

Influencer Marketing Dimensions and Customer Buying Behaviour of Electronic Products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria: An Empirical Survey Study

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between influencer marketing dimensions source credibility, brand awareness, and expertise and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted, and data were collected from 384 customers of electronic products using a structured online questionnaire administered via Google Forms. The sample size was determined using the Cochran formula, while respondents were selected through convenience sampling due to accessibility constraints. Measurement reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with coefficients ranging from 0.745 to 0.801, indicating acceptable internal consistency of the study constructs. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression with SPSS version 25. The regression results revealed that source credibility has a strong and statistically significant positive relationship with customer buying behaviour ($R = 0.665$, $R^2 = 0.660$, $\beta = 0.409$, $p < 0.05$). Brand awareness also showed a significant positive relationship with customer buying behaviour ($R = 0.668$, $R^2 = 0.663$, $\beta = 0.661$, $p < 0.05$), indicating a high explanatory power. Similarly, expertise was found to be significantly related to customer buying behaviour ($R = 0.564$, $R^2 = 0.547$, $\beta = 0.647$, $p < 0.05$). These findings demonstrate that influencer marketing dimensions are significant predictors of customer buying behaviour in the electronics market. The study concludes that credible, visible, and knowledgeable influencers play an important role in shaping customers' purchase decisions for electronic products in Akwa Ibom State. However, due to the correlational nature of the study design, the findings indicate associations rather than causal relationships.

Keywords: Influencer marketing, Source credibility, Brand awareness, Expertise, Customer buying behavior

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of social media platforms has changed how consumers get product information, evaluate alternatives, and make buying decisions. Customers are now relying on social media influencers for product

reviews, demonstrations, and recommendations, particularly in technology-driven markets where product complexity is high (Pan et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2024). Previous studies reveal that while influencer marketing



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continues to grow, concerns have emerged regarding declining trust, content authenticity, algorithm-driven visibility, and disclosure transparency (Campbell & Farrell, 2020; Masuda et al., 2022; Schouten et al., 2020). These concerns make influencer attributes such as credibility, expertise, and brand awareness significantly affects consumer purchase intention and behaviour (Pan et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2024). According to the Nigerian Communications Commission (2022), the expansion of internet access and social media usage has strengthened influencer consumer interactions, especially among young and urban consumers in Nigeria. Internet penetration has expanded significantly due to increased smartphone adoption. However, despite this growth, empirical studies investigating influencer marketing within Nigeria contexts remain limited, particularly in relation to electronic products (Nigerian Communications Commission, 2022). Akwa Ibom State is a unique case in this study due to its growing urban population, rising smartphone usage, and increasing exposure to social media marketing. Yet, existing literatures have largely concentrated on general consumer goods, betting services, or fashion products, leaving a gap in knowing how influencer marketing dimensions affect customer buying behaviour in the electronics market. The effectiveness of influencer marketing as a marketing communication tool, is gathering momentum due to issues of credibility erosion, sponsored content overload, and misleading endorsements. Customers are becoming more cautious in assessing influencer recommendations, especially for electronic products that require technical knowledge and financial commitment (Pan et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2024). Many firms in Nigeria invest heavily in influencer campaigns without empirical evidence on which influencer marketing dimensions significantly influence customer buying behaviour. Existing literature have either investigated influencer marketing broadly or focused on other product categories, with limited attention to electronics within specific Nigerian states. This study therefore investigates the relationship between influencer marketing dimensions like source credibility, brand awareness, expertise and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between influencer marketing dimensions and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives were to:

- i. Determine the relationship between source credibility and customer buying behaviour of electronic products Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

- ii. Ascertain the relationship between brand awareness and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

- iii. Investigate the relationship between expertise and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between source credibility and customer buying behavior of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between brand awareness and customer buying behaviour experience of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between expertise and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is the strategic marketing approach that utilizes individuals with established online followership and perceived credibility to promote products or services. The effectiveness of influencer marketing lies in influencers' ability to function as relatable and trusted opinion leaders who change consumer perceptions and decision-making across different stages of the buying process (Fouad & Marsap, 2023). Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok provide influencers with direct access to large and engaged audiences, making them to create relatable content that resonates with followers (Aslam, 2023). The increasing academic concentration on influencer marketing shows its role in changing consumer behaviour across various industries (Pan et al., 2024; Joshi et al., 2023).

Source Credibility and Customer Buying Behaviour

Source credibility is the extent to which a communicator is perceived as trustworthy, believable, and knowledgeable by the target audience (O'Keefe, 2002). Awah et al. (2024) and Anyadighibe et al. (2022) describe source credibility as a key determinant of message acceptance, emphasizing trustworthiness and expertise as its main variables. Studies affirmed that influencer credibility significantly affects customer buying behaviour because consumers are more likely to accept product recommendations or referral from influencers they

perceive as honest and competent (Schouten et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2024). Expertise shows the influencer's perceived knowledge of the product category, while trustworthiness shows the belief that the influencer provides truthful and unbiased information (Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández, 2019) making influencer messages become more persuasive and increasing the chances of positive buying decisions.

Brand Awareness and Customer Buying Behaviour

Brand awareness is the extent to which consumers can know and recall a brand within a particular product category (Aaker, 2010). Udo et al. (2024) trace that brand awareness is a foundational element of consumer decision-making and a requirement for brand choice. Influencer marketing plays an important role in promoting brand awareness by repeatedly exposing consumers to brand-related content in related and engaging formats. Kim and Chao (2019) and Rijal (2023) argue that increased brand awareness reduces consumer uncertainty and facilitates faster purchase decisions, especially in competitive markets. Thus, higher levels of brand awareness generated through influencer endorsements are likely to positively influence customer buying behaviour.

Expertise and Customer Buying Behaviour

Expertise is the perceived level of knowledge, skill, or competence an influencer have within a specific domain (Johne, 2023). Expertise in the electronic products context is important because consumers often need technical information to evaluate product performance, quality, and value. Influencers with demonstrable expertise are more persuasive because their recommendations are seen as informed and reliable. Expert influencers suppress consumer confusion, increase understanding, and promote confidence in purchase decisions. As a result, influencer expertise have a significant positive relationship with customer buying behaviour (Masuda et al. 2022; Wiedmann & Mettenheim, 2020).

Customer Buying Behaviour

Customer buying behaviour is the process and action consumers go through when selecting, purchasing, and using products. Ameen et al. (2021) asserted that buying behaviour include cognitive, emotional, and behavioural responses that influence purchase decisions. In digital marketing environments, these responses are increasingly changed by online interactions and influencer-generated content in the digital marketing environments (De Keyser et al., 2022; Asuquo et al., 2024). Influencers affect customer buying behaviour by changing perceptions positively reducing perceived risk, and promoting product

evaluation through real content and personal experiences. Empirical studies from different markets reveals strong associations between influencer marketing and consumer perceptions and behaviours (Szakal et al., 2024).

Theoretical Framework

Source Credibility Theory (Hovland et al., 1953)

This study is anchored on Source Credibility Theory proposed by Hovland et al. (1953), which explains how the perceived credibility of a message source influences audience persuasion. The theory states that messages delivered by sources perceived as credible mostly in terms of trustworthiness and expertise are more likely to influence attitudes and behaviours. Source credibility theory in this study gives the theoretical justification for assessing how influencer credibility and expertise relate to customer buying behaviour. The theory does not directly explain brand awareness; however, brand awareness is treated as a complementary marketing outcome of influencer exposure rather than a core theoretical construct of the theory. Thus, the theory supports the hypothesized relationships between influencer attributes (credibility and expertise) and customer buying behavior.

Empirical Review

Recent empirical studies provide evidence supporting the influence of influencer attributes on consumer responses. Attih et al. (2021) found that credibility and expertise significantly influenced consumer responses to influencer marketing campaigns in Malaysia, highlighting the importance of trusted and knowledgeable influencers. Similarly, Khurshid et al. (2024) reported that influencer credibility and expertise positively affected consumers' purchase intentions in the beauty industry. Mahmud et al. (2024) demonstrated that influencer marketing promotes brand awareness and shapes different stages of the customer buying journey, reinforcing the role of influencers in consumer decision-making. Bansah et al. (2024), through a systematic literature review, identified expertise and perceived credibility as consistent predictors of consumer purchase intention across industries. Nagori (2024) further confirmed that credibility, expertise, and trustworthiness significantly influence purchase intention, tracing their importance in digital marketing area. However, most existing studies concentrates on fashion, beauty, or global markets, with limited empirical evidence from Nigeria's electronics market.

Research Gap and Contribution

Despite the increasing number of researches done on influencer marketing, empirical studies concentrating on electronic products within the Nigerian context remain

scarce. This study contributes to the literature by providing context-specific evidence from Akwa Ibom State, investigating how influencer credibility, brand awareness, and expertise relate to customer buying behaviour in the electronics industry.

METHODOLOGY

Survey research design was adopted for the study in order to assess the relationships between influencer marketing dimensions and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. This design was appropriate for collecting to data to assess the relationships among variable. The population consisted of customers of electronic products (mobile phones and computers) in Akwa Ibom State. Since there was no official sampling frame, the population size was treated as unknown. A sample size of 384 respondents was determined using the Cochran (1977) formula. Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, was employed due to accessibility and cost implications. Although this method limits external validity and generalizability, it was suitable for exploratory empirical analysis within the study context. Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire (Google Forms). The instrument consisted of two sections: Section A captured respondents' personal data, while Section B measured independent and dependent variables measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Content validity was done with the assistance of experts' review. The results of Cronbach coefficients for each items were above the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency (Table 1). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression with SPSS version 25. Simple regression was employed to examine the independent relationship between each influencer marketing dimension and customer buying behaviour, thereby avoiding multicollinearity concerns associated with combined models. Participation was voluntary, and respondent's privacy was assured. The use of convenience sampling and self-reported data hinders the generalizability of the findings; however, these limitations do not undermine the internal validity of the relational analysis.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients.

S/N	Variables	No of Items	Coefficient
1	Source credibility	3	0.750
2	Brand awareness	3	0.801
3	Expertise	3	0.745
4	Customer buying behaviour	3	0.800

Source: The Researcher's Computation (2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between source

credibility and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Table 2 shows the simple linear regression results examining the relationship between source credibility and customer buying behaviour. The result shows a strong positive relationship ($R = 0.665$), with an R^2 value of 0.660, indicating that 66.0% of the variation in customer buying behaviour is explained by source credibility. The regression coefficient for source credibility ($\beta = 0.409$, $p < 0.05$) was positive and statistically significant. The F-statistic ($F = 158.315$, $p < 0.05$) indicates that the model is statistically adequate. Based on these results, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between brand awareness and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

As shown in Table 3, brand awareness exhibited a strong positive relationship with customer buying behaviour ($R = 0.668$). The R^2 value of 0.663 indicates that approximately 66.3% of the variation in customer buying behaviour is explained by brand awareness. The regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.661$, $p < 0.05$) confirms a statistically significant relationship. The model was statistically significant ($F = 141.801$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between expertise and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Table 4 shows that expertise has a strong positive relationship with customer buying behaviour ($R = 0.564$). The R^2 value of 0.547 indicates that 54.7% of the variation in customer buying behaviour is explained by expertise. The regression coefficient for expertise ($\beta = 0.647$, $p < 0.05$) was statistically significant, and the model was adequate ($F = 139.972$, $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The findings indicate that source credibility is significantly associated with customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State. This shows that customers are more likely to rely on influencers they perceive as trustworthy and believable when making electronic purchase decisions. This is in line with previous studies by Nagori (2024) and Khurshid et al. (2024), which emphasized on credibility as a major influencer factor. Brand awareness was also found to have a significant relationship with customer buying behaviour, revealing that increased exposure to electronic brands through influencers promotes recognition and recall, thereby changing purchase decisions. This finding corroborates Mahmud et al. (2024), who reported that brand awareness plays a major role in influencing consumer decision-making. Expertise indicated a strong and significant relationship with customer buying behaviour, suggesting

Table 2: Summary of simple linear regression model showing the relationship between source credibility and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

	B1	SE	B2	t-value	Significant(2 tailed)
Constant	28.435	0.371		76.406	0.001
Source credibility	0.409	0.016	0.410	37.215	0.000
Dependent variable: Customer buying behavior					
R =	0.665				
R ² =	0.660				
Adjusted R-Square	0.558				
Std. Error of Estimate	1.49172				
F- Statistics	158.315				
Probability (Significance p-value=	0.000				

*significantly related at 5% ($p < 0.05$). B1= unstandardized beta, B2= standardized beta, SE= standard error. **Source:** The Researcher's Computation (2025).

Table 3: Summary of simple linear regression model showing the relationship between brand awareness and customer's buying behavior of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

	B1	SE	B2	t-value	Significant (2 tailed)
Constant	28.408	0.390		76.336	0.000
Brand awareness	0.661	0.020	0.660	35.859	0.000
Dependent variable: Customer buying behavior					
R =	0.668				
R ² =	0.663				
Adjusted R- Square =	0.664				
Std. Error of Estimate	1.51098				
F- Statistics =	141.801				
Probability (Significance p-value=	0.000				

*significantly related at 5% ($p < 0.05$). B1= unstandardized beta, B2= standardized beta, SE= standard error. **Source:** The Researcher's Computation (2025).

Table 4: Summary of simple linear regression model showing the relationship between expertise and customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

	B1	SE	B2	t-value	Significant(2-tailed)
Constant	27.491	0.414		71.186	0.000
Expertise	0.647	0.021	0.664	33.050	0.000
Dependent variable: Customer buying behaviour					
R =	0.564				
R ² =	0.547				
Adjusted R- Square	0.543				
Std. Error of Estimate	1.59393				
F- Statistics	139.972				
Probability (Significance p-value=	0.000				

*significantly related at 5% ($p < 0.05$). B1= unstandardized beta, B2= standardized beta, SE= standard error.

Source: The Researcher's Computation (2025).

that influencers perceived as knowledgeable in electronics are more persuasive, especially in a product category that requires technical understanding. This finding supports the works of Attih et al. (2021) and Bansah et al. (2024).

Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between influencer-related factors source credibility, brand awareness, and expertise and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The reliability results confirmed that all study constructs were internally consistent, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients

ranging from 0.745 to 0.801, indicating that the measurement instruments were reliable and suitable for analysis. The regression analyses showed that source credibility has a strong and statistically significant positive relationship with customer buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.410$, $t = 37.215$, $p < 0.05$), explaining a substantial proportion of variance in buying behaviour ($R^2 = 0.660$). Similarly, brand awareness was found to be a significant predictor of customer buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.660$, $t = 35.859$, $p < 0.05$), accounting for about 66.3% of the variation in customers' purchase decisions. In addition, expertise demonstrated a significant positive relationship with customer buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.664$, $t = 33.050$, $p <$

0.05), highlighting the importance of influencers' technical knowledge in shaping consumers' decisions in the electronics market. Based on these findings, the study concludes that influencer characteristics play a critical role in influencing customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State. Consequently, manufacturers and marketers of electronic products should prioritize collaboration with influencers who are credible and trustworthy in order to enhance consumer confidence and stimulate positive buying behaviour. Firms are also encouraged to strategically leverage influencers to improve brand awareness across widely used social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, as increased visibility and recognition significantly strengthen customers' purchase intentions. Furthermore, organizations should engage influencers with demonstrable technical expertise in electronics to provide informative and educative content that supports informed decision-making and reduces perceived purchase risk.

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