

**EFFECTS OF DIGITAL MARKETING ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF FOOD  
DELIVERY SERVICES AMONG UNIVERSITY OF BENIN STUDENTS**

**BY**

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BENIN CITY, NIGERIA.**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that:

1. This project is based on a research undertaken by me, **ESSIEN DAVID ESHIET** of the department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Benin, under the supervision of Mr. N. F. Ugiagbe.
2. The work has not been previously submitted for the award of a degree elsewhere.
3. All the ideals and views expressed herein are products of my personal research and where the views of others have been expressed they have been duly acknowledged.

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## CERTIFICATION

We the Undersigned certify that this research work was successfully carried out by **ESSIEN DAVID ESHIET** with the matriculation number **MGS1706705** in the Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Benin, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) Degree in Business Administration, of University of Benin, Benin City.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work in its entirety is dedicated to God Almighty for His infinite mercies and grace which made it possible for me to come this far. Indeed he has been faithful beyond imagination and to him I owe everything.

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This study examines the impact of digital marketing on consumer buying behavior of food delivery services among University of Benin students. The study adopted quantitative research design as its methodology. A sample size of 300 students was surveyed using a structured questionnaire, and the collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The findings reveal that social media advertisements ( $B = 0.242$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) and email marketing campaigns ( $B = 0.295$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) significantly influence students' awareness and adoption of food delivery services. However, mobile marketing strategies ( $B = 0.023$ ,  $p = 0.730$ ) and search engine optimization ( $B = 0.016$ ,  $p = 0.823$ ) did not have a significant impact on purchase decisions. These results suggest that social media and email marketing are the most effective digital marketing tools for engaging university students in the food delivery sector. Based on these findings, it is recommended that businesses prioritize social media and email marketing strategies by leveraging personalized promotions, influencer collaborations, and visually engaging content to drive consumer engagement. Additionally, food delivery services should refine their mobile marketing approach by offering tailored in-app rewards and optimizing notification relevance to improve responsiveness.*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

In recent years, the rapid advancement of technology and the proliferation of the internet have significantly transformed the landscape of marketing (Chaffey, 2019; Strauss & Frost, 2014). Traditional marketing methods are increasingly being replaced by digital marketing strategies, which leverage online platforms to reach consumers in dynamic and engaging ways (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2017). Among these platforms, social media has emerged as a dominant force, revolutionizing the way businesses interact with their target audiences (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp offer unparalleled opportunities for businesses to market their products and services, particularly to tech-savvy and digitally active demographics like university students (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

One industry that has particularly benefited from digital marketing on social media is the food delivery sector (Jiang, Yang & Jun, 2020; Kim & Ko, 2012). By using targeted advertisements, promotional campaigns, and influencer collaborations, food delivery companies are able to appeal directly to the preferences and behaviors of their consumer base (Dehghani, Niaki & Shirkhani, 2016; Lee & Lee, 2020). These strategies have proven effective in creating awareness, driving consumer engagement, and ultimately influencing purchase decisions (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt & Fuller 2013; Lamberton &

Stephen, 2016). The adoption of social media as a primary marketing tool has transformed the way consumers discover, evaluate, and choose food delivery services (Chung, 2021; Lee & Lee, 2020).

The University of Benin (UNIBEN), with its diverse and vibrant student population, provides an ideal case study to examine the effect of digital marketing on consumer buying behavior (Eze, 2021; Ofori, 2020). UNIBEN students are active users of social media platforms, making them a key demographic for food delivery services looking to expand

their market share (Akinyemi & Shittu, 2021; Akinlabi, 2019). Social media platforms serve as a medium for these services to not only advertise but also build brand loyalty through reviews, promotions, and user-generated content (Zhu, Wang & Chen, 2020; Lee & Lee, 2020).

However, despite the widespread use of social media for digital marketing, the extent to which these campaigns influence the buying behavior of UNIBEN students remains underexplored (Akinlabi, 2019; Eze, 2021). Understanding the connection between digital marketing and consumer behavior is crucial for businesses aiming to optimize their marketing strategies and meet the evolving needs of their audience (Kotler et al., 2017; Chaffey, 2019). Studies have shown that while social media provides a powerful platform for consumer engagement, the precise impact of digital marketing campaigns on buying behavior requires further investigation (Dehghani et al., 2016; Kim & Ko, 2012).

This study seeks to investigate how social media promotions for food delivery services affect the buying behavior of UNIBEN students (Jiang et al., 2020; Akinyemi & Shittu, 2021). By examining the role of digital marketing elements such as promotional offers, influencer endorsements, and customer reviews, this research aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of these strategies in shaping consumer

preferences (Lee & Lee, 2020; Hutter et al., 2013). Social media promotions have become a key driver in influencing consumer decisions, particularly when combined with endorsements from influencers and positive customer feedback (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Zhu et al., 2020).

In summary, the study aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on digital marketing and its impact on consumer behavior, with a specific focus on the student demographic in the context of food delivery services (Eze, 2021; Akinlabi, 2019). This exploration is vital not only for understanding current trends but also for guiding future marketing practices in an increasingly digital world (Kotler et al., 2017; Chaffey, 2019). Understanding how digital marketing strategies influence the buying behavior of students can provide businesses with valuable insights to refine their marketing approaches (Jiang et al., 2020; Hutter et al., 2013).

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The emergence of digital marketing, particularly on social media platforms, has revolutionized how businesses promote their products and engage with consumers (Chaffey, 2019; Kotler et al., 2017). In the food delivery sector, companies increasingly rely on social media advertising to reach their target audience, employing strategies such as influencer endorsements, promotional offers, and engaging visuals to capture attention and drive sales (Hutter et al., 2013; Lee & Lee, 2020). However, while the use of social media for marketing has become prevalent, the effectiveness of these strategies in influencing consumer behavior among specific demographics, such as university students, remains insufficiently understood (Eze, 2021; Akinlabi, 2019).

At the University of Benin (UNIBEN), a considerable number of students actively use social media platforms daily, making them a critical audience for food delivery services (Akinlabi, 2019; Eze, 2021). Yet, despite the widespread visibility of digital marketing campaigns, questions remain regarding the extent to which these campaigns influence the students' buying behavior (Kotler et al., 2017; Dehghani et al., 2016). Do social media advertisements truly drive awareness and sales among students? Which marketing strategies resonate most with this demographic? What factors, such as discounts, convenience, or peer recommendations, primarily motivate their buying behavior? (Hutter et al., 2013; Zhu et al., 2020).

Moreover, many food delivery services face challenges in understanding the unique preferences and behaviors of university students (Jiang et al., 2020; Eze, 2021). Without clear insights into what drives their buying behavior, these businesses risk inefficient allocation of resources and missed opportunities to maximize the impact of their marketing efforts (Chaffey, 2019; Kotler et al., 2017). The failure to understand these drivers can

result in misdirected marketing campaigns, which may not resonate with the target audience and ultimately reduce overall marketing effectiveness (Hutter et al., 2013; Lee & Lee, 2020).

This problem is further compounded by the dynamic and rapidly changing nature of digital marketing. As trends on social media evolve, the preferences and behaviors of consumers, particularly young, digitally active students, may also shift (Chaffey, 2019; Kotler et al., 2017). Businesses must therefore continuously adapt to stay relevant, but the lack of comprehensive research on the specific buying behaviors of UNIBEN students in response to food delivery promotions creates a knowledge gap (Eze, 2021; Akinlabi,

2019). Without such research, food delivery services risk missing the mark with their marketing strategies and failing to fully engage this critical demographic (Jiang et al., 2020; Hutter et al., 2013).

This study seeks to address this gap by exploring the effect of digital marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior, with a focus on food delivery services promoted on social media (Eze, 2021; Hutter et al., 2013). By doing so, it aims to provide actionable insights for marketers to optimize their strategies and better meet the needs of UNIBEN students, ultimately contributing to the effective use of digital marketing in the food delivery sector (Kotler et al., 2017; Chaffey, 2019). Understanding these dynamics will help food delivery services develop targeted campaigns that resonate with this digitally savvy demographic (Jiang et al., 2020; Lee & Lee, 2020).

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effect of digital marketing on consumer buying behavior, with a specific focus on food delivery services promoted on social media among University of Benin (UNIBEN) students. To achieve this, the study will address the following specific objectives:

1. To analyze the influence of social media advertisements on buying behavior on UNIBEN students' awareness of food delivery services. s
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of mobile marketing strategies (e.g., push notifications, SMS marketing) in driving purchase decisions among UNIBEN students.
3. To assess the role of email marketing campaigns (e.g., personalized offers, newsletters) in influencing the buying behavior of UNIBEN students.

4. To explore the impact of search engine optimization (SEO) strategies and online visibility on students' preferences for food delivery services.

These objectives aim to uncover the relationship between digital marketing efforts and consumer behavior within the context of the UNIBEN student population, offering valuable insights for businesses in the food delivery sector.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

To guide the investigation into the effect of digital marketing on consumer buying behavior among University of Benin (UNIBEN) students, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. How do social media advertisements influence the buying behavior among UNIBEN students?
2. To what extent do mobile marketing strategies (e.g., discounts, free delivery) drive buying behavior among UNIBEN students?
3. What role do email marketing campaigns play in shaping the buying behavior of UNIBEN students?
4. How do SEO strategies and online visibility impact the preferences of UNIBEN students in choosing food delivery services?

These questions aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between digital marketing efforts and consumer behavior, focusing on the unique characteristics of the UNIBEN student demographic.

## **1.5 HYPOTHESIS**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between social media advertisements and the awareness of food delivery services among UNIBEN students.

H<sub>0</sub>: Promotional offers (e.g., discounts, free delivery) do not significantly influence the purchase decisions of UNIBEN students.

H<sub>0</sub>: Influencer marketing and peer recommendations do not significantly affect the buying behavior of UNIBEN students.

H<sub>0</sub>: SEO strategies and online visibility do not significantly influence the preferences of UNIBEN students in choosing food delivery services.

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study is significant for several reasons, as it contributes to the understanding of the relationship between digital marketing and consumer buying behavior, particularly in the context of university students.

1. For Food Delivery Service Providers: The findings of this study will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies on social media in driving awareness and sales among students. Businesses can leverage this information to optimize their marketing campaigns, ensuring that their efforts are more targeted, engaging, and impactful.

2. For Social Media Marketers: The research highlights the role of various digital marketing elements—such as promotional offers, influencer collaborations, and customer reviews—in influencing consumer decisions. It will help marketers refine their approaches to cater specifically to the preferences and habits of university students, who represent a highly dynamic and tech-savvy demographic.

3. For UNIBEN Students: This study sheds light on how digital marketing affects their buying behavior, enabling students to better understand their consumer behavior. It may also encourage students to be more discerning in their engagement with social media marketing campaigns.

4. For Academia: By focusing on the University of Benin as a case study, this research adds to the existing body of knowledge on digital marketing and consumer behavior in Nigerian universities. It provides a foundation for future studies exploring the impact of digital marketing in other sectors or among different demographic groups.

5. For The Digital Marketing Industry In Nigeria: The study offers a localized perspective on the effectiveness of social media marketing within the Nigerian context. As digital marketing continues to evolve, the research can serve as a reference point for businesses and policymakers seeking to align marketing strategies with consumer behavior trends in the country.

Ultimately, the study aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice, offering practical recommendations for food delivery services, social media marketers, and other stakeholders interested in leveraging digital marketing to influence consumer behavior effectively.

## **1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study focuses on examining the effect of digital marketing on consumer buying behavior, specifically within the context of food delivery services promoted on social media. The scope of the study is defined as follows:

1. **Geographical Scope:** The research is centered on students of the University of Benin (UNIBEN), located in Benin City, Nigeria. The study targets the student population as a representative demographic of young, tech-savvy consumers actively engaged with social media.
2. **Platform Scope:** The research examines the impact of digital marketing efforts across popular social media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, as these are commonly used by the target demographic for interacting with brands and services.
3. **Time Scope:** The study will analyze recent and ongoing digital marketing campaigns to ensure the relevance of findings. It focuses on campaigns executed within the last year to capture contemporary trends in consumer behavior and digital marketing practices.

By narrowing the scope to these areas, the study aims to provide a detailed and focused analysis of how digital marketing influences the buying behavior of UNIBEN students concerning food delivery services promoted on social media. This targeted approach enhances the relevance and applicability of the research findings.

## **1.8 BASIC DEFINITIONS**

To ensure clarity and understanding of the key concepts used in this study, the following terms are defined:

1. **Digital Marketing:** The use of digital channels, including social media, email, search engines, and websites, to promote products or services, engage with consumers, and drive sales.
2. **Consumer Buying Behavior:** The decision-making process and actions taken by consumers when selecting, purchasing, and using products or services. This includes factors such as awareness, preferences, motivation, and post-purchase evaluation.
3. **Social Media:** Online platforms and applications, such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, that enable users to create, share, and interact with content and engage with others.
4. **Food Delivery Services:** Businesses that provide consumers with prepared meals or food items delivered to their specified location, often facilitated by digital platforms or mobile applications.
5. **UNIBEN Students:** Enrolled students of the University of Benin, who form the primary demographic group analyzed in this study.
6. **Promotional Campaigns:** Marketing strategies implemented to increase consumer engagement and drive sales, often involving discounts, free delivery offers, giveaways, or other incentives.

7. Influencer Marketing: A marketing strategy that involves collaborating with individuals who have a significant social media following to promote products or services to their audience.

8. User-Generated Content (UGC): Content created and shared by consumers, such as reviews, testimonials, or social media posts, that promotes a brand or service organically.

These definitions provide a foundational understanding of the terms used throughout the study, ensuring consistency and precision in the interpretation of findings.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter is organized into three primary sections: conceptual review, theoretical review, and empirical review. The conceptual literature explores key concepts that pertain to the topic of discussion, providing foundational understanding. The theoretical literature delves into various theories that are relevant to the subject under examination, offering a framework for the study. Lastly, the empirical literature reviews previous studies that are closely aligned with the current research, analyzing their findings in relation to the present study.

#### **2.2 Conceptual Review**

##### **2.2.1 Consumer Buying Behaviour**

Consumer buying behaviour is a complex and multifaceted process that encompasses the identification of needs, the search for information, the evaluation of alternatives, the purchase of goods and services, and post-purchase interactions. Solomon (2018) defines it as the actions undertaken by individuals or groups in selecting, acquiring, utilizing, assessing, and disposing of products or services to satisfy their needs. Expanding on this, Babin and Harris (2023) examine the broader decision-making processes through which individuals and collectives seek to fulfill their desires, whether through tangible products, services, experiences, or concepts. This dynamic process is shaped by various psychological, social, and economic factors that influence decision-making at every stage (Singh, 2023).

One of the most widely recognized theoretical frameworks for understanding consumer buying behaviour is the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) model. This model delineates five sequential stages: problem or need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behaviour (Blackwell et al., 2006; Mwaisaka, 2017). These stages provide a structured approach to analyzing how consumers navigate their purchasing decisions (Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1: The Five-Step Buyer Decision Process**



*(Mwaisaka, 2017)*

The first stage, *problem or need recognition*, occurs when an individual perceives a discrepancy between their current state and a desired state, prompting the realization of a need (Oliveira, 2021). Various factors can trigger this recognition, including social influences, lifestyle changes, marketing efforts, or exposure to external stimuli. For instance, an individual may recognize the need to purchase a new household appliance after an existing one malfunctions or feel the necessity to upgrade electronic devices due to advancements in technology (Boardman, Parker-Strak, & Henninger, 2020). Businesses strategically

stimulate this stage through targeted advertising and promotions, using persuasive techniques to create awareness of potential needs (Jacobson & Harrison, 2022). However, consumers may not always consciously recognize their needs, underscoring the importance of marketing strategies that effectively highlight latent demands (Chernev, 2022).

Once a need has been identified, consumers proceed to the *information search* stage, during which they seek relevant details to aid in decision-making. This search process can involve consulting various sources, including online reviews, social media, advertisements, word-of-mouth recommendations, and expert opinions (Bartschat et al., 2022). The extent of information gathering depends on factors such as the complexity of the product, the perceived financial risk, and prior consumer knowledge. For example, when purchasing a high-involvement product like a car or an electronic gadget, individuals tend to conduct extensive research, comparing technical specifications, user reviews, and brand reputations (Chuprapawan, 2023). In contrast, routine purchases, such as household essentials, may involve minimal information search due to established brand preferences (Zhang, Cao, & Liu, 2023). Despite the availability of vast digital resources, consumers often face challenges such as information overload, misleading advertisements, and biased reviews, which can complicate their decision-making process (Bartschat et al., 2022).

The *evaluation of alternatives* follows the information search phase, during which consumers compare different products or brands based on specific criteria such as price, quality, durability, and perceived value (Fuller et al., 2023). This assessment may be influenced by personal preferences, past experiences, cultural norms, and economic considerations. For instance, when purchasing household appliances, a

consumer may compare energy efficiency ratings, warranty coverage, and customer service reputation before making a final decision (Abalkhail, 2023). Organizations attempt to influence this stage by emphasizing unique selling propositions such as product differentiation, sustainability, and superior customer service (Sarokin & Bocken, 2024). However, intangible factors such as ease of use, long-term reliability, and overall satisfaction may be difficult to evaluate prior to purchase, especially in online transactions, necessitating innovations like virtual demonstrations or trial periods (Gallery & Conlon, 2024).

The *purchase decision* stage marks the point at which the consumer selects a specific product or service and proceeds with the transaction (Sujono et al., 2023). Several factors influence this decision, including product availability, price promotions, perceived brand credibility, and the convenience of the purchasing process. In the context of e-commerce, businesses optimize this stage by offering seamless checkout processes, multiple payment options, and personalized recommendations (Istiqomah & Alfansi, 2024). However, barriers such as last-minute hesitation, cart abandonment, or concerns over product authenticity can prevent consumers from finalizing their purchases, necessitating strategic interventions such as limited-time discounts, free shipping incentives, or simplified return policies (Rajib & Roy, 2023).

Finally, *post-purchase behaviour* encompasses the consumer's experience following the purchase, which significantly influences future buying decisions and brand loyalty (Dobre et al., 2023). Positive post-purchase experiences, characterized by product satisfaction, efficient customer support, and strong after-sales service, can lead to repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Wang, Yu, & Chen, 2023). Conversely, dissatisfaction—resulting from unmet expectations, defective products, or poor

service—may lead to product returns, complaints, or negative reviews, affecting the company's reputation (Ologunbe, 2023). Organizations enhance customer retention by offering loyalty programs, responsive customer service, and hassle-free return policies, thereby fostering long-term engagement and trust (Tata, Prashar, & Parsad, 2021).

While the EKB five-step buyer process provides a structured model for understanding consumer buying behaviour, it does not fully account for variations in purchasing patterns across different contexts (Olumekor & Polbitsyn, 2022). In many cases, consumers deviate from the linear sequence due to factors such as habitual purchasing, impulse buying, or high-involvement decision-making. For example, *routine buying behaviour*, which involves repeated purchases of familiar products, often bypasses extensive information search and alternative evaluation stages due to established brand loyalty and past experience (Abadi et al., 2023). A consumer purchasing essential household goods, such as detergents or groceries, may make decisions based on habit rather than detailed analysis (Deldjoo et al., 2023).

Conversely, *high-involvement purchases*, such as luxury items or long-term investments, tend to involve an extended evaluation process due to the higher financial and emotional stakes involved (Luo & Park, 2024). Consumers investing in high-value products, such as automobiles or real estate, engage in extensive research, comparing features, warranties, and resale values before committing to a decision (Hur & Ha, 2023). Additionally, *impulse buying*, driven by emotional triggers or situational factors such as promotional offers, can cause consumers to skip stages and proceed directly from problem recognition to purchase without thorough evaluation (Lee, Gan, & Liew, 2023). These deviations highlight the

complexity and variability in consumer buying behaviour, reinforcing the need for flexible and adaptive marketing strategies that cater to different purchasing patterns (Bickley, 2023).

### **2.2.2 Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing has been defined by various scholars in recent years, emphasizing its role in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly in the online retail sector. According to Järvinen (2020), digital advertising encompasses all promotional efforts delivered through digital channels, including social media, search engines, and websites, aimed at influencing consumer decisions. Similarly, Lee (2021) defines digital advertising as a strategic process that involves leveraging online platforms to deliver personalized, targeted messages to a segmented audience. Kannan (2020) expands this definition by arguing that it integrates data analytics, behavioural tracking, and real-time bidding to enhance the effectiveness of advertisements. In contrast, Pandey (2019) highlights the technological aspect, viewing digital advertising as an innovation-driven approach utilizing algorithms to optimize ad placement and timing. Also, Zia (2021) emphasizes the user-interactive elements of digital advertising, such as social media engagement and influencer partnerships, which are essential for creating more dynamic, customer-centered content. Lastly, Chaffey (2019) discusses digital advertising as an evolution of traditional marketing strategies, incorporating elements of interactivity and two-way communication between brands and consumers. These definitions collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of digital advertising, illustrating that while technological advancements play a critical role, the ultimate goal is to engage and influence consumer behaviour in a more personalized and direct manner.

Empirical evidence indicates that digital advertising significantly impacts the online purchasing behaviour of fashion products, especially among university students. For instance, a study by Ali (2022) found that personalized ads on social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are highly effective in influencing the purchasing decisions of university students, with 78% of respondents indicating that they had made at least one fashion-related purchase as a result of seeing an ad online. Moreover, Wang (2020) argues that the immediacy and convenience of digital ads, combined with targeted content, lead to impulse buying, particularly among younger demographics who are more accustomed to online shopping environments. Furthermore, a study by Harsha (2021) highlights the role of visual aesthetics and influencer marketing in digital ads, noting that these elements are highly persuasive, as most students reported they are more likely to buy a fashion product if it is endorsed by influencers they follow. Additionally, Smith (2022) discusses how digital advertisements capitalize on social proof and peer influence, leading to higher engagement and conversions. Overall, the integration of personalized content, real-time engagement, and interactive elements in digital advertising is transforming the online fashion retail landscape by making it more consumer-focused and behaviourally driven, particularly for university students who are frequently online.

### **2.2.2.1 Social Media Advertising**

Social media advertising (SMA) has become a crucial tool in digital marketing strategies, especially in the fashion industry, which has seen a surge in online purchasing behaviours among university students. Various authors have provided distinct yet overlapping definitions of SMA, demonstrating its evolving nature. According to Alalwan (2020), SMA refers to using social networking platforms to promote

products or services through paid advertisements that target specific demographics. Similarly, Tuten and Solomon (2022) define SMA as a strategic practice that leverages social media platforms to enhance brand awareness, engagement, and conversion rates through highly targeted and personalized ads. Duffett (2020) emphasizes the role of user-generated content and the interactive nature of SMA, asserting that it allows two-way communication between brands and consumers. Another perspective by Appel et al. (2020) highlights that SMA capitalizes on the vast user data available on platforms like Instagram and Facebook, enabling marketers to deliver hyper-personalized advertisements that cater to individual preferences. Muntinga et al. (2021) elaborate that SMA not only encompasses traditional promotional messages but also integrates influencers and content creators who amplify brand visibility. The synthesis of these definitions underlines that SMA is a multi-faceted approach involving personalization, interactivity, and data-driven targeting, aimed at enhancing consumer engagement and conversion in a competitive online market. This range of definitions shows that while the core of SMA lies in utilizing social platforms, its execution depends significantly on leveraging personalized content and data analytics to drive purchasing decisions.

Empirical research on SMA's influence on online purchasing behaviour, points to a strong correlation between targeted advertisements and consumer decisions. Arora and Agarwal (2019) found that personalized advertisements on social media platforms significantly affect consumers' brand attitudes and purchase intentions, primarily due to the visual appeal and perceived relevance of the products advertised. Similarly, Alalwan (2020) emphasized that university students, being active social media users, are more susceptible to influencer marketing and peer recommendations, which often shape their purchasing decisions. The integration of user-generated content and influencers in advertising strategies also increases

the perceived trustworthiness of products, further driving purchase behaviours (De Veirman et al., 2021). Furthermore, a study by Zhu and Chen (2021) found that SMA fosters impulsive buying tendencies by creating a sense of urgency through limited-time offers and social proof mechanisms, such as displaying the number of likes or comments on an advertisement. These factors collectively demonstrate that SMA's personalized, data-driven, and interactive features play a crucial role in shaping the purchasing behaviours.

#### **2.2.2.2 Mobile Marketing**

Mobile marketing refers to the strategic use of mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, to promote products and services through various digital channels, including social media, mobile applications, SMS, and websites. According to Kotler et al. (2019), mobile marketing is a subset of digital marketing that leverages mobile technology to deliver personalized, time-sensitive, and location-based content to consumers. The increasing penetration of mobile devices worldwide has transformed marketing strategies, enabling businesses to engage with consumers in real time. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2020) emphasize that mobile marketing enhances consumer interaction by providing a seamless and convenient shopping experience, fostering brand engagement and customer loyalty. As mobile technology continues to evolve, businesses integrate artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and data analytics to refine their mobile marketing strategies and enhance consumer experience.

The impact of mobile marketing on consumer buying behaviour is significant, as it influences purchasing decisions through personalized advertisements, push notifications, and mobile-friendly e-commerce platforms. Studies suggest that mobile marketing facilitates impulse buying, enhances customer trust, and

improves purchase convenience (Gao et al., 2021). Research by Shareef et al. (2019) indicates that mobile marketing campaigns that utilize tailored promotions and location-based services significantly affect consumers' purchase intentions. Moreover, mobile applications and digital wallets streamline the buying process, reducing friction and increasing transaction efficiency (Pantano & Priporas, 2016). The accessibility and immediacy of mobile marketing not only shape consumer preferences but also reinforce brand loyalty by creating a direct and continuous communication channel between businesses and consumers. Consequently, businesses that effectively implement mobile marketing strategies can leverage consumer behaviour insights to drive sales and maintain a competitive advantage in the digital marketplace.

### **2.2.2.3 Email Marketing**

Email marketing is a form of digital advertising that involves the use of electronic mail to communicate promotional messages, build customer relationships, and drive consumer engagement. Several scholars have defined email marketing in various ways. Kotler and Keller define email marketing as a direct form of marketing communication that uses email as a means of promoting products and services to potential and existing customers (Kotler & Keller, 2022). Chaffey describes email marketing as a strategic tool for delivering targeted advertising messages to segmented audiences to enhance brand awareness and customer retention (Chaffey, 2021). Armstrong and Kotler assert that email marketing encompasses personalized and automated email campaigns designed to encourage customer interactions and conversions (Armstrong & Kotler, 2023). These definitions emphasize the promotional, targeted, and strategic nature of email marketing, highlighting its role in enhancing customer engagement and driving

business growth. Email marketing integrates customer data analytics and automation to deliver personalized content, which enhances its effectiveness as a digital advertising tool (Ryan, 2022). The increasing adoption of artificial intelligence and machine learning in email marketing has further improved its precision, ensuring that businesses can reach specific customer segments with tailored messages (Solomon, 2023). The growing reliance on email marketing by brands reflects its cost-effectiveness, immediacy, and ability to track consumer responses in real-time (Tuten, 2023).

Email marketing significantly impacts customer patronage by fostering brand engagement, increasing purchase intent, and improving customer loyalty. The adoption of email marketing by soft drink companies in Nigeria has contributed to increased brand visibility and consumer interaction, leading to higher purchase rates (Adebayo, 2023). Nigerian consumers respond positively to promotional emails that offer discounts, exclusive deals, and personalized product recommendations, which influence their purchasing decisions (Ogunbiyi, 2022). The effectiveness of email marketing in driving customer patronage in Nigeria is enhanced by the increasing internet penetration and smartphone usage, which facilitates seamless access to email content (Eze, 2023). Nigerian consumers perceive email marketing as a credible source of product information, which influences their trust in brands and enhances their likelihood of making repeat purchases (Afolabi, 2023). The integration of interactive elements such as embedded videos and clickable call-to-action buttons in email marketing campaigns enhances user engagement and drives higher conversion rates in the Nigerian market (Eze, 2023).

#### **2.2.2.4 Search Engine Optimisation**

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is a critical component in the digital marketing landscape, particularly for online purchasing behaviour in the fashion industry. SEO refers to a set of strategies aimed at improving a website's visibility on search engine result pages (SERPs). While definitions of SEO vary slightly among scholars, the core principles remain consistent. Chaffey (2020) defines SEO as a process of enhancing a website's content and structure to align with search engine algorithms, thereby increasing its visibility and ranking. Similarly, Li (2019) elaborates that SEO encompasses on-page and off-page activities aimed at improving site relevance to search queries, enhancing user experience, and ultimately driving organic traffic. According to Opreana (2022), SEO also involves optimizing keywords, meta tags, and backlinks, while Pashkevich (2021) underscores the importance of technical SEO components such as page speed and mobile responsiveness. Adding to this discourse, Kumar (2020) emphasizes SEO's role in content creation, suggesting that integrating relevant keywords naturally within high-quality content is key to ranking success. Alrawi (2018) further argues that SEO is not a static process but one that requires continuous updating as search engine algorithms evolve. Despite these variations, the definitions converge on the fundamental goal of improving a website's visibility to attract more traffic, which is crucial for influencing consumer behaviour in online environments. Thus, SEO's role is integral to fostering a competitive edge in the fashion sector, where consumer choices are increasingly driven by online search results.

Research has shown that effective SEO strategies directly impact consumer decision-making by increasing the discoverability, which in turn influences purchasing behaviour (Darban, 2021). A study by Jang (2023) highlights that young consumers, particularly university students, are more likely to purchase from websites that rank higher on SERPs due to the perceived trust and credibility associated with top search

results. Furthermore, SEO enhances user experience by ensuring fast loading times, mobile compatibility, and relevant content, factors that significantly affect online shopping satisfaction and repeat purchases (Ahmad, 2020). According to MacGowan (2022), the integration of SEO with personalized marketing strategies, such as targeted ads and content recommendations, can further increase engagement and conversion rates. For retailers, this means that an effective SEO strategy not only drives traffic but also increases the likelihood of impulse purchases, a trend particularly prevalent among university students who exhibit higher tendencies for spontaneous buying (Wu, 2019). Therefore, SEO not only enhances visibility but also plays a pivotal role in shaping online purchasing behaviours.

## **2.3 Theoretical Review**

### **2.3.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)**

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), proposed by Icek Ajzen in 1991, has become one of the most widely employed theoretical frameworks in understanding human behaviour, especially within decision-making contexts. This theory extends from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which posits that an individual's behaviour is determined by their intention to perform the behaviour, driven by attitudes and subjective norms. Ajzen introduced "perceived behavioural control" as a key addition to the TRA model to form TPB, recognizing that individuals' intentions can also be influenced by their perceived ease or difficulty in performing the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). TPB has been applied across various fields, including health, environmental studies, and consumer behaviour. It is particularly relevant in understanding how individuals' behavioural intentions are shaped by their attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In recent years, the rise of digital advertising has

prompted scholars to employ TPB to examine consumer decision-making in online contexts, particularly among younger demographics such as university students, who are frequent users of digital platforms (Boateng & Okoe, 2015; Cheung & To, 2017).

The core components of TPB—attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control—have been widely explored in academic research as significant determinants of behaviour. Ajzen (2015) emphasizes that attitudes represent the individual’s favorable or unfavorable evaluation of a particular behaviour. In the context of online purchasing behaviour, attitudes toward online shopping can be shaped by experiences with digital advertising, which aims to influence consumer preferences (Lim et al., 2016). Subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behaviour. Studies have shown that peer influence and social networks, especially on digital platforms, can significantly impact purchasing decisions among university students (Lin & Kim, 2016; Alalwan, 2018). Meanwhile, perceived behavioural control pertains to an individual’s belief in their ability to execute the behaviour. In the online shopping environment, this could include factors such as ease of navigation, trust in the platform, or availability of resources, such as financial means or internet access (Hsu et al., 2016). However, scholars have critiqued the oversimplification of perceived behavioural control, arguing that it doesn’t fully capture the complexities of digital consumption in today’s highly mediated environments (Pavlou & Fyngenson, 2006). Moreover, while TPB successfully accounts for intentional behaviour, it often struggles to explain unintentional or habitual behaviour, which is increasingly relevant in digital contexts (Moser, 2016; Hansen, 2018).

In relation to this study, TPB remains highly pertinent. Digital advertising directly influences the key components of TPB by shaping attitudes through targeted advertisements and personalized recommendations. Studies have found that positive attitudes toward online advertising often correlate with higher online purchasing intentions (Mir, 2018; Chen & Lee, 2019). Furthermore, the growing role of social influencers in digital marketing strengthens the subjective norms aspect, as students are often guided by the purchasing behaviours and endorsements of influencers (Hassan & Shiu, 2018). Perceived behavioural control also plays a vital role as digital platforms increasingly offer seamless user experiences, mobile accessibility, and secure payment methods, making online shopping more convenient for students (Richard et al., 2020). However, as digital advertising continues to evolve, some scholars argue that TPB may need refinement to account for the emotional and subconscious elements of online consumer behaviour that are not fully addressed by the current model (Loiacono et al., 2019). Overall, TPB provides a useful theoretical foundation for understanding the cognitive mechanisms behind online purchasing decisions in the digital age, though its ability to adapt to the complexities of modern consumer behaviour remains an area of scholarly debate.

### **2.3.2 Consumer Decision-Making Process Model**

The Consumer Decision-Making Process Model, often attributed to John Dewey (1910), outlines a sequential process through which consumers identify and solve a purchasing problem. The model's classical form involves five stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behaviour (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The model has been foundational in understanding consumer behaviour across various product categories, as it elucidates how external and

internal factors influence decision-making. Its applicability has been explored in diverse sectors, including fashion, which is characterized by high emotional involvement and frequent online purchasing decisions (Solomon et al., 2018). As the digital advertising landscape evolves, particularly among younger, tech-savvy demographics like university students, revisiting this model offers critical insights into how these individuals interact with fashion products online.

The Consumer Decision-Making Process Model has been extensively evaluated and modified to accommodate shifts in digital behaviour, particularly within online purchasing contexts (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). The theory assumes a rational and linear progression through its five stages, which has been critiqued for its inability to account for impulsive purchasing and the influence of digital marketing strategies (Bruner & Kumar, 2017). Contemporary scholars such as Darley, Blankson, and Luethge (2010) argue that the model needs adaptation to digital environments where decision-making can be non-linear due to information overload and social media influence. Other critiques focus on the overemphasis on cognitive processes while neglecting the emotional and psychological aspects that are increasingly relevant in the online fashion domain (Prashar, Sai, & Parsad, 2015). For instance, digital advertising often capitalizes on visual stimuli and immediate gratification, which can significantly truncate the evaluation and information search phases, leading to more impulsive decisions (Floh & Madlberger, 2013). Additionally, fashion purchasing, being high in symbolic value, is influenced by factors such as peer validation and brand visibility, which are often accentuated through digital marketing (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

In the context of this study, the theory remains highly relevant but must be considered through a digital lens. Youths represent a unique demographic that is both time-constrained and heavily influenced by peer networks, social media, and online reviews (Chiang & Pant, 2019). Digital advertising, especially via platforms like Instagram and TikTok, aligns closely with the "evaluation of alternatives" stage, as it fosters brand comparison and user engagement through targeted algorithms (Pentina, Guilloux, & Micu, 2018). However, given the fast-paced nature of the digital world, youths may bypass the traditional information search process and directly move to the purchase phase based on influencer recommendations or time-limited offers (Shareef et al., 2018). Furthermore, post-purchase behaviour in this demographic is also crucial, as online reviews, unboxing experiences, and social sharing can influence both brand loyalty and future purchasing decisions (Park & Kim, 2019). Thus, while the Consumer Decision-Making Process Model offers a useful framework, its linearity and rational focus must be recalibrated for understanding the dynamic, fast-paced, and emotionally charged context of online fashion purchasing among university students.

### **2.3.3 Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)**

The "Uses and Gratifications Theory" (UGT) is a well-established framework in communication and media studies that explains how individuals actively seek out specific media to fulfill their needs and desires. UGT was first developed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch in 1973, providing an alternative to the then-dominant passive audience theory that posited media consumption as a one-way, unidirectional flow of influence (Katz, 1973). Instead, UGT posits that audiences actively participate in their media consumption, seeking particular forms of media to gratify various psychological and social needs such as

entertainment, information, personal identity, and social integration (Blumler, 1979). Over time, this theory has evolved to incorporate new forms of media, including digital platforms, which are increasingly central to understanding modern communication and consumer behaviour, particularly in the context of digital advertising and online purchases.

UGT assumes that individuals are not passive consumers of media; rather, they are selective in their media consumption based on how well a particular medium satisfies their needs. Scholars such as Ruggiero (2000) and Stafford et al. (2004) expanded UGT's applicability to online media, stressing that the interactive nature of the internet adds a new layer of complexity. UGT has been applied to various digital contexts, including social media (Whiting & Williams, 2013), mobile applications (Leung, 2015), and more recently, digital advertising (Lim et al., 2020). For instance, consumers are motivated to engage with digital ads for various gratifications such as entertainment, information-seeking, or even social interaction (Lee & Choi, 2019). Sundar and Limperos (2013) argue that digital platforms afford unique "affordances" not present in traditional media, which influence how users derive gratifications from digital content. UGT has also been useful in understanding how tailored digital advertisements appeal to personal identities, often triggering more engagement and a higher likelihood of purchasing behaviour (Cho & Cheon, 2017; Bolton et al., 2013). However, the theory has its limitations, particularly in accounting for subconscious influences on consumer behaviour, which has prompted critics to call for an integration of more passive audience theories (Shafer, 2018). Despite these critiques, UGT remains a valuable theoretical lens through which to analyze how digital media impacts consumer behaviour, especially in fashion retail.

In the context of purchasing behaviour, UGT provides a useful framework for understanding the role of digital advertising in influencing consumer decisions. Young adults, particularly university students, are often heavy users of social media platforms where digital ads are pervasive (Khan, 2017). These students engage with digital advertisements to satisfy multiple needs: gaining information about the latest trends, finding products that express personal identity, and staying socially integrated with their peer group (Taylor & Strutton, 2016). Research indicates that personalized advertising, a key feature of digital marketing strategies, enhances gratifications and increases the likelihood of purchase (Xu et al., 2017). Additionally, digital ads that offer entertainment value or are perceived as aesthetically appealing are more likely to generate positive consumer responses, including purchase intention (Dehghani & Tumer, 2015). However, the constantly evolving nature of digital media platforms and the increasingly sophisticated algorithms used to target consumers present new challenges in fully applying UGT, as the theory must evolve to capture the complexities of today's digital marketing environment (Zhao & Wang, 2020). Therefore, while UGT is relevant to understanding online purchasing behaviour in the fashion industry, it may require further refinement to address the nuanced interplay between gratification-seeking and algorithm-driven advertising.

#### **2.3.4 Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)**

The *Elaboration Likelihood Model* (ELM), introduced by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), is a dual-process theory that explains how individuals process persuasive messages, particularly in the context of attitude formation and change. The theory posits that individuals process messages through either a central route, which involves deep, thoughtful scrutiny of message content, or a peripheral route, which relies on

surface-level cues such as attractiveness or credibility of the source (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Over the years, ELM has become widely influential in understanding how advertising messages are processed, with its applicability extending to various domains, including digital marketing. With the proliferation of digital advertising and its influence on online consumer behaviour, especially among university students, ELM provides a relevant framework to explore how different kinds of advertisements affect the purchasing decisions of consumers, particularly in sectors such as fashion where both informational content and superficial aesthetics play significant roles (Boerman et al., 2017; Nelson et al., 2016).

The Elaboration Likelihood Model hinges on the idea that individuals vary in the degree to which they engage with persuasive content. The central route processing is typically employed when the recipient is motivated and has the ability to engage in cognitive elaboration, leading to more enduring attitude changes (Petty, Rucker, Bizer, & Cacioppo, 2004). In contrast, peripheral route processing occurs when individuals lack either motivation or ability, resulting in more transient attitude shifts based on external cues like the visual appeal of an ad or endorsement by a celebrity (Sicilia, Ruiz, & Reynolds, 2016). Research has demonstrated that in the context of digital advertising, consumers often use peripheral route processing due to information overload and limited attention spans, which is particularly relevant among university students who are constantly exposed to a barrage of online stimuli (Liu et al., 2019). However, when students perceive a personal relevance in the message—such as fashion products that align with their identity or self-expression—they may engage more with the central route, scrutinizing product features and benefits (Thompson & Malaviya, 2013). Studies like that of Zhang and Mao (2020) confirm that the centrality or peripherality of processing is context-dependent and mediated by factors such as involvement and digital literacy, both of which are particularly heightened among university students.

In relation to the effect of digital advertising on online purchasing behaviour, ELM is highly relevant. Youths, who are digitally native, are often exposed to high levels of advertising, much of which targets them through peripheral cues such as social media influencers, visually appealing content, and limited-time offers (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). These advertisements often capitalize on peripheral route processing, where the aesthetic or superficial appeal of the product may have a greater influence on purchase decisions than detailed product information (Bart, Stephen, & Sarvary, 2014). However, the central route remains significant for high-involvement fashion purchases, such as when youths are buying more expensive or high-utility items, which require thoughtful consideration of attributes like quality, durability, and functionality (Deng & Yuen, 2020). The dynamic interplay of central and peripheral processing routes in ELM thus helps explain why some digital ads are more effective than others in driving online purchases, particularly when targeting a demographic as varied and digitally savvy as university students.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

This study adopts the theory of planned behaviour as its theoretical framework. This theory extends from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which posits that an individual's behaviour is determined by their intention to perform the behaviour, driven by attitudes and subjective norms. Ajzen introduced "perceived behavioural control" as a key addition to the TRA model to form TPB, recognizing that individuals' intentions can also be influenced by their perceived ease or difficulty in performing the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). TPB has been applied across various fields, including health, environmental studies, and consumer

behaviour. It is particularly relevant in understanding how individuals' behavioural intentions are shaped by their attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In recent years, the rise of digital advertising has prompted scholars to employ TPB to examine consumer decision-making in online contexts, particularly among younger demographics such as university students, who are frequent users of digital platforms (Boateng & Okoe, 2015; Cheung & To, 2017).

## **2.5 Empirical Review**

Abubakar and Ilesanmi (2020) examined the influence of digital advertising on the purchasing behaviour of fashion products among university students in Nigeria. Using a survey research design, 450 students were sampled from the University of Lagos, Nigeria, through a structured questionnaire. The study employed descriptive statistics and regression analysis to evaluate the data. The findings revealed that exposure to digital advertisements on social media significantly influences students' purchase intentions towards fashion products, particularly in areas such as trust and brand image. The researchers recommended that fashion brands should enhance their presence on digital platforms to increase engagement and loyalty among young consumers.

Okoro and Ogbeide (2021) explored the relationship between social media advertising and students' fashion product choices in South-West Nigeria. A total of 350 students from universities in Lagos and Oyo states were surveyed using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using the Chi-square test and Pearson correlation. The study revealed that advertisements on Instagram and Facebook had a positive effect on the purchase of fashion products, as students were attracted by trendy and visually appealing

content. The authors recommended that fashion companies tailor their advertisements to reflect the students' lifestyle and preferences for better conversion rates.

Babalola and Ibrahim (2021) investigated how digital influencers affect university students' purchasing behaviour of technology products in Nigeria. A sample of 300 students from three universities in Northern Nigeria was selected through a multi-stage sampling method. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The results indicated that digital influencers on Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok had a significant impact on the students' choices of technology products, including smartphones, laptops, and accessories. Students were more likely to purchase technology products endorsed by influencers they perceive as credible and relatable. The study suggested that technology brands collaborate with micro-influencers for better engagement and product awareness among the student demographic.

Nwankwo and Adeola (2022) focused on the effect of online advertising on the purchase intentions of consumer electronics, such as smartphones and laptops, among Nigerian undergraduate students. The study involved 400 students from universities in South-East Nigeria, using an online survey to gather data. A structural equation modelling (SEM) technique was employed to analyze the relationships between the variables. The findings revealed that trust in online advertising, the quality of product presentation, and perceived credibility of the e-commerce platforms positively influenced students' intentions to purchase consumer electronics. The authors recommended that electronics advertisers improve the clarity and accuracy of their online ads and product descriptions to boost consumer confidence.

Alabi and Omole (2022) examined how digital advertising influences university students' buying behaviour concerning health and wellness products, such as supplements, fitness gear, and organic

products. The study surveyed 375 students from three universities in the South-West region of Nigeria using a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using ANOVA and regression techniques. The study concluded that online advertisements from health and wellness brands significantly influence students' purchasing decisions, with factors such as advertisement appeal, trust in the brand, and social proof playing crucial roles. The authors recommended that health and wellness companies focus on creating engaging and informative advertisements, incorporating testimonials to foster trust among university students.

Ajiboye and Oyinlola (2022) explored the impact of Instagram advertisements on the purchase of personal care products, including skincare and haircare items, among university students in Nigeria. The study used a survey method to collect data from 500 students at the University of Ibadan. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and linear regression models. The findings showed that Instagram's visual appeal and the platform's interactive nature significantly influenced students' purchasing decisions regarding personal care products. The authors recommended that personal care brands invest more in Instagram advertising, using high-quality visuals, product demonstrations, and interactive features such as polls and customer reviews to engage potential buyers.

Eze and Mbah (2022) investigated how digital marketing communications, particularly through social media platforms, influence the purchasing behaviour of educational tools (e.g., software, textbooks, and e-learning platforms) among students in Nigerian higher institutions. The researchers employed a survey method, gathering responses from 400 students across five universities in Eastern Nigeria. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. Results showed that digital marketing communication,

particularly through targeted ads on social media, significantly influenced students' decisions to purchase educational tools. The authors recommended that educational product marketers use personalized strategies and offer discounts to increase the adoption of their products by university students.

Chukwu and Nnamani (2023) analyzed the influence of social media advertising on the purchasing patterns of food delivery services among university students in Nigeria. The study involved 450 students from universities in Enugu State. Using a cross-sectional survey design, the authors employed the Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analysis for data evaluation. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between the frequency of exposure to social media ads and students' usage of food delivery apps. Specifically, advertisements featuring promotions such as discounts and celebrity endorsements were the most effective in influencing purchase decisions. The authors recommended that food delivery companies increase their use of celebrity endorsements and regularly offer promotions to boost engagement and orders among students.

Ogunleye and Adebayo (2023) explored the combined role of e-commerce and digital advertising on the purchase of home appliances, such as refrigerators, microwaves, and electric kettles, among Nigerian university students. The study surveyed 500 students from universities in Lagos using a well-structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and path analysis. The findings indicated that the convenience of e-commerce platforms, coupled with persuasive digital advertisements, significantly influenced students' buying decisions. The study highlighted that students were more likely to purchase home appliances when offered convenient payment options and reliable delivery services. The

authors recommended that home appliance brands optimize their e-commerce platforms and improve customer experience to drive online purchases.

Ifeanyi and Olanrewaju (2023) assessed how online advertising impacts the consumption of subscription-based streaming services, such as Netflix and Spotify, among university students in Nigeria. The researchers gathered data from 400 students across three major universities in the Northern region of Nigeria through a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using logistic regression and descriptive statistics. The study revealed that students were more likely to subscribe to streaming services that were advertised online, especially if the advertisements featured promotional offers such as free trials or discounted subscriptions. The authors recommended that streaming service providers increase transparency and offer promotions through online ads to attract and retain student subscribers.

Siddiqui and Singh (2020) explored the influence of social media advertising on the buying behaviour of fashion products among university students in India. A sample of 500 students from three universities in Delhi was surveyed using a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The study found that social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook significantly affect the students' fashion purchasing decisions, especially through visually appealing content and peer influence. It was recommended that fashion brands focus on visually captivating ads and leverage user-generated content to enhance engagement and trust.

Ko and Kim (2021) examined the impact of digital influencers on the online fashion shopping behaviour of university students in South Korea. The study collected data from 400 students in Seoul using a self-administered questionnaire. The data were analyzed using structural equation modelling (SEM). The

findings revealed that students are highly influenced by fashion influencers on platforms like YouTube and Instagram, which shape their perceptions of fashion trends and purchasing decisions. The authors recommended that fashion brands collaborate with influencers to enhance brand visibility and build trust among the young consumer segment.

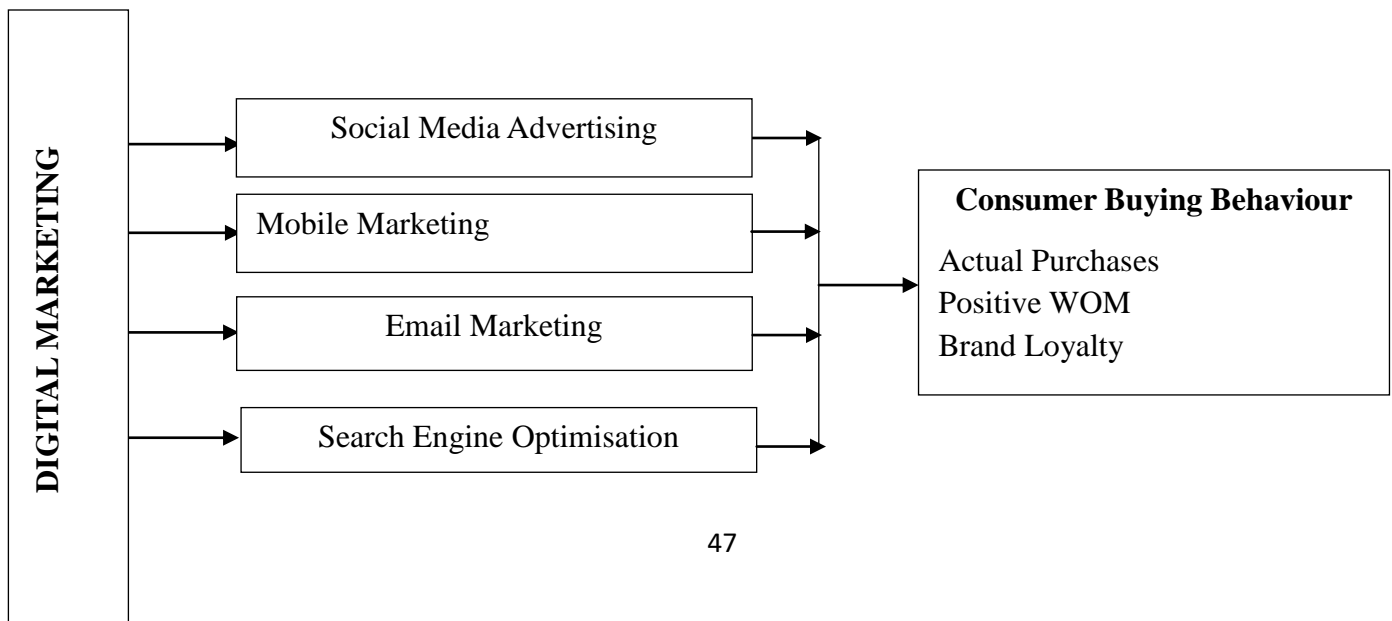
Smith and Barnes (2021) investigated the impact of Instagram advertisements on fashion product purchases among university students in the U.S. The study employed a survey method, collecting data from 600 students from three major universities in California. Data were analyzed using logistic regression. The results indicated that interactive ads on Instagram, particularly those featuring influencer endorsements, significantly influenced students' purchase behaviour. The authors concluded that Instagram's unique blend of visual content and direct shopping features makes it a powerful tool for fashion brands targeting university students. They recommended fashion retailers invest in Instagram ads, particularly leveraging the platform's "shop now" feature for better conversion.

Gao and Li (2022) investigated how social media marketing affects fashion consumption among university students in China. The researchers surveyed 450 students from universities in Beijing using an online questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The findings indicated that social media platforms like WeChat and Weibo significantly influence students' fashion consumption, with social proof and trust in brands playing a major role. The study recommended that fashion brands in China increase their presence on local social media platforms and collaborate with key opinion leaders (KOLs) to build brand loyalty and increase sales.

Mendez and Martinez (2023) examined the effects of digital advertising on the fashion purchasing behaviour of university students in Spain. A sample of 400 students from universities in Madrid was surveyed using an online questionnaire. Data were analyzed using factor analysis and multiple regression. The study found that online advertisements, particularly those using personalization and retargeting strategies, had a strong influence on the students' purchasing decisions. The study recommended that fashion brands invest in personalized advertising strategies, such as targeted email campaigns and tailored ads, to effectively engage university students and increase purchase likelihood.

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework serves as a guide as we investigate the aspects of digital marketing that contributes to consumer buying behaviour. Punch (2015) views a conceptual frame work is a narrative portrayal of a research study's central concept and variable, as well as their presupposed relationship to one another. It includes both the dependent variable (consumer buying behaviour), independent variable (social media advertising, mobile marketing, email marketing, and search engine optimisation).



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework (Author's Computation, 2025)**

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter described the research methods and procedures used for data collection and analysis, including the research design, population and sampling techniques, operationalization and measurement of variables, research instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, data sources, data analysis methods, and model specification.

### 3.2 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive design illustrated the relationships between variables as they naturally occurred. It identified and gathered data on the characteristics of a specific issue or question (Bryman, 2015). The study adopted a descriptive research design because, as noted by Bushiri (2015), this approach has the advantage of yielding a substantial amount of responses from a diverse group of participants.

### 3.3 Population of the Study

The population of this study included the total number of undergraduate students of the University of Benin which was 32,951 (ICT/CRPU University of Benin, 2025). The breakdown of the population is presented in the table below:

**Table 3.1: Population Distribution of the Study**

| S/N | FACULTY               | POPULATION OF STUDENTS |
|-----|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1   | Agriculture           | 1,215                  |
| 2   | Arts                  | 4,311                  |
| 3   | Basic Medical Science | 3,466                  |
| 4   | Dentistry             | 141                    |
| 5   | Education             | 4,123                  |
| 6   | Engineering           | 3,786                  |
| 7   | Environment Science   | 831                    |
| 8   | Law                   | 944                    |
| 9   | Life Science          | 3,969                  |

|              |                        |               |
|--------------|------------------------|---------------|
| 10           | Management Science     | 3,086         |
| 11           | Pharmacy               | 1,106         |
| 12           | Physical Science       | 2,252         |
| 13           | Social Science         | 2,511         |
| 14           | Medicine               | 823           |
| 15           | Veterinary Medicine    | 128           |
| 16           | Institute of Education | 167           |
| 17           | SPESSE                 | 92            |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                        | <b>32,951</b> |

**Source: ICT/CRPU University of Benin (2025)**

### 3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) sample size determination formular. The formular is stated as;

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

In the formular above;

n is the required sample size from the population understudy

N is the whole population that is understudy

e is the precision or sampling error which is usually 0.05 for management sciences

Therefore;

$$n = \frac{32,951}{1 + 32,951(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{32,951}{1 + 32,951(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{32,951}{1+82.38}$$

$$n = \frac{32,951}{83.38}$$

$$n = 395$$

Therefore, the sample size of the study was determined to be 395. The study employed a simple random sampling technique, which ensured that every unit in the population had an equal likelihood of selection. Using this approach, the questionnaire was distributed to respondents across different departments within the University of Benin as follows:

**Table 3.2: Sample Distribution of the Study**

| S/N | FACULTY               | POPULATION OF STUDENTS | CALCULATION                                 | SAMPLE SIZE OF STUDENTS |
|-----|-----------------------|------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 1   | Agriculture           | 1,215                  | $\frac{1,215}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 15                      |
| 2   | Arts                  | 4,311                  | $\frac{4,311}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 52                      |
| 3   | Basic Medical Science | 3,466                  | $\frac{3,446}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 42                      |
| 4   | Dentistry             | 141                    | $\frac{141}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$   | 2                       |
| 5   | Education             | 4,123                  | $\frac{4,123}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 49                      |
| 6   | Engineering           | 3,786                  | $\frac{3,786}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 45                      |

|              |                        |               |   |            |
|--------------|------------------------|---------------|---|------------|
| 7            | Environment Science    | 831           | $\frac{831}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$   | 10         |
| 8            | Law                    | 944           | $\frac{944}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$   | 11         |
| 9            | Life Science           | 3,969         | $\frac{3,969}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 48         |
| 10           | Management Science     | 3,086         | $\frac{3,086}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 37         |
| 11           | Pharmacy               | 1,106         | $\frac{1,106}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 13         |
| 12           | Physical Science       | 2,252         | $\frac{2,252}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 27         |
| 13           | Social Science         | 2,511         | $\frac{2,511}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$ | 30         |
| 14           | Medicine               | 823           | $\frac{823}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$   | 10         |
| 15           | Veterinary Medicine    | 128           | $\frac{128}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$   | 2          |
| 16           | Institute of Education | 167           | $\frac{167}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$   | 2          |
| 17           | SPESSE                 | 92            | $\frac{92}{32,951} \times \frac{395}{1}$    | 1          |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                        | <b>32,951</b> |   | <b>395</b> |

**Source: ICT/CRPU University of Benin (2025)**

### 3.5 Sources of Data

The study's nature required the use of primary data. Data were gathered by administering questionnaires to respondents who were students at the University of Benin.

### 3.6 Operational and Measurement of Variables

The study examined the effect of digital marketing on consumer buying behaviour among University of Benin students specifically within the context of food delivery services. It specifically investigated four key digital marketing dimensions— social media advertisements, mobile marketing strategies, email

marketing campaigns, and search engine optimisation —and their relationship with consumer buying behaviour among University of Benin students specifically within the context of food delivery services. A Likert-type scale, commonly used in similar research, was adopted for the study. Additionally, Table 3.3 presented the operationalization of these variables.

**Table 3.3: Operationalization of Variables**

| <b>S/N</b> | <b>Variables</b>                                    | <b>Operationalisation and Measurement of the variables</b>  | <b>Quantification of variables</b> |
|------------|---|---|------------------------------------|
| 1          | Gender  | Two-point scale   | Question 1                         |
| 2          | Age   | Four-point scale  | Question 2                         |
| 3          | Class level   | Six point scale   | Question 3                         |
| 4          | Faculty   | Open ended  | Question 4                         |
| 6          | Consumer Buying Behaviour of Food Delivery Services | The decision-making processes and actions of students when selecting, ordering, and purchasing meals through online food delivery platforms. Measured by Likert-type five point scale.  | Question 5-9                       |
| 7          | Social Media Advertisements                         | Paid or organic promotional content on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter designed to influence students' awareness, preferences, and purchasing decisions regarding food delivery services. Measured by the Likert-type five point scale. | Question 10-14                     |
| 8          | Mobile Marketing Strategies                         | Targeted promotional activities delivered through mobile devices—such as push notifications, SMS, in-app advertisements, and location-based offers—aimed at influencing students' engagement and  | Question 15-19                     |

|                |    |                            |   |                |
|----------------|----|----------------------------|---|----------------|
| <b>Source:</b> |    |                            | purchasing decisions on food delivery platforms. Measured by the Likert-type five point scale.  |                |
| <b>Author</b>  | 9  | Email Marketing Campaigns  | Targeted promotional emails sent by food delivery services to inform, engage, and influence students' purchasing decisions through personalized offers, discounts, updates, and loyalty programs. Measured by the Likert-type five point scale.             | Question 20-24 |
| <b>'s</b>      |    |                            |   |                |
| <b>Compu</b>   |    |                            |   |                |
| <b>tation</b>  |    |                            |   |                |
| <b>(2025)</b>  | 10 | Search Engine Optimisation | The strategic enhancement of food delivery service websites to improve their visibility and ranking on search engine results pages, thereby influencing students' awareness, trust, and purchasing decisions. Measured by the Likert-type five point scale. | Question 25-29 |

### 3.7 Research Instrument

The study employed a structured questionnaire as the research instrument. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section gathered demographic information about the respondents, while the second section contained questions aligned with the previously stated research questions to obtain relevant information from participants. Responses in the questionnaire were based on a 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

### 3.8 Validity of the Research Instrument

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument accurately measured what it was intended to measure (Bolarinwa, 2015). The validity of the instrument (questionnaire) was confirmed by the researcher's supervisor, an expert in the field of Business Administration. His insights, suggestions, and recommendations were incorporated to develop the final version of the instrument.

### **3.9 Reliability of the Research Instrument**

Reliability refers to the consistency of the research instruments. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach's Alpha is a reliability metric that indicates the extent to which items within a set are closely related to one another (Sekaran, 2003). The reliability of the data associated with the variables was measured using Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) coefficient, which ranges from 0 to 1 (Bayram, 2004). According to Inenacho (2014), a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.7 is considered statistically reliable, suggesting that the items in the questionnaire exhibited a high level of consistency.

### **3.10 Method of Data Collection**

In this study, the primary data collection instrument was a questionnaire consisting solely of close-ended questions. Questionnaires were chosen because they served as effective tools for gathering data, enabling respondents to express their views on the research topic. A five-point Likert scale (ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree") was used in the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to students at the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State. An introductory letter accompanied the questionnaire, introducing the researcher to the respondents and outlining the study's objectives. Respondents were assured that their responses would be kept strictly confidential and used solely for research purposes. This approach was intended to encourage a higher response rate.

### **3.11 Method of Data Analysis**

The responses from the distributed questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation matrix, and linear regression. Descriptive statistics were employed to describe the

demographic characteristics of the respondents through frequency counts and percentages. Additionally, they were used to address the research questions using frequency counts, simple percentages, mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), and standard deviation. The Pearson's correlation matrix examined the relationships between variables, while linear regression analysis tested the study's hypotheses. The analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 26) econometric software.

### 3.10 Model Specification

The model specification considered suitable by the researcher is a multiple linear regression model as follows:

$$\text{Consumer Buying Behaviour of Food Delivery Services} = f(\text{Digital Marketing Strategies}) \text{---(3.1)}$$

$$\text{Consumer Buying Behaviour of Food Delivery Services} = f(\text{Social Media Advertisements, Mobile Marketing Strategies, Email Marketing Campaigns, Search Engine Optimisation}) \text{-----(3.2)}$$

$$\text{CBB} = \beta_1\text{SMA} + \beta_2\text{MMS} + \beta_3\text{EMC} + \beta_4\text{SEO} + \varepsilon \text{-----(3.3)}$$

Where;

CBB – Consumer Buying Behaviour of Food Delivery Services.

SMA – Social Media Advertisements.

MMS – Mobile Marketing Strategies.

EMC – Email Marketing Campaigns.

SEO – Search Engine Optimisation.

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ - Coefficients

$\varepsilon$  – Error term

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the empirical analysis of the data retrieved from respondents in the field survey. Specifically, the questionnaire was printed hard copy and shared to the respondents. A total response of 395 was targeted, out of which only three hundred (300) of responses were completely submitted by the respondents. The data from the responses were retrieved, cleaned and used for this analysis indicating a response rate of 75.9%.

#### **4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis**

##### **4.2.1 Demographic Analysis**

Below is a comprehensive demographic table that includes all collected demographic information (gender, age, class level, and faculty) with corresponding frequency and percentage distributions.

**Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

| <b>Category</b>    | <b>Sub-Category</b>    | <b>Frequency (n)</b> | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>      | Male                   | 130                  | 43.3%                 |
|                    | Female                 | 170                  | 56.7%                 |
| <b>Age</b>         | 20 years and below     | 55                   | 18.3%                 |
|                    | 21 – 30 years          | 195                  | 65.0%                 |
|                    | 31 – 40 years          | 50                   | 16.7%                 |
|                    | 41 years and above     | —                    | —                     |
| <b>Class Level</b> | 100 Level              | 40                   | 13.3%                 |
|                    | 200 Level              | 55                   | 18.3%                 |
|                    | 300 Level              | 50                   | 16.7%                 |
|                    | 400 Level              | 90                   | 30.0%                 |
|                    | 500 Level              | 45                   | 15.0%                 |
|                    | 600 Level              | 20                   | 6.7%                  |
| <b>Faculty</b>     | Agriculture            | 13                   | 4.3%                  |
|                    | Arts                   | 37                   | 12.3%                 |
|                    | Basic Medical Science  | 30                   | 10.0%                 |
|                    | Dentistry              | 2                    | 0.7%                  |
|                    | Education              | 38                   | 12.7%                 |
|                    | Engineering            | 32                   | 10.7%                 |
|                    | Environmental Science  | 7                    | 2.3%                  |
|                    | Law                    | 8                    | 2.7%                  |
|                    | Life Science           | 34                   | 11.3%                 |
|                    | Management Science     | 37                   | 12.3%                 |
|                    | Pharmacy               | 9                    | 3.0%                  |
|                    | Physical Science       | 19                   | 6.3%                  |
|                    | Social Science         | 22                   | 7.3%                  |
|                    | Medicine               | 7                    | 2.3%                  |
|                    | Veterinary Medicine    | 2                    | 0.7%                  |
|                    | Institute of Education | 2                    | 0.7%                  |
|                    | SPESSE                 | 1                    | 0.3%                  |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>300</b>             | <b>100%</b>          |                       |

**Source: Author’s Computation (2025)**

### **Gender Distribution**

The majority of respondents are female (56.7%), while males constitute 43.3% of the sample. This indicates a higher level of participation from female students.

### **Age Distribution**

A significant portion of respondents (65.0%) fall within the 21–30 years age group, highlighting that most students are young adults. The 20 years and below category accounts for 18.3%, while 31–40 years represents 16.7%, indicating a smaller proportion of older students. No respondents were recorded in the 41 years and above category.

### **Class Level Distribution**

The 400 Level class has the highest representation (30.0%), suggesting a greater willingness among final-year undergraduate students to participate. The 200 Level (18.3%) and 300 Level (16.7%) have moderate participation, while the 100 Level (13.3%) and 500 Level (15.0%) have relatively lower responses. The 600 Level (6.7%) has the least representation.

### **Faculty Distribution**

The faculties with the highest representation include Education (12.7%), Arts (12.3%), and Management Science (12.3%), indicating large student populations in these disciplines. Life Science (11.3%), Engineering (10.7%), and Basic Medical Science (10.0%) also have significant participation. Faculties with the lowest representation include SPESSE (0.3%), Dentistry (0.7%), Veterinary Medicine (0.7%), and

Institute of Education (0.7%), likely due to their smaller student populations. The distribution generally aligns with faculty enrollment sizes within the institution.

#### 4.2.2 Descriptive Analysis

This section presents the descriptive analysis on digital marketing and consumer buying behaviour of food delivery services among University of Benin students.

*Key: SA(Strongly Agree), A(Agree), N(Neutral), Disagree, SD(Strongly Disagree)*

**Table 4.2: Responses on Consumer Buying Behaviour of Food Delivery Services**

| S/N            | ITEM   | SA (5)<br>f/(%)         | A (4)<br>f/(%)        | N (3)<br>f/(%)          | D (2)<br>f/(%)          | SD (1)<br>f/(%)        | Mean<br>( $\bar{x}$ ) |
|----------------|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 5              | I frequently use food delivery apps to order meals while on campus.                                  | 95<br>(31.7%)           | 88<br>(29.3%)         | 60<br>(20.0%)           | 37<br>(12.3%)           | 20<br>(6.7%)           | 3.67                  |
| 6              | I prefer using food delivery services over physically going to restaurants.                          | 102<br>(34.0%)          | 85<br>(28.3%)         | 58<br>(19.3%)           | 40<br>(13.3%)           | 15<br>(5.0%)           | 3.73                  |
| 7              | I frequently recommend food delivery services to my friends  | 89<br>(29.7%)           | 91<br>(30.3%)         | 65<br>(21.7%)           | 38<br>(12.7%)           | 17<br>(5.7%)           | 3.67                  |
| 8              | I feel that using food delivery services saves me time and effort compared to cooking or dining out. | 98<br>(32.7%)           | 86<br>(28.7%)         | 62<br>(20.7%)           | 35<br>(11.7%)           | 19<br>(6.3%)           | 3.70                  |
| 9              | I am very loyal to the usage of food delivery services on campus                                     | 93<br>(31.0%)           | 90<br>(30.0%)         | 63<br>(21.0%)           | 36<br>(12.0%)           | 18<br>(6.0%)           | 3.69                  |
| <b>Average</b> |  | <b>95.4<br/>(31.8%)</b> | <b>88<br/>(29.3%)</b> | <b>61.6<br/>(20.5%)</b> | <b>37.2<br/>(12.4%)</b> | <b>17.8<br/>(5.9%)</b> | <b>3.69</b>           |

**Source:** Field Survey (2025)

The descriptive analysis of consumer buying behavior regarding food delivery services among University of Benin students indicates a strong inclination toward digital food ordering. A notable 31.8% of respondents strongly agree and 29.3% agree that they frequently use food delivery apps, showing that over

61% of students rely on these services. Similarly, 62.3% (SA = 34.0%, A = 28.3%) prefer food delivery over dining in restaurants, highlighting a shift towards convenience. Additionally, 60% of students actively recommend these services to peers, and 61.4% agree that food delivery saves time and effort. Loyalty to food delivery services is also evident, with 61% of respondents expressing commitment. The overall mean score of 3.69 suggests a generally positive perception of food delivery services, emphasizing their growing importance among university students.

**Table 4.3: Responses on Social Media Advertisements**

| S/N            | ITEM  | SA (5)<br>f/(%)        | A (4)<br>f/(%)          | N (3)<br>f/(%)          | D (2)<br>f/(%)         | SD (1)<br>f/(%)        | Mean<br>( $\bar{x}$ ) |
|----------------|---|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 10             | Social media ads make me aware of new food delivery services and meal options.                                      | 108<br>(36.0%)         | 92<br>(30.7%)           | 55<br>(18.3%)           | 30<br>(10.0%)          | 15<br>(5.0%)           | 3.83                  |
| 11             | I am more likely to try a food delivery service after seeing appealing ads on platforms like Instagram or Facebook. | 102<br>(34.0%)         | 95<br>(31.7%)           | 58<br>(19.3%)           | 28<br>(9.3%)           | 17<br>(5.7%)           | 3.79                  |
| 12             | Promotions and discount codes on social media influence my decision to order food online.                           | 97<br>(32.3%)          | 98<br>(32.7%)           | 60<br>(20.0%)           | 27<br>(9.0%)           | 18<br>(6.0%)           | 3.76                  |
| 13             | I trust food delivery services more if I see positive comments and reviews on social media.                         | 104<br>(34.7%)         | 90<br>(30.0%)           | 57<br>(19.0%)           | 33<br>(11.0%)          | 16<br>(5.3%)           | 3.78                  |
| 14             | Influencer recommendations on social media affect my choice of food delivery platforms.                             | 99<br>(33.0%)          | 96<br>(32.0%)           | 59<br>(19.7%)           | 29<br>(9.7%)           | 17<br>(5.7%)           | 3.78                  |
| <b>Average</b> |   | <b>102<br/>(34.0%)</b> | <b>94.2<br/>(31.4%)</b> | <b>57.8<br/>(19.3%)</b> | <b>29.4<br/>(9.8%)</b> | <b>16.6<br/>(5.5%)</b> | <b>3.79</b>           |

**Source:** Field Survey (2025)

The analysis of social media advertisements' influence on consumer behavior among University of Benin students reveals a strong impact on awareness and decision-making regarding food delivery services. A

significant 65.7% (SA = 36.0%, A = 30.7%) of respondents acknowledge that social media ads inform them about new food delivery options. Additionally, 65.7% (SA = 34.0%, A = 31.7%) are more inclined to try a service after viewing engaging ads on platforms like Instagram and Facebook. Promotional offers and discount codes influence 65% of students' purchasing decisions, while 64.7% trust food delivery services more when they see positive reviews. Furthermore, influencer recommendations sway the choices of 65% of respondents. The overall mean score of 3.79 suggests that social media advertisements significantly shape students' preferences and engagement with food delivery services.

**Table 4.4: Responses on Mobile Marketing Strategies**

| S/N            | ITEM  | SA (5)<br>f/(%)          | A (4)<br>f/(%)          | N (3)<br>f/(%)          | D (2)<br>f/(%)         | SD (1)<br>f/(%)        | Mean<br>( $\bar{x}$ ) |
|----------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 15             | I am more likely to order food when I receive push notifications about special offers or discounts. | 110<br>(36.7%)           | 94<br>(31.3%)           | 52<br>(17.3%)           | 29<br>(9.7%)           | 15<br>(5.0%)           | 3.85                  |
| 16             | Personalized in-app recommendations influence my meal choices when ordering food online.            | 105<br>(35.0%)           | 96<br>(32.0%)           | 55<br>(18.3%)           | 27<br>(9.0%)           | 17<br>(5.7%)           | 3.82                  |
| 17             | SMS or app notifications about exclusive deals encourage me to place spontaneous food orders.       | 112<br>(37.3%)           | 92<br>(30.7%)           | 50<br>(16.7%)           | 31<br>(10.3%)          | 15<br>(5.0%)           | 3.85                  |
| 18             | I prefer using food delivery apps that offer loyalty points or rewards through mobile promotions.   | 108<br>(36.0%)           | 97<br>(32.3%)           | 53<br>(17.7%)           | 26<br>(8.7%)           | 16<br>(5.3%)           | 3.85                  |
| 19             | Mobile-exclusive discounts influence my decision to choose a specific food delivery service.        | 107<br>(35.7%)           | 95<br>(31.7%)           | 54<br>(18.0%)           | 28<br>(9.3%)           | 16<br>(5.3%)           | 3.83                  |
| <b>Average</b> |   | <b>108.4<br/>(36.2%)</b> | <b>94.8<br/>(31.6%)</b> | <b>52.8<br/>(17.6%)</b> | <b>28.2<br/>(9.4%)</b> | <b>15.8<br/>(5.3%)</b> | <b>3.84</b>           |

**Source:** Field Survey (2025)

The analysis of mobile marketing strategies highlights their significant role in shaping students' food delivery preferences at the University of Benin. A considerable 67.8% (SA = 36.7%, A = 31.3%) of respondents are more likely to order food upon receiving push notifications about special offers, while 67% (SA = 35.0%, A = 32.0%) find personalized in-app recommendations influential. Additionally, 68% of students are encouraged to place spontaneous orders due to SMS or app notifications about exclusive deals. Loyalty programs and mobile-exclusive discounts also play a crucial role, with 68.3% and 67.4% of respondents, respectively, favoring services offering these incentives. The overall mean score of 3.84 suggests that mobile marketing strategies, particularly discounts, personalized promotions, and reward programs, significantly influence students' food ordering behavior.

**Table 4.5: Responses on Email Marketing Campaigns**

| S/N            | ITEM  | SA (5)<br>f/(%)          | A (4)<br>f/(%)          | N (3)<br>f/(%)          | D (2)<br>f/(%)         | SD (1)<br>f/(%)        | Mean<br>( $\bar{x}$ ) |
|----------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 20             | I often open promotional emails from food delivery services.  | 115<br>(38.3%)           | 90<br>(30.0%)           | 50<br>(16.7%)           | 27<br>(9.0%)           | 18<br>(6.0%)           | 3.86                  |
| 21             | Discount codes and special offers in emails encourage me to place food orders online.                   | 108<br>(36.0%)           | 92<br>(30.7%)           | 55<br>(18.3%)           | 29<br>(9.7%)           | 16<br>(5.3%)           | 3.83                  |
| 22             | Personalized emails that suggest meals based on my preferences influence my purchasing decisions.       | 110<br>(36.7%)           | 95<br>(31.7%)           | 52<br>(17.3%)           | 28<br>(9.3%)           | 15<br>(5.0%)           | 3.86                  |
| 23             | I am more likely to use a food delivery service after receiving an email about limited-time promotions. | 112<br>(37.3%)           | 91<br>(30.3%)           | 54<br>(18.0%)           | 26<br>(8.7%)           | 17<br>(5.7%)           | 3.85                  |
| 24             | I find emails with visually appealing content (images, menus) more engaging and persuasive.             | 107<br>(35.7%)           | 93<br>(31.0%)           | 56<br>(18.7%)           | 27<br>(9.0%)           | 17<br>(5.7%)           | 3.82                  |
| <b>Average</b> |   | <b>110.4<br/>(36.8%)</b> | <b>92.2<br/>(30.7%)</b> | <b>53.4<br/>(17.8%)</b> | <b>27.4<br/>(9.1%)</b> | <b>16.6<br/>(5.5%)</b> | <b>3.84</b>           |

**Source:** Field Survey (2025)

The analysis of email marketing campaigns reveals their effectiveness in influencing food delivery choices among University of Benin students. A significant 69.3% (SA = 38.3%, A = 30.0%) of respondents frequently open promotional emails, indicating high engagement with email marketing. Additionally, 66.7% are encouraged to place orders due to discount codes and special offers in emails, while 68.4% are influenced by personalized meal recommendations. Limited-time promotions further drive consumer action, with 67.6% expressing a greater likelihood of ordering food after receiving such emails. Moreover, visually appealing email content enhances engagement, as acknowledged by 66.7% of respondents. The overall mean score of 3.84 suggests that email marketing, particularly personalized promotions, discounts, and visually engaging content, plays a crucial role in shaping students' purchasing behavior.

**Table 4.6: Responses on Search Engine Optimisation**

| S/N            | ITEM  | SA (5)<br>f/(%)        | A (4)<br>f/(%)          | N (3)<br>f/(%)        | D (2)<br>f/(%)         | SD (1)<br>f/(%)        | Mean<br>( $\bar{x}$ ) |
|----------------|---|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 25             | I am more likely to choose food delivery services that appear at the top of my search engine results.           | 120<br>(40.0%)         | 89<br>(29.7%)           | 48<br>(16.0%)         | 27<br>(9.0%)           | 16<br>(5.3%)           | 3.90                  |
| 26             | I trust food delivery services more when they rank highly on Google or other search engines.                    | 112<br>(37.3%)         | 95<br>(31.7%)           | 50<br>(16.7%)         | 28<br>(9.3%)           | 15<br>(5.0%)           | 3.87                  |
| 27             | I usually click on the first few links when searching for food delivery options online.                         | 118<br>(39.3%)         | 92<br>(30.7%)           | 47<br>(15.7%)         | 29<br>(9.7%)           | 14<br>(4.7%)           | 3.91                  |
| 28             | Well-optimized food delivery websites (easy to navigate, fast-loading) influence my decision to place an order. | 115<br>(38.3%)         | 94<br>(31.3%)           | 49<br>(16.3%)         | 26<br>(8.7%)           | 16<br>(5.3%)           | 3.89                  |
| 29             | I often rely on search engine results to discover new food delivery services.                                   | 110<br>(36.7%)         | 96<br>(32.0%)           | 51<br>(17.0%)         | 27<br>(9.0%)           | 16<br>(5.3%)           | 3.86                  |
| <b>Average</b> |   | <b>115<br/>(38.3%)</b> | <b>93.2<br/>(31.1%)</b> | <b>49<br/>(16.3%)</b> | <b>27.4<br/>(9.1%)</b> | <b>15.4<br/>(5.1%)</b> | <b>3.89</b>           |

**Source:** Field Survey (2025)

The analysis of search engine optimization (SEO) indicates its strong influence on students' choices of food delivery services at the University of Benin. A significant 69.7% (SA = 40.0%, A = 29.7%) of respondents prefer services that appear at the top of search engine results, while 69% (SA = 37.3%, A = 31.7%) trust food delivery providers that rank highly on Google or other search engines. Additionally, 70% of students tend to click on the first few links when searching for food delivery options, reinforcing the importance of high search rankings. Well-optimized websites also play a crucial role, with 69.6% stating that ease of navigation and fast-loading pages influence their ordering decisions. Furthermore, 68.7% rely on search engine results to discover new food delivery services. The overall mean score of 3.89 highlights the significant impact of SEO in enhancing visibility, credibility, and user engagement in food delivery services among university students.

### 4.2.3 Correlation Analysis

The correlation matrix is presented in Table 4.7. Essentially, the result reveals the pairwise relationship among the variables used in the study. Principally, Correlation analysis is used to examine the strength (strong or weak) and direction (positive or negative) of relationship that occurs between two or more variables.

**Table 4.7: Correlation Results**

|     | CBB    | SMA    | MMS    | EMC    | SEO |
|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----|
| CBB | 1      |        |        |        |     |
| SMA | .571** | 1      |        |        |     |
| MMS | .503** | .696** | 1      |        |     |
| EMC | .593** | .648** | .640** | 1      |     |
| SEO | .476** | .593** | .594** | .657** | 1   |

**Source: Author's Estimation from SPSS 22, 2025.**

The correlation analysis examines the relationship between consumer buying behavior (CBB) and various digital marketing strategies, including social media advertisements (SMA), mobile marketing strategies (MMS), email marketing campaigns (EMC), and search engine optimization (SEO). The results indicate a statistically significant positive correlation between CBB and all marketing strategies. Social media advertisements exhibit the strongest correlation with CBB ( $r = .571, p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that social media plays a crucial role in influencing students' purchasing decisions. Email marketing campaigns also show a strong correlation ( $r = .593, p < 0.01$ ), indicating their effectiveness in driving engagement. Mobile marketing strategies ( $r = .503, p < 0.01$ ) and SEO ( $r = .476, p < 0.01$ ) also demonstrate moderate positive relationships with CBB, highlighting their importance in shaping consumer preferences. Additionally, strong intercorrelations exist among the digital marketing strategies, with the highest observed between SMA and MMS ( $r = .696, p < 0.01$ ) and between EMC and SEO ( $r = .657, p < 0.01$ ). These findings suggest that integrated digital marketing strategies significantly influence consumer buying behavior in food delivery services among University of Benin students.

#### **4.2.4 Multicollinearity Analysis**

The presence of multicollinearity among independent variables indicates that they are perfectly correlated. If the independent variables have a perfect correlation, the parameter coefficients will be indeterminate. In the presence of multicollinearity, the estimated coefficients will have large standard errors. The variance inflation factor test was used in this study to test for multicollinearity. The end result is as follows:

**Table 4.8 Variance Inflation Factor Test**

| <b>Variable</b> | <b>Coefficient Variance</b> | <b>Centered VIF</b> |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| SMA             | .431                        | 2.323               |
| MMS             | .400                        | 2.500               |
| EMC             | .436                        | 2.292               |
| SEO             | .455                        | 2.197               |

**Source: Author’s Estimation from SPSS 22, 2025.**

The variance inflation factor (VIF) test results indicate that multicollinearity is not a significant concern in this study. All independent variables—social media advertisements (SMA), mobile marketing strategies (MMS), email marketing campaigns (EMC), and search engine optimization (SEO)—have VIF values well below the critical threshold of 10, with values ranging from 2.197 to 2.500. These values suggest moderate correlation among the predictors but not to a degree that would compromise the reliability of the regression estimates. Additionally, the coefficient variance values are relatively low, further supporting the stability of the model. Therefore, the presence of multicollinearity is minimal, ensuring that the estimated regression coefficients remain interpretable and statistically valid.

#### **4.2.5 Regression Analysis and Test of Hypotheses**

The research hypotheses were tested utilising regression analysis in order to achieve the current study's objectives. The hypotheses were evaluated with an Alpha level of significance of 0.05 (Decision rule: computed level of significance <0.05, reject null hypothesis; computed level of significance >0.05, accept null hypothesis).

**Table 4.9a Model Summary**

| <b>Model Summary<sup>b</sup></b> |                   |          |          |                               |                    |             |     |     |                   |                  |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-----|-----|-------------------|------------------|
| Model                            | R                 | Adjusted |          | Std. Error of<br>the Estimate | Change Statistics  |             |     |     | Durbin-<br>Watson |                  |
|                                  |                   | R Square | R Square |                               | R Square<br>Change | F<br>Change | df1 | df2 |                   | Sig. F<br>Change |
| 1                                | .649 <sup>a</sup> | .421     | .406     | .42821                        | .421               | 28.188      | 4   | 295 | .000              | 1.878            |

**a. Dependent Variable:** CBB

**b. Predictors:** (Constant), SMA, MMS, EMC, SEO

**Source:** Statistical Package for social Sciences v.22

The model summary results indicate that the independent variables—social media advertisements (SMA), mobile marketing strategies (MMS), email marketing campaigns (EMC), and search engine optimization (SEO)—collectively explain 42.1% of the variation in consumer buying behavior (CBB), as shown by the R Square value of 0.421. The Adjusted R Square of 0.406 suggests a slight adjustment for the number of predictors, indicating that the model remains robust in explaining consumer behavior. The standard error of the estimate (0.42821) implies a moderate level of prediction accuracy. The F-statistic ( $F = 28.188$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) confirms the overall statistical significance of the model, meaning that the independent variables significantly influence CBB. Additionally, the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.878) falls within the acceptable range (1.5–2.5), indicating no serious autocorrelation in the residuals. These findings suggest that digital marketing strategies significantly impact students' food delivery service usage at the University of Benin.

**Table 4.9b Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

| <b>ANOVA<sup>a</sup></b> |            |                |     |             |        |                   |
|--------------------------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model                    |            | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig.              |
| 1                        | Regression | 25.843         | 4   | 5.169       | 28.188 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
|                          | Residual   | 35.573         | 295 | .183        |        |                   |
|                          | Total      | 61.416         | 299 |             |        |                   |

**a. Dependent Variable:** CBB

**b. Predictors:** (Constant), SMA, MMS, EMC, SEO

**Source:** Statistical Package for social Sciences v.22

The ANOVA results assess the overall significance of the regression model in explaining consumer buying behavior (CBB) based on digital marketing strategies. The regression sum of squares (25.843) indicates the proportion of variation in CBB explained by the independent variables—social media advertisements (SMA), mobile marketing strategies (MMS), email marketing campaigns (EMC), and search engine optimization (SEO). The residual sum of squares (35.573) represents the unexplained variation. The F-statistic ( $F = 28.188$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) confirms that the overall model is statistically significant, meaning that the independent variables collectively influence consumer buying behavior. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis that digital marketing strategies have no impact on CBB is rejected. These results further reinforce that digital marketing strategies play a crucial role in shaping students' decisions regarding food delivery services at the University of Benin.

**Table 4.9c Multiple Regression Output**

| Model |            | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized | t     | Sig. |
|-------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|-------|------|
|       |            | B                           | Std. Error | Coefficients |       |      |
| 1     | (Constant) | 1.323                       | .226       |              | 5.861 | .000 |
|       | SMA        | .242                        | .075       | .270         | 3.243 | .001 |
|       | MMS        | .023                        | .067       | .030         | .345  | .730 |
|       | EMC        | .295                        | .073       | .334         | 4.044 | .000 |
|       | SEO        | .016                        | .072       | .018         | .223  | .823 |

**a. Dependent Variable: CBB**

**Source: Statistical Package for social Sciences v.22**

The multiple regression results provide insights into the individual impact of digital marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior (CBB) among University of Benin students. The constant ( $B = 1.323$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) represents the baseline level of CBB when all independent variables are zero. Among the predictors, email marketing campaigns (EMC) have the strongest positive influence ( $B = 0.295$ ,  $\beta = 0.334$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that email promotions significantly drive students' food delivery service usage. Social media advertisements (SMA) also have a significant impact ( $B = 0.242$ ,  $\beta = 0.270$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), suggesting that advertisements on platforms like Instagram and Facebook effectively influence purchasing behavior.

However, mobile marketing strategies (MMS) ( $B = 0.023$ ,  $p = 0.730$ ) and search engine optimization (SEO) ( $B = 0.016$ ,  $p = 0.823$ ) do not significantly predict CBB, as their p-values exceed 0.05. This suggests that push notifications, SMS marketing, and high search engine rankings may not strongly determine students' food delivery choices.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of email marketing and social media advertising in shaping consumer behavior, while mobile marketing and SEO appear to have minimal direct impact in this context.

### **Hypothesis 1**

**H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between social media advertisements and the awareness of food delivery services among UNIBEN students.**

The regression output shows that social media advertisements (SMA) have a significant positive effect on consumer buying behavior ( $B = 0.242$ ,  $\beta = 0.270$ ,  $t = 3.243$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). Since the p-value (0.001) is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ), concluding that social media advertisements significantly influence the awareness and adoption of food delivery services among UNIBEN students.

### **Hypothesis 2**

**H<sub>0</sub>: Mobile marketing strategies (e.g., discounts, free delivery) do not significantly influence the purchase decisions of UNIBEN students.**

The results indicate that mobile marketing strategies (MMS) do not have a statistically significant effect on consumer buying behavior ( $B = 0.023$ ,  $\beta = 0.030$ ,  $t = 0.345$ ,  $p = 0.730$ ). Since the p-value (0.730) is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), implying that mobile marketing strategies do not significantly impact the purchase decisions of UNIBEN students.

### **Hypothesis 3**

**H<sub>0</sub>: Email marketing campaigns do not significantly affect the buying behavior of UNIBEN students.**

Email marketing campaigns (EMC) show a strong and statistically significant impact on consumer buying behavior ( $B = 0.295$ ,  $\beta = 0.334$ ,  $t = 4.044$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Since the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ), concluding that email marketing campaigns significantly influence the buying behavior of UNIBEN students.

### **Hypothesis 4**

**H<sub>0</sub>: SEO strategies and online visibility do not significantly influence the preferences of UNIBEN students in choosing food delivery services.**

The regression results indicate that search engine optimization (SEO) does not have a significant effect on consumer buying behavior ( $B = 0.016$ ,  $\beta = 0.018$ ,  $t = 0.223$ ,  $p = 0.823$ ). Since the p-value (0.823) is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), suggesting that SEO strategies and online visibility do not significantly influence the food delivery preferences of UNIBEN students.

## **4.3 Discussion of Findings**

### **Social Media Advertisements and Consumer Buying Behavior**

The study found that social media advertisements (SMA) significantly influence the awareness and adoption of food delivery services among University of Benin students ( $B = 0.242$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). This aligns

with existing literature highlighting the impact of SMA on consumer purchasing behavior. According to Alalwan (2020), social media advertising is highly effective due to its ability to deliver targeted, visually appealing, and interactive advertisements. Similarly, Arora and Agarwal (2019) found that personalized social media ads significantly shape consumer attitudes and increase purchase intent, especially among young digital users. The influence of social media advertising is further reinforced by Zhu and Chen (2021), who noted that limited-time promotions and social proof mechanisms (such as likes, shares, and influencer endorsements) foster impulsive buying tendencies. In contrast, some scholars argue that while SMA enhances brand awareness, its effectiveness in driving direct purchases may vary depending on factors such as ad fatigue and skepticism towards influencer marketing (De Veirman et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the findings of this study confirm that social media advertisements play a pivotal role in influencing food delivery service adoption, particularly among students who are highly engaged with digital content.

### **Mobile Marketing Strategies and Consumer Buying Behavior**

The study revealed that mobile marketing strategies (MMS) do not significantly influence the purchase decisions of University of Benin students ( $B = 0.023$ ,  $p = 0.730$ ). This contradicts existing research that suggests mobile marketing plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior. Kotler et al. (2019) emphasize that mobile marketing facilitates real-time engagement through push notifications, SMS marketing, and in-app promotions, which have been shown to drive impulse purchases. Additionally, Gao et al. (2021) found that location-based promotions and personalized mobile advertisements increase purchase intent, particularly for fast-moving consumer goods. However, the lack of a significant

relationship in this study suggests that students may not respond as strongly to mobile-based promotions for food delivery services, possibly due to notification overload or a preference for other marketing channels. Pantano and Priporas (2016) argue that while mobile marketing enhances convenience, its impact depends on factors such as trust in the app and perceived relevance of the promotions. This finding suggests that food delivery services may need to refine their mobile marketing strategies, focusing on more engaging, personalized, and less intrusive approaches to effectively capture student interest.

### **Email Marketing Campaigns and Consumer Buying Behavior**

The study found that email marketing campaigns (EMC) significantly impact consumer buying behavior among University of Benin students ( $B = 0.295$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), supporting previous research on the effectiveness of email marketing in driving consumer engagement. Kotler and Keller (2022) define email marketing as a direct and strategic communication tool that enhances brand loyalty and purchase intent. This aligns with the findings of Ogunbiyi (2022), who discovered that Nigerian consumers respond positively to promotional emails offering discounts and personalized product recommendations. Additionally, Adebayo (2023) found that email marketing significantly increases brand visibility and interaction, particularly when campaigns are well-structured with engaging visuals and compelling call-to-action elements. The study also aligns with Ryan (2022), who highlights the role of automation and AI-driven personalization in enhancing email marketing effectiveness. However, Tuten (2023) cautions that excessive promotional emails may lead to consumer disengagement, suggesting that brands must balance frequency and content relevance to maintain effectiveness. Overall, this study reinforces the importance of

email marketing in the food delivery sector, particularly in fostering customer retention and driving repeat purchases among university students.

### **Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Consumer Buying Behavior**

The study found that search engine optimization (SEO) does not significantly influence students' preferences for food delivery services ( $B = 0.016$ ,  $p = 0.823$ ), contradicting previous research that emphasizes the role of SEO in shaping online consumer behavior. Chaffey (2020) describes SEO as a crucial strategy for increasing online visibility and consumer trust by ensuring that businesses rank higher in search engine results. Jang (2023) further highlights that university students are more likely to choose brands that appear at the top of search engine results due to perceived credibility. However, the lack of a significant relationship in this study suggests that students may rely more on peer recommendations, social media ads, or mobile apps rather than search engine results when choosing food delivery services. This finding aligns with MacGowan (2022), who argues that while SEO is essential for online visibility, its influence on immediate purchasing decisions varies by industry and product type. Additionally, Wu (2019) found that impulse purchases, particularly in fast-moving sectors like food delivery, are driven more by digital advertising and social proof than by search engine rankings. The results suggest that while SEO remains important for brand credibility, food delivery companies should focus more on social media engagement and direct marketing strategies to capture the attention of university students.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

This study focused on digital marketing and consumer buying behaviour of food delivery services among University of Benin students. A total of three hundred (300) questionnaire out of a potential 395 were retrieved from the respondents who were students within the study's geographical scope. The retrieved data was analysed using both descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The summary of the research findings are as follows:

- i. The study found that social media advertisements (SMA) significantly influence the awareness and adoption of food delivery services among University of Benin students ( $B = 0.242$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ).
- ii. The study revealed that mobile marketing strategies (MMS) do not significantly influence the purchase decisions of University of Benin students ( $B = 0.023$ ,  $p = 0.730$ ). This contradicts existing research that suggests mobile marketing plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior.
- iii. The study found that email marketing campaigns (EMC) significantly impact consumer buying behavior among University of Benin students ( $B = 0.295$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), supporting previous research on the effectiveness of email marketing in driving consumer engagement.

- iv. The study found that search engine optimization (SEO) does not significantly influence students' preferences for food delivery services ( $B = 0.016$ ,  $p = 0.823$ ), contradicting previous research that emphasizes the role of SEO in shaping online consumer behavior.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This study examined the impact of digital marketing strategies on the consumer buying behavior of food delivery services among University of Benin students, employing both descriptive statistics and regression analysis on data retrieved from 300 respondents. The findings highlight that social media advertisements play a crucial role in influencing students' awareness and adoption of food delivery services, reinforcing the effectiveness of targeted and visually engaging content in shaping consumer preferences. In contrast, mobile marketing strategies were found to have an insignificant impact, suggesting that students may not respond strongly to push notifications and SMS-based promotions in this context. Email marketing campaigns emerged as a significant driver of consumer engagement, indicating that personalized promotional messages effectively influence purchase decisions. However, search engine optimization did not show a significant influence on students' food delivery service preferences, implying that other digital marketing channels may be more instrumental in shaping their choices. These findings suggest that food delivery businesses targeting university students should prioritize social media and email marketing while refining their mobile marketing and SEO strategies to enhance consumer engagement and conversion rates.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

From the research analysis and conclusions above, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Since the study found that social media advertisements significantly influence the awareness and adoption of food delivery services, businesses should invest more in creating engaging, visually appealing, and interactive advertisements. This includes leveraging influencer marketing, user-generated content, and targeted promotions on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok to capture students' attention. Additionally, brands should adopt data-driven advertising approaches, utilizing AI-powered tools to personalize content and optimize ad placement based on students' preferences and online behaviors.
- ii. Given that mobile marketing strategies did not significantly influence purchase decisions, food delivery companies should refine their approach to mobile promotions. Instead of generic push notifications and SMS marketing, businesses should implement more personalized and engaging mobile campaigns, such as app-based loyalty programs, gamified discount rewards, and AI-driven meal recommendations based on user history. Additionally, reducing notification fatigue by optimizing the frequency and relevance of mobile messages may help improve consumer response to mobile marketing efforts.
- iii. Since email marketing campaigns were found to significantly impact consumer buying behavior, businesses should prioritize well-structured and personalized email campaigns to enhance customer engagement. This includes segmenting students based on their order history and preferences to send tailored promotions, exclusive discount codes, and early access to special deals. Moreover, incorporating visually appealing email templates with clear call-to-

action buttons and interactive content (such as embedded videos or clickable menus) can further enhance engagement and conversion rates.

- iv. Given that search engine optimization (SEO) did not significantly influence students' food delivery preferences, businesses should reconsider their digital marketing priorities. While SEO remains important for long-term brand visibility, more immediate efforts should be directed toward social media engagement, direct marketing, and referral incentives. Investing in influencer partnerships, student ambassador programs, and referral discounts can help drive organic awareness and encourage word-of-mouth marketing, which may be more effective in influencing students' food delivery choices than traditional SEO efforts.

### **5.5 Contribution to Knowledge**

This study contributes to knowledge by providing empirical insights into the effectiveness of various digital marketing strategies in influencing consumer buying behavior within the context of food delivery services among university students in Nigeria. While existing literature emphasizes the broad impact of digital marketing, this study specifically identifies social media advertisements and email marketing campaigns as the most influential channels in shaping students' purchasing decisions, thereby offering a more targeted understanding of digital marketing effectiveness within the university demographic. Additionally, the findings challenge conventional assumptions about mobile marketing strategies and search engine optimization, as these were found to have an insignificant impact, suggesting that students may prioritize social engagement and direct promotional offers over search rankings and push notifications. This study, therefore, refines existing digital marketing models by demonstrating the context-specific nature of consumer responsiveness, particularly in emerging markets. Furthermore, by

employing a robust methodological approach combining descriptive statistics and regression analysis, the study provides a data-driven framework for marketers and businesses to optimize their digital marketing strategies to better engage university students.

### **5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Future studies can expand on this research by broadening the sample focus and geographical scope to include students from multiple universities across Nigeria or other African countries. This would provide a comparative analysis of digital marketing effectiveness across diverse student populations, considering factors such as regional internet penetration, socioeconomic background, and cultural influences on digital consumption. Additionally, future research could explore a wider range of digital marketing variables, such as influencer marketing, chatbot engagement, and artificial intelligence-driven recommendations, to examine their impact on consumer behavior. Incorporating a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative in-depth interviews or focus group discussions, could provide deeper insights into why certain digital marketing strategies resonate more with university students while others do not.

Methodologically, future studies could employ longitudinal research designs to track consumer responses to digital marketing strategies over time, allowing for a more dynamic understanding of changing preferences and behaviors. Moreover, utilizing advanced data analysis techniques, such as structural equation modeling (SEM) or machine learning-based predictive analytics, could enhance the robustness of findings by identifying complex relationships between multiple marketing strategies and purchasing behaviors. Future research may also consider integrating psychographic variables, such as consumer trust, perceived value, and brand loyalty, to better explain the decision-making process beyond mere exposure to

digital advertisements. By adopting these recommendations, future studies can provide more comprehensive insights that would further refine digital marketing strategies tailored to university students in evolving digital landscapes.

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**APPENDIX I**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING**  
**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**  
**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

Dear Respondent,

**APPEAL FOR THE COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE**

I am an undergraduate student in the above named Department. As part of the requirement for the programme, I am conducting research on “**Digital Marketing and Consumer Buying Behaviour of Food Delivery Services Among University of Benin students**”. In this regard, you have been randomly selected as a member of the sample. I also wish to assure you that your answers will be treated in strict confidence and used for the stated academic purpose only.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully,

Name:

(Researcher)

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

Tick  in the appropriate box and give answers where necessary.

1. Gender: Male [  ] Female [  ]

2. Age: 20yrs and below [  ] 21 – 30yrs [  ] 31 – 40yrs [  ] 41years and above [  ]

3. Class Level of Respondents: 100 level [  ] 200 level [  ] 300 level [  ] 400 level [  ] 500 level [  ]  
600 level [  ]

4. Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION B: GENERAL

Please tick in the appropriate box after each question as an indication of your choice using likert scale:

Strongly Agree=SA; A= Agree; Undecided=U; Disagree= D; Strongly Disagree= SD.

| S/N | PARTICULARS  | SA<br>(5) | A<br>(4) | U<br>(3) | D<br>(2) | SD<br>(1) |
|-----|--|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 5   | I frequently use food delivery apps to order meals while on campus.                                  |           |          |          |          |           |
| 6   | I prefer using food delivery services over physically going to restaurants.                          |           |          |          |          |           |
| 7   | I frequently recommend food delivery services to my friends  |           |          |          |          |           |
| 8   | I feel that using food delivery services saves me time and effort compared to cooking or dining out. |           |          |          |          |           |
| 9   | I am very loyal to the usage of food delivery services on campus                                     |           |          |          |          |           |

|    | <b>Social Media Advertisements</b>  | <b>SA<br/>(5)</b> | <b>A<br/>(4)</b> | <b>U<br/>(3)</b> | <b>D<br/>(2)</b> | <b>SD<br/>(1)</b> |
|----|---|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 10 | Social media ads make me aware of new food delivery services and meal options.                                      |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 11 | I am more likely to try a food delivery service after seeing appealing ads on platforms like Instagram or Facebook. |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 12 | Promotions and discount codes on social media influence my decision to order food online.                           |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 13 | I trust food delivery services more if I see positive comments and reviews on social media.                         |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 14 | Influencer recommendations on social media affect my choice of food delivery platforms.                             |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
|    | <b>Mobile Marketing Strategies</b>  | <b>SA<br/>(5)</b> | <b>A<br/>(4)</b> | <b>U<br/>(3)</b> | <b>D<br/>(2)</b> | <b>SD<br/>(1)</b> |
| 15 | I am more likely to order food when I receive push notifications about special offers or discounts.                 |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 16 | Personalized in-app recommendations influence my meal choices when ordering food online.                            |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 17 | SMS or app notifications about exclusive deals encourage me to place spontaneous food orders.                       |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 18 | I prefer using food delivery apps that offer loyalty points or rewards through mobile promotions.                   |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 19 | Mobile-exclusive discounts influence my decision to choose a specific food delivery service.                        |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
|    | <b>Email Marketing Campaigns</b>  | <b>SA<br/>(5)</b> | <b>A<br/>(4)</b> | <b>U<br/>(3)</b> | <b>D<br/>(2)</b> | <b>SD<br/>(1)</b> |
| 20 | I often open promotional emails from food delivery services.  |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 21 | Discount codes and special offers in emails encourage me to place food orders online.                               |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |

|    |   |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
|----|---|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 22 | Personalized emails that suggest meals based on my preferences influence my purchasing decisions.               |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 23 | I am more likely to use a food delivery service after receiving an email about limited-time promotions.         |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 24 | I find emails with visually appealing content (images, menus) more engaging and persuasive.                     |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
|    | <b>Search Engine Optimisation</b>   | <b>SA<br/>(5)</b> | <b>A<br/>(4)</b> | <b>U<br/>(3)</b> | <b>D<br/>(2)</b> | <b>SD<br/>(1)</b> |
| 25 | I am more likely to choose food delivery services that appear at the top of my search engine results.           |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 26 | I trust food delivery services more when they rank highly on Google or other search engines.                    |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 27 | I usually click on the first few links when searching for food delivery options online.                         |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 28 | Well-optimized food delivery websites (easy to navigate, fast-loading) influence my decision to place an order. |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |
| 29 | I often rely on search engine results to discover new food delivery services.                                   |                   |                  |                  |                  |                   |

**THANK YOU!**

