

Impact of Social Media Networks on Consumer Patronage in Nigeria: A Study of Jumia and Konga Nigeria Limited

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out on the impact of social media networks on consumers' patronage of products. It was premised on the proliferating notion of online retail businesses in Nigeria particularly through the use of many social media like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google Stores, Likedlin, etc despite the nefarious atrocities of internet fraudsters. Among the most notable retail companies that engage in such online businesses in Nigeria are Jumia and Konga Nigeria Ltd, upon which this study was carried out as well as on the consumers who patronize the companies both in Enugu and in Lagos state. Two objectives were sought; to determine the perception of the consumers toward online shopping and to determine the extent to which the consumers patronize the online retailers. To achieve these objectives, a cross sectional survey research design was adopted with questionnaire being the data collection instrument. The data collected were analysed and presented in tables. The hypotheses were tested using ANOVA and Chi-square statistical tools at 5% level of significance and specified degrees of freedom. Among others, the findings revealed that there is a significant difference in the perceptions of the entire consumers and that consumers patronize online retailers very significantly. The study concluded that consumers would continue patronizing online retailers at a crescendo despite their varying perception of internet usage.

Keywords: Network, Data, Social media and Consumer.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The term 'social media' is quite often mentioned these days. It is a new phenomenon and one would probably imagine that everyone knows or understands what it means. Nearly ninety percent (if not more) of all online or internet users use social media in one way or the other (Kietzmann and Kristopher, 2011; Dolwick, 2009). The emergence of social media began in the early days of internet when people started sharing information and communicating with one another (Boyd and Ellison, 2010) but unfortunately; the platforms used then were more 'technology intensive' and required some level of expertise before use. Hence, the number of people using social media platforms then was limited. Over a period of time as technology advanced, platforms that are less sophisticated were developed thus, enabling billions of regular internet users, without any technology background, to use the services (Boyd et al., 2010; Baden, Bender, Spring, Bhattacharjee and Strain, 2009) and this marked a turning point in the history of internet, making the internet technology all inclusive in such a way that people no longer remain silent spectators to the content being dished out to them. Now, they could create their own content, share it with others, respond to people, collaborate with them and many more (Andreas and Haenlein, 2010). This user interaction is what gave impetus to the today's increasingly emerging social media networks and sites.

Social media network sites such as, Facebook, Twitter, Likedin, Youtube, Google+, etc now allow member individuals to interact with one another and to build relationships even many companies across the world have joined but they joined only the fastest growing networks such as Facebook and Twitter, so as to connect with their customers (Trattner and Kappe 2012). The social media networks act so fantastically as the vehicle helping companies to gain traffic or attention to their own website usually through the use of Links via the adverts they place on the social media websites (Chinag and Chung, 2011; Deis and Hensel, 2010). It also acts just as the traditional Word of Mouth in mainstream marketing does. Corporate messages uploaded on the sites spread very fast from users to users and presumably resonate in favour of the company (Deis and Hensel, 2010). In these regards, social media networks, ever since 2008, have become the new 21st century paradigmatic market medium for businesses to exploit (IMAP, 2010) and influence their customers' purchasing behaviour more. This is because, globally, a survey report reveals that about half of the 400 million active users of Facebook alone log on each day and spend over 500 billion minutes per month on the same site. (Oracle Retail, 2010) and sequel to this notion, virtually all businesses now employ social media networks as an extension of their existing corporate marketing strategies especially the retail industry in order to capture and serve customarily those active users with a broad range of lifestyle brands of products across the universe. And in the light of this, many firms in Nigeria also have started plunging into using these platforms. This current study thus seeks to explore the

patronage behaviour of Nigerian consumers via these growing social media networks especially from those companies that utilize them for their marketing activities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The rapid adoption and evolution of social media networks across all countries of the world today has spurred many businesses to devising strategies in order to invite millions of active users of the networks to their product offerings usually on their own websites. Nigeria is not exempted of this growing phenomenon. Many businesses in the country now strive to replicate those online dealings and transaction patterns which their counterpart abroad practice. An example of this is Amazon, the world's largest online retailer, selling a broad range of lifestyle brands of products to customers at their doorsteps across many countries. In Nigeria, a good number of similar online retailers such as Jumia, Konga, Dealdey, 3Stiches, Taafoo, Buyright.bz, etc have now emerged and some are still up coming. They also offer a broad range of lifestyle product brands such as electronics, computers, phones, books, home appliances, toys, etc. also at customers' doorsteps but within Nigeria only.

Apart from the rising competition among the currently existing rivals, there seems to be a daunting tendency that Nigerians would never dare transact business via the internet with any unseen person who displays many attractive pictures of product items, tagged with prices and might not physically exist anywhere but prompting prospective buyers to pay upfront so that the items would be delivered at their doorsteps anywhere in the country. This has always been a questionable issue as a result of the pervasive menaces of *Yahoo-Yahoo* internet frauds and has shaped the perception of many Nigerians toward being careful when operating on the internet especially when it comes to their supply of certain personal information. Meanwhile, many of the Nigerian online retailers have provided sufficient rooms for any likely doubt about the authenticity of their transaction via the social media networks with any prospective customers by allowing them to pay for any product of their choice on delivery. But still, other numerous problems proliferate thus, impeding against the patronage tendencies of Nigerians.

Existing philosophies (theoretical perspectives) provide that there could be a service quality gap usually in terms of the retailer's understanding of what prospective customers want, how they want it, as well as how to cater for them satisfactorily since the genesis of the transaction through these growing social media network platforms is done without any physical contact between the retailer and prospective consumers. The retailers might lack the knowledge or understanding of what the prospective customers specifically wanted or preferred either as a result of the disillusion in the product information and attributes they uploaded or as a result of not constantly updating information regarding the available product items. This was the experience of an individual who bought a blouse for a friend from JUMIA from their e-store. Some days later, JUMIA sent him a mail that the dress was out of stock and that he should pick another one. This went on for weeks and he then noticed he would no longer need the product item but there were issues regarding refund of his money. According to the individual, "*They kept telling me to reorder. It was frustrating but after I did thrice, my item was delivered to me*". There could be many people suffering from this type of encounter out there. Some of whom might lose both their money and the product item they ordered. And this might affect their continued patronage of the online retailers.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to harness the impact of social media networks on consumer patronage of the products of online retailers who utilise them for ecommerce purposes. The specific objectives however include:

- i. To determine the perception of the consumers toward online shopping
- ii. To determine the extent to which the consumers patronize the online retailers.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the perception of consumers toward online shopping?
- ii. To what extent do the consumers patronize online retailers?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H_A: 1 There is difference in the perception of consumers toward online shopping

H_A: 2 Consumers do significantly patronize online retailers.

1.6 Profile of JUMIA and KONGA

1.6.1 Jumia Nigeria Ltd

Jumia Nigeria is one of the today's Nigerian one-stop online retail shops offering a wide selection of products including Mobile Phones, Computers, Electronics, Home Appliances, Toys, Books, Wears and many more but not limited to either Men only or Women's Fashion, thus, bringing them right to customers' doorstep. Jumia was formerly owned by Rocket Internet who sold all its African holdings including Kasuwa, an online electronic, gadgets and content store like Amazon, and Sabunta, also an online clothing and fashion store, both to Millicom who then consolidated both companies into Jumia. As a global company which has assets under supervision of

approximately \$2.0 trillion and assets under management of about \$1.3 trillion (as of June 30, 2012), Jumia's clients include institutions, retail investors and high-net worth of individuals in every major market throughout the world. Jumia Nigeria also offers a wide selection of styles and brands, 100% convenience with 24/7 online access from home or office, secure payment such as Bank Deposit/Online banking and Cash on Delivery, exceptional customer care service, Fast next-day or two to five days delivery and returns after 7 days and lots more. Jumia can be followed up on social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube.

1.6.2 Konga Nigeria Ltd

Konga Nigeria is also one of the today's Nigerian one-stop online retail shops offering a wide selection of products including Mobile Phones, Computers, Electronics, Home Appliances, Toys, Books, Wears and many more just as Jumia, bringing them right to customers' doorstep. Konga is an indirect competitor to Jumia in four categories and currently only delivers to Lagos. It also offers a wide selection of styles and brands, 100% convenience with 24/7 online access from home or office, secure payment such as Bank Deposit/Online banking and Cash on Delivery, exceptional customer care service, Fast next-day or two to three days delivery and lots more. Konga also can be followed up on social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Frame work

The term 'Social Media Network' consists of three terms: social, media and network. The term 'social' ubiquitously refers to the characteristic of living organisms as applied to populations of humans. It in short, always refers to the interaction among humans and to their collective co-existence irrespective of whether they are aware of interaction or not, and irrespective of whether the interaction is voluntary or involuntary (Dolwick, 2009). Based on this definition, it can be inferred that the term 'social' reflects the characteristic of a society which allows a group of people living in the society to relate or interact together.

The term 'media' as the plural of 'medium', simply refers to the means of communication, such as radio, television, newspapers, and magazines that reach or influence people widely. BusinessDictionary.com corroborates this definition and adds that it (media) is the communication channels through which news, entertainment, education, data, or promotional messages are disseminated. Media however includes every broadcasting and narrowcasting medium such as newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, billboards, direct mail, telephone, fax, and internet.

As a computer terminology, the term 'network' means an interconnection (via cable and/or wireless) of a group of computers and peripherals which are capable of sharing software and hardware resources between many users (Baden *et al.*, 2009). Internet is an example of a global network of networks. As a communication terminology, it, network can be referred to as a system that enables users of telephones or data communication lines to exchange information over long distances by connecting with each other through a system of routers, servers, switches, and the likes (Dolwick, 2009). The Merriam-Webster dictionary however defines networking as the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions; *specifically*: the cultivation or enhancement of productive relationships for employment or business.

2.2 Meaning of Social Media

With the foregoing definitions, the term '*Social Media*' can now be conceptualised. Agichten, Carlos, Donato and Aristides, (2008) define it as a form of electronic communication (such as Internet, Websites or Mobile phones usually for social networking and blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (like videos). Tang and Whinston, (2012) also define social media as the means of interactions among people through which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities (computer-aid) and networks. Social media however can meaningfully be regarded as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of websites, and that allows creation and exchange of user-generated content. Simply put, it depends on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. It introduces substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities and individuals (Kietzmann and Kristopher, 2011). Social media differs from traditional/industrial media in many aspects such as quality (Tang *et al.*, (2012), reach, frequency, usability, immediacy and permanence (Nigel, Graham and Hodges, 2012) all of which are enhanced by the internet. There are many effects that stem from internet usage. As a result, according to Nigel *et al.*, (2012), many internet users would continue to spend more time with social media sites than any other type of site.

2.3 Meaning of Social Network

From the meaning of 'social' and 'network' as given above, the term Social Network can meaningfully be inferred as an internet-based services that allow individuals to (i) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (ii) articulate a list of users with whom they share a connection, and (iii) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site. While the term "Social Network Site" appears to have been widely employed to describe this emerging phenomenon (Keitzmann and Kristopher, 2011; Tang *et al.*, 2012; Baden *et al.*, 2009), it also appears in most public discourses, and the two terms: *Social Network Site* and *Social Networking Site* seem to be often used interchangeably. Here in this study, the term *network* suffixing 'social media' would be employed and not "*networking*" simply for two reasons: emphasis and scope. "Networking" emphasizes relationship initiation, often between strangers and while it may be possible on some sites, it might not be the primary purpose of many of others, nor is it what differentiates them from other forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC) (Dolwick, 2009).

2.4 Consumer Patronage Behaviour through Social Media Networks

Retailers are increasingly using internationalization strategy in order to enhance their competitiveness, increase sales and make good profits. One of which is the today's proliferating usage of Social Media Networks. Since the 1990s, many retailers across the world have been entering this enterprising marketplace and as a result, the rivalry between domestic and foreign retailers becomes fiercer everyday (Anic and Jovancevic, 2004). With the increasing expansion of these foreign retailers and shifts in consumers' attitudes and behaviour, domestic retailers feel stronger pressures to make their competitive strategies more effective so that they can compete against the foreign retailers who are already utilising social media networks to penetrate the domestic retailers' established markets. A good example of this in Nigeria is the emerging competition among foreign online retailers like Amazon and domestic counterparts like Jumia, Konga, Buyrite, Deedaldey, etc. Strategic positioning has now become the critical issue for gaining both a sustained long-term growth and persistent customers' patronage. The key question now has been how these domestic retailers can get Nigerian consumers to visit their online stores more frequently and buy more merchandise on each visit. Since the success in retailing industry depends on consumers, most domestic retailers are now also moving into social media which their counterparts abroad exploit (Chaney and Gamble, 2008).

For consumers to patronize the domestic retailers, the study of Laroche (2005) suggests that a country's image affects consumers' product evaluation (attitudes to a product) through their beliefs about the product's attributes such as quality, reliability and pricing. Attitude theory may explain how countries are seen in the mind of the consumers, what beliefs and emotions towards a country they have, how this information affects their reactions towards a country (Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009). Attitudes are complex system comprising the persons' beliefs about the object, their feelings towards the object, and action tendencies with respect to the object. As such they include cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects, and represent the way people react to a stimulus. Consumers mentally process objective information about the product or retailer and form an impression of the benefits they provide. They express the preference or lack of preference for stores, brands and other marketing stimuli by reflecting a favourable or unfavourable attitude, which might affect their purchasing intention and purchases (Dmitrovic, Vida and Reardon, 2009). Many studies have examined consumers' attitudes towards domestic and foreign products (Bhuiyan, 1997; Beaudoin, 1998; Dickerson, 1982; Wang and Heitmeyer, 2006), while only a few studies explored the consumers' evaluation of domestic and foreign retailers (Hyllegard, 2005; Chaney and Gamble, 2008; Ilter, Aykol, Ozgen, 2009; Anic and Jovancevic, 2009). The results of those studies are inconsistent. Although there is some indication that consumers have more positive attitudes towards foreign products or retailers than domestic products or retailers (Strutton, True, and Rody, 1995; Wang and Heitmeyer, 2006; Chaney and Gamble, 2008), other research suggests that consumers perceive more favourably domestic products or retailers than foreign products or retailers (Dickerson, 1982; Hyllegard *et al.*, 2005). Domestic retailers were shown to be better evaluated than foreign retailers on several store attributes, including product quality, product assortment, pricing, structure and store layout (Hyllegard *et al.*, 2005). International retailer is likely to be rated higher by consumers in its home country than consumers in its foreign subsidiaries (Burt and Carralero-Encinas, 2000). In all therefore, by establishing online stores, a foreign retailer might expect some resistance in terms of boycotts with consumers who are more supportive to their domestic retailers (Zarkada-Fraser and Fraser, 2002) but in Nigeria, the reverse might be the case simply because of the belief and attitude that an average consumer has toward foreign made products or retailers.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Theory of Service Quality Gap Model propounded by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) has been considered appropriate. This model highlights the main requirements for delivering high service quality. Customers generally have a tendency to compare the service they 'experience' with the service

they 'expect'. For example, if a customer shops online from Jumia stores, he/she would have a predefined expectation in terms of how he/she is to be treated or catered for; in terms of he/she needs as ordered, etc. If the experience of this customer does not match the expectation, there arises a gap.

2.6 Empirical Reviews

Extant related studies on the impact of social media networks over consumer patronage vary a lot both in approaches and the scopes covered. Anic and Vouk's (2005) study for example, was carried out on *Exploring the Relationships between Store Patronage Motives and Purchasing Outcomes for Major Shopping Trips in the Croatian Grocery Retailing* using survey research design method. These authors drew from their perceived limited choice of stores which Croatian consumers had for their grocery shopping trips before the beginning of the 1990s. And since then, a fast expansion of supermarkets, hypermarkets, cash and carry stores and discounters have been witnessed. Even with the entry of multinational retailers, and the continued shifts in consumers' attitudes and behaviour, the Croatian grocery retailers also have felt ever stronger pressures to make their competitive strategies more effective, so that they can increase their store traffic, enhance store loyalty and improve performance. Although this current study, by using social media networks, centres on the revolutionary improvement in the Retailing business environment which affects consumers' shopping behaviour, the main purport of Anic and Vouk's (2005) study was on the other hand meant to explore the relative importance of patronage motives as individual values and factors, and link them with purchasing outcomes. Also, to examine the relationship between consumers' and managers' view on store patronage motives. The authors further conceptualize 'store patronage motives' as being "the reasons for patronizing a store" – i.e. elements of a retailer's merchandising mix that are critical in customers' patronage decision.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional survey research design was employed for this study. This study was carried out both in Enugu and Lagos states in Nigeria specifically, in Education, Private and Public institutions. Since this current work was centred on the use of social media networks for arousing consumers' patronages toward most of the today's Nigerian online retailers' product items, the study was however carried out across the Educational institutions (specifically students whether postgraduate or undergraduate) in the states, as well as in some selected private and public institutions.

The population for this study consists of the members of Nigerian consumers and the marketing staff of Jumia and Konga Nigeria Ltd. The total population of these consumers however is 15,555,155. On the other hand, the population of the marketing staffs of Jumia and Konga Nigeria Ltd are 229 and 167 respectively. Summed up, this gives 396.

The required sample size for the survey conducted for this study was computed by using Yamane's (1968) sample size determination formula and the value obtained was 400.

The data for this study were collected through the use of a structured questionnaire and these were complemented by oral interview conducted among selected members of the sample. The data were adjudged valid and reliable essentially because of their sources.

4.0 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Test of Hypothesis One

H₀: 1 There is no difference in the perception of consumers toward online shopping

H_A: 1 There is a significant difference in the perception of consumers toward online shopping

To test this hypothesis, One-way Classified ANOVA was used. The justification for which is that, it helps in determining the variations across any given groups of samples. The result of the analysis is shown in table 1.

TABLE 1: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Enugu Edu.	32	22.6875	2.66927	.47186	21.7251	23.6499	17.00	25.00
Enugu Priv. Inst.	28	22.3214	2.55392	.48264	21.3311	23.3117	17.00	25.00
Enugu Pub. Inst.	21	21.1905	3.31088	.72249	19.6834	22.6976	15.00	25.00
Lagos Education	90	18.8333	3.64815	.38455	18.0692	19.5974	12.00	24.00
Lagos Priv. Inst.	83	20.1446	3.53427	.38794	19.3728	20.9163	13.00	25.00
Lagos Pub. inst.	79	17.3797	4.46727	.50261	16.3791	18.3804	9.00	25.00
Total	333	19.6276	4.03816	.22129	19.1923	20.0629	9.00	25.00

Source: Field survey, 2014.

Table 2: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1032.233	5	206.447	15.407	.000
Within Groups	4381.593	327	13.399		
Total	5413.826	332			

Source : Result of the statistical analysis based data collected.

Tables 1 and 2 present the results of the One-way classified ANOVA test on hypothesis one. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics showing the Mean Perception, Standard Deviation as well as the Standard Error of the Perceptions of the Consumers across the six (6) sectors captured in Enugu and Lagos state. While it may be difficult to determine whether there is any significant difference among the set of 'Means' on this table, Table 2 however provides the ANOVA – i.e. the Analysis of the Variance in the Mean Perception of the consumers across the six sectors. It can be deduced that there is a significant [$F_{cal} = 15.407$, $p < 0.05$] difference in the perceptions of the consumers as regards online shopping. This shows that the entire consumers do not have equal view of what it means to buy good online.

Based on the ANOVA result, it is ideal to conclude that there is a significant difference in the perceptions of the entire Nigerian Consumers that were captured in this study as regards online shopping. Hence, the null hypothesis would be rejected while the alternate hypothesis [H_A] which states that '*There is a significant difference in the perception of Nigerian consumers toward online shopping*' would be accepted.

4.2 Test of Hypothesis Two

H_0 : 2 Nigerian consumers do not significantly patronize online retailers.

H_A : 2 Nigerian consumers do patronize online retailers significantly.

To test this hypothesis, Chi-square [χ^2] statistical tool was used to test the hypothesis at 5% level of significance and specified degree of freedom and result is shown in the tables 3 and 4 that follow.

Decision Rule

Reject H_0 if $|p < 0.05|$ given the value of [χ^2], otherwise, accept it.

TABLE 3: CHI-SQUARE FREQUENCIES

Patronizing Online Retailers because it is stress free				Will Buy More because of the Experience			
Category	Obsv N	Exp N	Residual	Category	Obsv N	Exp N	Residual
SD	21	66.2	-45.2	SD	0	66.2	-66.2
D	40	66.2	-26.2	D	10	66.2	-56.2
U	39	66.2	-27.2	U	31	66.2	-35.2
A	121	66.2	54.8	A	175	66.2	108.8
SA	110	66.2	43.8	SA	115	66.2	48.8
	331				331		

Source: Field survey, 2014.

TABLE 4: CHI-SQUARE TEST STATISTIC

Patronizing Online Retailers because it is stress free				Will Buy More because of the Experience			
	χ^2	p-value	Remark		χ^2	p-value	Remark
Chi-square	126.749	0.014	Significant	Chi-square	347.414	0.0	Significant

Source : Result of the statistical analysis based data collected.

Tables 3 and 4 present the results of the Chi-square [χ^2] test on hypothesis two which was stated above. Based on the results presented on table 3, it can be deduced that the chi-square test is significant [$\chi^2 = 126.749$, $p < 0.05$] as per the consumption/patronage behaviour of the consumers. At the same time, it can be deduced that the chi-square test is also significant [$\chi^2 = 347.414$, $p < 0.05$] also as per the consumption/patronage behaviour of the consumers. Therefore, the null hypothesis would be rejected while the alternate hypothesis [H_A] which states that, '*Nigerian consumers do significantly patronize online retailers*' would be accepted.

5.1 Findings

The summary of the findings of the study are:

- there is a significant difference in the perceptions of the entire consumers; and
- the consumers patronize online retailers very significantly.

5.2 Conclusion

Despite that people have different perceptions toward online shopping, social media networks have been acting so fantastically even in today's business world, not as a globalization tool that keeps bringing people across the

world together but also as the vehicle increasingly helping companies to gain traffic or attention to their own websites usually through the use of Links via the adverts they place on the social media websites like facebook, YouTube, Google+, Likedin, etc. Sellers of product items via the internet already have good understanding of the wants of their online consumers and they constantly fulfil them. Therefore, Nigerian retailers that are yet to plunge their operations through this fantastic medium would remain as competitively impotent as some small neighbourhood retailers.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made :

- i. There is a great emerging opportunity of selling products not only at the locality market anymore but now to the entire world via social media networks. So, all small and medium sized retailers who crave for growth should plunge their businesses into the social media networks.
- ii. Nigerian consumers also should endeavour to patronize via social media networks [internets]. It is fraud free and real.

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