IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON NIGERIAN STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF AJE GROUP (LAGOS)

RAHEEM, ASISAT TEMITOPE
Department of Business Administration
University of Abuja
Email: tundekamil@gmail.com

&

JANET, MODUPE MATHEW
Department of Business Administration
University of Abuja
Email: naomimusty@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

While social media marketing is a proven driver of consumer behaviour in developed markets, its effectiveness in Nigeria particularly among students remains underexplored. Brands like Starbucks and Zara have mastered the use of Instagram and Facebook to foster emotional connections and drive repeat purchases. This study investigates the influence of social media marketing on Nigerian students, focusing on Aje Group as a case study. The research examines the relationship between Facebook and Instagram marketing efforts and their impact on brand loyalty and purchase intention among students. Using a survey research design, data were collected from 428 students across various faculties at the Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State, selected through stratified random sampling. Primary data were gathered via structured questionnaires analysed using SPSS version 27.0, employing multiple regression analysis to test hypotheses. The findings reveal a significant relationship between Aje Group's Facebook marketing efforts and brand loyalty, with consistent and engaging content fostering trust and emotional attachment among students. Similarly, Instagram marketing significantly influences purchase intention, driven by visually appealing and relatable content that resonates with the target audience. The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between Aje Group's social media marketing efforts both on Facebook and Instagram and their impact on brand loyalty and purchase intention among Nigerian students. The study recommends that Aje Group prioritize high-quality visuals, interactive campaigns, and authentic messaging to strengthen brand loyalty and boost sales among Nigerian students.

KEYWORDS: Social media marketing, Digital advertising, TikTok, Brand Loyalty, Nigerian Students, Instagram Marketing, Facebook Marketing

INTRODUCTION

The rise of social media has fundamentally transformed marketing strategies worldwide, creating new opportunities for brands to engage with consumers, particularly younger demographics. According to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2023), platforms like Facebook and Instagram have become essential tools for businesses aiming to build brand awareness, foster customer relationships, and influence purchasing decisions. Globally, companies such as Nike and Coca-Cola have successfully leveraged social media marketing (SMM) to cultivate brand loyalty and drive sales through targeted advertisements, influencer collaborations, and interactive content (Kim & Ko, 2023). This trend is especially pronounced among Generation Z and Millennials, who spend an average of 3.5 hours daily on social

media, making them a prime audience for digital marketing campaigns (Pew Research Center, 2024; Abubakar & Daniel, 2016).

In Nigeria, where over 70% of the population is under 30, social media marketing has emerged as a critical strategy for brands targeting the youth market (NBS, 2023). With a social media penetration rate of 42%, Facebook and Instagram dominate as the preferred platforms for brand discovery and engagement (Datareportal, 2024). The fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, in particular, has seen a surge in digital-first marketing strategies as companies compete for the attention of tech-savvy students and young professionals (Oyedele, 2024). However, while global brands like Pepsi and MTN excel in executing sophisticated digital campaigns, many local firms, including Aje Group—known for its Big Cola beverage struggle to maintain consistent engagement and convert online interactions into sales (Adeola, 2023).

Nigerian students, a key consumer segment, are highly active on social media but often gravitate toward global brands due to their superior digital marketing strategies (Eze et al., 2024). This preference highlights a significant challenge for local brands like Aje Group, which must compete with multinational rivals in a crowded market. Despite offering affordable products, Aje Group faces difficulties in retaining student consumers, who perceive global brands as more aspirational and digitally savvy (Adeoye, 2023). This disconnect underscores the need for Nigerian companies to refine their social media strategies to strengthen brand loyalty and purchase intention among young consumers.

While social media marketing is a proven driver of consumer behaviour in developed markets, its effectiveness in Nigeria particularly among students remains underexplored. Brands like Starbucks and Zara have mastered the use of Instagram and Facebook to foster emotional connections and drive repeat purchases (Godey et al., 2023). In contrast, Nigerian brands such as Aje Group struggle to harness these platforms effectively, despite the high social media usage rates among students. Recent data from the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC, 2024) reveals that 62% of university students rely on Instagram and Facebook for product discovery, yet only 28% recall consistent marketing efforts from local brands like Aje Group.

The competitive landscape further exacerbates this issue. Multinational beverage companies like Coca-Cola and Pepsi dominate social media engagement through high-budget campaigns and influencer partnerships, leaving local brands at a disadvantage (NBS, 2024). Aje Group's Big Cola, for instance, faces an uphill battle in capturing student loyalty, as this demographic often associates global brands with higher quality and better digital experiences (Okafor, 2024). This gap in market penetration suggests a misalignment between Aje Group's social media strategies and the preferences of Nigerian students.

Existing research on social media marketing primarily focuses on Western markets or business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce, leaving a significant gap in understanding its impact on brand loyalty and purchase intention in Nigeria (Dwivedi et al., 2023). While studies such as Kumar et al. (2024) confirm that Instagram aesthetics enhance buying intent, and Harrigan et al. (2023) link Facebook engagement to brand trust, these findings may not fully apply to Nigeria's unique market dynamics. Moreover, there is limited empirical evidence on how Nigerian conglomerates like Aje Group can leverage cost-effective SMM strategies to compete with global giants.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the influence of Facebook and Instagram marketing on brand loyalty and purchase intention among Nigerian students, using Aje Group as a case study. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions: How does Facebook marketing influence brand loyalty among Nigerian students? What is the impact of Instagram marketing on purchase intention for Aje Group's products? And which platform—Facebook or Instagram has a stronger effect on consumer behavior? The findings will provide actionable insights for Aje Group and similar Nigerian brands to optimize their social media strategies, enhance student engagement, and improve market performance.

i. How does Facebook marketing by Aje Group impact brand loyalty among Nigerian university students in Lagos?
ii. To what extent does Instagram marketing impact purchase

intention for Aje Group's products among Nigerian students?

The main objective was ton investigate the impact of social media marketing on Nigerian students: a case study of Aje Group (Lagos). The specific objectives include:

i. To examine the impact of Facebook marketing on brand loyalty among Nigerian students.
ii. To assess the impact of Instagram marketing on purchase intention in the same demographic.

This study examines the impact of Facebook and Instagram marketing (independent variables) on brand loyalty and purchase intention (dependent variables) among Nigerian university students, focusing specifically on Lagos State due to its urban, tech-savvy student population and Aje Group's strong market presence in the region. The research targets students in Lagos-based universities, as their high social media engagement and exposure to digital marketing campaigns make them ideal for analyzing the interplay between platform-specific strategies and consumer behavior. While the findings offer critical insights for Aje Group's marketing teams and similar local brands, the study is limited by its geographic concentration on Lagos, which may restrict generalizability to rural or less digitally connected student populations. Additionally, reliance on self-reported survey data introduces potential biases, such as exaggerated recall of social media interactions or idealized purchase intentions. The cross-sectional design further limits the ability to establish long-term causal relationships between social media marketing and consumer decisions. The study also narrows its focus to Facebook and Instagram, excluding other platforms like TikTok or X (Twitter), which may play emerging roles in youth marketing. Finally, the research assumes uniform access to smartphones and internet connectivity among students, overlooking socioeconomic disparities that could affect social media exposure. Despite these constraints, the study provides a foundational understanding of how Nigerian students respond to targeted social media marketing, paving the way for future longitudinal or multi-platform investigations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing (SMM) refers to the strategic use of social media platforms to promote brands, engage consumers, and drive business objectives (Tuten & Solomon, 2023). It encompasses content creation, paid advertising, influencer collaborations, and community management to foster brand-consumer relationships. In Nigeria, SMM has become indispensable due to rising internet penetration (53% as of 2024) and youth-dominated demographics, with 70% of social media users under 30 (Datareportal, 2024). Platforms like Facebook and Instagram dominate Nigeria's digital landscape, enabling brands like Aje Group to target students a key consumer segment through tailored campaigns (Oyedele, 2024). Effective SMM leverages algorithms and analytics to optimize reach, though its impact varies by platform and audience psychographics (Kim & Ko, 2023).

Facebook Marketing

Facebook marketing involves branded content, targeted ads, and interactive features (e.g., polls, live videos) to engage users (Chaffey, 2024). In Nigeria, Facebook's 30 million users (Statista, 2024) make it a critical platform for brands. For Aje Group, Facebook marketing can enhance brand loyalty through community-building (e.g., exclusive groups) and consistent engagement (Harrigan et al., 2023). However, declining youth usage (Pew Research, 2024) poses challenges, necessitating hybrid strategies with Instagram. Studies link Facebook's informational posts to long-term trust but note weaker purchase intention stimulation compared to visual platforms (Kumar et al., 2024).

Instagram Marketing

Instagram marketing relies on visual storytelling, influencer partnerships, and ephemeral content (Stories/Reels) to drive engagement (Godey et al., 2023). In Nigeria,

Instagram's popularity among students (NCC, 2024) makes it ideal for Aje Group to boost purchase intention through aesthetics and scarcity tactics (e.g., "limited-time offers"). Research confirms Instagram's superiority in impulse buying, with 68% of Nigerian students discovering brands via influencers (Eze et al., 2024). However, algorithm changes and ad saturation may dilute reach, requiring authentic content (Sheth & Kellstadt, 2024).

Nigerian Students

Nigerian students (aged 18–25) represent a digitally native, price-sensitive cohort shaping FMCG trends (NBS, 2024). With 92% owning smartphones (NCC, 2024), they exhibit high social media usage (4.1 hours/day) but low brand loyalty due to economic constraints (Adeoye, 2023). Their purchase intention is influenced by peer reviews and promotional offers (Okafor, 2024), making them a critical audience for Aje Group's SMM strategies.

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty reflects repeat purchases and emotional attachment despite competitors' efforts (Aaker, 2023). For Nigerian students, loyalty is driven by affordability (60%), perceived quality (25%), and social media engagement (15%) (NBS, 2024). Aje Group can foster loyalty via consistent SMM interactions (e.g., responding to comments) and value-added content (Harrigan et al., 2023).

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention measures the likelihood of buying after SMM exposure (Kim & Ko, 2023). Among Nigerian students, it correlates with Instagram's visual appeals ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$) and discount-driven Facebook ads ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.05$) (Eze et al., 2024). Aje Group's success hinges on aligning platform-specific content with students' price sensitivity and trend consciousness (Oyedele, 2024).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on one complementary theoretical framework that explains the relationship between social media marketing and consumer behavior among Nigerian students: the Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model.

Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model

The Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model was developed by Kevin Lane Keller in 1993 as a comprehensive framework for understanding how consumers form perceptions and attitudes toward brands. Keller's model emphasizes that brand equity is rooted in consumer knowledge, which consists of two key components: brand awareness and brand image. According to Keller, strong brand equity arises when consumers not only recognize a brand but also associate it with positive attributes, perceived quality, and emotional connections. Over time, this leads to brand loyalty and influences purchasing decisions. Keller's work has been widely adopted in marketing research due to its systematic approach to analyzing the factors that contribute to brand success.

Keller's CBBE model serves as a robust theoretical foundation for examining the impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior, particularly among Nigerian students. The model explains how brand knowledge encompassing awareness, associations, perceived quality, and resonance translates into loyalty and purchase intentions. For Aje Group, this framework is highly relevant because it aligns with the study's focus on how Facebook and Instagram marketing strategies shape students' perceptions of affordability, trendiness, and overall brand value. Empirical studies in Nigeria support this application; for example, Okafor (2024) demonstrated that consistent social media engagement by local FMCG brands enhanced brand equity metrics by 32% among university students. By leveraging the CBBE model, Aje Group can identify effective ways to build enduring brand equity and foster long-term customer relationships in a competitive market.

Despite its strengths, the CBBE model has certain limitations in the context of Nigerian students and social media marketing. First, the model assumes uniform access to digital platforms, which may not hold true given socioeconomic disparities in internet access among students. According to the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC, 2024), significant portions of the population still face challenges related to connectivity and digital literacy. Second, the CBBE model prioritizes

long-term brand equity building, whereas Nigerian youth often exhibit impulsive buying behaviors driven by promotions and discounts (Eze et al., 2024). This suggests that integrating complementary theories, such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) or Social Influence Theory, could provide a more holistic understanding of consumer behavior. TAM's focus on perceived usefulness (e.g., timely discounts) and Social Influence Theory's emphasis on peer effects could address gaps in the CBBE model. Despite these limitations, the CBBE model remains indispensable for diagnosing how Aje Group's social media strategies can cultivate sustained brand equity in a dynamic and competitive environment.

Empirical Review

Bilgin (2018) aimed to examine the effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty, with a focus on consumers who actively follow brands on social media. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected through online questionnaires distributed to 547 participants via convenience sampling. The population consisted of followers of brands with high social media scores in Turkey. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed for data analysis. The study found that social media marketing significantly influenced brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty, with brand awareness having the most pronounced effect. However, the study's reliance on convenience sampling limited its generalizability. Bilgin recommended that marketers focus on enhancing brand awareness through strategic social media campaigns.

Mokhtaruddin et al. (2023) explored the influence of social media marketing on brand loyalty from the perspective of customers in the apparel industry. The study used a conceptual approach to address gaps in empirical research within this context. While no specific methodology was applied, the authors reviewed existing literature to propose relationships between social media marketing and brand loyalty. They highlighted the lack of empirical evidence in the apparel sector and recommended further studies to validate their propositions. This conceptual gap underscores the need for quantitative investigations in the apparel industry.

Lestari et al. (2023) investigated the impact of Instagram social media marketing and technology readiness on purchase intention, mediated by social media brand engagement for the X Instant Mortar brand. A quantitative research design was adopted, with data collected from 150 Instagram followers using convenience sampling. The researchers employed SEM to analyze the data. Findings revealed that social media marketing positively influenced purchase intention both directly and indirectly through brand engagement. Despite these insights, the study focused narrowly on one product category, limiting broader applicability. The authors suggested leveraging technology readiness to enhance marketing strategies.

Ahmed et al. (2021) assessed the impact of Facebook marketing on urban youth's brand loyalty in Bangladesh. Using a quantitative approach, they surveyed 306 urban youth selected through convenience sampling. Regression analysis was conducted to test hypotheses. Results showed that advantageous campaigns, Facebook groups, and relevant content positively influenced brand loyalty, while updated content had a negative effect. The study highlighted nighttime as the peak usage period for Facebook but lacked diversity in its sample. The authors recommended tailoring content to nighttime preferences.

Utami et al. (2023) studied the influence of Instagram social media marketing and brand image on purchase intention, mediated by brand trust, focusing on Avoskin products in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. A survey method with purposive sampling was used to collect data from 100 respondents. Multiple linear regression and Sobel tests were conducted using SPSS 25. The findings indicated that social media marketing and brand image significantly affected purchase intention through brand trust. However, the small sample size restricted the robustness of the conclusions. The authors advised enhancing brand trust via consistent and engaging social media content.

Ibrahim et al. (2021) examined how social media marketing activities influenced revisit intention through brand trust and brand loyalty among coffee shop customers in Northern Cyprus. Data were collected from 415 undergraduate students following coffee shops on Facebook, using structural equation

modeling for analysis. The study found that social media marketing positively affected revisit intention, mediated by brand loyalty and trust. Despite these contributions, the student-focused sample limited the external validity of the results. The authors recommended prioritizing customer engagement on social media platforms.

Thundeniya and Dissanayake (2024) explored the influence of Facebook content marketing on e-brand loyalty, mediated by online consumer engagement, in Sri Lanka's telecommunications industry. A structured questionnaire was administered to 395 respondents using convenience sampling. Quantitative methods revealed that Facebook content marketing positively impacted e-brand loyalty, with engagement acting as a mediator. The study addressed a gap in brand-switching behavior research but relied heavily on non-probability sampling. The authors suggested creating valuable content to retain online audiences.

Muhsina and Mou (2023) analyzed the interplay between social media marketing, perceived service quality, satisfaction, and brand value in Bangladesh's fashion industry. An online survey was conducted with employees from various firms, though the exact sample size was not disclosed. Findings highlighted the importance of authentic social media marketing in fostering customer loyalty. However, challenges in direct data collection limited the depth of insights. The authors recommended integrating visual elements into social media strategies.

Ibrahim (2021) conducted a multi-group analysis to explore the nexus between social media marketing activities and brand loyalty across five-star and four-star hotels in Kyrenia, Northern Cyprus. Data were collected from 407 customers, and SEM was used for analysis. The study found that hotel ratings moderated some relationships but not others. While insightful, the exclusive focus on hotel ratings overlooked other potential moderating factors. The authors emphasized the importance of tailored social media strategies based on hotel categories.

Indrawati and Rahmah (2023) studied the influence of Instagram marketing on customer purchase intention through customer inspiration, focusing on Telkomsel Postpaid users in Java, Indonesia. A quantitative approach was adopted, with 384 respondents selected via purposive sampling. SEM-PLS analysis showed that customer inspiration mediated the relationship between Instagram marketing and purchase intention. However, the study did not account for other motivational factors influencing purchase decisions. The authors recommended aligning marketing efforts with inspirational content.

Ilmaknun et al. (2024) analyzed the influence of influencer marketing and social media marketing on purchase intention for cosmetic products among Generation Y and Z in Greater Jakarta. Using SmartPLS, data from 257 respondents were analyzed. Both marketing approaches positively influenced purchase intention, mediated by customer satisfaction and perceived value. Despite addressing generational differences, the study did not explore rural or older demographics. The authors recommended targeting specific generational preferences in marketing campaigns.

Syamimi Tauhit and Asmadi (2024) examined the effect of Instagram social media marketing on purchase intention for skincare products among youth in Klang Valley, Malaysia. A quantitative survey was conducted with data analyzed using SPSS. Findings revealed that enjoyment derived from Instagram use increased purchase intention. However, the study did not investigate competitive factors driving purchases. The authors suggested focusing on engaging content to enhance user experience.

Harjadi et al. (2024) explored the influence of Instagram marketing, e-WOM, and co-branding on brand switching behavior for Aerostreet shoes in Kuningan Regency, Indonesia. Data from 120 respondents were analyzed using SEM-AMOS. Results indicated that purchase intention mediated the effects of marketing activities on brand switching, but direct effects were insignificant. The study's narrow geographical scope limited its applicability. The authors recommended integrating purchase intention into marketing strategies.

Widiyan and Sienatra (2024) assessed the influence of social media marketing activities and e-WOM on purchase intention for gold

jewelry, mediated by brand awareness, among Instagram users in Indonesia. Data from 160 respondents were analyzed using SmartPLS. Findings showed that social media marketing and e-WOM significantly influenced purchase intention through brand awareness. However, the study did not explore offline influences on purchasing behavior. The authors recommended enhancing brand visibility on social media platforms.

METHODOLOGY

This research utilized a descriptive survey methodology to analyze how social media marketing influences brand loyalty and purchasing decisions, with particular emphasis on Aje Group's digital campaigns targeting both working professionals and university students from three prominent Lagos institutions: University of Lagos, Lagos State University, and Pan-Atlantic University. The study population included 3,500 individuals (combining employees and students) selected for their active social media participation and alignment with Aje Group's consumer base. Applying Yamane's (1967) sampling calculation with a 5% error tolerance, researchers established a baseline sample of 357 subjects, subsequently expanded to 428 by adding a 20% contingency for possible non-participation. A stratified random sampling method ensured balanced representation across occupational and educational categories, with simple random sampling applied within each subgroup to maintain selection fairness. Investigators gathered data using a standardized 5-point Likert scale survey assessing primary factors: exposure to and evaluation of Aje Group's Facebook/Instagram promotions (predictor variables), measures of brand allegiance (including repeat buying patterns and emotional attachment), and indicators of potential purchases. Analytical procedures employed SPSS 27.0 software, incorporating descriptive statistics (averages, variability measures) for participant characteristics and advanced regression techniques to explore connections between digital marketing exposure and consumer response patterns. The analytical framework modeled brand loyalty ($BL = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 FB + \beta_2 IG + \varepsilon$) and purchase intent ($PI = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 FB + \beta_2 IG + \varepsilon$), with FB and IG representing Facebook and Instagram marketing respectively, α_0 as the baseline value, β coefficients quantifying variable impacts, and ε accommodating measurement error. Preliminary testing with 30 subjects (evenly split between employees and students) verified the survey's comprehensibility and relevance, while reliability assessments produced Cronbach's alpha values between 0.76 and 0.83, demonstrating robust scale consistency. Ethical safeguards included voluntary participation agreements and rigorous protection of respondent anonymity throughout the investigation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of Data

Table 4.1 Response Rate.

Questionnaire Distributed	428
Returned Questionnaire	373
Percentage of returned Questionnaire	87%
Unreturned Questionnaire	55
Percentage of not returned Questionnaire	13%

Source: field Survey, (2025)

A total of 428 questionnaires were distributed for the study, and 373 were successfully returned, resulting in a response rate of 87%. This significant level of participation reflects a high level of engagement from respondents, which contributes to the reliability and validity of the collected data. However, 55 questionnaires, representing 13% of the total, were not returned, which could slightly affect the completeness of the sample. Nonetheless, the high return rate of 87% ensures that the sample size remains adequate and strong enough for meaningful analysis, reducing potential biases and reinforcing the credibility of the study's findings.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One:

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between Aje Group's Facebook marketing efforts and brand loyalty among Nigerian students.

$BL = \beta 0 + \beta_i FB + \varepsilon$.....3.1

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.683[a]	.466	.465	.36695

a. Predictors: (Constant), FM

The model summary indicates a moderately strong relationship between the predictor variable (FM - Facebook Marketing) and the outcome variable, as evidenced by an R value of 0.683, which suggests a substantial positive correlation. The R Square value of 0.466 reveals that approximately 46.6% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by Facebook marketing efforts, while the adjusted R Square of 0.465 confirms this explanatory power after accounting for sample size and number of predictors, showing minimal shrinkage. The standard error of the estimate (0.36695) demonstrates that the average distance between the observed values and the regression line is relatively small, indicating that the model's predictions are reasonably precise. These results collectively suggest that Facebook marketing serves as a significant predictor of the outcome variable, explaining nearly half of its variability, though other unmeasured factors likely contribute to the remaining variance. The model's strength is further supported by the close alignment between R Square and adjusted R Square values, indicating stable predictive capability without overfitting.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	43.655	1	43.655	324.203	.000[b]
	Residual	49.957	371	.135		
	Total	93.612	372			

a. Dependent Variable: BL

b. Predictors: (Constant), FM

The ANOVA results demonstrate that the regression model significantly predicts brand loyalty (BL) through Facebook marketing (FM), as evidenced by the F-statistic of 324.203 with a highly significant p-value of .000 ($p < 0.001$), which is below the conventional alpha level of 0.05. This leads us to reject the null hypothesis that Facebook marketing has no effect on brand loyalty, confirming a statistically significant relationship. The large F-value, calculated as the ratio of mean square regression (43.655) to mean square residual (0.135), indicates that the explained variance by the model is substantially greater than the unexplained variance. With the regression sum of squares (43.655) accounting for a significant

portion of the total variation (93.612), these results strongly support the conclusion that Facebook marketing is an important predictor of brand loyalty among the studied population, as the probability of obtaining such results by chance alone is extremely low (less than 0.1%). Since the significance value is less than the 0.05 threshold, we conclude that the regression model fits the data significantly better than a model with no predictors.

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.651	.134		12.360	.000
	FM	.592	.033	.683	18.006	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BL

The coefficients table reveals that social media marketing (FM) has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty (BL), as indicated by the unstandardized coefficient (B = .592) and the standardized coefficient (Beta = .683), which highlights the strength of the relationship. The t-value of 18.006 and the significance level (p = .000) confirm that FM is a statistically significant predictor of BL, with the p-value far below the conventional threshold of 0.05. Additionally, the constant term (B = 1.651, p = .000) suggests a baseline level of brand loyalty even in the absence of social media marketing influence. Based on the decision rule, since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, concluding that social media marketing significantly drives brand loyalty. This underscores its critical role in shaping consumer behavior and highlights the need for businesses to leverage social media strategies effectively to enhance brand loyalty.

Hypothesis Two:

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between Instagram marketing and purchase intention among Nigerian students.

$PI = \beta 0 + \beta_i IM + \varepsilon$.....3.2

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.735[a]	.541	.539	.39218

a. Predictors: (Constant), IM

The model summary indicates that the regression model, using influencer marketing (IM) as the predictor variable, explains a substantial portion of the variance in the dependent variable. The R-value of .735 suggests a strong positive correlation between influencer marketing and the outcome variable, while the R Square value of .541 indicates that approximately 54.1% of the variability in the dependent variable can be attributed to influencer marketing. The Adjusted R Square value of .539 confirms the model's robustness by accounting for the number of predictors, showing minimal overfitting. Additionally, the

standard error of the estimate (.39218) reflects the average deviation of observed values from the predicted values, indicating a relatively good fit of the model to the data. Overall, these statistics demonstrate that influencer marketing is a significant and influential predictor, providing a reliable framework for understanding its impact on the dependent variable.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	67.179	1	67.179	436.782	.000[b]
	Residual	57.061	371	.154		
	Total	124.240	372			

a. Dependent Variable: PI

b. Predictors: (Constant), IM

The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model is highly significant in explaining the relationship between influencer marketing (IM) and purchase intention (PI). The F-statistic of 436.782, with a significance level (p-value) of .000, strongly rejects the null hypothesis, suggesting that the model effectively explains the variance in PI. The sum of squares for regression (67.179) accounts for a substantial portion of the total variability (124.240), highlighting the explanatory power of IM as a predictor. The residual mean square of .154 reflects relatively low unexplained variance, indicating a good model fit. Therefore, it can be concluded that influencer marketing significantly influences purchase intention, underscoring its critical role in shaping consumer behavior and necessitating strategic integration into marketing campaigns.

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.628	.163		3.863	.000
	IM	.840	.040	.735	20.899	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PI

The coefficients table reveals that influencer marketing (IM) has a significant positive impact on purchase intention (PI), as indicated by the unstandardized coefficient (B = .840) and the standardized coefficient (Beta = .735), which highlights the strength of the relationship. The t-value of 20.899 and the significance level (p = .000) confirm that IM is a statistically significant predictor of PI, with the p-value far below the conventional threshold of 0.05. Additionally, the constant term (B = .628, p = .000) suggests a baseline level of purchase intention even in the absence of influencer marketing influence. Based on the decision rule, since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, concluding that influencer marketing significantly drives purchase intention. This underscores its critical

role in shaping consumer behavior and highlights the need for businesses to leverage influencer marketing strategies effectively to enhance customer engagement and drive sales.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between Aje Group's Facebook marketing efforts and brand loyalty among Nigerian students. This finding aligns with Bilgin's (2018) research, which demonstrated that social media marketing activities significantly influence brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty. The findings imply that Aje Group's strategic use of Facebook as a marketing platform effectively fosters a sense of trust, engagement, and attachment among students, translating into stronger brand loyalty. Consistent and engaging content such as informative posts, promotions, and interactive campaigns resonates deeply with the target audience, influencing their perceptions and preferences. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of understanding the unique preferences of Nigerian students, such as their attraction to entertaining and relatable content, in crafting successful social media strategies. These insights are consistent with Ahmed et al.'s (2021) findings, which highlighted the positive impact of relevant and engaging Facebook content on urban youth's brand loyalty. By leveraging these insights, Aje Group can continue to strengthen its brand equity and competitive advantage in the Nigerian market while addressing potential challenges like scepticism or competition from rival brands.

The study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between Instagram marketing and purchase intention among Nigerian students. This aligns with Lestari et al.'s (2023) and Utami et al.'s (2023) studies, which found that visually appealing content, relatable messaging, and interactive campaigns strongly influence consumer behaviour. Strategic use of Instagram as a marketing platform effectively influences students' purchasing decisions by creating awareness, enhancing brand perception, and fostering engagement. These elements not only capture their attention but also drive interest and intent to purchase, particularly for products perceived as trendy or essential within their peer groups. The findings further highlight the importance of understanding the preferences of Nigerian students, such as their attraction to authentic and value-driven content, consistent with Muhsina and Mou's (2023) emphasis on the role of authentic social media marketing in fostering customer loyalty. By leveraging these insights, businesses targeting this demographic can strengthen brand loyalty, enhance customer engagement, and ultimately boost sales. These results reinforce the need for tailored strategies that resonate with specific audiences, as emphasized in prior empirical reviews.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between Aje Group's social media marketing efforts both on Facebook and Instagram and their impact on brand loyalty and purchase intention among Nigerian students. This underscores the critical role of strategic social media utilization in fostering trust, engagement, and emotional attachment, which ultimately translates into stronger brand loyalty and drives purchasing decisions. The findings highlight that consistent and engaging content such as informative posts, promotions, interactive campaigns, and visually appealing designs resonates deeply with the target audience, shaping their perceptions and preferences. Understanding the unique preferences of Nigerian students, such as their inclination toward entertaining, relatable, and value-driven content, is vital for crafting effective social media strategies. These insights provide Aje Group with an opportunity to strengthen its brand equity, maintain a competitive edge in the Nigerian market, and address potential challenges like scepticism or competition from rival brands, while also tapping into the demographic's high social media activity to drive awareness, enhance brand perception, and boost sales.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

i. Aje Group should prioritize creating consistent, high-quality, and engaging content tailored to the preferences of Nigerian students. This includes incorporating entertaining, relatable, and value-driven posts that resonate

with their cultural and social contexts, thereby deepening emotional connections and reinforcing brand loyalty.

ii. Aje Group should prioritize high-quality visuals, creative designs, and engaging multimedia content on Instagram. This approach aligns with the demographic's preference for aesthetically pleasing and relatable content, enhancing brand recall and purchase intention.

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