

**SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES AND DIGITAL CONSUMERS'
PURCHASING DECISIONS IN KENYA**

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By the Candidate

This proposal/thesis is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other University or any other award.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Kithinji, and siblings Philip, Festus, Wanja, Nick, and Winjoy. This is for you!

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
ABSTRACT.....	x
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Background of the Study	1
1.2. Statement of the problem.....	8
1.3. Objectives of the study	9
1.4. Research Questions.....	10
1.5. Significance of the study	10
1.6. Scope	12
1.7. Operational Definition of Key Terms.....	12
CHAPTER TWO	14
LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1. Introduction	14
2.2. Empirical Review	14
2.3. Theoretical Literature Review	19
2.3. Summary of Literature.....	23

2.4.	Critique of Literature	25
2.5.	Research Gaps	29
2.6.	Conceptual Framework.....	32
CHAPTER THREE:.....		36
METHODOLOGY		36
3.1.	Introduction	36
3.2.	Research design.....	36
3.3.	Study Area	36
3.4.	Target population.....	37
3.5.	Sampling design and size	37
3.6.	Data collection.....	38
3.7.	Pilot Study	39
3.8.	Data analysis and presentation	39
3.9.	Measurement of variables.....	40
3.10.	Empirical model	41
3.11.	Ethical Issues	42
CHAPTER FOUR.....		43
DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION		43
4.1.	Introduction	43
4.2.	Response Rate.....	43
4.3.	Data Processing, Writing, and Screening	44
4.4.	Reliability Test and Validity Tests	44

4.5.	Respondents Social Media Use	48
4.6.	Descriptive Analysis	50
4.7.	Diagnostic Tests	61
4.8.	Inferential statistics.....	65
4.9.	Chapter Summary	74
CHAPTER FIVE		75
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		75
5.2.	Summary of Key Findings.....	75
5.3.	Conclusions	79
5.4.	Recommendations	81
5.5.	Suggestions for Future Research	83
REFERENCES.....		84
APPENDICES		97
Appendix I: Questionnaire		97
Appendix II: Research Budget.....		101
Appendix III: Research Timeline.....		102
Appendix IV: Research Documents.....		103

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Calculated Sample Size	37
Table 3.2 Measurement of Variables	39
Table 4.1 Response Rate	42
Table 4.2 Reliability Test	44
Table 4.3 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	47
Table 4.4 Social Media Purchase	48
Table 4.5 Social Media Content Marketing	50
Table 4.6 Social Media Advertisement	52
Table 4.7 Social Media Influencer Marketing	54
Table 4.8 Social Media Customer Engagement	57
Table 4.9 Digital Consumer's Purchase Decision	59
Table 4.10 Collinearity statistics	62
Table 4.11 Autocorrelation	63
Table 4.12 Heteroscedasticity Test	64
Table 4.13 Correlation Analysis	65
Table 4.14 Model Summary	69
Table 4.15 ANOVA Analysis	70
Table 4.16 Multivariate Regression Model	71
Table 4.17 Model Fitness	73

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework	32
Figure 4.1 Social Media Frequency	50
Figure 4.2 Q-Q Plot	64

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDA Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action

SM Social Media

SMM Social Media Marketing

SMMA Social Media Marketing Activities

SMMS Social Media Marketing Strategies

UGT Uses and Gratification Theory

RDT Resources Dependency Theory

ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of technology has spurred the expansion of digital solutions for both businesses and consumers. In Kenya, there is a noticeable shift towards online shopping as consumers make more informed decisions due to the abundance of information available. Companies are increasingly adopting the e-commerce business model and leveraging digital marketing, particularly through social media marketing activities. The primary objective of the study was to investigate the effect of social media marketing activities on the buying habits of Kenyan digital consumers, given the country's over eleven million active social media users. Specifically, it aimed to determine the extent to which social networking advertising influenced digital consumer choices, examine the role of content marketing, assess the effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies, and understand how social media engagements affected purchasing decisions. To guide the analysis, the study utilized three theoretical frameworks: the uses and gratification theory, the concept of resource dependence theory, and the AIDA model. The research target group comprised individuals who had used social media in the three months preceding the survey. The study employed a descriptive research design and collected questionnaire responses from social media users in Nairobi, utilizing various social media platforms and email for questionnaire dissemination. Statistical analysis, conducted using SPSS 28.0, involved regression and correlation analyses to explore relationships between independent and dependent variables. A pilot study was conducted to ensure the reliability and validity of the research instruments, and the results confirmed their reliability and validity. The descriptive analysis revealed that social media advertising significantly influences consumers' purchase decisions, with social media content and influencer marketing also playing substantial roles. Furthermore, positive correlations were identified between digital consumer purchase decisions and influencer-based marketing, content marketing, social media advertising, and customer engagements. The regression analysis provided additional insights, indicating that social media marketing initiatives indeed affected consumers' decisions to buy. Therefore, increasing the utilization of marketing techniques is likely to lead to higher sales from digital consumers. Notably, the research emphasized the importance of prioritizing social media content marketing, social media advertising, and social media customer engagements when implementing social media marketing tactics, as these methods exhibited a stronger influence on digital consumer purchase decisions.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The extension of the Web has brought forth both prospects and risks for businesses. The web has empowered customers with knowledge and information, thus enabling them to make informed purchase decisions (Farooq & Raju, 2019). Whereas for companies, the web has expanded the areas of operations by making the world a global village. Companies can sell and ship to any place quickly, promoted by efficient technology like e-commerce (Farooq & Raju, 2019). The availability of information and the expansion of international marketing has necessitated companies to adopt technologically akin solutions to avail as much information to customers and attract consumers worldwide to remain competitive, such as digital marketing solutions.

SM has become one of the driving forces in technology, enabling companies and consumers to interact, sell, and share product information. Businesses embrace SMM to secure a competitive edge and influence digital consumers' purchase behaviors (Tajpour et al., 2022). The emergence and growth of the Internet in the 1990s influenced the shift in a firm's marketing activities from the old marketing techniques, mainly TV ads, to SM. (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2023). Firms increasingly turn to the Internet and digital-based marketing, such as SM, due to the increased number of users on these platforms and their effectiveness and personal touch (Jiang et al., 2023). Thus, companies must evaluate their SMMA to maximize their influence on consumers' purchase decisions.

1.1.1. Global Perspective on Social Media Marketing and Consumer Purchase Decisions

Globally, three billion people use social media daily. Social media usage increases website traffic, which companies may employ to influence online buyers' purchases (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Mason et al. (2021) found that 93% of US companies leverage Facebook and other SM platforms like LinkedIn for fostering interactions consumer-to-consumer interactions, brand awareness, and product reviews. Social media marketing (SMM) has increased revenue for organizations compared to other marketing tactics.

In Asian countries such as China, social media is a powerful tool that has been integrated with financial services, hence facilitating consumers' ability to make purchases using their social networking accounts, thus promoting sales. An example of this is the social network WeChat. The close relationship between consumers and the integration of social media and marketing activities has prompted the creation of consumer-centric products in the Chinese market, which is advantageous for both consumers and marketers. (Whitler, 2019). Integrating social media and marketing has impacted the development of consumer-centered products to promote purchases due to the high competition.

1.1.2. Regional Perspective on Social Media Marketing and Consumer Purchase Decisions

Digital marketing and social media are employed for the promotion of tourism destinations across different African countries, such as Festivals in Nigeria (Arasli et al., 2021). Tourism is an income generator for several countries in Africa, and there is high competition for destinations across the world; thus, there is a need to have practical marketing tools to promote tourist decisions when choosing their destination. SM sites like YouTube and Instagram provide a powerful platform to influence global and local tourists regarding the places to visit (Mkwizu, 2019). Digital Marketing

is a great way to promote events, consumer products, and tourist destinations in different countries as more people have smart mobile phones and access to the Internet.

World Bank (2022), African countries have not yet fully unlocked their digital capabilities. African companies have not yet effectively adapted to SMM as a primary marketing tool. Challenges, including poor networks in some countries, have hindered the growth and adoption of digital marketing techniques, including SMM. Countries such as Ethiopia are witnessing a low rate of internet use and digital marketing adoption concerning their population, which has hindered the growth in SMM (Mkwizu, 2019). Ethiopia and other countries thus have an excellent opportunity to unlock their digital potential like SMM and e-commerce. African countries' adoption of SMM strategies and existing digital marketing solutions remains low, and governments need to invest more to unlock the opportunities in this sector.

East Africa; Tanzania, and Kenya lead with the number of internet users concerning the population (World Bank, 2021). Digital marketing and social media have led to investments in telecommunications infrastructure in the East African Region, including enhanced internet access. Countries such as South Sudan have internet use of 7% of their total population, thus resulting in low adoption of digital marketing strategies such as the use of SMM; such countries present an investment opportunity in this area of digital connectivity. There has been a growth in the adoption of SMM across the different countries in the East Africa region due to increased internet penetration and a rise in SM users, but some countries still lag.

1.1.3. Local Perspective on Social Media Marketing and Consumer Purchase Decisions

Social media marketing has become an essential tactic for businesses in Kenya looking to sway consumers' decisions about what to buy. The utilization of social media-based marketing has surged over the past decade, attributed to the decreased costs of smartphones and improved internet

connectivity. Moreover, the Kenyan government has actively encouraged the adoption of the digital economy, resulting in increased engagement in digital marketing endeavors, including SMM, by businesses in the nation (Wilson & Makau, 2018). Kenya's companies have been quick to capitalize on this trend, with a growing number of businesses using SM to interact with current clients on internet channels and attract new ones, promote products/services, and build relationships with their target audiences. Kenyan companies have adopted SM advertising, with Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn being the most widely used networks.

Several factors have hindered the adoption of SMM across Kenya: the high cost of purchasing bundles, poor connections in some areas and infrastructure, and poor digital literacy skills in some parts of the country. Companies aiming to use SMM in their marketing activities require either an Ethernet or bundles purchased from Phone courier service providers such as Safaricom. These purchases of internet bundles and payment of Wi-Fi connection is an added cost that businesses have to take in, and some companies might lack the needed resources to buy the required data bundles and hire skilled labor to manage SMM effectively. In addition, some places lack proper infrastructure, or people lack the skills and gadgets to use smartphones and the Internet (Wilson & Makau, 2018). This lack of infrastructure and skills hinders the effectiveness of SMM and other Digital marketing techniques that companies might use to promote their brands to their customers in the country.

1.1.4. Social Media

The social media landscape comprises an ecosystem of platforms and users. The platforms are either significant or minor SM platforms. These platforms include technology companies and business models applied in SM. Some important platforms are Facebook, X formally Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. The second aspect of the ecosystem is the users. The users are

individuals and organizations that use SM technology to engage in different uses, such as interactions and advertising (Appel et al., 2020). The SM landscape ecosystem comprises the technology and hosting companies and individuals who use these technologies for different uses in a collaborative way.

Social media has gained different uses over the years. As technology has advanced, the uses of SM have also increased. Individuals use social media for purposes like interacting with friends and family as a source of entertainment, news, and information (Za et al., 2021). Companies and organizations have also adopted SM as a platform for advertising, interacting with customers, and e-commerce without the limitation of geographical borders. Social media continues gaining traction, and different uses, such as virtual reality, emerge as technology advances.

1.1.5. Social Media Marketing Activities

Companies are adopting digital marketing activities such as social media marketing due to their cost-effectiveness and ability to reach many customers. Social media platforms have grown to have billions of users that companies can target as their customers. Secondly, SMMA are not limited to one place, like billboards and posters, which are limited to just one place. Furthermore, SMMS offers a cheaper way of promoting a company's goods and services (Dickinger et al., 2004). Social media marketing activity adoption has been fueled by the growth in SM users and the cost-effectiveness of SMMS.

Companies can adopt different SMMS activities, such as influencer marketing, content marketing, social media advertising, and customer engagement. SMMA are strategic tools that allow firms and their customers to exchange resources. Companies need to understand customers' motivations in engaging them to develop and use SMMS that align with their motivations effectively. In return,

customers help promote the company brands and make sales (Jamil et al., 2022). SMMS activities help in resource exchange between companies and their customers.

1.1.6. Digital Consumers' Purchase Decisions

A wide range of psychological aspects, including perceptions, motives, learning, attitudes, and beliefs—the brand image and product quality—have an effect on the complex purchase choices made by consumers (Chen et al., 2021). The collective view and status of a brand among customers are embodied in its brand image. Customers may choose one brand over another if they have a favorable perception of the brand because it inspires trust, dependability, and familiarity (Chen et al., 2021). Furthermore, the quality of the goods has a big impact on how buyers intend to buy. Positive SM testimonials and reviews from users who have previously used the product might encourage prospective consumers to buy it even more. These evaluations serve as social proof, reducing doubts and offering insightful information on the functionality of the product. In conclusion, customers' purchasing choices are greatly influenced by the interaction of brand image, product quality, and user reviews. As a result, in order to successfully generate purchase intention, companies must concentrate on building a strong brand image and producing high-quality products.

In today's technologically driven era, the market is filled with numerous brands offering similar products, each highlighting their unique values to entice consumers. To capture potential customers' attention and save time, brands leverage social media as a powerful platform to showcase their offerings and provide product information (Ansari et al., 2019). Through social media, brands aim to attract digital consumers and build strong connections by effectively

communicating their value propositions (Ansari et al., 2019). By effectively utilizing social media to showcase their products and values, brands can influence consumers' purchase decisions.

1.1.7. Digital Consumers in Kenya

The growth in technology has influenced consumer behaviors and has led to the development of digital consumers. Covid-19 accelerated the growth of this category of consumers in the country. With the migration of services such as education and other products, consumers started purchasing them from online platforms (Jílková & Králová, 2021). Digital consumers, compared to other consumers, are more informed as they have broad access to information and can exchange their experiences and opinions regarding companies. The number of digital consumers will continue to increase as more people adopt technology and SM.

The rise in digital consumers has been influenced by both local and global trends. Currently, there is a high penetration of mobile phones in the country, enabling many people to access the internet. Additionally, the expansion of internet infrastructure and increased accessibility to the internet has contributed to the growth of digital consumers. Furthermore, E-commerce has been growing in Kenya, with various platforms facilitating online shopping (Kwofie, 2022). Consumers are increasingly turning to online platforms to purchase goods and services. To facilitate this growth, there has been an increase in the ease of paying for services and goods online through digital banking and financial services such as M-Pesa. Digital consumers in the country are continuing to grow due to the continued adoption of mobile phones, better internet access, the growth in e-commerce, and innovations in the financial sector.

Companies view digital consumers as a threat due to their power compared to other types of consumers. Digital consumers' attributes that make them a threat to the company are that they are

many in numbers, engage in networking activities, are aware of their needs, are mobile, and exact some control over their communication and business activities (Rakić & Rakić, 2019). These attributes have also led to a change in consumer behavior, thus the need for companies to adopt new marketing strategies. Some of the techniques that companies are adopting are SMM.

1.2.Statement of the problem

As of 2023, internet penetration in the country stands at 37%, with an annual growth rate of 8%. This trend poses both a threat and an opportunity for companies to explore. The surge in internet penetration has directly contributed to the expansion of the digital consumer segment in the country (Kemp, 2023). To remain competitive, companies must adopt strategies that effectively tap into this growing market. One notable aspect of the digital landscape in Kenya is the widespread use of social media platforms. These platforms boast a significant user base, making them crucial for companies aiming to market to and influence their target audience. Simultaneously, consumers leverage these platforms to look products and services, and gather information. In Kenya alone, there are over eleven million engaged social media user accounts, constituting 27% of the nation's overall population (Africa Internet Users, 2022 Population and Facebook Statistics, 2022). Recognizing social media as a viable consumer segment, companies can strategically target these platforms to influence purchase decisions. The complex decision-making processes of digital consumers further underscore the importance of adopting Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) as a tool for market growth (Rakić & Rakić, 2019).

In a study conducted by Rugova and Prenaj (2016), the benefits of social media marketing were identified, emphasizing its effectiveness as a low-cost marketing tool. Understanding and implementing effective social media marketing activities can empower e-commerce businesses to

become competitive. By identifying strategies that genuinely influence digital customers on social media and leveraging them, businesses can not only attract but also retain a significant share of the market, ensuring their sustained competitiveness in the dynamic digital landscape. Jamil et al. (2022) studied the role of social media marketing activities in influencing customer intentions and established that SMM significantly influenced customer intentions. The study, however, was not focused on any product or company segment and was not done in Kenya. Ndung'u (2019) focused on Digital Marketing Strategies and Performance of the Top 100 medium-sized companies in Nairobi City County; the study adopted digital marketing, which has a broad scope, thus limiting its effectiveness in understanding social media marketing. Kitetu (2022) investigated how digital marketing communication tools influence the enrollment of students in private hospitality colleges located in Kenya and the study was mainly focused on digital marketing in the context of students and did not study the effect of digital marketing in the context of digital consumers. In addition, the study was limited to hospitality colleges in Kenya. The effects of SMM on digital consumer purchase decisions represent a research and knowledge gap, as research mainly focused on digital marketing. The study thus aimed to investigate how social media marketing influences the buying habits of digital consumers.

1.3.Objectives of the study

1.3.1. General Objective

The study's general objective is to investigate how social media marketing activities affect Kenyan digital consumers' purchases.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- i. To explore how social media content marketing influences the buying choices of digital consumers in Kenya.
- ii. To assess the influence of social media advertising on digital consumer purchasing decisions in Kenya.
- iii. To examine the influence of social media influencer marketing on digital consumer purchasing decisions in Kenya.
- iv. To investigate the effects social media customer engagements affects Kenyan digital customers' purchase decisions.

1.4. Research Questions

- i. What is the influence of social media content marketing on the purchasing decisions of digital consumers in Kenya?
- ii. What is the influence of social media advertising on the purchasing decisions of digital consumers in Kenya?
- iii. What is the influence of social media influencer marketing on the purchasing decisions of digital consumers in Kenya?
- iv. What is the influence of social media customer engagement on the purchasing decisions of digital consumers in Kenya?

1.5. Significance of the study

1.5.1. Social Media Advertising Companies in Kenya

With the growth in the utilization of social networking sites. In Kenya and the world, there is a need to establish the Effect of SMMA on consumer behaviors; thus, the research results will help understand how SMM activities affect consumers' behaviors, mainly their purchase decisions and intentions. Therefore, the study's findings provide practical insights for marketers for e-commerce companies, enabling them to make informed decisions about resource allocation, content creation, and engagement strategies on SM platforms. By aligning their marketing efforts with consumer behaviors influenced by SMM, marketers can enhance their chances of success in influencing consumer purchase behaviors and improve return on investment.

1.5.2. Academia

The data results will also improve the theoretical framework and help explain digital consumer purchase decisions, particularly SMMA. The study's conclusions may inform future digital marketing studies. Researchers can build upon these findings to explore additional dimensions of SMM, investigate other factors that may influence consumer behaviors in the digital space, and evaluate the long-term effects of SMM on customer decision-making.

1.5.3. Digital Consumers

Consumers will benefit from this study as companies will develop better SMMs. With the current overload in the information consumers come across daily from SM, the research will establish activities that affect the consumer purchase decision, thus allowing companies to use SMMA that will impact the consumer, reducing the information overload. Further, this understanding can drive the development of more personalized and relevant marketing content tailored to specific consumer preferences and needs. Consumers can benefit from receiving marketing messages that align with their interests, leading to a more satisfying and engaging experience on SM platforms.

1.6. Scope

The goal of the research was to ascertain how Kenyan customers' purchasing choices were impacted by SMM. Influencer marketing, SM advertising, SM content marketing, and SM consumer interactions were its four main focuses. The Nairobi Metropolitan Area, which includes Nairobi, Kiambu, portions of Kajiado, and Murang'a County, was the area of the study. This made sure that a sizable audience of frequent SM users was the study's goal and provided useful information for analysing how SM marketing affects online buyers' choices. In order to gather data for the research, active users of any SM platform were included. The study was conducted in 2023 from August to October.

1.7. Operational Definition of Key Terms

Social Media- These web pages and digital platforms let users produce, share, and engage with other people's media.

Social Media Marketing- using social media to promote events or attract potential customers online to influence purchase decisions.

Digital Consumers -are the end-users who use products sold through online platforms such as e-commerce sites and Facebook marketplace, among other online media.

E-commerce - The exchange of monetary compensation for acquiring and depositing merchandise and services via the Internet.

Purchase Decision-This refers to the process through which consumers make choices regarding the acquisition of goods or services available in the market.

Customer- individual or entity that purchases and uses goods, products, or services to satisfy their needs and wants

Influencer Marketing- leveraging opinion leaders who have built a significant following in social media and are trusted opinion shapers to promote and market one's goods and services

Content Marketing- This marketing strategy is where you make and share helpful, fitting, and steady content to get and keep a specific group of people interested.

Social Media Advertising- advertising that you may pay for to advertise your goods and services on social media networks.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.Introduction

The chapter highlights literature on SM marketing and consumer purchase decisions based on the research variables: content marketing, SM advertising, influencer marketing, and engagement. The chapter is segmented into the theoretical foundation, the empirical overview, and the conceptual framework that will aid in developing constructs to be used in data collection.

2.2.Empirical Review

Research requires empirical examination to identify contextual, practical, knowledge, and methodological gaps to be filled. The study objectives determine the empirical review.

2.2.1. Social Media Content Marketing and Purchase Decision

Ansari, Ghori, Ansari, and Kazi (2019) examined how SM content affects Pakistani customers' buying decisions. According to their research, social media content marketing helps companies generate and distribute valuable information to boost revenue. Social media content marketing was an independent variable. An online questionnaire, 150 responses, and quantitative research were used. Ansari et al. (2019) identified a strong link between social media content marketing and customer purchases.

The study of Mgbame and Iyadi (2022) was to determine how the Nigerian non-alcoholic beverage industry's content marketing strategy affected consumer engagement. The study aimed to close the information gap about how content marketing affects consumer engagement. They took a

quantitative approach to their research. The sample population comprised 274 employees from chosen businesses in Lagos State, Nigeria's non-alcoholic beverage industry. According to their findings, the content marketing approach significantly improves consumer engagement in Nigeria's non-alcoholic beverage sector. Customer engagement was correlated considerably with content marketing characteristics, such as information quality, co-creation of content, content marketing channels, and message source credibility (Mgbame & Iyadi, 2022). Moreover, their conclusion asserted that content marketing strategies boost consumer engagement within the non-alcoholic beverage industry in Nigeria.

Kitetu (2022) sought to determine how digital marketing affected Kenyan private hospitality institutions' student enrollment. They used a descriptive design for their study. The study's population comprised 7,813 students from Nairobi County's 35 hospitality institutions. There were 381 responders in the research sample population. They found that student enrollment at hospitality institutions was positively improved by content marketing. According to Kitetu (2022), digital marketing communication methods significantly increase student enrollment in Kenyan private hospitality colleges.

2.2.2. Social Media Advertising and Purchasing Decisions

Ertemel and Ammoura (2019) examined how social media advertising affects customer buying behaviors in Istanbul's fashion retail business. Quantitative research was used. The study collected customer data using computerized questionnaires. Data analysis revealed the link between social media advertising and the five client buying behavior stages. No information search, considerable correlation with analyzing alternatives, moderate association between purchasing decisions and post-purchase behavior, and weak correlation between social media advertising and customer need

awareness (Ertemel & Ammoura, 2019). The study also examined how gender and income affect social media advertising (Ertemel & Ammoura, 2019). The study illuminates how social media advertising affects Istanbul fashion retail consumer buying behavior.

Ogunyombo et al. (2017) examined how three Nigerian colleges' young students watched and were impacted by social media ads when buying. Their research was quantitative. A multistage sample strategy and survey design were used to survey 385 undergraduate students from three selected Nigerian colleges. A 13-item questionnaire was presented to the sample to assess social media marketing exposure, viewing, and purchase decisions. Ogunyombo et al. (2017) revealed that 66.9% of respondents were exposed to social media adverts, demonstrating their popularity among youth. Only 14.3% of respondents said social media ads influenced their purchases. They found that age, gender, and social media use frequency affected young people's social media ad exposure. According to the survey, marketers have to reconsider their techniques and deliver more value to potential customers to earn a substantial return on investment from social media platform advertising.

"Facebook Ads' Impact on the Purchasing Conduct of Kenyan Women for Beauty Products." by Agneta (2018) examined how social media advertising marketing affects Kenyan women's cosmetics purchases and sales. The cross-sectional study targeted Kenyan women who buy and use cosmetics (Agneta 2018). The survey sampled 384 people and the study found that Facebook ads influenced women's buying in the country. The study found that cosmetics advertising in the country is ineffective.

2.2.3. Social Media Influencer Marketing and Purchasing Decisions

Yodi et al. (2020) investigated how influencer and content marketing impacted customers' decisions to buy Erigo products. They defined influencer marketing as leveraging opinion leaders who have built a significant following in social media and are trusted opinion shapers to promote and market one's goods and services. They used a quantitative research methodology and sampled 100 customers from Erigo Company (Yodi et al., 2020). They demonstrated a solid and positive correlation between consumer behavior and influencer marketing. The paper only focuses on Erigo Company, thus representing a contextual research gap.

Odoi's (2021) aim was to assess how social media influencers affect the purchasing choices of Ghanaian customers in offline settings. The study's research strategy employed a quantitative research technique. (Odoi, 2021). The study population consisted of students from the Ghana Institute of Journalism, concentrating on 200 master's students within the institution. According to the survey, 99% of participants said social media influencers affected customers' purchasing decisions (Odoi, 2021). The study showed that social media influencers impact prospective consumers' perception of a company's offerings and reputation.

Wafula (2022), in their study, aimed to compare social media influencer marketing and traditional media marketing in business promotion in Kenya today. Their research was derived from the need to understand the marketing landscape in Kenya by comparing the two forms of business promotion. Wafula (2022) employed a qualitative research design. The study utilized secondary sources of information, including articles and literature. The study established that traditional media marketing holds higher credibility than social media influencers due to the processes the information takes before being conveyed to the audience (Wafula, 2022). The study concludes

that, with time, influencer marketing will gain traction and play a dominant part in influencing customers.

2.2.4. Social media Customer engagement and Purchasing Decision

Rosadi, Azhari, and Saraswati (2022) examined how brand attachment and customer interaction affect buying decisions. They wanted to know how brand attachment and customer interaction affected buying decisions. A quantitative study of 115 regional cosmetics brand customers in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, was conducted (Rosadi et al., 2022). Customer connection increases brand attachment, which boosts purchasing decisions, according to the study. Brand attachment also mediates customer involvement on buying behavior (Rosadi et al., 2022).

Oladimeji (2021) examined how customer interaction affects smartphone purchases in Nigeria. Smartphone manufacturers' customer interaction tactics on Nigerian youths and smartphone retailers' most successful consumer engagement techniques were also examined. This study used quantitative methods. Data were acquired by questionnaire. The survey targeted Nigerian youth. Purposive sampling was used to select 289 Nigerian youth for the study. Social media is the best consumer engagement method, per Oladimeji (2021).

Shaheen (2022) studied Kisumu City, Kenya, women-owned e-commerce enterprises' consumer engagement techniques. The study examined consumer engagement strategies and the success of women-owned online companies in Kisumu, Kenya (Shaheen, 2022). Quantitative research was used. Kisumu City's research population was Kenyan women-owned online businesses. Shaheen (2022) targeted Kisumu City, Kenya, women online entrepreneurs. Shaheen's 2022 study found that consumer interaction methods helped Kisumu City's women-owned online businesses succeed. Shaheen (2022) advises female online entrepreneurs in Kisumu City, Kenya, to focus on

customer contact tactics to increase their businesses' effectiveness. Additionally, the study can inspire future research.

2.3.Theoretical Literature Review

Theoretical reviews examine theories that explain events. The study will focus on Uses and Gratifications, Resources Dependence, and AIDA.

2.3.1. Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT)

The uses and gratification theory was put forward by Katz, Blumberg, and Gurevitch in 1973, and the theory seeks to address how individuals use different media channels and other environmental factors to satisfy their needs. According to Katz, Blumberg, and Gurevitch (1973), each medium offers unique combinations of attributes, such as user control over the medium and the exposure time and place. UGT was used to study why people used media platforms such as print, watched certain shows, and digital means such as social media communications tools (Ko et al., 2005). UGT helps identify motivations that drive individuals to use media platforms. These motivations include getting information regarding specific products, expressing themselves, and connecting with friends, family, and others (Whiting & Williams, 2013). The UGT was developed as a theory to help explain why different people use different media platforms.

UGT has received criticism in different aspects. Katz et al. (1973) pose the challenge of identifying the best combinations of the different attributes of media that could render some media more effective than others. They further highlight the limitation of the model as they do not reflect the full scope of functions that media platforms offer. In addition, the theory lacks psychological backing in drawing the gratifications users derive from using a particular media. Hartmann (2009) states that there have been inconsistencies in the number of uses and gratifications that can be

drawn from social media. There has not been an agreed number of gratifications that media users can draw from social media. However, to dispute this, critics Ball et al. (2021) acknowledge that media users' motivations, uses, and gratification evolve with time as different aspects of media are developed and incorporated, as is the case with the development of social media technology. Different users derive different gratification from the use of certain media. According to Ko et al. (2005), other users receive additional gratification from using media, including Internet-based media such as social media. UGT is critical in exploring the gratifications that individuals derive from social media. Social media enables users to engage in different activities, such as sharing opinions and seeking information and feedback regarding specific issues (Saud et al., 2020). This process of seeking gratification may influence consumers' behaviours, such as purchasing.

UGT is essential in understanding the gratification people get from social media, thus enabling one to target them using the right strategy. Social media has become integrated and has added new features and functionalities. Such functionalities include better-targeted content using advanced algorithms and incorporating live videos and augmented reality. These changes in social media have provided different ways to engage, market, and influence consumers' behaviours online (Appel et al., 2020). The theoretical framework of Uses and Gratifications aided in understanding why people engage in social media platforms, their motivations, and the gratifications they derive from social media, thus shaping their behaviours, such as making purchases of products they come across online.

2.3.2. Resource Dependence Theory (RDT)

Aldrich and Pfeffer presented the Resources Dependency Theory in 1976. According to the paradigm, companies need to depend on external environmental variables that can provide the

necessary services and assets since they cannot internally create all the assets and functions needed to maintain themselves (Pfeffer & Aldrich, 1976). In RDT, a firm should be active and adaptable to the external environment changes. Further, the theory highlights the challenges that firms face in selecting the right actions to direct their resources to ensure the firm's survival in the long run (Nienhüser, 2008). RDT looks at how businesses control their reliance on outside resources to stay afloat and succeed in the market.

The Resources Dependence Theory (RDT) lacks the groundwork to clarify whether a firm's action will result in a positive or negative outcome. The theory, thus, is limited in its ability to predict organizational behaviour results (Hillman et al., 2009). In addition, the theory does not pay enough attention to a firm's internal resources and emphasizes the external resources interplay (Davis & Adam, 2010). RDT's inability to predict specific outcomes or behaviors limits its application. RDT's failure to predict the outcome of actions and its emphasis on external resources limits its applications and explanation of strategies applied by firms.

For this study, RTD was applied to understand organizations' strategies in their Social media marketing activities. The model can predict the different social media marketing strategies and their objectives. RDT facilitates understanding additional behaviors exhibited by enterprises engaged in e-commerce operations and employing social media as a promotional instrument. RDT in the study further aided in understanding the motives and the strategies organizations operate and the deployment of resources in social media marketing activities. The goal of social media marketing can also be based on the company's requirement to attract clients who can serve as its resource suppliers (Li et al., 2021). Therefore, E-commerce companies require strategies to stimulate consumer interaction, facilitating contributions such as purchases, brand expansion, and increased online traffic to alleviate resource scarcity. (Li et al., 2021). It helped analyze how firms

rely on social media platforms as a resource to reach and engage with customers, acquire information about consumer preferences, and drive sales by influencing consumers' behaviors.

2.2.3. AIDA Model

Customer purchase decisions can be explained using consumer decision models such as the AIDA Model, abbreviated Attention, Interest, Desires and Action. The framework was created by Elias St. Elmo Lewis in 1898. (Fetherstonhaugh & Worldwide, 2016). The model has been adopted in the advertising segment of marketing. It presents a framework businesses can use to develop, target, and share their advertising messages (Nevalainen, 2019). The AIDA model forwards four steps marketers should aim for and take potential customers through to make a purchase. The first step is getting the attention of the potential customers; marketers should aim to capture the attention of their target customers and make them aware of the products and services they are offering (Mumtaz, 2019). The next step in the model is to draw the target audience's interest. In this step, the marketers should present the benefits and features that appeal to the audience. After appealing to the desires of the target consumers, the next objective that the advisement or marketing strategy should aim to achieve is to create a craving or emotional connection that highlights the manner in which the product or service addresses the needs and desires of the customers. (Mumtaz, 2019). The last step is to motivate the target consumers to make or take action, which can be buying the product or service, visiting a specific website, or subscribing to a particular newsletter.

According to Fortenberry & McGoldrick (2020), the AIDA model has an impact on academics and marketers, although it only stresses the pre- and purchase phases. The post-purchase and marketing reinforcement phases are not taken into account by the AIDA model. As a result,

Fortenberry & McGoldrick (2020) suggest developing a model that includes the phases of consumer behavior related to retention and satisfaction. However, given that the main objectives of marketing are to draw in customers and increase revenue, Mumtaz (2019) states that the model sufficiently describes the setting in which businesses create advertising tactics. Hence, the AIDA model does not include the post-buy characteristics of the consumer journey; rather, it does a good job of explaining the pre-purchase and purchase objectives of marketing campaigns aimed at influencing consumer making a purchase behaviour.

When creating useful marketing campaigns that aim to influence customer choices, the AIDA model works well. Marketers may accomplish their objectives of drawing in and influencing the choices of customers by using several strategies (Weng et al., 2021). Understanding how various marketing tactics contribute to and impact customer behaviors of companies is supported by the AIDA model. Mumtaz (2019) asserts that the AIDA model and digital marketing are quite compatible. This approach facilitates prospective clients' trip through the four phases of the purchase process and offers marketers essential direction for developing successful online marketing operations. In the four processes that the model detailed, the study's model assisted in understanding the various social media activities highlighted in this study; Social media content marketing, social media advertising, social media influencer marketing, and social media customer engagements and their goal of influencing customers' buying choices.

2.3. Summary of Literature

Theories and empirical reviews were explored in the literature review. Empirical overview incorporated Ansari et al.'s (2019) social networking content marketing and purchase decision research. Testing showed a high positive association between social media content and customer

purchases. Mgbame and Iyadi (2022) found that content marketing engaged Nigeria's non-alcoholic drink customers. Kitetu (2022) found content marketing improved hospitality college enrollment.

Under social media and purchasing decisions, the empirical review reviewed the studies done by Ertemel & Ammoura (2019), which found that there was no information search, a significant correlation with weighing options, a moderate correlation between purchasing decisions and behavior after the purchase, and a poor correlation between social media advertising and customer need recognition. Additionally, Ogunyombo et al. (2017) found that social media ads had little effect on consumers' buying decisions. Meanwhile, Agneta's (2018) investigation proved that Facebook advertisements influenced women's buying behavior in the country. The empirical studies found that social media advertising influenced consumers' purchase decisions.

Under social media influencer marketing and purchase decisions, the literature reviewed was that of Yodi et al. (2020), which established a positive and significant relationship between influencer marketing and consumer behavior. Odoi (2021) established that social media influencers play a part in influencing new customers' perceptions of a company's products and brand. In the Kenyan context, the research reviewed the study by Wafula (2022), which established that influencer marketing would gain traction and play a dominant part in influencing customers. The studies established that influencer marketing played a role in influencing consumer decisions.

Rosadi et al. (2022) found that social media customer engagements improves brand attachment and buying decisions. Per Oladimeji (2021), social media interaction is best for consumers. Shaheen (2022) found that consumer participation improved Kisumu City, Kenya, women-owned online

enterprises. The empirical evaluation revealed other academics' research shortcomings and findings.

Under theoretical review, the study examined the UGT theory by Katz, Blumberg, and Gurevitch in 1973. It helps understand consumers' uses of social media (Appel et al., 2020). The second theory reviewed was RDT, which was put forward by Aldrich and Pfeffer in 1976; it aids in understanding marketing activities that companies use in their marketing activities, such as social media marketing (Li et al., 2021). Lastly, under the theoretical framework, the study reviewed the AIDA model, which is essential in understanding consumer decision-making processes (Nevalainen, 2019). The theoretical framework guided and developed the study's research designs and conceptual framework.

2.4. Critique of Literature

Ansari et al. (2019) investigated how Pakistani consumers' judgments about what to buy were influenced by social media content. The study has several advantages and disadvantages. Online questionnaires were used to collect the data, a typical and effective way to get information. With 150 responders, the study's sample size is modest and reasonably representative. (Ansari et al., 2019). The study overlooks other potential influences on customer behavior and examines the connection between brand recognition and social media content promotion concerning consumer purchase options. The research fails to provide a clear definition of brand awareness or social media content marketing, potentially causing confusion or misinterpretation of the outcomes.

Mgbame and Iyadi (2022) investigated how the Nigerian non-alcoholic beverage industry's use of content marketing strategy affects consumer engagement. The study's sample size of 274 employees from specific industrial organizations is drawn from a survey research design

technique, which offers a solid foundation for analysis. (Mgbame & Iyadi, 2022). The study solely concentrates on the Non-Alcoholic Beverage Industry in Lagos State, Nigeria, thereby constraining the applicability of the findings to other industries or regions. The study does not explain the industry's content marketing strategy, which may limit understanding of the relationship between content marketing and customer engagement.

Kitetu's (2022) study investigates the impact of internet marketing on student enrollment at private hospitality universities located in Kenya. Using a descriptive research design and a sample size of 381 individuals, the study offers a strong basis for evaluation. Furthermore, the research uses validated and trustworthy statistical procedures to identify relationships between the variables under investigation. In 2022, Kitetu. One disadvantage of the research is that it only looked at one industry, which makes it unable to extrapolate the findings to other sectors.

The effect of social media advertising on consumer purchasing behaviors in the retail fashion industry was studied by Ertemel and Ammoura (2019). The study was conducted through electronic questionnaires, which allowed for large sample size and efficient data collection. The study focused on a specific sector (fashion retail) and location (Istanbul, Turkey), which allowed for more targeted and relevant findings (Ertemel & Ammoura, 2019). The study only focused on one location (Istanbul, Turkey) and may not be generalizable to other locations or cultures. The study only focused on one industry (fashion retail) and may not apply to other sectors.

The Ogunyombo et al. (2017) research clarifies the ways in which young Nigerians are exposed to, witness, and swayed by social media marketing throughout their purchasing decisions. In the inquiry, a survey design and a multistage sampling strategy were used. Data for the research came from 385 undergraduate students at three Nigerian universities (Ogunyombo et al., 2017). The

study's exclusive focus on undergraduate students at three institutions in Nigeria limits the generalizability of its findings to other groups.

Agneta (2018) looks at a pertinent and important subject in the cosmetics industry: how Facebook advertisements impact Kenyan women's shopping and purchasing of beauty items. There are 384 responders in the research, which is a commonly used sample size. The research only looked at Facebook as a social media platform. It was restricted to the female population alone, limiting its applicability to different sectors.

Yodi et al. (2020) look at how consumer behavior and fashion industry purchasing choices are affected by influencer and content marketing. The study's sample size is substantial for this topic, with 100 respondents. The study's results are less applicable to other fashion sector firms due to its limited focus on Erigo Company clients (Yodi et al., 2020). The lack of a thorough description of Erigo Company's usage of influencer and content marketing tactics in the research may restrict the results' application to other businesses.

Odoi (2021) examined social media's role in influencing offline consumer purchase decisions in Ghana. A design based on quantitative data was employed in the study. A sample size of 200 students is used. It employed an easy random sampling technique. The study had a drawback in that it was limited to offline customers in Ghana. (Odoi, 2021). The study further focused on offline customers. The findings thus cannot be used to generalize the influence of social media on the purchasing decisions of other consumers.

In Wafula's (2022) study, they compare traditional media marketing in Kenya with social media influencer marketing as a means of promoting businesses. It offers an analysis of these two marketing strategies in relation to national company promotion. This qualitative research offers

insights into Kenya's marketing environment. The usefulness of conventional media marketing and social media influencers in Kenya is not quantitatively analyzed in this study (Wafula, 2022). Furthermore, the text does not clearly outline the effects of influencer marketing on social media.

The study by Rosadi et al. (2022) looks at how brand loyalty and customer interaction affect customers' purchasing choices. The study uses a quantitative approach. The study population is made up of customers of local cosmetics companies in Yogyakarta; 115 respondents reflect the population in the sample (Rosadi et al., 2022). Descriptive analysis and route analysis are also used in the investigation. While route analysis is used to look at the connections between the variables and test the hypotheses, descriptive analysis is used to characterize the properties of the research variables. The study's limitations are restricted to Yogyakarta.

Oladimeji (2021) collected answers from 289 participants, a good representation of the sample, using a quantitative research methodology and survey questionnaires. The study's emphasis is customer participation in Nigeria's smartphone sector. The study sheds light on the advantages of consumer involvement for businesses and individuals alike, including boosting sales volume, cultivating a devoted client base, and making customer feedback easily accessible. The results' generalizability to other sectors or countries is limited by the study's focus on the Nigerian smartphone industry.

The 2022 research by Shaheen examines the relationship between customer engagement techniques and the operational efficiency of women-owned digital businesses in Kisumu. The study's sample size of 105 was selected using techniques that have been shown to be statistically grounded (Shaheen's, 2022). In order to further examine the data, the research employs a descriptive technique, which makes it possible to determine associations using precise statistics.

The fact that the research only focuses on Kisumu and women-owned enterprises is one of its limitations.

2.5. Research Gaps

Ansari et al. (2019) employed a sample population of 150 people and centered their investigation on Pakistan. Because the study was conducted in Pakistan, there is a context gap because the two nations' demographics vary, which might affect the findings. A larger sample size will be used in this study, which will be carried out in Kenya. The goal of Mgbame and Iyadi's research from 2022 was to determine how marketing engagement in Nigeria's non-alcoholic industry is influenced by content. There was a contextual gap in the study since it concentrated on the non-alcoholic business. The study's primary emphasis was on digital users.

In contrast, Kenya was the subject of Kitetu's (2022) investigation. The focus of Kitetu (2022) was on how digital marketing affected student enrollment in Kenya's private hospitality institutions. Due to the study's focus on hospitality institutions, there is a contextual gap. The subject of the present study was digital customers.

The 2019 research by Ertemel & Ammoura focused on how social media advertising affects customers' choices to buy in Istanbul's retail sector. The research discovered a weak relationship between social media and product selection made by customers. These findings indicate a gap in knowledge. The purpose of the research is to ascertain if social media advertising and purchase choices are connected. Ogunyombo et al. (2017) looked at how young Nigerian students' purchasing choices were impacted by social media advertisements and their exposure to them. A subjective multistage sampling approach was used in the investigation. This indicates a gap in the methodology. The approach for this study will be random sampling. Additionally, a distinct sample

set from Ogunyombo et al. (2017) will be used in this study. Agneta (2018) investigated how Facebook advertisements affected Kenyan women's sales and purchases of cosmetics. The research focused on only one social media network. Its emphasis on women in particular revealed a divide in the intended audience. The present research looked at digital buyers of various online goods and was gender-neutral.

Yodi et al. (2020) looked at how consumers' decisions to buy Erigo items were influenced by influencer marketing and content. Since it was a case study, there may be a contextual gap since its conclusions may not apply to other sectors. In Kenya, the study will be conducted with an emphasis on digital customers. The goal of the research, conducted by Odoi (2021), was to determine how social media influencers affect offline consumers' choices to buy in Ghana. There is a contextual gap since the study was conducted in Ghana. Kenya will be the study's location. Wafula (2022) sought to compare the use of conventional media marketing and social media influencer marketing in Kenyan company promotion. The research for the study made use of secondary data. hence pointing to a methodological flaw. They also limited their conclusions by using qualitative data. Primary data and a descriptive research approach were used in this study.

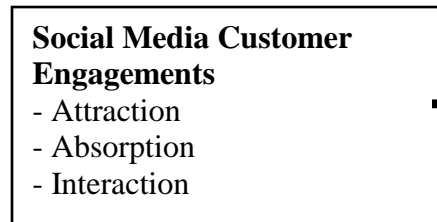
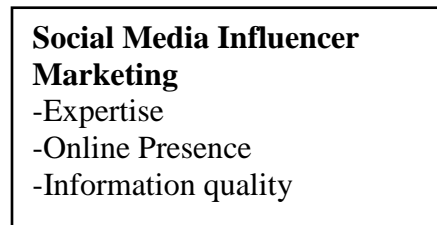
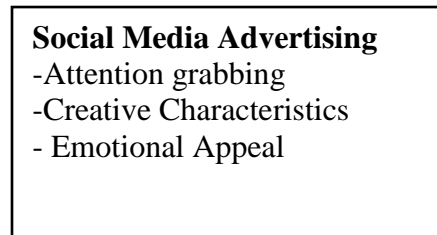
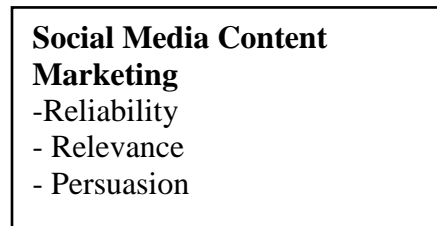
In Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Rosadi et al. (2022) sought to determine brand attachment and consumer participation in purchase choices. There is a contextual gap since the study was conducted in Indonesia. Compared to Rosadi et al.'s study, the study was carried out in Kenya and used a bigger sample (2022). Oladimeji (2021) concentrated on defining customer interaction strategies and how they affect Nigerian consumers' decisions to buy cell phones. Purposive sampling was used in the research, which may have commercial implications. hence pointing to a methodological flaw. Additionally, the research was not carried out in Kenya, creating a contextual gap. In the research, a random sample was employed. Shaheen (2022) focused on the accomplishments and approaches

to consumer interaction of female-owned online businesses in Kisumu, Kenya. The research focused on internet businesses run by women (Shaheen, 2022). There is a contextual gap here. This research focuses on various e-commerce companies in addition to women-owned enterprises.

2.6. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework explains the link between independent and dependent variables.

Independent Variables



Dependent Variables

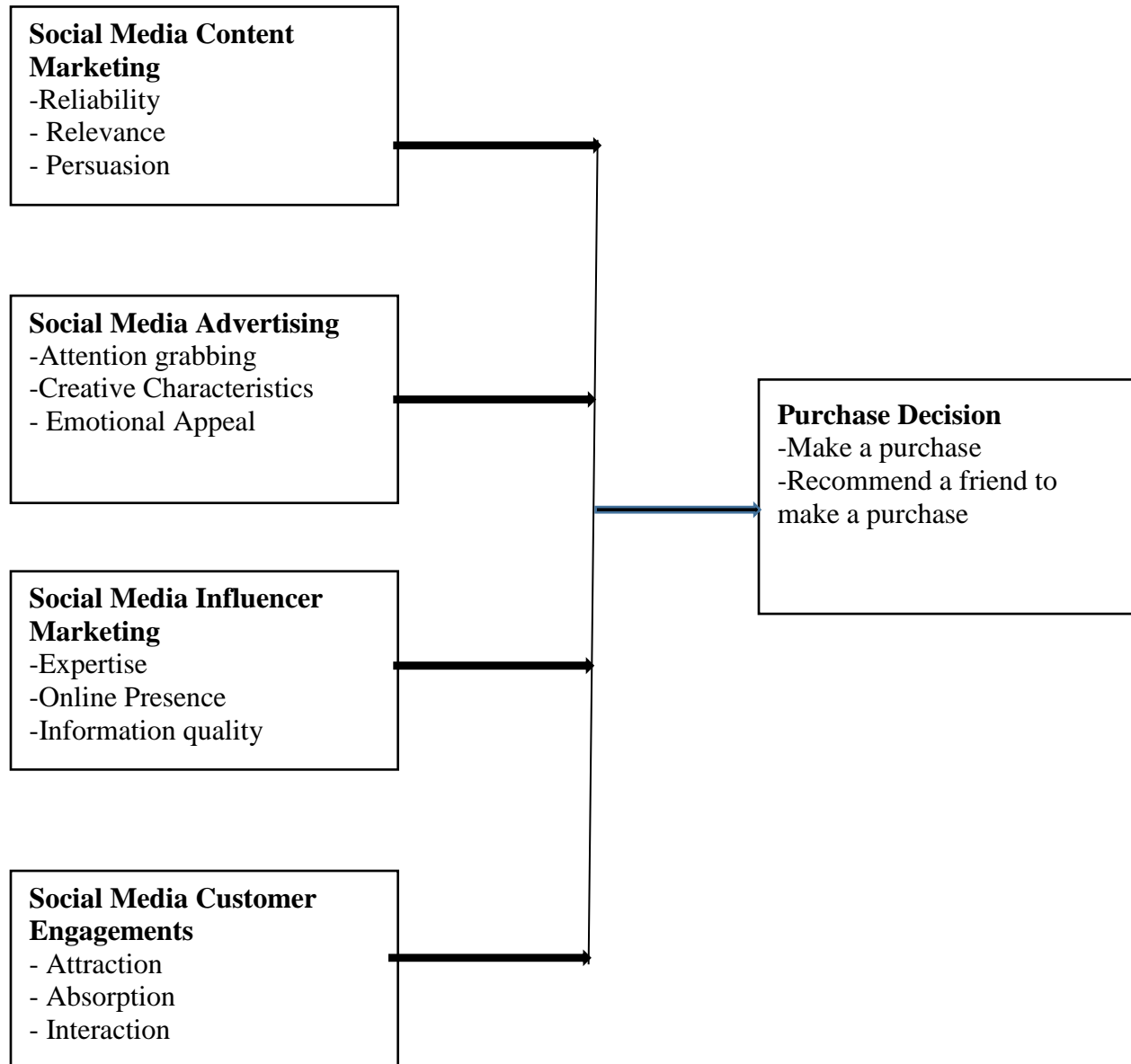
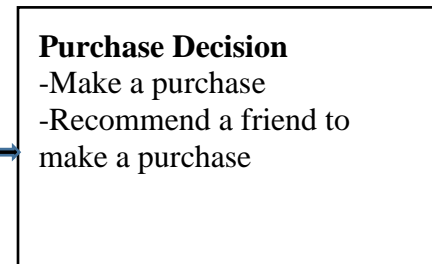


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.6.2. Discussion of the variables

2.6.2.1. Social Media Content Marketing

Nowadays, content marketing is a crucial component of digital marketing. It undermines several forms that draw viewers in and support the development of brands. Writing articles specifically for certain audiences and using them to advertise goods and services is known as social media blogging (Yazgan Pektas & Hassan, 2020). Second, businesses create brief films for social media vlogs—a shortened form of video blogging. With the emergence of video-sharing social media platforms like YouTube and Instagram, they have become more popular over time (Kim, 2017). Moreover, businesses make use of lengthier advertising films, which are more informative than vlogs. The expansion of social media content on platforms like blogs, vlogs, and videos. These many content formats support the creation of captivating and relatable narratives that are pertinent to the audience, aid in persuading, and serve as trustworthy resources of information on the goods and services that the companies provide.

2.6.2.2. Social Media Advertising

Social media advertising is the practice of employing sponsored advertisements on various social media platforms to promote goods, services, or messages. It consists of creating and placing paid-for ads on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Businesses use different ads like story ads, which appear in the story feeds of the users; photo ads use visuals like photos and imagery to convey brand messages concisely and elicit emotional responses (Yasmin et al., 2015). In addition, companies use messenger ads sent directly to the inboxes of the target audiences. Social media ads

deliver content that integrates into users' online experiences through attention-grabbing and appealing emotionally to the viewers. These ad formats can influence consumer perceptions, preferences, and purchasing decisions.

2.6.2.3. Social Media Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is another strategy that companies in social media marketing employ. It involves using the persuasive power of individuals with high online followings to impact consumer decision-making. Influencer marketing requires product reviews, where influencers evaluate and endorse products, explaining their features, benefits, and drawbacks (Zhou et al., 2021). These reviews provide potential consumers firsthand insights and experiences, facilitating informed decision-making. Secondly, an influencer's online presence significantly influences consumer decisions (Leung et al., 2022). Influencers establish personal connections through consistent and relatable content creation and cultivate trust with their followers. Finally, the perceived expertise of influencers in their respective domains helps improve their credibility and enhances their capacity to shape consumer decisions.

2.6.2.4. Social Media Customer Engagements

Customer engagements involve marketing activities that promote consumer engagement with the company. Companies measure their brand's engagement by measuring likes, comments, and views. Likes often show a numeric representation of approval and signify a positive reception to posted content (Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021). Their influence lies in their ability to establish social proof, indicating to other potential customers the popularity and endorsement of a particular product or service. Comments foster conversations and dialogues around the content. Views, a

metric often associated with video content, reflect the extent of audience reach and engagement. A high view count serves as a conspicuous indicator of content.

2.6.2.5. Purchase Decision

Purchase decisions are complex processes that consumers undergo when choosing the product to purchase. Consumers make the first purchase decision after reviewing all the information and establishing that the product fits their demands. Second, when they repurchase the product because they liked it; and third, when they tell their friends to buy it too(Jun 2020), this cycle of re-engagement underscores the critical role of positive experiences in nurturing brand patriotism and reinforcing the customer's purchase decision regarding a particular product. Through social media marketing, marketers can influence customers to purchase and recommend a product to a friend.

CHAPTER THREE:

METHODOLOGY

3.1.Introduction

The research design, study locations, target population, sampling strategy, questionnaire structure, pre-testing and variable amusement, validity and reliability assessments, pilot study, data analysis, and ethical considerations are all covered in detail in this chapter.

3.2.Research design

The structure and procedures used in the data gathering and analysis to determine answers to the questions and develop a conclusion are known as the study design. Thus, a research design works as a plan to guide the research on the methods applied for data collection and analysis for the research project (Kothari, 2004). There are different types of research designs, such as quantitative, qualitative, explanatory, and descriptive (Kothari, 2004). The study used a descriptive research design. Descriptive research gathers information about the current status to draw a description and interpretation. The aim of using this research method is because it is based on data collection and analysis and through this the researcher is able to identify relationships between the studied variables (Salaria, 2012). Descriptive research thus was chosen has it helped in establishing connections and inferences of the research variables.

3.3.Study Area

The research took place in the Nairobi Metropolitan Area of Kenya due to its substantial population of digital consumers and a high concentration of internet and social media users. These areas

exhibit an elevated number of users of social media within the country. Additionally, Nairobi provides a distinct demographic of users of social media compared to other countries.

3.4.Target population

The study population denotes a clearly described group of individuals, objects, and events that form a focus group of research (Kothari, 2004). To be effective, the targeted population should have similar qualities to prevent sampling mistakes. The target population for this study comprises individuals who have actively used social media platforms in Kenya. As of 2023, the country has approximately 11 million social media users (Kemp, 2023). These individuals, having engaged with social media, have encountered various products and services marketed by firms on these platforms. Therefore, they form the specific group of interest for this research, characterized by their experience with social media and exposure to marketing activities on these platforms..

3.5. Sampling design and size

The process of choosing an appropriate sample so that the characteristics of the whole population may be ascertained is known as sampling. It guarantees the statistics back up the sample size and sampling strategy chosen by the researcher. Furthermore, as per Adams et al. (2007), the sampling design aids in the development of a sample frame. Thus, the sampling methodology describes the process that will be used to collect data on the whole population. The research used probability sampling, a random selection technique that offers every item in a population an equal chance of being chosen (Kothari, 2004). This guaranteed the study's objectivity.

Researchers need to choose the right sample size and frame; thus, one should consider the composition of the population, the sample, and the sample size. The sample frame for this study

was people who have been active on social media and made a purchase in the last six months in Nairobi. Since there are no precise statistics regarding social media users, the study adopted the formula of calculating the sample size of an infinite population proposed by Singh and Masuku (2014).

Table 3.1

Calculated Sample Size

Sample Size for Frequency in a Population

Population size(for finite population correction factor or fpc)(<i>N</i>):	1000000
Hypothesized % frequency of outcome factor in the population (<i>p</i>):	50%+/-5
Confidence limits as % of 100(absolute +/- %)(<i>d</i>):	5%
Design effect (for cluster surveys- <i>DEFF</i>):	1

Sample Size(*n*) for Various Confidence Levels

ConfidenceLevel(%)	Sample Size
95%	384
80%	165
90%	271
97%	471
99%	664
99.9%	1082
99.99%	1512

Equation

Sample size $n = [DEFF * Np(1-p)] / [(d^2 / Z^2_{1-\alpha/2} * (N-1) + p*(1-p)]$

Source: (Singh & Masuku 2014)

3.6. Data collection

Data collection is the process of gathering information from respondents. The research will use questionnaires to collect primary data from participants (Kelley et al., 2003). A questionnaire is a

kind of research tool that consists of a series of questions used to extract information from participants. Obtaining important data and perceptive information from the participants is its primary objective. The structured questionnaire for the research used a 5-point Likert scale to collect data for the quantitative section. The degree of agreement amongst responders over a statement was measured using the Likert scale, which goes from 1 as Disagree Strongly, 2 as Disagree, 3 as Neutral, 4 as Agree, 5 as agree strongly (Kothari, 2004).

3.7.Pilot Study

Pre-studies, also known as pilot studies, enable researchers to pretest the validity and reliability of their research instruments (Kothari, 2004). The validity and reliability of the data collecting tools were evaluated in a pilot study with sixteen participants. Additionally, it enabled the researcher to make changes to the questionnaires, including bettering the questions' phrasing, order, and method of data processing. Validity is the extent to which a research instrument can assess study topics, while reliability makes sure that surveys provide consistent responses. Cronbach alpha testing was used to conduct the reliability test, and an alpha value between 0.6 and 0.95 was judged trustworthy. Furthermore tests validity was done to ensure that the data was okay for analysis using the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity evaluates if the correlations between variables in a dataset in order to determine whether the data is suitable for factor analysis.

3.8.Data analysis and presentation

In research, data analysis facilitates the interpretation of the gathered information. In order to review the data, spot trends, and derive conclusions from the information gathered, the research used a variety of statistical and analytical techniques (Kothari, 2004). To assist in addressing the study questions, the data analysis revealed patterns, correlations, and insights. SPSS version 28.0,

a statistical analysis tool, was utilized for the investigation due to its detailed examination. Two methods utilized in data analysis to examine the connection between the variables were regression and correlation analysis.

Presenting the data analysis was the next stage following data analysis. Effective communication of the research findings to all stakeholders is facilitated by the presentation. The study used graphs, tables, charts, and visualizations to convey its results in a clear, succinct manner. These techniques facilitate the more thorough communication of statistical findings and complicated information.

3.9.Measurement of variables

Table 3.2

Measurement of Variables

Variable	Type	Parameters	Measurement
Social Media Content Marketing	Independent	Reliability Relevance Persuasion(Yazgan Pektas & Hassan, 2020)	Likert/ Ordinal
Social Media Advertising	Independent	Impression Creative Attributes Reach (K V et al., 2021)	Likert/ Ordinal
Social Media Influencer Marketing	Independent	Expertise Number of followers Information quality(Saima & Khan, 2021)	Likert/ Ordinal
Social media Customer engagements Marketing	Independent	likes shares comments(Harrigan et al., 2017)	Likert/ Ordinal

Purchase Decision	Dependent	Make a purchase Recommend purchase	Likert/ Ordinal a
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3.10. Empirical model

The research employed correlation analysis to determine the relationship between the dependent variable and statistically significant independent factors. The research employed multiple regression, ANOVA, and beta coefficient of determination. This statistical method assessed the independent variables' influence on the dependent variable to evaluate their statistical significance. We used a multivariate regression model to examine the link between independent factors and the dependent variable.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where: Y = Purchasing decisions of e-commerce industry customers in Kenya

X1 = Content marketing impact

X2 = Social media marketing influence

X3 = Influencer marketing effect

X4 = Social media customer engagements

$\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3,$ and β_4 are the regression coefficients.

The primary aim of the regression analysis was to assess the significance of each independent variable (X1, X2, X3, X4) in predicting the purchasing decisions (Y) of e-commerce industry customers in Kenya.

The study assumes error-free data, weak correlations between independent variables, and linear relationships between variables utilizing this model. Errors are not unrelated to one another.

3.11. Ethical Issues

A NACOSTI research permission was obtained to assure respondents that the research followed ethical standards. The research project respected respondents' privacy. This study did not hurt the environment, and no one was forced to participate or give their personal information.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1.Introduction

The study results from data analysis are presented in this chapter. The study investigated how social media marketing affects Kenyan digital customers' purchases. This section covers response rate, validity, reliability, respondent background, descriptive results, inferential analysis, and research aims.

4.2.Response Rate

The response rate was calculated by comparing completed and returned questionnaires to the intended sample size and dispersed questionnaires. Two hundred eleven distributed questionnaires were completed and submitted, 54.95%. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), an analysis and reporting can be considered adequate at a 50% response rate, good at 60%, and excellent when it surpasses 70%. As a result, the research could utilize the 55% response rate to conduct its analysis. In Table 4.1, the response rate is summarized.

Table 4.1

Response Rate		
	Total	%
Target Sample	384	100%
Response	211	54.95%

4.3.Data Processing, Writing, and Screening

The researcher used stringent approaches to assure data integrity and validity. After gathering responses from 211 individuals via Google Forms, the researcher examined for missing values in the dataset. To avoid bias or inconsistencies in the study, missing data have to be identified and addressed. According to Little and Rubin (2019), missing data in a dataset is widespread in research and can drastically affect analytic outcomes. Checking data for bias and inaccuracy was crucial. True and reliable data is needed for quantitative studies to have strong statistical power (Pearson 2010). The SPSS missing value analysis program found patterns in the missing data and utilized mean replacement to treat them.

Entry into an Excel spreadsheet transformed raw data into an analysis-ready format. For easier data interpretation, quality checks, knowledge discovery, and transcriptions, data must be recorded and converted into an analysis-ready format (Lanzola et al. 2014). Thus, SPSS-readable number values were assigned to responses. After cleaning, the data was checked for mistakes and inconsistencies. To avoid skewing data, outliers and errors were carefully examined and double-checked. Data analysis relies on data cleansing and screening to improve decision-making, find and fix errors, and assure data quality (Osborne, 2012).

4.4.Reliability Test and Validity Tests

4.4.1. Reliability Test

Reliability measures how consistent research instruments such as questionnaires produce consistent results. This test ensures that a study's findings can be relied on and replicated in other areas. Using information from the pilot research, a Cronbach alpha test was used to conduct the

reliability test. A satisfactory Cronbach's alpha range of 0.6 to 0.95 is sufficient for the research instrument's dependability (AbuShanab & Pearson, 2007). The reliability test was conducted on the pilot study data and the following results..

Table 4.2

Reliability Test

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha of Calculated Variable	Construct Parameter Items	Item-Total Correlation	Alpha if Deleted	Item	Conclusion
Social media content marketing	0.736	3	0.625, 0.648, 0.710,	0.721, 0.743	0.712,	Acceptable
Social media advertising	0.797	3	0.751, 0.762	0.772, 0.718, 0.830	0.729,	Acceptable
Social media influencer marketing	0.826	3	0.80, 0.81	0.82, 0.83, 0.84, 0.85		Acceptable
Social media customer engagement	0.721	3	0.691, 0.715	0.704, 0.722, 0.734	0.713,	Acceptable
Purchase decision	0.790	2	0.781, 0.789	N/A		Acceptable
Aggregate Score	0.774					Acceptable

The findings of the reliability study for five constructs pertaining to purchasing choices and social media marketing are shown in the table. There were three items in each construct, and the internal consistency of each item was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. All of the constructions in the table had acceptable levels of dependability, as the table demonstrated.

For social media content marketing, the acceptable Cronbach's Alpha was 0.736. Additionally, the item-total correlation was examined. The connection between an object and the scale's overall score—which does not include that item—is known as the item-total correlation. It shows how well a particular component adds to the scale's overall dependability. According to Eisinga et al. (2013), correlations over 0.4 are considered acceptable for item-total correlations and above 0.5 are preferred. All of the social media content marketing components had acceptable overall correlations, ranging from 0.625 to 0.710. The impact of deleting a particular item on the overall score is shown by the item-total correlation and the alpha of the removed item for each item in the construction. The permissible range of scores for adverts on social media material was 0.712 to 0.743 (AbuShanab & Pearson, 2007).

Cronbach's Alpha for social media ads was 0.797, which was deemed acceptable. The acceptable range for the item-total Alpha score was 0.751 to 0.772. The overall correlation falls between 0.718 and 0.830 if the item is removed, which is all within an acceptable range (AbuShanab & Pearson, 2007).

For social media influencer marketing, the Cronbach's Alpha score was 0.826, deemed to be within an acceptable range. The acceptable range for the item-total Alpha score was 0.751 to 0.772. The overall correlation, which is between 0.718 and 0.830 if the item is removed, is acceptable (AbuShanab & Pearson, 2007).

The customer engagement on social media received an acceptable Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.721. The acceptable range of the item-total Alpha score was 0.691 to 0.715. The overall correlation falls between 0.713 and 0.734 if the item is removed, which is all within an acceptable range (AbuShanab & Pearson, 2007).

Cronbach's Alpha for the Purchasing Decision was 0.790, which was considered satisfactory. Both teams' item total scores, which fall into the good range, were 0.781 and 0.789 (AbuShanab & Pearson, 2007). Cronbach's alpha indicates that the five constructs pertaining to purchasing choices and social media marketing have adequate levels of dependability. The constructs assess the same underlying concept since all of the items have sufficient levels of item-total correlation.

4.4.2. Validity Test

The research concept was developed based on previous studies to validate the questionnaire's validity for the study, as shown in Table 3.2. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also used to confirm that the data was suitable for analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity evaluates if the correlations between variables in a dataset considerably deviate from what would be expected if the dataset had no correlations in order to determine whether the data is suitable for factor analysis(Shrestha, 2021). Therefore, the significance of the test is shown by the p-value linked to the Chi-Square statistic. It indicates if the correlations between your variables deviate considerably from an identity matrix. The data is suitable for data analysis if the p-value is less than 0.001.

Table 4.3

Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity

χ^2	Df	P
----------	----	---

Inf	10	< .001
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From the analysis, the p-value is less than 0.001, which established that the data was statistically valid for statistical analysis. (Selickaitė et al., 2019).

4.5.Respondents Social Media Use

The study aimed to establish the respondent’s social media use, if they have ever purchased products online, and their frequency in usage of social media platforms this was to help establish whether social media use is prominent among the target population, and it helped also draw the high use of social media among the target population.

4.5.1. Respondent’s Social Media Purchases

The purpose of this section was to find out whether the participants had ever bought a product that was advertised on social media. Table 4.4 reveals that 87.68% of participants said they had bought a product from social media platforms, whereas 12.32% of participants said they had not bought any products they had seen online. The data shows that digital consumers segment in social media has emerged as a crucial platform for online shopping and that digital customers have grown to be a significant market segment.

Table 4.4

Social Media Purchase

	N	%	Cumulative
Yes	185	87.68%	87.68%
No	26	12.32%	100%

Note. Have you ever purchased something Online?

This result validates the study's goals, which state that social media has developed into an essential channel for making purchases of goods and services. It demonstrates that engaging and influencing Kenyan digital customers via social media marketing is a realistic and effective strategy. The results emphasize the value of social media marketing initiatives, draw attention to a market opportunity, offer perceptions into consumer behavior, emphasize the necessity of focused marketing plans, and present a chance for companies to outperform rivals by using social media as a sales channel. The results emphasize even more how important it is for businesses to comprehend how various social media marketing initiatives affect digital customers' purchasing decisions.

These results are consistent with a number of research on social media marketing. Siriwardana (2020) notes that social media has grown to be a powerful force in the modern marketing environment as more customers rely on it as a marketplace and information source. It was verified that social media gives businesses the ability to effectively engage and communicate with their target market. This confirms the researcher's conclusions on the significance of social media marketing initiatives and the possibility of a competitive advantage for companies using social media as a marketing tool.

4.5.2. Respondent Frequency of using social media

The frequency of social media usage by respondents is displayed in Figure 4.3. As can be seen from the table, 91.47% of respondents said they use social media daily, 3.79% said they use it once a month, and 4.74% said they use it once a month. This means that the research was able to focus on social media users, who make up a significant portion of digital consumers. The results

demonstrate that social media has ingrained itself into peoples' everyday lives and serves as a forum for communication and information-seeking about goods and services. The findings of social media use frequency align with Siriwardana's (2020) study, which found that users of social media platforms use them somewhat frequently. This demonstrates that social media is widely used by respondents on a regular basis, indicating its importance as a necessary component of peoples' daily lives.

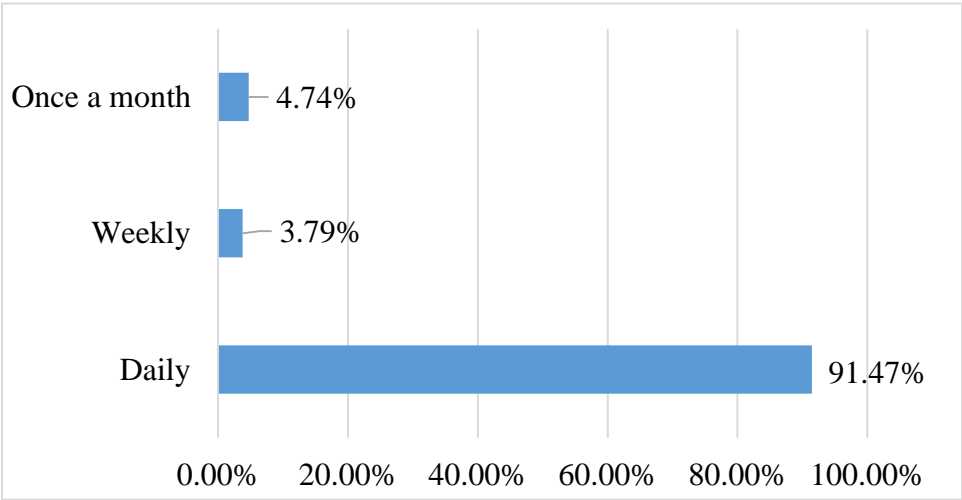


Figure 4.1 Social Media Frequency

4.6.Descriptive Analysis

This study's main goal was to evaluate how social media marketing affected Kenyan consumers' choices to buy. The descriptive statistical analysis based on the answers from the 211 participants who filled out and returned their questionnaires is described in this section. The research used percentages mean as measures of central tendency and standard deviation for a descriptive analysis of the variables. The analysis's results are shown in tabular style, with participant replies divided into three categories: strongly disagree (2), agree (5), agree (4), and strongly disagree (1).

4.6.1. Social Media Content Marketing

The study's first objective was to look at how social media content marketing influenced Kenyan digital consumers' choices to buy. Table 4.5 displays the outcomes for the specific objective.

Table 4.5

Social Media Content Marketing

Statement	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean Statistics	Standard Deviation
I find the information in social media to express facts well	21	4.70	14.20	30.80	31.20	18.50%	3.450237	1.088996
Social media content posted by companies try to persuade me to buy a product	21	5.20	4.70%	17.50	39.30	33.20%	3.905213	1.075589
I find social media content to have relevant information about products and services.	21	3.80	9.80%	25.60	37.90	23.20%	3.67298	1.04956
Social media content guides my decision-making process when making a purchase	21	9.00	13.70	22.70	29.90	24.60%	3.473934	1.247949
Aggregate							3.63	1.118

Table 4.5 shows that respondents' fairly favorable assessment of social media content marketing's influence on customers' purchasing decisions was 3.63. The standard deviation of 1.118 indicates substantial dispersion around the mean but low variability.

Most respondents felt social media content was true, with 30.8% neutral. According to participants' comments (3.905 mean and 1.049 standard deviations), most firms posted to persuade them to buy. With a mean score of 3.672 and a standard deviation of 1.049, most participants said social media affected their purchases. However, 22.7% were indifferent and 12.6% strongly disagreed.

With an average of 3.474 and an SD of 1.248, most respondents said social media affected their buying decisions. The data above shows that most participants knew about their social media marketing and that most firms use it for marketing. According to 54.5% of participants, social media marketing strongly affected their purchase choice. However, 22.7% were indifferent and 21.7% stated social media marketing did not affect purchase choices. Social media influences many shoppers, but not all.

A study by Kwahk and Kim (2017) found that social media commitment and interaction linkages significantly improved social impact transfer parameters and e-commerce outcomes like visit intention and confidence in online sellers. They also discovered that normative and informational social media content impacts consumer purchasing decisions and has varied effects. Nevertheless, Zhu et al. (2022) noted that using social media does not necessarily lead to users' willingness to purchase on social commerce websites. They established that social media use stimulates users' purchasing intentions on social commerce websites in a culturally varied setting..

The thus concluded that social media content marketing favorably affects Kenyan digital customers' purchase choices by a mean of 3.63. The low standard deviation of 1.18 indicates

response consistency. This finding agrees with Ansari et al. (2019), who found that social media content favorably affected customer purchasing choices.

4.6.2. Social Media Advertisement

The second objective was to assess how social media advertisements affect the buying choices of digital consumers in Kenya. Participants were questioned about different facets of social media advertising and their effects on their purchase decisions, with the findings detailed in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Social Media Advertisement

Statement	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean Statistics	Standard Deviation
I find social media ads with original ideas more engaging.	211	9.95 %	8.50 %	24.2 5%	27.5 0%	29. 90 %	3.5876 78	1.26777
Creative social media ads manage to capture my interest	211	8.53 %	8.53 %	14.6 9%	34.1 2%	34. 12 %	3.7677 73	1.24226 7
Social Media Ads with reasonable offer prices reduce my information searching process.	211	10.90 %	10.9 0%	16.1 1%	37.4 4%	24. 64 %	3.5402 84	1.27016
I tend to like social media ads with a strong emotional appeal.	211	10.90 %	11.8 5%	36.0 2%	24.6 5%	16. 59 %	3.2417 06	1.18576 3
Aggregate							3.534	1.24

When asked whether they thought social media ads with unique concepts were more engaging, the respondents' responses were inconsistent, with an average of 3.588 and a standard deviation of

1.268. Of those who responded to the statement, 57.4% agreed or strongly agreed, 24.3% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 18.35% disagreed or strongly disagreed. In addition, the participants were questioned whether they were drawn in by inventive and imaginative social media advertisements. The majority (34.12%) agreed, with a mean of 3.7677 and a standard deviation of 1.2422 indicating agreement. Therefore, when asked whether social media advertising with affordable offer pricing made it easier for them to get information, the majority of respondents (24.6% SA, 37.4% A) said that they did, with 16.1% remaining neutral and 21.8% strongly opposing or agreeing. The majority of participants agreed, with a mean score of 3.54 and a standard deviation of 1.27. The participants' responses to the question of whether they liked social media ads varied, with a mean of 3.2417 and a standard deviation of 1.1858, respectively. 16.59% highly agreed, 24.65% agreed, 36.02% were indifferent, and 22.75% opposed or strongly disagreed with the emotionally compelling plea.

The results on the influence of social media advertisements show mixed reactions, with the majority believing that advertisements with emotional and educational appeal were more likely to capture their attention. However, some participants were neutral on the social media advertisements, and many also disagreed that those ads were appealing. The results are contradictory to the findings of earlier research. Ogunyombo et al. (2017) found that social media ads had little effect on consumers' buying decisions. Ertemel & Ammoura (2019) established a weak relationship between social media advertising and consumer need recognition, no search for information.

In summary, the study's findings show that social media advertising has a big impact on how customers decide what to buy. With an overall mean score of 3.534 and a standard deviation of 1.25, as shown in Table 4.6, respondents indicated that they had positive opinions regarding the

impact of social media advertisements on their decisions to buy, pointing out that innovative content can successfully grab the attention of digital consumers.

4.6.3. Social Media Influencer Marketing

The third objective was to look at how Kenyan digital customers' purchasing decisions were influenced by social media influencer endorsements. Table 4.7 provides an overview of the analysis's conclusions.

Table 4.7

Social Media Influencer Marketing

Statement	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean Statistics	Standard Deviation
Social media influencer product reviews help me understand the products/services offered	211	12.32 %	6.16 %	19.91 %	39.34 %	22.27 %	3.5308 06	1.24784 1
I engage with influencers who have a high number of followers on social media.	211	20.38 %	14.69 %	24.17 %	26.54 %	14.22 %	2.9952 61	1.34021 9
Influencers consistently deliver high-quality and reliable information about products/services	211	16.59 %	18.48 %	28.91 %	23.22 %	12.80 %	2.9715 64	1.26159
Social media influencers influence my purchasing choices.	211	17.54 %	15.17 %	30.81 %	22.75 %	13.74 %	3	1.27684 4
Aggregate							3.12	1.28162 35

There was conflicting feedback on social media influencer marketers' on purchasing decisions. Most participants agreed that social media influencer product reviews helped them understand products or items, with a mean of 3.5308 and a standard deviation of 1.2478. 22.27% strongly agreed, 39.34% agreed, and 19.9% were neutral. Participants were also asked about engaging with popular influencers. With a mean of 2.995 and a standard deviation of 1.3402, 24.1% were neutral, 40.76% agreed or strongly agreed. Remaining 35.07% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean was 2.9715 and the standard deviation was 1.2615 when participants were asked if influencers consistently provided high-quality and dependable product/service information. 29.91% were neutral and 35% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Participants were also questioned if social media influenced their buying power. With a mean of 3 and a standard deviation of 1.2768, most were neutral. The evidence reveals influencer marketing influences customer behavior. This influence helps buyers understand products through reviews. Influencer information is questioned and has conflicting reviews.

Koay et al. (2022) found that influencer marketing does not necessarily affect purchases. Only influencer trustworthiness and knowledge predicted purchase intention, but attractiveness was more important when materialism was high. These findings contradict the present study's conclusions that social media influencer marketing influences Kenyan digital consumers' purchasing decisions, with the average perception being slightly above neutral.

Thus, influencer marketing's impact on digital consumers' purchase decisions is rather neutral, with a mean of 3.12 and a standard deviation of 1.281, and consumers are not sure it greatly affects them. These findings support Odoi (2021), who found that social media influencers affect new customers' brand and product perceptions.

4.6.4. Social Media Customer Engagement

The fourth objective was to investigate how social media customer interaction affects the purchasing decisions of digital consumers in Kenya. Participants shared their views on the impact of social media customer engagement on their purchasing decisions, with the outcomes showcased in Table 4.8

Table 4.8

Social Media Customer Engagement

Statement	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean Statistics	Standard Deviation
I am passionate about brands that post on social media.	211	8.53 %	12.3 2%	28. 44 %	28.4 4%	22. 27 %	3.383 45864 7	1.20403 4
I get carried away when interacting with information on products and services posted online.	211	12.8 %	14.6 9%	29. 38 %	26.5 4%	16. 59 %	3.194 31279 6	1.19507 7
I am someone who interacts with other like-minded people online through commenting and sharing of posts.	211	15.17 %	17.0 6%	21. 8%	28.9 1%	17. 06 %	3.156 39810 4	1.18585
I often participate in the activities of companies on social media sites.	211	22.75 %	23.2 2%	23. 7%	18.9 6%	11. 37 %	2.729 85782	1.18810 3
Aggregate							3.115	1.193

The participants were asked whether they were passionate about brands that usually post on social media; many agreed, with 16.59% strongly agreeing and 26.54% agreeing. There were some

28.44% who were neutral. There was also a significant number of people who disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean of 3.383 and a standard deviation of 1.204 shows that a slight majority of the participants were passionate about brands that post on social media. The participants were also asked whether they get carried out when interacting with information about products online. With a mean of 3.156, a slight majority agreed (22.27% SA, 28.44% A), but there were a significant number who were neutral (29.3%) and disagreed (12.8% SD, 14.69% D).

With a mean of 3.1563 and a standard deviation of 1.186, 45.96% agreed or strongly agreed, 32.23% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 21.8% were neutral on whether they constantly commented and shared posts with like-minded people online. When asked if they participated in online company activities, 40.27% said yes, 23.7% said neutral, and 45.95% said no. The mean of 2.7298 indicates that few people engage in brand activities on social media.

In 2020, Lăzăroiu and colleagues examined how social media involvement affects brand equity and purchase intention, with perceived risk as a moderator. Social media involvement improves brand equity and buying intention, but it is weaker when perceived risk is large. This suggests that social media involvement may not affect high-risk online shoppers as much as low-risk shoppers.

Table 4.8 shows that participants have interacted with company marketing on social media. Some claim they enjoyed their dealings with such companies, while others say they didn't. Customer involvement includes brand enthusiasm, product information, like-minded people, and online corporate activities. The study found that it can influence consumer behavior and purchases. Rosadi, Azhari, and Saraswati (2022) found that consumer interaction improves brand attachment and buying decisions.

4.6.5. Digital Consumers Purchase Decision

The purchase decision is the dependent variable, and different factors influence it. This study establishes whether social media marketing affected participants' purchase decisions. Table 4.9 shows the descriptive statistics for purchasing decisions.

Table 4.9

Digital Consumer's Purchase Decision

	N	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Standard deviation
After viewing products/services on social media, I became interested in purchasing them.	211	6.16 %	10.4 3%	26. 54 %	28.4 4%	22. 27 %	3.383 45864 7	1.20403 4
After viewing a product/service on social media, I am willing to purchase it.	211	6.64 %	13.7 4%	38. 39 %	26.5 4%	21. 33 %	3.194 31279 6	1.19507 7
I am inclined to recommend a friend to purchase a product/service promoted on social media platforms	211	8.06 %	14.6 9%	21. 8%	28.9 1%	12. 32 %	3.156 39810 4	1.18585
Aggregate							3.244	1.95

When asked whether they became interested in purchasing the product after viewing it, with a mean of 3.3834 and a standard deviation of 1.204, the slight majority (50.71%) agreed, with 26.5% being neutral. There were a significant number of participants who (16.59%) disagreed. The participants were also asked whether they would purchase the product after viewing it online. Most

participants were neutral, with a mean of 3.156 confirming this. 21.335 strongly agreed, 26.54% agreed, 38.3% were neutral, 20.3% disagreed and strongly disagreed.

Overall, the analysis suggests some level of interest and willingness among participants to purchase the product after viewing it online. However, there are also notable segments of the participants who are not interested or unwilling to buy. While these findings show that social media marketing strategies may determine purchase decisions, some studies prove the contrary, including Kwahk and Kima (2017), who discovered that social media impacts on consumers' purchasing decisions are complicated and indirect. They established that while social interaction ties may not directly affect purchase intention, they considerably benefit social impact transfer variables and confidence in online vendors. Kwahk and Kima (2017) implies that social media might not directly influence customer purchasing behavior and could, instead, be influenced by various external factors.

In conclusion, from the study's data analysis in Table 4.9, respondents express some interest in purchasing products or services promoted on social media, are somewhat willing to buy after seeing a product or service, and are slightly inclined to recommend these products or services to friends. The aggregate mean of 3.244 and standard deviation of 1.95 suggest that, in general, digital consumers are moderately neutral with the statements related to their behavior of purchasing products that they come across online.

4.7. Diagnostic Tests

4.7.1. Normality Tests

A normality test was performed to evaluate the data's normalcy. The study specifically employed a Q-Q plot due to its capability to reveal deviations from the diagonal line, thereby indicating a potential violation of the normality assumption. The analysis results demonstrated that the data closely conformed to the diagonal line, providing strong evidence that the study's data set followed a normal distribution. This is visually illustrated in the accompanying figure below.

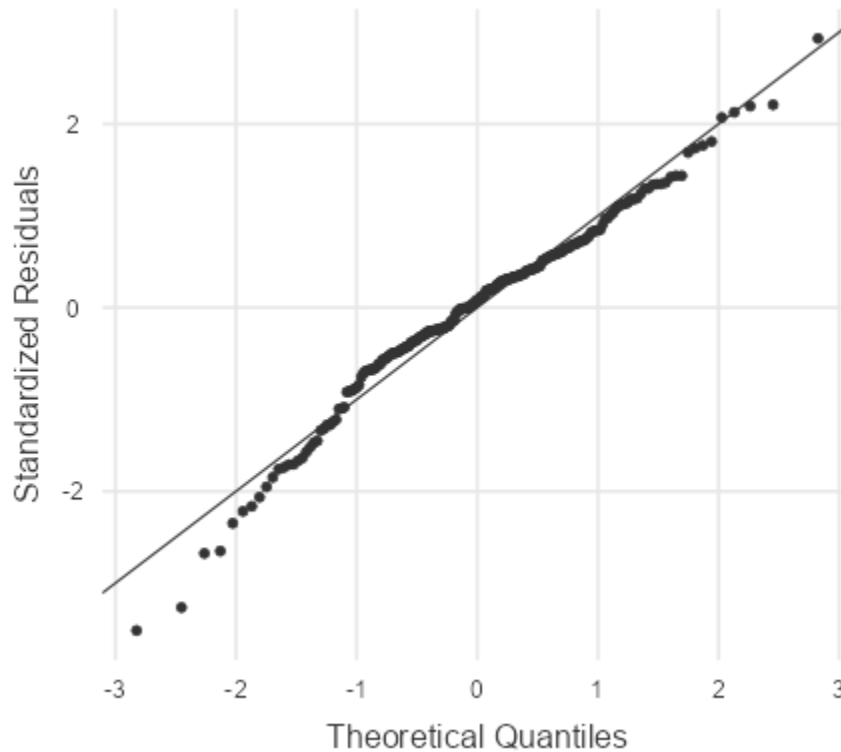


Figure 4.2 Q-Q Plot

4.7.2. Multicollinearity Test

To determine if there was a connection between the study's dependent variables, a multicollinearity test was employed. The study employed a variance of inflation and tolerance values to establish whether collinearity existed in the variables data (Gwelo, 2019). Variance inflation factor (VIF) values below five generally indicate a lower level of correlation among predictors in a regression model. When VIF values fall between five and ten, it suggests that predictors are moderately correlated (O'brien, 2007). However, when VIF values exceed ten, it signifies a higher degree of correlation among predictors, indicating the potential presence of multicollinearity, which might require correction in the model (O'brien, 2007).

Table 4.10

Collinearity statistics

	VIF	Tolerance
Social media content marketing	1.26	0.692
Social media advertising	1.68	0.594
Social media influencer marketing	1.63	0.614
Social media customer engagement	1.89	0.528

Note. Collinearity statistics

From the above table, Social media content marketing has a VIF of 1.26, indicating relatively low multicollinearity. Its tolerance value of 0.692 also suggests that this predictor's variance is primarily independent of the other predictors. Social media advertising has a VIF of 1.68 and a

tolerance of 0.594, showing low multicollinearity. Social media influencer marketing has a VIF of 1.63 and a tolerance of 0.614, indicating low multicollinearity similar to the previous predictors. Social media customer engagement has a VIF of 1.89 and a tolerance of 0.528, suggesting low multicollinearity. From the above analysis, the predictors of the dependent variable have VIF and tolerance values of acceptable ranges; this is according to Niresh & Thirunavukkarasu (2014), who deemed VIF of below five as acceptable.

Based on the findings presented in the table above, the predictors used in the study exhibit low levels of correlation among themselves. Given their low levels of correlation, these predictors were utilized to investigate the relationship between various social media marketing activities and their impact on purchase decisions. With low multicollinearity among these predictors, it suggests that the study's variables are relatively independent, allowing for a more accurate exploration of their individual and collective influence on purchase decisions of digital consumers.

4.7.3. Auto-Correction Test

The study performed an autocorrelation test to examine the error terms. The study utilized the Durbin-Watson test to assess any correlation in the error terms. According to Turner (2019), a value exceeding 2.0 indicates the absence of autocorrelation, while a value below 2.0 suggests its presence.

Table 4.11

Autocorrelation Test

Autocorrelation	DW Statistic	p
0.00507	1.96	0.748

Note. Durbin–Watson Test for Autocorrelation

From the table provided, the Durbin-Watson (DW) Statistic value is 1.96, which is very close to the critical value of 2.0. In this context, a DW Statistic near 2.0 indicates a lower likelihood of significant autocorrelation. The associated p-value of 0.748 also supports the lack of evidence for autocorrelation in the data.

4.7.4. Heteroscedasticity Test

To discover regression model breaches of constant variance, heteroscedasticity tests are used. Several tests may detect heteroscedasticity. Martin (2023) suggests assessing linear regression models for heteroscedasticity using the Breusch-Pagan Test. The test links squared residuals to independent variables. A substantial association reflects heteroscedasticity in the first regression model. The null hypothesis of homoscedasticity is rejected by a p-value below 0.05 (Martin, 2023).

According to Djalic and Terzic (2021), the Goldfeld-Quandt test checks for heteroscedasticity by examining whether the variance of the errors is the same in different groups or segments of the data. Heteroscedasticity occurs when the test statistic (F-statistic) exceeds the critical value at a specified significance level. (Djalic & Terzic, 2021). The Harrison-McCabe test is another method used to detect heteroscedasticity in regression models. According to Onifade and Olanrewaju (2020), test statistic helps assess the presence of non-constant variance in residuals. The Harrison-McCabe test relies on the p-value, with a lower p-value suggesting evidence of heteroscedasticity and a higher p-value indicating a lack of significant evidence for heteroscedasticity (Muhammad Ahsan Raza et al., 2023)

Table 4.12

Heteroscedasticity Test

	Statistic	p
Breusch-Pagan	10.4	0.015
Goldfeld-Quandt	0.978	0.545
Harrison-McCabe	0.501	0.518

The lower p-value in the Breusch-Pagan test table above suggests heteroscedasticity. Goldfeld-Quandt and Harrison-McCabe tests had higher p-values, indicating no heteroscedasticity. Muhammad Ahsan Raza et al. (2023) say the Goldfeld-Quandt test is best for detecting heteroscedasticity. According to Onifade and Olanrewaju (2020), the Park test is best for sample data sizes exceeding 500. We find that the data set has no substantial heteroscedasticity using the Goldfeld-Quandt test.

4.8. Inferential statistics

4.8.1. Correlation Analysis: Social Media Marketing and Digital Consumer's Purchasing Decision

Correlation measures the direction and degree of a linear connection between two or more variables. (2023, A. Sulthan). Thus, it indicates if and how two variables are connected. Correlation examines how one variable affects another. Positive correlation indicates that when one variable rises, the other rises also. However, when negatively related, one declines as the other rises. Puth et al. (2014) say Pearson's correlation (r) measures linear connections. Linear relationships are shown by 'r' values between -1 and 1. However, ' $r = 0$ ' shows no linear

connections. Pearson's correlation is crucial for measuring linear connections' strength and direction. Values closer to -1 or 1 indicate strong linear correlations.

Table 4.13

Correlation Analysis

		Social media marketing	Social media Advertisements	Social Media Influencer Marketing	Social Media Customer Engagement	Purchase Decision
Social media Content marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.466**	.456**	.544**	.621**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	211	211	211	211	211
Social media Advertisements	Pearson Correlation	.466**	1	.486**	.468**	.529**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	211	211	211	211	211
Social Media Influencer Marketing	Pearson Correlation	.456**	.486**	1	.621**	.533**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	211	211	211	211	211
Social Media Customer Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.544**	.468**	.621**	1	.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	211	211	211	211	211

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	211	211	211	211	211
Purchase Decision	Pearson Correlation	.621**	.529**	.533**	.592**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	211	211	211	211	211

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

Pearson's correlation for social media content advertising was 0.621 ($p=0.000$). Our Pearson correlation coefficient is statistically significant ($p\text{-value} = 0.000$), indicating a substantial positive link between social media marketing and purchase choices.

Pearson's correlation value for social media ads was 0.529, indicating a modest favorable link. Given 0.000, the association is statistically significant at 0.05. Social media influencers are being used by firms to promote their products. The participants remembered their experiences, and this research investigated if they may affect a future customer's purchase. We correlated social media influencer marketing with purchase decisions. Table 4.12 reveals a modest positive association between social media influencer marketing and purchase decisions at 0.533. Given 0.000, the association is statistically significant at 0.05.

Most firms use different marketing initiatives, however participants had conflicting opinions. The correlation coefficient between the two variables is 0.592 in Table 4.12, indicating a significant positive link. Given 0.000, the association is statistically significant at 0.05.

Zhu et al. (2022) found that social media usage does not inevitably increase social commerce website purchases. They found that social media use affects culturally diverse social commerce website users' purchase inclinations. This research shows that social media content marketing influences purchases. Impacts vary per consumer and may be influenced by social connection links, social media commitment, and cultural intelligence.

This study found a favorable association between digital consumer purchase choices and social media marketing. Previous study, notably Kitetu (2022), found a favorable correlation between client buying behaviors and social media marketing. Shaheen (2022) also found that social media marketing, including consumer engagement, helped women-owned internet businesses in Kisumu City, Kenya.

4.8.2. Regression Analysis: Social Media Marketing and Purchasing Decision

In regression analysis, the independent variable predicts the dependent variable (2012, Nathans et al.). It determines the intensity and direction of the independent-dependent variable link using regression coefficients. (2012, Nathans et al.). Positive coefficients imply a positive correlation with the dependent variable, whereas negative coefficients indicate a negative connection.

How effectively the independent factors account for the variability in the dependent variable is measured by the R-squared. It has a range of 0 to 1. An increased R-squared value signifies that a greater percentage of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent factors. P-amount. A higher R-squared value indicates that the model better explains the variance in the dependent variable. The p-value of each coefficient indicates the statistical significance of the variable within the model. A low p-value (typically less than 0.05) suggests that the variable is a significant predictor of the dependent variable. It helps in ascertaining whether there exists a

genuine connection between the variable and the outcome. Coefficient of Determination: This relates to the R-squared and quantifies the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables.

4.5.2.1. The Model Summary

Table 4.14 shows regression analysis model summary. R-squared measures the model's goodness of fit and the independent and dependent variables' relationship. Social media might explain 52.5% of Purchasing Decisions (0.525). 0.516 is the model's adjusted R Square, which adjusts for predictor count.

Table 4.14

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.725 ^a	.525	.516	.662009220088

Note. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Customer Engagement, Social media Advertisements, Social media marketing, Social Media Influencer Marketing

4.5.2.2. ANOVA Analysis

ANOVA determines whether two or more group averages vary statistically. Regression model significance may be determined via ANOVA. To test if the predictors collectively explain the variation in the dependent variable, compare full regression mode to a null model. The F-statistic

determines whether the variances across groups substantially vary from those within groups. The likelihood of seeing an extreme F-statistic if group means were the same is given by the p-value. If the F-statistic is large, group means may differ greatly. A p-value below 0.05 indicates significant differences between groups.

Table 4.14 shows the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) findings.

Table 4.15

ANOVA Analysis

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	99.897	4	24.974	56.986	.000 ^b
	Residual	90.281	206	.438		
	Total	190.178	210			

Note. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Customer Engagement, Social media Advertisements, Social media marketing, Social Media Influencer Marketing

The F-statistic is 56.986, with a significance value of 0.000. A larger F-statistic suggests that the predictors are good at explaining variation in the dependent variable. Therefore, we can say that our model significantly explains the variance in Purchase Decision.

4.5.2.3. Coefficient of Determinants: Social Media Marketing Strategies and Decision to Purchase

Multivariate regression has one dependent variable and numerous independent variables. The researcher may examine the link between several independent factors and a dependent variable by considering interactions and correlations. The multiple regression model below was used to examine the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where: Y = Purchasing decisions of e-commerce industry customers in Kenya

X1 = Social Media Content marketing

X2 = Social media Advertising

X3 = Social media Influencer marketing

X4 = Social media customer engagements

β_0 , β_1 , β_2 , β_3 , and β_4 are the regression coefficients

Table 4.15 shows the results of the coefficients in the multivariate regression model.

Table 4.16

Multivariate Regression Model

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
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		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.141	.227		.622	.534
	Social media Content marketing	.402	.070	.343	5.708	.000
	Social media Advertisements	.193	.058	.195	3.334	.001
	Social Media Influencer Marketing	.129	.059	.141	2.189	.000
	Social Media Customer Engagement	.237	.070	.227	3.402	.001

Note. a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Table 4.16 shows regression coefficients. The unstandardized coefficient (B) for social media marketing is 0.402, with a standard error of 0.070, assuming all other variables are identical. Each unit increase in social media marketing increases purchasing options by 0.402 units. A unit increase in social media ads increases purchase choices by 0.193, according to the unstandardized coefficient. Customer engagement has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.237 and social media influencer marketing 0.129. All coefficients are significant at 0.05.

The standardized coefficient (Beta) for social media marketing is 0.343, 0.195 for ads, and 0.141 for influencer marketing, and 0.227 for customer engagement, indicating that these strategies strongly influence purchasing decisions. The t-values show the estimated coefficient/standard error ratio. Because the Sig. Values are less than 0.05, the predictors and dependent variable are significantly related. When Social Media marketing techniques are zero, purchase choices have an anticipated value of 0.141 (B). The constant coefficient is not statistically significant since its p-value is 0.534. Thus, regression model coefficients are:

$$Y = 0.141 + 0.402X_1 + 0.193X_2 + 0.129X_3 + 0.237X_4$$

From the above, the optimal model that would be most effective in increasing the purchase decisions of digital consumers is

$$\text{Model 1 } Y = 0.141 + 0.402X_1 + 0.193X_2 + 0.129X_3 + 0.237X_4$$

$$\text{Model 2 } Y = 0.141 + 0.402X_1 + 0.193X_2 + 0.237X_4$$

$$\text{Model 3 } Y = 0.141 + 0.402X_1 + 0.237X_4$$

Table 4.17

Model Fitness

Model Fit Measures

Model	R	R²	RMSE
1	0.704	0.496	0.668
2	0.700	0.491	0.670
3	0.688	0.473	0.683

Model 1's R-value of 0.704 in the table above indicates a moderately favorable linear connection between the model's predictions and the dependent variable. With an R-squared of 0.496, the model's independent variables account for around 49.6% of the variation in the dependent variable. The average error in the model's predictions is represented by the RMSE, which is 0.668. With an RMSE of 0.670 and an R-value of 0.700 and R-squared of 0.491, Model 2 is able to predict 49.1% of the independent variable. With an RMSE of 0.683, model three's R of 0.688 and R squared of

0.473 show that the independent variables in the mode account for around 47.3% of the variation in the dependent variable.

From the above model fitness analysis, the optimal model is model two ($Y = 0.141 + 0.402X_1 + 0.193X_2 + 0.237X_4$); this is because although it has a lower R-value and R squared value compared to model 1, the difference is minimal with a difference of 0.05 in the R squared values. It would be economical for companies to carry out the three marketing activities compared to implementing all four.

4.9. Chapter Summary

The data on the impact of social media marketing methods on purchase decisions was examined in this chapter. According to the descriptive data, most participants were aware of social media marketing techniques, including leveraging influencers, advertisements, and social media platforms to engage customers. The correlation analysis established a positive correlation between digital marketing strategies and buying decisions. The regression analysis also demonstrated that social media marketing strategies informed buying decisions of digital consumers.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1.1. Introduction

The chapter presents an overview encompassing the study's discoveries, conclusions, and recommendations investigating the effects of social media marketing strategies on the purchasing behaviors of digital consumers in Kenya. This section aligns with the study's four specific goals: to analyze the effect of social media content marketing on the purchasing decisions of digital consumers in Kenya; to assess the effects of social media advertising on the purchasing decisions of digital consumers in Kenya; to explore the effect of social media influencer marketing on the purchasing decisions of digital consumers in Kenya; and to investigate the impact of social media customer engagement on the purchasing decisions of digital consumers in Kenya..

5.2. Summary of Key Findings

5.2.1. The Influence of Social Media Content Marketing on Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

The study examined how social media content marketing affects Kenyan digital customers' purchasing decisions. The researcher tested the instrument's reliability. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was satisfactory, the questionnaire was reliable, and the items served their objective. Most participants knew the companies' social media content marketing strategies, according to descriptive statistics. Most people believed social media content was accurate and were encouraged to buy products based on their regular encounters with it. Social media content may have influenced their purchasing. Inferential statistics corroborated this. According to the

correlation analysis, social media content marketing positively influenced purchasing decisions. The correlation was similarly significant at 0.05. The regression model showed that social media content marketing and other variables increased buying decisions significantly. This study supported Ansari et al. (2019), who found that social media content positively affected customer purchasing decisions.

5.2.2. The Influence of Social Media Advertising on the Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

The second objective was to assess how Kenyan digital customers' purchasing decisions were influenced by social media advertising. The reliability test was conducted on the items in the instrument in order to collect data on social media advertising. The items fulfilled their intended purpose, and the Cronbach's alpha was judged satisfactory. The opinions of the 211 participants were solicited, and the findings showed that opinions on the impact of social media advertisements on purchasing decisions were divided. But when it came to purchasing, the majority said that social media advertisements had no effect on their choice. This implied that buying decisions were influenced by social media ads to a certain extent. The correlation analysis between the purchase decision and social media advertisements showed a Pearson correlation coefficient indicating a moderately positive link between social media advertisements and purchasing decisions, which was supported by the inferential statistics. The results of the analysis showed that, when paired with other variables like social media content, influencer advertisements, and consumer engagement, there was a significant unit addition of social media advertisements for every unit rise in the decision to buy. The results corroborate those of earlier research that produced comparable outcomes such of Agneta (2018), which proofed that Facebook ads affect Kenyan women's purchasing decisions.

5.2.3. The Influence of Social Media Influencer Marketing on the Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

Examining how social media influencer marketing affects Kenyan digital customers' purchase decisions was the third goal. Following a reliability test, it was determined that the social media influencer marketing items were functional and had an acceptable Cronbach's Alpha. Data from the 211 participants indicated that they were aware of social media influencer marketing. Most participants agreed when asked whether social media influencer product reviews helped them understand the products or items, and the majority agreed. Most participants were neutral on whether they engaged with influencers with many followers. When the participants were questioned about whether the influencers regularly provided accurate and dependable information about goods and services, the circumstances were identical. A somewhat favorable association between social media influencer marketing and purchase choices was found via correlational analysis. The regression model calculated showed that a unit increase in purchase to buy was influenced by a significant unit addition of social media influencer marketing alongside other variables. This was found to have the slightest increase in the purchase decisions of digital consumers. At the 0.05 significance level, the results showed statistical significance. These findings align with a previous study by Odoi (2021) that established that social media influencers play a part in influencing perceptions of a company's products and brand.

5.2.4. The Influence of Social Media Customer Engagement on the Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

The fourth objective was examining the impact of social media customer interactions on Kenyan digital consumers' buying choices. The reliability test on the items used to collect data on social media consumer interactions yielded an adequate Cronbach's alpha. The results showed that the

products were functional. Most of the participants said that they had a significant preference for companies that regularly provide material on social media. The participants' responses to the question of whether they often shared and commented on posts to connect with other like-minded people online were inconsistent; some agreed or strongly agreed, while others disagreed or disagreed strongly. Regarding the participants' interactions with various brands on the current social media platforms, opinions were generally divided. The correlation research showed a somewhat positive relationship (Pearson's correlation coefficient) between consumers' social media participation and their purchasing choice. The results of the regression model showed that, among other things, a significant inclusion of customer involvement significantly impacted a purchase decision increase of one unit. These results were in line with those of Rosadi, Azhari, and Saraswati (2022), who found a favorable correlation between consumer purchase choices and customer involvement

5.3. Conclusions

5.3.1. The Influence of Social Media Content Marketing on Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

The first objective was to look at how social media content affects digital consumers' purchase decisions about what to buy from a variety of angles, including how satisfied social media users are with content from various businesses. According to descriptive data, most participants think social media material is of a good quality and have faith in it. A strong and favorable association between social media content and purchase choices was shown by further correlation research. Furthermore, the results of the regression analysis showed that social media content was one of the elements that significantly affected digital customers' choices to buy. Thus, the research comes to the conclusion that adding excellent social media content influences customers' choices to buy.

5.3.2. The Influence of Social Media Advertisements on Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

The second objective evaluated how social media ads affected the choices that digital consumers made about what to buy. According to descriptive data, most participants knew that a lot of businesses target them with social media ads. The results of the correlation study showed a somewhat positive relationship between social media advertising and buying decisions. In addition, the regression model's findings demonstrated that, in addition to other marketing techniques, social media advertising had a favorable impact on the participants' purchase choices. The research comes to the conclusion that improving social media advertising improved digital consumers' decision-making process to a modest extent.

5.3.3. The Influence of Social Media Influencer Marketing on Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

Examining how social media influencer marketing affects digital customers' purchase decisions was the third objective. Descriptive data showed that social media influencers created high-quality content. However, the majority neither agreed nor disagreed that they regularly interacted with social media influencers on specific products. The correlational analysis revealed that social media influencers and purchase decisions had a low, moderate positive relationship. The regression analysis also revealed that increased social media influencer marketing led to a marginal increase in the digital consumer's buying decision. This study concludes that social media influencer marketing influences the decision to buy, though to a lesser degree, than other variables such as social media content marketing and advertisements.

5.3.4. The Influence of Consumer Engagement on Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

The fourth goal of the study was to determine how customer interaction impacted the decision-making process of Kenyan digital customers. The participants' varying views on the use of social media engagement activities were shown by the descriptive statistics. The majority said that they encountered many social media platforms for consumer involvement, but they also expressed neutrality when asked whether continuous participation had an impact on their purchase choice. Correlation study, however, showed a favorable association between purchasing choices and social media client interaction. Additionally, improving social media consumer involvement leads to better purchasing choices, according to the regression research. Thus, the research comes to the conclusion that consumer interaction on social media affects purchasing decisions.

The research demonstrates the strong positive correlation between different social media marketing methods and purchasing decisions. The descriptive data showed that the purchasing choices of digital customers were impacted by social media marketing initiatives. The majority of participants said that having access to sufficient information, learning from their influencers, and seeing relevant and engaging ads from businesses all helped in their ability to make well-informed decisions. Regression study findings showed that digital consumers' involvement in social media marketing campaigns affects their choices to buy. Consequently, this research comes to the conclusion that digital consumer decision-making is improved by the development of different social media marketing methods, such as social media content, social media commercials, social media influencer marketing, and social media customer interaction.

5.4.Recommendations

5.4.1 The Influence of Social Media Content Marketing on Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

The study recommends that businesses should keep putting resources into creating excellent social media content that appeals to their target audience based on the data analysis and findings. They should also regularly assess and improve the quality and relevance of social media content to maintain and strengthen consumer trust. Recognizing that the majority of businesses posted content with the aim of convincing participants to make a purchase, companies should align their content strategies with the intent to drive conversions. Clearly communicate value propositions, promotions, and compelling reasons to encourage purchases. Businesses should leverage the positive impact of social media content marketing by focusing on authenticity, aligning content with purchase intent, addressing skepticism, diversifying approaches, actively engaging with the

audience, considering cultural variances, adapting to changing consumer behaviors, and maintaining consistency and transparency

5.4.2 The Influence of Social Media Advertisements on Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

Firms should invest in creative and engaging social media advertisements that capture the target audience's attention. The study also discovered that social media advertisements that were creative and truthful were likely to capture the attention of the participants. Recognizing that ads with reasonable offer prices were perceived positively and reduced information searching processes, companies should consider incorporating competitive pricing information in their social media advertisements. This can streamline the decision-making process for potential customers.

5.4.3 The Influence of Social Media Influencer Marketing on Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

According to the findings, businesses should work with social media influencers whose opinions and content reflect their own. Brands should collaborate with influencers who consistently provide honest and reliable information to build trust among consumers. In addition brands should prioritize collaborations with influencers who are perceived as trustworthy and knowledgeable in their respective fields.

5.4.4 The Influence of Consumer Engagement on Purchasing Decisions of Digital Consumers in Kenya

In order to maximize the effect of influencer marketing, companies should focus on creating compelling and engaging content to foster brand passion. Regular and authentic social media

interactions can contribute to a positive brand image. Since a significant portion of participants engaged with like-minded individuals online, companies should consider fostering online communities where consumers can discuss products, share experiences, and build connections. This can enhance brand loyalty and contribute to positive word-of-mouth marketing.

5.4.5. Adoption of Social Media Marketing Strategies

Businesses may find it financially unproductive to use all four marketing strategies: influencer marketing, advertising, social media content marketing, and consumer involvement. Therefore, based on the findings, the report recommends that companies concentrate on three social media marketing initiatives: social media customer interactions, social media advertising, and social media content marketing in order to influence digital customers' purchasing choices. Together, these three activities are responsible for a large portion of the variances in the purchasing choices made by Kenyan digital customers.

5.5. Suggestions for Future Research

The study verified that social media strategies have a significant beneficial impact on consumers' decision-making. Nonetheless, there's still need for further research in this area. Further research attempts might investigate the impact of various social media tactics on customer decision-making and brand loyalty, exploring the potential for mediating elements to either enhance or diminish the effectiveness of social media marketing initiatives.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire

PART A: Respondents Social Media Use

Instructions

Please tick (√) where appropriate or fill in the required information in the space provided.

1. Have you ever brought a product or service promoted or that you came across on social media?

Yes ()

No ()

2. What is your frequency of using Social Media?

Daily ()

Weekly ()

Once a month ()

Never ()

PART B

The following part relates to the different strategies used by e-commerce businesses in Social Media Marketing and their influence on the purchase decision of Consumers

Use 5 as agree strongly, 4 as Agree, 3 as Neutral, 2 as Disagree, and 1 as Disagree Strongly.

1. Kindly indicate the extent you agree with this statement regarding the effect of Social media content marketing on digital consumers purchasing decisions in Kenya. Social media content includes things like social media videos, and blogs

(5 as agree strongly, 4 as Agree, 3 as Neutral, 2 as Disagree, and 1 as Disagree Strongly)

CONT		1	2	3	4	5
CONT 1	I find the information in social media to express facts well.					
CONT 2	Social media content posted by companies try to persuade me to buy a product.					
CONT 3	I find social media content to have relevant information about products and services.					
CONT 4	Social media content guides my decision-making process when making a purchase.					

2. Kindly indicate the extent you agree with this statement regarding the effect of social media advertising on digital consumer purchasing decisions in Kenya. These include things like Social media Story Ads, Photo ads, and Messenger Ads.

(5 as agree strongly, 4 as Agree, 3 as Neutral, 2 as Disagree, and 1 as Disagree Strongly)

SMD		1	2	3	4	5
SMD 1	I find social media ads with original ideas more engaging.					
SMD 2	Creative social media ads manage to capture my interest.					
SMD 3	Social Media Ads with good offer prices reduce my information searching process.					
SMD 4	I tend to like social media ads with a strong emotional appeal.					

3. Kindly indicate the extent you agree with this statement regarding the effect of social media influencer marketing in shaping digital consumer purchasing decisions in Kenya.

(5 as agree strongly, 4 as Agree, 3 as Neutral, 2 as Disagree, 1 as Disagree Strongly)

INF		1	2	3	4	5
INF 1	Social media influencer product reviews help me understand the products/services offered.					
INF 2	I engage with influencers who have a high number of followers on social media.					
INF 3	Influencers consistently deliver high-quality and reliable information about products/services.					
INF 4	Social media influencers influence my purchasing choices.					

4. Kindly indicate the extent you agree with this statement regarding the effect of social media customer engagement in influencing digital consumer purchasing decisions in Kenya.

(5 as agree strongly, 4 as Agree, 3 as Neutral, 2 as Disagree, 1 as Disagree Strongly)

<u>CSM</u>		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
CSM 1	I am passionate about brands that post on social media.					
CSM 2	When interacting with information on products and services posted online I get carried away.					
CSM 3	I am someone who interacts with other like-minded people online through commenting and sharing of post.					

CSSM 4	I often participate in activities of companies in social media sites.						
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5. Kindly indicate the extent you agree with this statement regarding your purchasing decisions for products and services promoted on social media platforms in Kenya.

(5 as agree strongly, 4 as Agree, 3 as Neutral, 2 as Disagree, and 1 as Disagree Strongly)

Purchase Decision

<u>PD</u>		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>PD 1</u>	After viewing products/service promoted in social media I become interested in purchasing it.					
<u>PD 2</u>	After viewing a product/ service in social media I am willing to purchase it.					
<u>PD 3</u>	I am inclined to recommend a friend to purchase a product/ service promoted in social media platforms.					

Thank you very much for your time and input. Your efforts and sacrifice are highly appreciated.

Appendix II: Research Budget

Item	Budget Cost (Ksh)
Travel	10,000
Research Assistants	15,000
Acquiring SPSS 28.0 Licenses	1,000
Consultations	20,000
Printing Costs	4,000
NACOSTI Approval	1,000
Total	51,000

Appendix III: Research Timeline

Time	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October and November
ACTIVITY								
Preliminary Activities	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange
Chapter 1	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange
Chapter 2	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Light Orange	Light Orange
Chapter 3	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Orange	Light Orange
Thesis Proposal Defense	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Light Orange	Light Orange
Field Research Chapters 4 & 5	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow	Yellow
Submission of the Project	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Yellow

Appendix IV: Research Documents



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BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

25th September, 2023

The Director,
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation,
Utalii House,
Nairobi.

Dear Sir,

REF: JEROM MUTWIRI KITHINJI, REG NO.: MBAC01/6531/2021

This is to introduce the above named Master of Business Administration student in the School of Business and Economics of the Co-operative University of Kenya.

He has successfully completed his course work and is proceeding to the field to collect data from digital consumers in Kenya. The title of his research project is "**Social Media Marketing Activities and Digital Consumers' Purchasing Decisions in Kenya**".

Kindly accord him the necessary assistance.

Yours Sincerely,

D. K. Muthoni,
Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies.

Cc: Dean, SBE.



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