study emphasises important factors that will assist upcoming researchers in conducting critical analysis of similar elements in subsequent investigations.

Cabigting, Marallag, Mariano, and Grimaldo (2022) investigated the effects of online advertising on brand establishment and purchase intention. The study sample included 389 participants hailing from various locations within the Philippines. The data was analysed and interpreted using a descriptive correlation method. It has been determined that online communities and electronic word-of-mouth have an impact on customers' purchasing intentions and brand loyalty. Furthermore, the findings of the research suggest that online advertising exerts a substantial impact on consumers' buying choices. The study suggests that these elements have a clear impact on customers' purchase intention and brand loyalty, resulting in good outcomes.

Sarki, Abubakar, Bala, and Kasimu (2021) examined the impact of online advertising on consumer purchase intention. The study was directed by three objectives, a research question, and hypotheses. The objective of this study is to ascertain the internet advertising platforms utilised by the Nasco group of enterprises. The objective of this study is to analyse the influence of internet advertising on consumers' purchasing behaviour in relation to the items offered by the Nasco group of enterprises. This study aims to identify the

obstacles that hinder the implementation of internet advertising within the Nasco group of firms. The study employed a structured questionnaire to collect data. The data was analysed using various statistical methods, including simple percentage, t-test, Spearman correlation, and ANOVA. The study revealed that internet advertisement medium has a considerable impact on consumers' purchasing intention. The survey also indicated that the obstacles associated with online advertising include inconsistent network services and suboptimal utilisation of online platforms. In conclusion, the researcher suggests that the company could implement a variety of internet advertising platforms to effectively promote its products, among other strategies.

Anirvinna, Kumar, Saini, and Meena (2021) examined the effects of many relevant variables of online advertisement on the online buying behaviour of young individuals. The primary objective of this study is to utilise modern statistical methods, namely a predictive model, in order to determine the characteristics that contribute to the engagement of young individuals in online shopping within the city of Jaipur, India. Data were collected from a sample of 434 participants using a survey methodology that employed the stratified sampling technique. Once the elements have been identified, a regression model is constructed. The findings of this study indicate that there is a significant lack of association among all the factors examined. The coefficient of determination (R-square) for the model is 17.7%. The findings indicate that the factors influencing the impact do not make a substantial contribution. The statistical significance of the regression model is indicated by the p-value, suggesting that there is evidence to support the notion that at least one element has a substantial impact. The results of this investigation have various practical and managerial implications for electronic companies in different countries. The results of this investigation have many implications for the functional and administrative aspects of electronic organisations. This study contributes to the existing literature on the impact of internet purchasing behaviour among young individuals by differentiating and empirically validating persuasive factors and elements of concern using the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and regression analysis model. A regression model that integrates many components can serve as a robust theoretical framework for forecasting

the behaviour of young individuals during internet purchasing in developing nations such as India.

Emotin and Sulayon (2021) examined the impact of online advertising on the consumer behaviour of smartphone users. The present study utilised a quantitative non-experimental research approach, employing a correlational technique. The survey was carried out at Tagum City, located in the province of Davao del Norte, Philippines. The study included a sample size of 365 participants. The findings of the study indicate that customers consider online advertising to be highly prevalent. In contrast, there is significant scrutiny surrounding consumer purchase behaviour in relation to cellphones. The statistical findings indicated a noteworthy correlation between internet advertising and the purchasing behaviour of smartphone consumers.

Dzenita and Mersid (2021) examined the impact of advertising across various digital marketing platforms on customer purchasing behaviour within the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The primary objective of this study is to ascertain and elucidate if advertising delivered through various digital marketing channels have the capacity to influence individuals' attitudes towards products or services, as well as their purchase behaviour, from the perspective of customers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In order to accomplish this objective, the analysis of data relies on qualitative data obtained from a survey as the primary method of data collecting. A research framework was constructed, drawing upon the existing literature, which incorporates three distinct independent variables: social media marketing, email marketing, and mobile phone marketing. The dependent variable of interest in this model is consumer buying behaviour. The research findings will offer valuable insights into the impact of online advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour.

Udenze and Aduba (2020) conducted a study on online advertising in Nigeria, with a specific focus on analysing the strategies employed in Facebook and Instagram platforms. The objective of this study is to examine the degree to which Nigerian firms are employing social media platforms for the purpose of promoting their products. The theoretical framework employed in this study is the Diffusion of Innovation Theory. A mixed methods approach was utilised to collect data for the investigation. The survey was utilised as a quantitative research tool, whereas semi-structured

interviews were employed as a qualitative research approach. Data was collected from 375 Internet users through the utilisation of online questionnaires. These individuals were chosen as they reflect the customer base for online advertisements. Additionally, qualitative interviews were conducted with 6 business owners who utilise online advertising through social media. The findings of the research indicate that Nigerians utilise social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to a limited amount for advertising purposes, despite the substantial number of consumers who engage with these networks within the country. The research suggests that business owners should alter their perspective towards social media, refraining from viewing it solely as a platform for recreational or social purposes, and instead recognising it as a viable channel for marketing and generating profits. Additionally, the study suggests that Nigerian firms should consider involving media professionals in managing their online activities. This recommendation takes into consideration the significant influence of social media, which has the potential to either enhance or harm the reputation and success of any business or brand. The study suggests that additional resources should be allocated to enhance the effectiveness of the Consumer Protection Council in regulating online advertising practises. This measure will contribute to enhancing the protection of online consumers and significantly mitigating instances of cyber fraud.

Wardhani and Alif (2018) examined the efficacy of advertising exposure on Instagram, a popular social media platform in Indonesia, in relation to users' behavioural attitudes towards the company and their desire to make a purchase. This study employed a quantitative research methodology, utilising a survey approach to collect data from a sample of more than 260 participants. The data collection was carried out by self-administered structured questionnaires. The data were subjected to analysis through the application of structural equation modelling (SEM) utilising LISREL. The criteria that measure ad exposure, namely entertainment and informativeness, have a significant impact on individuals' attitudes towards the advertising. Furthermore, when considering the impact on purchase intention, it is evident that attitude towards the advertisement holds a notable influence in comparison to attitude towards the brand. The scope of this study is limited to Instagram users and the advertising campaign

conducted specifically in Indonesia. Notwithstanding this constraint, the outcomes of the study provide marketers with the opportunity to optimise the efficacy of their advertising campaign in order to achieve the desired return on investment (ROI) by employing emotional appeals, creativity, informative content, and entertaining features to foster a favourable disposition among customers towards the advertising, the brand, and their intention to make a purchase. This study makes a valuable contribution to the existing body of literature on marketing communication, with a specific focus on advertising. It provides researchers with insights into the success of social media advertising, particularly in relation to emotional appeals, creativity, information, and entertainment components

## METHODOLOGY

Research design can be viewed as a detailed blue print used to guide a research study towards its objectives. A cross sectional survey research design method was adopted because it deals mainly with opinions and is widely used in management, or social science research etc due to the complex relationship that exist between variables. It also ensured that the resultant sample sufficiently represent the population. Thus, findings from these are expected to be generalized to the entire population. A survey research is one in which a group of item is studied by collecting and analyzing data from a few people (sample) consisted to be representative of the entire group.

Population of a study is defined with respect to the sampling frame used for the study. In research, the population of any study is the total lists of all elements or objects of a well-defined group being studied. The population of the study consists of 325 customers of smartphones dealers in YenagoaBayelsa State.

The required sample unit of staff to be captured was determined by using Yamane's (1968) sample size determination formula. This states as thus;

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

Where;

$n$  = the required sample size to be captured;

$N$  = the total number of members in the population;

$e$  = the tolerable error margin for the selection of appropriate representative unit of the population.

$$n = \frac{325}{1 + 325 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{325}{1.8125} = 179$$

A total number of 179 respondents were selected from smartphones dealers in YenagoaBayelsa State. Therefore, the sampling technique employed in this study was the stratified sampling, which was drawn as a portion of the population so that each member of the population would have an equal chance of being selected. In other words, in a random sampling all possible samples of fixed size have the same probability of being selected. Stratified random sampling was employed due to the fact that any sample drawn at random is unbiased in the sense that no member of the population has any more chance of being selected than any other member. This is to ensure that all sample elements have equal chances of being selected in order to achieve a corresponding and reliable result that can be generalized. Stratified random sampling helped to represent not only the overall population, but also key subgroups of the population, especially small minority groups.

Data collection usually takes place early on in a research project, and is often formalized through a data collection plan. The study used questionnaire as an instrument to collect data. The questionnaire was designed in two parts. The first part is a classification section. This requires such details of the respondent sex, age, occupation etc. The second part possessed the questions relating to the subject matter of the inquiry. The responses for this second part formed the basis of the data presentation and analysis. This represents purely the primary source of data collection. A five (5) point Likert-scale questionnaire was used for assessment of the opinions of the respondents as provided.

The study employed the likert summated rating scale method ranging from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree to measure the chosen variables in this study. In this study, the first 5 items in the questionnaire are demographic measures. While the remaining 16 questions were characterized by issues of time management practice: organizational survival, goal-oriented plans, scheduling time, prioritizing work task as it relates to organizational survival.

Validity has to do with the strength of the measurement or how much it does what it says it will. Reliability refers to the dependability of something. Reliability refers to the extent to which the data collection techniques or analysis procedures yield consistent findings whereas

validity is concern with the ability of the instrument to measure what it is designed to measure. To validate the instrument for data collection, the questionnaire was given to renowned expert from the Department of Business Administration, Federal University Otueke, Bayelsa State. This helped to establish the content of the instrument. Consequently, adjustments and corrections were effected to ensure that it elicits the desired information.

To establish the reliability of the instrument, a test-retest method was employed. A faulty research instrument can go a long way to nullify the reliability of the research findings. Hence, for this research a pre-test of the questionnaire was done. This pre-test enabled the researcher to detect certain irregularities that could have hampered the validity of this research. The instrument was administered to a group of experts within the interval of two weeks. Since the results from the The general form of the equation to predict CPI =  $\beta_0 + \beta_1SM + \beta_2EM + \beta_3EWOM + \epsilon$

Therefore:

CPI = Customers Purchase Intention

In this study, the statistical technique that was used is descriptive statistics, Spearman rank correlation analysis. Correlation was used to establish the nature of relationship that exists among the

two tests show some similarity, this suggested that the questionnaire was reliable.

Coakes and Steel, (2007) stated that reliability analysis examines the properties of the measurement scales and the items that they consist. The process calculates a number of commonly used measures of scale reliability and also provides relevant information about the relationship between specific items in the scale. To verify the reliability of the research constructs, the internal consistency analysis (Cronbach’s alpha) and item-to-total correlation was applied to identify the internal consistency reliability of the proposed constructs. Measurement of the model reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha (CA) based tests. CA provides an estimate of the indicator inter correlations, an acceptable measure for CA is 0.7 or higher, while bellow 0.7 connotes week reliability (Seckaran, 2003).

SM = Social Media

EM= E-mail Marketing

EWOM = Electronic word of mouth

variables. All analysis was done using the statistical package for social science (SPSS) software version 25.

## DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### Characteristics of the Sample

**Table 4.1:** Response rate

S/N	Response Rate	Frequency/%
1	Copies of questionnaire administered	179
2	Questionnaire returned	171
3	Questionnaire not properly filled	9
4	Questionnaire useable	162
5	Response rate	91%

*Source: Field Survey 2023*

A total of 179 copies of the questionnaire were administered, 171 copies of the questionnaire were returned, 9 copies of the questionnaire were not

properly filled while 162 copies of the questionnaire were useable. The analyses was based on the 91% response rate.

**Table 4.2:** Analysis of Respondents Profile

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender:		
	Male	84	52
	Female	78	48
	Total	162	100
2	Age Range:		
	Below 30 years	52	32
	31-40 years	92	57
	41years and above	18	11
	Total	162	100

3	Marital Status:		
	Single	53	33
	Married	109	67
	Total	162	100
4	Educational Qualification		
	OND/NCE	55	34
	HND/B.Sc	89	55
	Master	18	11
	Total	162	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 4.2 exhibits the background characteristics of the various respondents. It revealed on the gender composition of the respondents representing 52% of the sample were males while 48% were females. The age bracket of the respondents indicated that 32% of the respondents were below 30 years of age; 57% of the respondents' falls within the age bracket of 31-40 years of age, while 11% of the respondents were above 41 years of age and above. The marital composition of the respondents indicated that; 33% of the sample respondents were single, while 67% other respondents were married. On the

educational background of the sample, it was revealed that 34% of the respondents were OND/NCE holders, result showed that 55% of the respondents were HND/B.Sc holders, while 11% of the other respondent were postgraduate degree holders.

**Analysis of Other Research Data**

The analysis of the other research data as well as the testing of the earlier postulated hypotheses in previous chapter was done here for the aim of arriving at a conclusion.

**Table 4.3: Social media**

S/N	Statement	Scale				
		SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1
1.	Consumer behavior has significantly changed due to online promotions and contents	144 (88.9%)	15 (9.3%)	2 (1.2%)	1 (0.6%)	-
2.	Increasing number of online reviews influences consumer behaviour.	106 (65.4%)	52 (32.1%)	3 (1.9%)	1 (0.6%)	-
3.	Consumer attitudes are influenced by consumer perception of digital contents usefulness, and credibility in social networks	112 (69.1%)	41 (25.3%)	9 (5.6%)	-	-
4.	Consumer voices are powerful due to the advancement of social networking sites	124 (76.5%)	31 (19.1%)	7 (4.3%)	-	-

Source: field work, 2023

Table 4.3 indicated the descriptive statistics showing the pattern of sample response, in relation to social media questionnaire statements. A total of 159 respondents agreed to the statement that consumer behavior has significantly changed due to online promotions and contents, while 1 respondent disagreed to the statement. A total of 158 respondents agreed to the statement that increasing number of online reviews influences

consumer behaviour, while 1 respondent disagreed to the statement. To the statement; consumer attitudes are influenced by consumer perception of digital contents usefulness, and credibility in social networks, a total of 153 respondents agreed to the statement. A total of 155 respondents agreed to the statement that consumer voices are powerful due to the advancement of social networking sites.

**Table 4.4:** E-mail marketing

S/N	Statement	Scale				
		SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1
5.	Valuable messages sent by email to a prospective or existing customer influence their purchase decisions	118 (72.8%)	40 (24.7%)	3 (1.9%)	1 (0.6%)	-
6.	Sending commercial messages, typically to a group of people creates brand awareness	99 (61.1%)	62 (38.3%)	1 (0.6%)	-	-
7.	Timely response to customers complaints builds customers trust	127 (78.4%)	31 (19.1%)	4 (2.5%)	-	-
8.	Consumers connects their needs upstream to the businesses via electronic messages	119 (73.5%)	37 (22.8%)	5 (3.1%)	1 (0.6%)	-

*Source: field work, 2023*

The descriptive statistics showing the pattern of sample response in relation to e-mail marketing questionnaire statements as displayed in table 4.4. A total of 158 respondents agreed to the statement that valuable messages sent by email to a prospective or existing customer influence their purchase decisions, while 1 other respondent disagreed to the statement. A total of 161 respondents agreed to the statement that sending

commercial messages, typically to a group of people creates brand awareness. To the statement, timely response to customers' complaints builds customers trust, a total of 158 respondents agreed to the statement. A total of 156 respondents agreed to the statement that consumers connects their needs upstream to the businesses via electronic messages, while 1 other respondent disagreed to the statement.

**Table 4.5:** Electronic word of mouth

S/N	Statement	Scale				
		SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1
9.	I trust online reviews and recommendations from other consumers when making buying decisions.	127 (78.4%)	29 (17.9%)	3 (1.9%)	3 (1.9%)	-
10.	I believe that companies should actively engage with eWOM and respond to customer feedback.	104 (64.2%)	55 (34%)	3 (1.9%)	-	-
11.	I often seek out eWOM before making a decision about a new product or service.	118 (72.8%)	36 (22.2%)	8 (4.9%)	-	-
12.	eWOM has influenced my purchasing decisions in the past.	116 (71.6%)	37 (22.8%)	9 (5.6%)	-	-

*Source: Field survey, 2023*

The descriptive statistics results showing the pattern of sample response in relation to electronic word of mouth questionnaire statements as seen on table 4.5. A total of 156 respondents agreed that they trust online reviews and recommendations from other consumers when making buying

decisions, while 3 other respondents disagreed to the statement. A total of 159 respondents agreed to the statement that they believe that companies should actively engage with eWOM and respond to customer feedback. To the statement: I often seek out eWOM before making a decision about a

new product or service, a total of 154 respondents agreed to the statement. A total of 153 respondents

agreed that eWOM has influenced their purchasing decisions in the past.

**Table 4.6:** Customers purchase intention

S/N	Statement	Scale				
		SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1
13.	Consumer perceptions can influence consumer purchase intentions on the advertised product.	122 (75.3%)	34 (21%)	4 (2.5%)	2 (1.2%)	-
14.	A brand features or advantages instill intention to purchase in customers.	102 (63%)	54 (33.3%)	5 (3.1%)	1 (0.6%)	-
15.	Purchase intention arise because the contents of advertising are more attractive	124 (76.5%)	32 (19.8%)	6 (3.7%)	-	-
16.	Consumer perception is formed as a result of visual input received by consumers.	115 (71%)	39 (24.1%)	8 (4.9%)	-	-

Source: field work, 2023

The descriptive statistics results showing the pattern of sample response, in relation to customers purchase intention questionnaire items as indicated in table 4.6. To the statement, consumer perceptions can influence consumer purchase intentions on the advertised product, a total of 156 respondents agreed to the statement, while 2 other respondents disagreed to the statement. A total of 156 respondents agreed that

to the statement that a brand features or advantages instill intention to purchase in customers, while 1 other respondent disagreed to the statement. A total of 156 respondents agreed to the statement that purchase intention arise because the contents of advertising are more attractive. To the statement, consumer perception is formed as a result of visual input received by consumers, a total of 154 respondents agreed to the statement.

**Table 4.7:** Spearman Correlation between social media and customers purchase intention

Correlations			Social media	Customers purchase intention
Spearman's rho	Social media	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.261**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
		N	162	162
	Customers purchase intention	Correlation Coefficient	.261**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
		N	162	162

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.7 showed that social media had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention (r = 0.261). The significant value of

0.001 (p < 0.01) revealed a significant relationship which indicated that social media is good measure of online advertising.

**Table 4.8:** Spearman Correlation between e-mail marketing and customers purchase intention

Correlations			E-mail marketing	Customers purchase intention
Spearman's rho	E-mail marketing	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.499**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	162	162

	Customers purchase intention	Correlation Coefficient	.499**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	162	162

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.8 showed that e-mail marketing had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention (r = 0.499). The significant

value of 0.000 (p < 0.01) revealed a significant relationship, which implied that e-mail marketing is a good measure of online advertising.

**Table 4.9:** Spearman Correlation between electronic word of mouth and customers purchase intention

Correlations				
			Electronic word of mouth	Customers purchase intention
Spearman's rho	Electronic word of mouth	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.538**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	162	162
	Customers purchase intention	Correlation Coefficient	.538**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	162	162

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.9 showed that electronic word of mouth had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention (r = 0.538). The significant value of 0.000 (p < 0.01) revealed a

significant relationship, which implied that electronic word of mouth is a good measure of online advertising.

**Hypotheses Testing**

The Spearman's rank correlation analysis was adopted as an analytical technique for testing the hypotheses. The p-values reported in the Spearman's correlation tables were used for testing the study hypotheses.

**The Decision Rule**

If the critical value calculated is greater than the probability level of significance, then the null hypotheses will be accepted while the alternate hypotheses will be rejected and vice versa. If the probability value of 0.000 is lesser than the critical value (i.e. 0.000 < 0.01), there is need to conclude that the given parameter is significant. In this case, it is fit to reject the null hypotheses and to accept the alternate. Therefore, the p-value is at 0.01.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Social media has no significant relationship with customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State

Since the p-value critical is at 0.01 greater than the calculated level of significance (0.001 < 0.01) in table 4.7, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate was accepted. This implied that social media had significant positive relationship with

customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State

**H<sub>02</sub>:** E-mail marketing has no significant relationship with customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State.

Table 4.8 indicated that the calculated level of significance is lesser than the p-value i.e. (0.000 < 0.01). Based on this result, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate was accepted implying that e-mail marketing had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Electronic word of mouth has no significant relationship with customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State.

The level of significance that was calculated in table 4.9 is lesser than the established p-value (0.000 < 0.01), therefore the null hypothesis was rejected why the alternate was accepted which states that electronic word of mouth had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

In accordance with the data analysis done in chapter four and the review of the related literature in chapter two, the discussion of findings of the study is presented below.

### **Social Media and Customers Purchase Intention**

Table 4.7 showed that social media had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention ( $r = 0.261$ ). Test of hypothesis one showed that social media had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State ( $0.001 < 0.01$ ). The utilization of social media has become a fundamental component of the daily routines of numerous individuals worldwide. Ajina (2019) opined that the utilization of digital and social media marketing enables organizations to attain their marketing goals at a comparatively reduced expense. In contemporary times, the prevalence of the Internet and its associated social media platforms has led to the recognition of social media advertising as a crucial factor in the achievement of business success (Gaber, *et al.* 2019).

### **E-Mail Marketing and Customers Purchase Intention**

Table 4.8 showed that e-mail marketing had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention ( $r = 0.499$ ). Test of hypothesis two showed that e-mail marketing had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State ( $0.000 < 0.01$ ). According to Fariborzi and Zahedifard (2012), email marketing is a type of direct marketing that entails the transmission of commercial or fundraising messages to a targeted audience through electronic mail. Taylor's (2020) asserted that email marketing offers a significant advantage in terms of meaningfulness, as it allows brands to tailor messages to individual customers and provide them with relevant content and promotions based on their profiles.

### **Electronic Word of Mouth and Customers Purchase Intention**

Table 4.9 showed that electronic word of mouth had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention ( $r = 0.538$ ). Test of hypothesis three showed that electronic word of mouth had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State ( $0.000 < 0.01$ ). It was hence inferred in this study that anonymous reviews are more influential on the buyer's

purchase intentions and ultimately over their purchase decisions (Ismail & Evans, 2016). Consumers frequently search for information about the product or service they want to purchase through related reviews or comments (Abubakaret *al.*, 2016). Hence, suggestions or comments from other customers on platforms and communities can have an impact on purchase intention (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). It is supported by prior research, which discovered that E-WOM had a significant effect on purchase intention (Alrwashdeh, 2019).

### **Summary of Findings**

Findings showed that social media had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention ( $r = 0.261$ ). This finding suggests that social media platforms provide a space where users can discover new products and services through various means such as sponsored ads, influencer endorsements, and organic posts. Customers often come across products they might not have found otherwise.

Findings showed that e-mail marketing had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention ( $r = 0.499$ ). This suggests that email marketing allows businesses to communicate directly with potential customers. When customers receive promotional emails about new smartphone models, features, or special offers, it can pique their interest and increase their purchase intention.

Findings showed that electronic word of mouth had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention ( $r = 0.538$ ). This suggests that user-generated content, such as photos and videos showcasing the smartphone's features and performance, can provide a real-life perspective that positively impacts purchase intention.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study concluded that online advertising had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention for smartphones in Yenagoa Bayelsa State. Social media, email marketing and electronic word of mouth had significant positive relationship with customers purchase intention. Social media allows businesses to share detailed information about their products or services, including features, benefits, and customer reviews. Customers can access this information easily and use it to make informed decisions. User-generated content, such as product reviews and recommendations from friends and influencers, can have a significant impact on

purchase intentions. Positive reviews and endorsements can boost trust and confidence in a product. Social media platforms offer sophisticated targeting options, allowing businesses to reach users who are more likely to be interested in their products. Targeted ads can be highly effective in capturing the attention of potential customers. Customers can easily compare products, prices, and reviews across different brands and retailers on social media. This helps them make informed choices and select products that best meet their needs.

Effective email marketing often involves personalization, where messages are tailored to the recipient's preferences and past interactions with the brand. Personalized product recommendations and exclusive offers can make customers feel valued and more inclined to make a purchase. Email campaigns can be timed strategically, such as sending discounts or promotions during holidays, back-to-school seasons, or product launches. These timely offers can create a sense of urgency and influence customers to buy. Beyond promotions, email marketing can include educational content, such as product specifications, comparisons, and user guides. Providing valuable information helps customers make informed decisions. Including customer reviews and testimonials in email marketing campaigns can boost trust. When potential buyers see positive feedback from others who have purchased the same smartphone, it can enhance their purchase intention.

Customer reviews and ratings on e-commerce websites, forums, and social media platforms heavily influence purchase intentions. Positive reviews and high ratings can build trust and confidence in a smartphone product. When individuals share their positive experiences with a particular smartphone on social media platforms, it can reach a wide audience and impact their purchase intentions. Friends and family members' recommendations also carry weight. Influencers often share their thoughts and experiences with smartphones through blogs, vlogs, and social media. Their endorsements can sway their followers' purchase decisions due to trust and perceived expertise. Online communities and forums provide spaces for users to discuss and seek recommendations for smartphones. Participating in these discussions and receiving advice from peers can influence customers' choices.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- I. Smartphones operators should actively respond to comments, messages, and mentions on social media platforms. Engaging with audience shows that they value their input and can build brand loyalty.
- II. Smartphones operators should implement automated drip email campaigns that nurture leads over time. Provide valuable information, customer testimonials, and incentives to encourage conversions.
- III. Smartphones operators should respond to reviews and engage in online discussions about their smartphones. Show appreciation for positive feedback and take constructive criticism seriously.

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