

**GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM**

**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH (SoGSaR)**



**MOTIVATING FACTORS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA SHOPPING AMONG STUDENTS: A  
CASE STUDY OF THE GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM GRADUATE  
SCHOOL**

**SUPERVISED BY DR. LOUISE CAROL SERWAA DONKOR**

**STUDENT: STARDNODA EDNA AKWETEH**

**INDEX NUMBER: MADC 20145**

**THIS DISSERTATION IS PRESENTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
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## **STUDENT'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this project work titled the motivating factors for social media shopping among students of Ghana Institute of Journalism, has been prepared by me during the year 2020/2021 under guidance of my abled supervisor, Dr. Louise Carol Serwaa Donkor, in partial fulfillment of my Masters in Development in Communication program as prescribed by Ghana Institute of Journalism.

I also declare that the project is the outcome of my own effort, that it has not been submitted by any other university for award of any Master's program.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

**SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by Ghana Institute of Journalism.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. Louise Carol Serwaa Donkor

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this work to GOD Almighty for giving me this opportunity to do my Master's degree which would not have been possible otherwise. This work is also dedicated to all aspiring students and future researchers.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I am super grateful to God for giving the strength, knowledge and wisdom to complete this work even though it was not easy.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CA	Cognitive Absorption
COVID-19	Coronavirus Diseases 2019
eWOM	Electronic Word of Mouth
GIJ	Ghana Institute of Journalism
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communication
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
VBC	Virtual Brand Communities

## **ABSTRACTS**

The introduction of e-learning platforms in schools has assisted students to experience a state of cognitive absorption, where they are exposed to other technological advances such as social media. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the motivating factors for social media shopping among students of the Ghana Institute of Journalism Graduate School. This was achieved by first identifying the factors that motivate students to engage in social media shopping; second, the role of social media in changing buying behaviour and lastly, the challenges consumers encounter. The study used quantitative approach with a descriptive research design employing tables, frequency, and charts to depict the relevant data. 153 students of the Ghana Institute of Journalism Graduate School were selected for the study. The study used online questionnaires for data collection and these data were analyzed with Microsoft excel and SPSS. The findings of the study showed that WhatsApp is the most popular social media platform used for online shopping. Also, confidentiality and privacy as compared to other factors are able to motivate customers to buy products online. Again, advertisement on social media platforms factored in consumer buying behaviour. The chief challenge encountered when using social media is distractions from hackers. The study recommends that sellers should improve upon the utilization of adverts on various social media platforms with emphasis on WhatsApp. The study again recommends that both owners of social media sites and sellers should improve on privacy.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Background of Study

Before the introduction of Information Communication Technology (ICT), businesses resorted to using magazines, newspaper, radio, television and word of mouth to reach potential and existing customers. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) resorted to the moving from door to door to boost their brand and create awareness. The budget and time availability for their business determined how fast they could achieve that. Traditionally, SMEs found difficulties in competing with the large companies since they had the power of reaching their markets through huge advertising budget.

Presently, technology has become the order of the day which has encouraged most businesses to reform the channels through which they reached their consumers previously and infuse technological avenues such as social media marketing. According to Rosen (2012), the traditional advertising channels such as television adverts, radio adverts and door to door marketing are costly with less returns and have been taken over by the social media which is more affordable and offers an instantaneous two-way correspondence. Now consumers are directly communicated with via social media leading to an increase in number of markets and businesses (Michaelidou et al. 2011). The adoption of and response to these technologies from a strategic perspective can reconfigure firms' relative competitive landscapes and therefore, depict key decision-making challenges (Bowman & Gatignon, 1995).

Social media marketing integrates the use of social media instruments like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to pursue clients in creative ways. Hoffman and Fodor (2010) contend that to contact new audience and fortify ties with existing customers, many businesses are employing the use of social media in their operations. Neti (2011) asserts that around 75% of small businesses have their own company page on social networking websites with 69% of them posting status updates and 54% of them monitoring the feedback from consumers. According to Statistica (2021), Facebook currently has about 2,895 million clients, YouTube has about 43% of web users spending countless hours to stream videos and attracting billions of views while a photograph

sharing application, Instagram, has more than 1,393 million accounts that are monthly active. The low-cost, increasing number of subscribers, and strong interactivity of social media marketing thereby attracts businesses to adopt social media in their marketing communication mix (Michaelidou, 2011).

The social media revolution has led to new ways of seeking and obtaining information on the multitude of products and services in the market. It has enabled consumers to connect and discuss brands with each other quickly and easily (Powers et al., 2012). Consumer opinions on products and services are now increasingly dominated by strangers in digital spaces, which in turn influence opinions in the offline space (Smith, 2009). Social media have empowered consumers, as marketers have no power over the content, timing or frequency of online conversations among consumers (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

The marketing concept focuses on customer needs and identifies activities which are needed in order to meet these needs (Borch, 1957). Consumer engagement focuses on consumers' needs in order to engage with them. Both concepts are customer-centric approaches that give primacy to the consumer. Sellers can only meet the needs of the buyers, determine what added value is required and how to do it, if they engage with consumers. A one-time purchase or even repeat purchases of the same product does not equal engagement with the customer. It could be evident that the customer is satisfied with the product or service but even satisfaction and retention does not necessarily signify customer engagement (Sashi, 2012).

## **1.1 Problem Statement**

The presence of Internet and its acknowledgment by people in general, have changed a considerable amount in the manner in which organizations advance their administrations and items just as the channels of correspondence among them and their customers (Bhanot, 2009). This is found in the manner they market and communicate their brands and items these days which is turning into a difficult task. Customers are overpowered by marketing advertisements and limited time occasions (Siamagka et al., 2015). The affectability of customers to get energized is becoming dim on limited time occasions and shoppers are starting to oppose the endeavors of certain organizations at marketing them.

Arekar et al. (2019) found that social networking sites show a wide variety of products with new brands in the market. They provided additional information about different brands of different products. Social media sites offer many suggestions and recommendations about the products they need. As a result, consumers get the information they need about different products from different brands. On the other hand, Tobi et al. (2020) also argue that social media has influence online shopping. Basically, the promotional focus of some organizations is on the conventional mass media advert style which includes commercials on TV, radio jingles and advertisements in print formats such as newspapers and magazines along with billboard placements (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). It is now on record that as the Internet is fast advancing across the global marketplace, the effectiveness of traditional mass media is fast on the decline.

In addition, the current pandemic has caused much variation in consumer behavior, for instance increasingly using social media to compare product alternatives, evaluate product risks, and make purchases, respectively (Mason et al., 2021). Laato et al. (2020) provided a summary of the literature on the impact of pandemics on human behavior and found that consumers are much interested in social media marketing. While use of social media is appealing to many, it can have negative effects on the mental health of the population. For instance, in studying adolescents in India, Dhir et al. (2018) found that social media fatigue may result from uncontrolled use of such platforms, and that social media fatigue may lead to increased levels of anxiety and depression. Nevertheless, social media is increasingly being used to facilitate communications between businesses and consumers (Knowles et al., 2020; Kumar et al., 2020). This has illustrated the importance of social media in marketing especially when integrated marketing promotional messages can be effective at influencing consumer perceptions about product image and lead to consumption behaviors. The current study sought to examine the effects of social media marketing on consumer behavior of Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) students. The current study sought to examine motivating factors for social media shopping among students: A case study of the Ghana Institute of Journalism Graduate school.

Likewise, Agarwal and Karahanna (2000) observed that when clients are profoundly engaged with data innovation, they experience a territory of Cognitive Absorption (CA). Agarwal and Karahanna (2000) observed that CA brings clients into the utilization of social media for an assortment of reasons. For one's purposes, social media offers fleeting separation, which restricts

the client's attention to the time elapsing. Likewise, social media furnishes clients with centered submersion, which permits the client to get away from life's undesirable real factors. Third, social media can give increased pleasure from fruitful communications between the client and the product. Fourth, social media furnishes the client with a feeling of control, and in conclusion, it can fulfill clients' interest by giving curiosity and awe. An interview with some GIJ students suggested that most students are deeply involved in information technology and therefore they experience a state of cognitive absorption. This was as a result of the usage of GIJ virtual e-learning platform by students. The question this sought to answer is will GIJ students' CA draw them into the use of social media and the shopping in particular. Based on the premises above, the current study seeks to determine the motivating factors motivating factors for social media shopping among graduate students in GIJ.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

### **1.2.1 General Objective**

The main objective of this study is to examine the motivating factors for social media shopping among students.

### **1.2.2 Specific Objectives**

Specific objectives of the study were:

- I. To examine factors that motivate student buyers to shop through social media platforms.
- II. To examine the role of social media in changing buying behaviour.
- III. To identify the challenges with the use of social media in shopping.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

- I. What factors motivate student buyers to shop through social media platforms?
- II. How have social media channels changed the buying behavior of customers?
- III. What are the challenges associated with the use of social media to shop?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Many businesses are ignorant about the significance of using social media especially for their marketing and business operations. This study is unique in its own way since it focused on sharing knowledge on the significance of social media to the digital community and the role of social media in changing buying behaviour. The findings of the study help businesses to identify the factors that motivate their customers and the challenges associated with the use of their social media platforms so as to adapt with the changes of the consumers tastes and preferences expressed on the various platforms of the social media. This research serves as a source of information and study material for further studies.

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The study covered only the graduate student of GIJ. The study only considered the graduate school because the researcher is a graduate student with access to respondents and the graduate students have a higher degree of purchasing power since most of them are workers. The findings of the study were only limited to descriptive analysis rather than inferential analysis, this however could not show the extent to which social media shopping affects the buying behaviour of the customers.

#### **1.6 Organization of the Study**

The study's organization is in five chapters, thus from chapter one to five. Chapter one focuses on, introduction which comprises of background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study and organization of the study.

Chapter two entails review of relevant literature which comprises of theoretical review and empirical review. The theoretical review talks about the relevant theories underlying the study and how they can be used to back, and improve our study. The empirical review also is about other related works people have done that is closely related to study and identifying what they did that need to be improved and help our study.

Chapter three describes the research design, target population, the sample size and sampling technique used, the data collection method and the analytical technique which was adopted, all contributing to be the methodology.

Chapter four looks at the presentation, analysis and discussion of findings. In this chapter the research questions are answered. Chapter five presents the conclusion, summary and recommendation of the study as well as the areas for further studies.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This section dissects relevant documentation and discoveries that are essential to improve the research and the ability to unravel concerns about theoretical and empirical literature. The theoretical literature presents and endeavors to disclose speculations that identify with the topic. The empirical literature describes what has been practically observed and validated objectively in relation to the topic.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Literature**

##### **2.1.1 Media Richness Theory**

Media richness theory is a framework used to describe the ability of a mail carrier to copy the information it sends. It was introduced in 1986 by Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel. Media richness theory holds that different types of media vary in their ability to transmit messages and alerts (Daft and Lengel, 1984). In contrast to more sophisticated media (e.g., text), richer media (e.g., images) have a different tone, a more diverse variety of characters, a more personal character, and a more rapid critique (Dennis & Valachich 1999). The richness of the media includes the number of channels used (e.g., audio, video, or both), the type of language (e.g., verbal, nonverbal, nonverbal communication, photography), personal preferences (individual or non-native), and depends on the criticism (Daft and Lengel, 1986). The richness of the media shifts from one media outlet to another, depending on the unique capacity of the correspondence and its impact on the beneficiaries.

In the current study, this theory is relevant because the message design used by online small businesses on social media platforms may change as they use the media. Message formats can be divided into three media types, namely text, text and images, video and animation.

### **2.1.2 Uses and Gratifications Theory**

The theory of uses and gratification recognizes that individuals use the media to meet different needs, and that the behavior of using the media has a specific cause (Katz & Blumler 1974). This theory is not only a valuable way to understand the motivation of customers through traditional media, but rather their inspiration for new media such as Myspace and Facebook (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke 2008). Furthermore, innovation and media professionals have used it to understand the power to support people's motivation and motivation for various forms of content (Pletikosa et al., 2013). In particular, the content-based nature of advertising messages is formatting (Gao & Koufaris, 2006). This is seen as a desire for consumers to use, create and engage with brand-related content as a commitment (Muntinga et al., 2011).

Notwithstanding, the uses and gratification theory helped the study to identify how social media changes the buying behaviour of graduate student of GIJ.

### **2.1.3 Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Theory**

IMC is a place where all parts of marketing communication (advertising, promotion, public relations, direct marketing, etc.) send stable information to consumers (Faulds et al. 2009). IMC was first developed in the 1980s to provide customers with a wider range of advertising than standard advertising. After all, today companies have many options and platforms to showcase their brand. IMC ensures that companies market their brands effectively and realistically (Faulds et al. 2009). With the advent of the Internet and mechanical advances, the wonders of social networking are evolving. There are different forms of social networks: social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace), innovative collaboration locals (YouTube, Flickr), blogs, virtual worlds, business locals, and reviews continue. Social networks are basically people who communicate and collaborate with others through electronic advances or online software (Iacobucci 2014).

The theory is relevant to this study because it helped the researcher to know what information reach the customers to purchase a product using social media.

#### **2.1.4 Technology Acceptance Model Theory**

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was proposed by Fred Davis and Richard Bagozzi (1989). This is information theory, which aims to explain how consumers perceive and use technology. Two factors affect the design of a user-acceptable model, namely, the acceptable benefits and ease of use. The usefulness is due to the fact that the user believes that the technology will help improve performance and efficiency, and the ease of use depends on how comfortable the technology is. Known benefits are determined by ease of use and internal factors, while ease of use is determined by internal factors (Venkatesh, Davis, 2000). The theory argues that the use of information systems depends on behavioral goals, and that behavioral goals depend on a person's attitudes toward using the system and their understanding of its use. According to Davis (1989), an individual's attitude is not the only factor influencing the use of his system, but it is based on the potential impact on his performance. Bhatti (2007) adopted an expanded TAM that includes recognized benefits, ease of use, personal innovation, subjective standards, and behavioral control to recognize mobile commerce. They found a useful link between ease of use, subjective norms, behavioral control, and mobile trading motivation.

The theory is very necessary for this study since it is able to show how well technology (social media platform) is accepted when it is introduced.

#### **2.2 Empirical Review**

Social media is one of the most notable improvements in the economic paradigm as it supports user-generated content and allows users to share content shared on other networks (Madni, 2015). Sumitha and Beegam (2014), affirms that social media provides a unique opportunity for brands to develop relationships with their customers. Fallon (2012) contends that social media is turning into a more conspicuous wellspring of marketing and advertising hence businesses are utilizing it consistently to get their name out to the public and in the minds of consumers. Additionally, people who interact with brands through social media are more emotionally attached to these brands and spend between 20-40 percent more on them than other customers (D'Antonio, 2016).

According to Paquette (2016), these online platforms and social media channels have the potential to promote Virtual Brand Communities (VBC) despite the sort of market, thereby allowing consumers to progressively go online to discuss products and brands, seek advice, and guidance. VBC can be defined as an association of users who appear on the Internet because they are interested in certain brands or products (Muniz and O'guinn, 2001). The nature and culture of social media groups influence the interpretation, branding, and product content of the members of these groups (Muñiz and Schau, 2007).

Kabue (2013), explored the components that influence the privatization of e-social media to promote the development of SMEs in Nairobi County. It was found that a significant proportion of respondents have access to the web, occupy a large position in web-based social networking sites, and pay little attention to web advertising. Srinivasan et al (2016), analyzed the effect of social media strategies used by SMEs on customer acquisition and retention. The investigation showed that the support of social networks has a significant impact on brand awareness, which affects the attraction and retention of customers. It was also found that there is a close positive relationship between sales and time spent on social networks, and that methods of promotion in Internet-based social networks affect the attraction and retention of customers, as well as an increase in the share of the industry as a whole.

Cox (2010) explored the relationship between age and behavior and found that the informal attitudes of customers in a society that promotes Internet advertising design (e.g., web magazines, videos, brand channels, or pages) vary across age groups. Cox (2010) further noted that customers in the 18-28 age group had a promising perspective on web magazines, videos, and brand channel advertising models. This is because customers have found these advertising arrangements to be interesting, useful, and fun. People aged 35-54 preferred advertising models because they found that the advertising patterns of advertisements and brand channels were more attractive, bright, and better coordinated within the online page format. In relation to the above literature, it is apparent that less attention is been paid or few studies has been done on social media marketing (Cox, 2010). Comparable to the above writing, it is clear that less consideration is been paid or few investigations has been done on customers' behaviour. This research seeks to study influence of social media marketing on consumer behaviour.

Liu et al. (2020) also found that social media allows consumers to provide feedback and analysis on products and services purchased or used. From the results of primary and secondary data, product recommendations can trigger purchasing behavior. Consumer buying behavior is based on trust and passion for the person offering the product (social media). Basically, it is influenced by social media and the product being offered. Likewise, Jacinto et al. (2021) understood that social media marketing is a predictor of consumer behavior decisions. Unlike Liu et al. (2020), Jacinto et al. (2021) combined correlation and regression methods using non-experimental quantitative research methods. 399 participants were identified using the sample size determination tool such as the Slovin's formula. Using the mean, frequency, Pearson correlation and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression, the findings indicated that there was a positive, moderate, and significant relationship between social media marketing and consumer purchasing behavior.

Varghese and Nandhini (2020) discuss the impact of demographic components on customers' purchasing power. Their study outlines the style of internet usage among customers. This can be seen as an opportunity for companies to increase their relationship with their customers through social media. Busen et al. (2016) highlighted the role of online advertising trends intermediaries in the relationship between online advertising determinants, adverts value, and consumer buying ideas. The results show that the value of online advertising is positively correlated with its information, reliability, and entertainment. Busen et al. (2016) again revealed that the influence of credibility and value of online advertising influence customer buying behaviour. Finally, their research shows that customers attitude acts as an intermediary between the value of advertising and the purpose of the purchase. Srinivasan et al. (2016) studied the impact of social media strategies on SME consumer acquisition and retention. The investigation showed that the help of social media affects brand awareness, which in turn attract customer affects customer retention. The authors revealed that there is a positive relationship between sales and time spent on social media, whereas the way Internet-based social networking is developed affects the attractiveness and retention of customers, as does the share of business as a whole.

Genyo and Soyoyo (2015) assessed online marketing and consumer purchasing behavior: Thirty (30) Nigerian firms sampled from Lagos and analyzed their responses using one hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires. The results show that there is a strong correlation between Nigerian

firms' online marketing and consumer purchasing decisions. In addition, there is a strong correlation between consumer purchasing decisions and Internet infrastructure. Finally, there is a strong link between consumer purchasing decisions and Internet security. The findings of Genyo and Soyoyo (2015) confirm the study by Tobi, Ayodele, and Akindele (2020), who concluded that online advertising influences customer behavior and leads to unplanned purchases.

A study by Al-Debei et al. (2015) found that consumers' attitudes toward online shopping were determined by trust and benefit. Trust is the quality of information from the social media platform and the product of the Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), and it is the concept of web quality (Al-Debei et al., 2015). Therefore, trust and profitability are key indicators of consumers' attitudes toward online shopping. Furthermore, the authors have found that the undisputed level of web quality increases the reliability of an online shopping website. Known web quality was a direct predictor of trust, and previous benefits were positive and critical. The researchers also found that 28 percent of changes in online shopping trends are due to benefits and trust. The results are somewhat consistent with those of Ali Taha et al. (2021) who argue that the majority of respondents engage in social media shopping during the COVID-19 epidemic and as a result of benefits and beliefs in social media shopping. Ali Taha et al. (2021) found that the majority of respondents re-used Facebook more than other social media during the second face of COVID-19. This is also in line with the study by Miller and Lammas (2010) who found that more than 11 million users use more than 70 percent of many SMs to purchase different products and services, provide rich information about some products, and share feedback with other users (Miller and Lammas, 2010). Facebook has more than 6 million users and is registered to buy and share information (Miller and Lammas, 2010). However, their findings were inconsistent with that of Koli, Chowdhury, and Dhar (2016) who argued that majority of people among the respondents representing 78% of the respondents use WhatsApp for online shopping.

Al-Mukhaini et al. (2014) explored the effect of using social media on consumer behavior. To understand what kind of products consumers in Oman usually buy using the social media they use, the study used questionnaire and interview guide to collect data from the respondents. According to research, Instagram is the best social media site for Oman consumers to buy their favorite products (models) online. Voramontri and Klieb (2018) explore the impact of social media on consumer behavior, using other sources of information such as TV, Radio, and

Newspapers to allow marketers to listen to online conversations and engage consumers on a regular basis. Their study revealed that social media is more effective than traditional form of adverts. Arekar et al. (2019) found that social networking sites show a wide variety of products with new brands in the market. They provided additional information about different brands of different products. Social media sites offer many suggestions and recommendations about the products they need. As a result, consumers get the information they need about different products from different brands. Hence Arekar et al. (2019) concluded that social media shopping provides numerous benefits to customers than traditional platform of shopping and this is consistent with the study by Voramontri and Klieb (2018).

Verma (2018) studied the impact of social media on consumer behavior in the Indian context. The researcher concluded that consumers need a brand that cares about themselves and society. Customers like it when companies respond to them directly and social media makes it easier. Today, consumers rely heavily on social media for customer support and services, and companies need to present themselves through advanced media to provide this assistance. Albert (2011) found that female members were more likely to be willing to shop online, while male members said customer service was more important when shopping online because of reliability and choice. Ramya and Ali (2016) consider five elements that determine consumer behavior. Their results suggest that demographic factors such as age, occupation, income, and lifestyle are important elements that influence consumer behavior. A study by Ying et al. (2021) examines four components: personal, social, psychological, and cultural factors. The techniques used in this review include frequency analysis, explanatory analysis, Pearson's correlation test, and multiple regression analysis. Based on the results of the study, psychological factors were found to be the most influential factor influencing consumer behaviour in Kuching, Sarawak Prefecture. The results of this research suggest that businesses need to use social media and engage in online platforms to gain a better understanding of customer behavior and gain market share.

Muniady et al. (2014) conducted a study of the elements influencing the purchasing behavior of students at the University of Malaysia. The purpose of this research was to examine how personal factors such as lifestyle, personal and economic circumstances influence the purchasing behavior of university students in Malaysia. The data were collected digitally and administered

questionnaires among university students. Their findings showed that "personal behavior" influences the purchasing behavior of the students in Malaysian university.

## **2.3 Definition and Concepts**

### **2.3.1 Social Media**

Social media has made a huge difference in the tools and strategies companies use to communicate with their customers. Manglod and Faulds (2009) combines the characteristics of the traditional way in which companies interact with customers through social media, and fights against the inability of administrators to cope with data content and iterations. Correspondence between firms and customers helps to ensure brand credibility before traditional techniques (Jackson, 2011; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011).

Discussions between firms and their customers provide firms with a new way to expand brand awareness, brand awareness, and brand outlook (Gunelius, 2011). According to Curran et al. (2011), because social media platforms, such as Facebook, store information and customers, advertising is superior to other advertising pathways because it guarantees access to a specific retail market.

In addition, Safko and Break (2009) plan to work on the stages of social media-based use and collaboration, coherent efforts, and content sharing. Manglod and Faulds (2009) also argue that social media advertising allows companies to have a better understanding of customer needs. Social media may be a well-known business decision because it allows for a balanced discussion of the individual (Siamagka et al, 2015). Social media has a direct impact on customer psychology, helping to increase the number of customers worldwide and connect with customers (Jones, Borgman and Ulusoy, 2015).

### **2.3.2 Social Media Marketing**

Social media integrates the quality of IMC's traditional tools (companies that communicate with customers) with highly improved verbal language (customers communicate with each other) so that marketing leaders cannot handle the content and repetition of such data (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Companies can maximize customer understanding in order to build attractive

relationships through social media marketing (Cox, 2012). Social media marketing will use marketing such as web marketing, social networking, blog marketing and more. This is the latest "noise" in marketing. Social media marketing has been recognized by companies around the world as a potential marketing step, and they have been used in conjunction with development to control their publicity efforts through social media marketing (Neti, 2011). Safko and Brake (2009) state that social media "refers to the exercises, practices, and practices in a network of people who gather online to share data, information, and assumptions using conversational media". Weinberg (2009) noted that social media is "defined by sharing data, meetings, and views through local sites". The basic definition is "the use of social media to improve an organization and its assets" (Barefoot and Szabo, 2010). If social media makes sense, it is possible to define social media marketing in detail. The basic definition is "the use of social media to improve an organization and its assets" (Barefoot and Szabo, 2010). Social media marketing integrates to find customers in innovative ways using online social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, My Space, and LinkedIn.

### **2.3.3 Consumer Behaviour**

Solomon et al. (2010) Consumer behavior is defined as the activities of people or assemblies that are spent selecting, purchasing, using, or disposing of a product, the thoughts of management, and the activities they face to meet their needs and desires. Heinonen (2011) argues that it is important for retailers and advertisers to be aware of the components that affect customer perceptions and mental cycles, as buyers are gradually creating content about brands that has only recently come under the control of companies. Rani (2014) Consumer behavior is a cycle of choices and demonstrations of people involved in buying and using an item. Rani (2014) went on to clarify that the consumer who is trying to find out what a person should use in the future chooses the result of incredible benefits, and then determines the amount of cash that the person will spend. and finally analyze the common costs and make a choice.

### **2.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter showed the theories and empirical works that underpins the study, although some concepts and definitions were reviewed. The study used four (4) theories such as media richness theory, IMC, uses and gratification theory and TAM. The showed the various empirical studies

related to the work. From the review, the study identified that scant studies have been conducted on graduate student of tertiary educational level. The study again realized that social media and its associated characteristics have been evolving and changing, hence there is the need to conduct study on it to see how its usage pattern.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter informs readers what actions have been undertaken to implement this study. It captures the method adopted for executing this study. The type of data as well as the data level is discussed under this chapter. The analytical tools for data analysis were discussed in this chapter. Furthermore, ethical issues pertinent to the implementation of this project was addressed in this chapter. Finally, a summary of this chapter is provided.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study used quantitative approach because it relied on collecting quantitative data, which is used to test existing theories about social media (Birks and Malhotra, 2006). Also, the quantitative approach allows for large sample unlike qualitative that uses small sample (Kothari and Garg, 2014). Since this study aims at identifying the role of social media shopping in changing buying behaviour of all graduate students in GIJ, it is therefore expedient to use quantitative approach. For instance, the study used 153 as sample which is large, hence quantitative is ideal.

According to Kothari and Garg (2014), a research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. Descriptive research design which helped the researcher to use descriptive statistics such as tables, frequency, and charts to depict the relevant data (Robson, 2002). Descriptive research design is essentially used to depict the momentum status or situation of the factor being examined (Birks and Malhotra, 2006). The researcher selected this design that assisted her to describe social media, how it used for shopping and the role it plays in changing behaviour of the users.

#### **3.2 Population**

The target population for the study is all GIJ graduate school students. According to GIJ, the graduate school has a population of about 248 students. The study only considered the graduate

school because the researcher is a graduate student and can have easy access to respondents and also the graduate students have a higher degree of purchasing power since most of them are workers.

### **3.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size**

According to Byrman and Bell (2003), a sample is the segment of the population that is selected for investigation. The study employed simple random sampling method because it allows equal opportunity of being a participant of the study and minimize bias in the selection process. The sample size was determined using the Yamane (1967) formula;

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

Where;

n = sample size

N = sampled population (248)

e = confidence interval (5%)

$$n = \frac{248}{1+248(0.05)^2} = 153.0864, \text{ approximately } 153 \text{ respondents}$$

Hence, the study used 153 graduate students of GIJ as the sample size.

### **3.4 Sources of Data**

The main source of data was primary data such as the responses from the questionnaire for the study however, the researcher used some secondary data including data from website, journal articles, books and other relevant published document.

### **3.5 Data Collection method**

Data that was collected for the study was through online structured questionnaire. The researcher made use of internet questionnaires since some of the respondents are very busy to meet them

one-on-one. In this case, the questionnaire was created using google form and the link was pasted on the various class WhatsApp platforms of the graduate students. The usage of the link helps the respondent to get access to the questions on the online questionnaires.

The questionnaires contained both closed and open-ended questions. The questions in the questionnaires are in four sections. Section 1 captures the demographic responses of the respondents whereas the 2 contains questions about factors that motivate student buyers to shop through social platforms. Sections 3 dealt with how social media channels influence buying behaviors of customers and the last section captures the challenges the users face when shopping through social media.

### **3.6 Analytical Techniques and Tools**

Data analysis is a method of converting data collected about a phenomenon into information by data editing, data coding, data entry, and summarizing data into tables, charts and graphs (Saunders et al., 2019). The study used descriptive analytical techniques in analysis the data collected which involve the use of tables, charts in analyzing a data for decision making purpose. The analytical tools for the study include the use of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23 and Microsoft excel 2016 and the result was shown in tables with corresponding frequencies and percentage for easy reading and understanding by the readers.

### **3.7 Ethical Consideration**

Ethical estimates, for example, informed consent of the respondents (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010), protection from members' control (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007), privacy and anonymity are respected (Cohen et al 2007; Johnson and Christensen 2008; Neutens and Robinson, 2010; McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). Ethical considerations in research have been complied with. This will help in following the ethical guidelines of the professional social sciences research associations. For instance, any information the respondents provided was treated with caution and utmost confidentiality.

### **3.8 Chapter Summary**

The study used quantitative approach whereas descriptive research design was used that helped the researcher to use descriptive statistics such as tables, frequency, and charts to depict the relevant data. The target population for the study is all GIJ graduate school students while 153 students were selected for the study. The study used questionnaire for data collection and these data was analyzed with Microsoft excel and SPSS.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

#### 4.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the study showed that online questionnaires were used in collecting data from the respondents and the analysis of these responses from the questionnaires were presented and discussed in the current chapter. The study analyzed the results based on the specific objectives and demographic factors of the respondents. This chapter is in four main sections; demographic factors of the respondent are captured in the first section whereas the subsequent section contains the first objective which is factors motivating student buyers to shop through social media platforms. The following section entails the role of social media in changing buying behaviour whilst the last section captures challenges associated with social media shopping.

#### 4.1 Demographic Profile

The study discussed some demographic responses such as gender, marital status and age. The results on demographic profile are presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Demographic Factors**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	80	52%
Female	73	48%
Total	153	100%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	93	61%
Married	60	39%
Total	153	100%
<b>Age</b>		
18-24 years	6	4%
25-34 years	99	65%
35-50 years	48	31%
Above 50 years		
Total	153	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.1 shows that the sample size is larger for men than for women. This is because 80 of the 153 participants were men and 48 percent of the remaining 73 participants were women. Again, there are 93 participants who are single, accounting for 61% of the total sample, and 60 participants representing 39% of the total sample are married. This again implies that the total sample size for the study has more respondents who are single.

In terms of the age of the respondents, 6 participants, who accounted for 4% of the total sample, were in the 18-24 age group (see Table 4.1). 65% of those surveyed (99 out of 153) were between the ages of 25 and 34, while 31% of those surveyed were between the ages of 35 to 50, with a frequency of 45. This means that the majority of respondents are within 25-34 years old, followed by 35-50 years old. The surveyed students aged 18-24 had the lowest frequency of 6 as shown in Table 4.1.

## **4.2 The Role of Social Media in Changing Buying Behaviour**

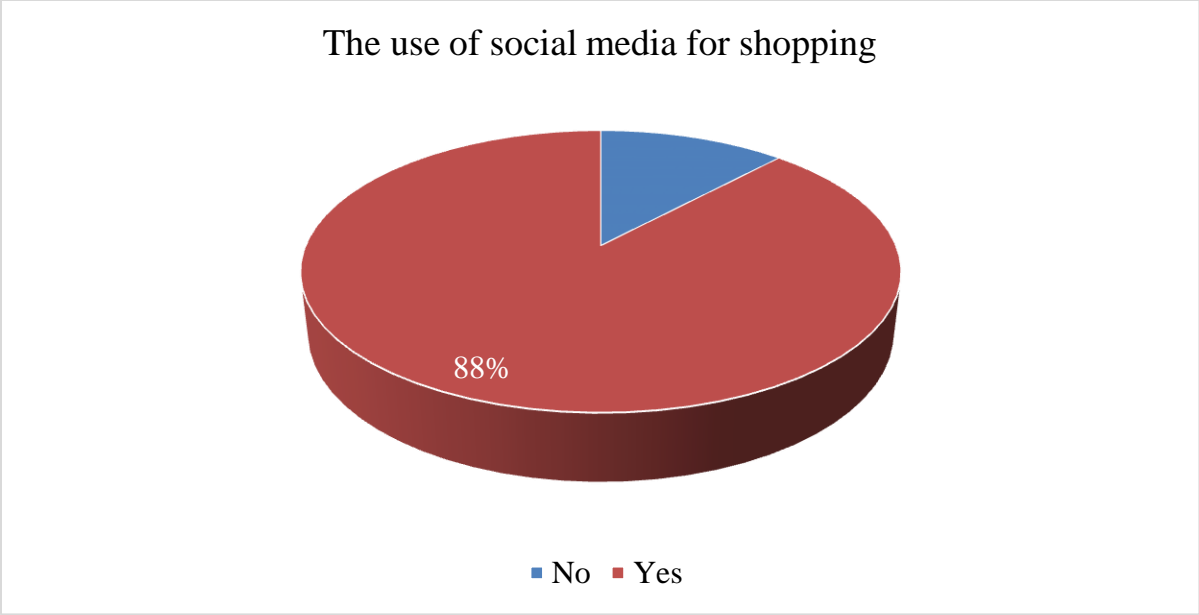
The study aimed at identifying factors that influence social media shopping, however the study first looked at those who use social media for shopping and most used tools for shopping. The results are presented in figure 4.1 and 4.2 respectively.

### **4.2.1 The use of social media for shopping**

The study asked respondents whether they use social media for online shopping, the responses are presented in figure 4.1.

The results from figure 4.1 suggested that most of the respondents used social media for shopping. For instance, 88% of the participants with a frequency of 143 selected “Yes” for the question “have you used social media for shopping?” However, the remaining 12% argued that they haven’t used social media for shopping (see figure 4.1).

The findings of figure 4.1 corroborate with the study of Miller and Lammas (2010) who stated in his research that social marketing has played a very important role in persuading consumers to buy online.



**Figure 4.1: The Use of Social Media Shopping**

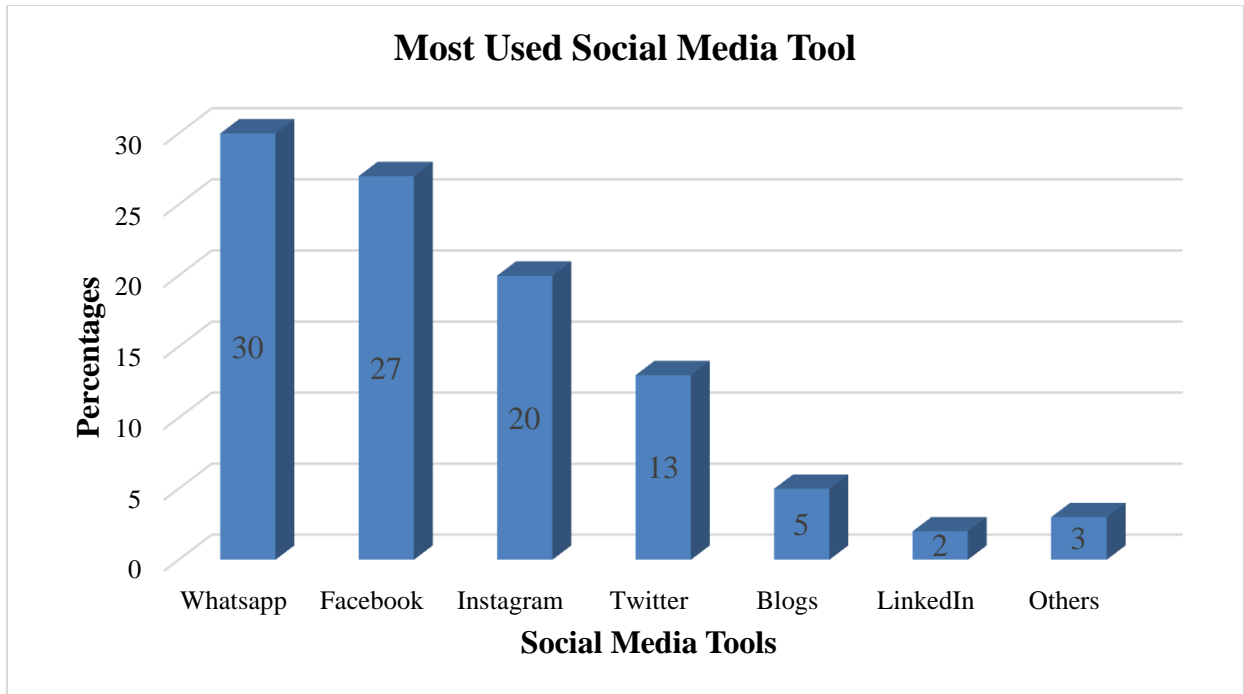
Source: Field Survey, 2021

**4.2.2 Most used Social Media Tool for Shopping**

The researcher seeks to know which social media tool is mostly used by the respondents to shop online. The responses are shown in figure 4.2.

The results in figure 4.2 suggested that the majority of participant for the study representing 30% of the entire sample used WhatsApp for online purchases followed by Facebook with a frequency of 41 representing 27% of the total students used for the study. The next most used social media platform is seen as Instagram, where 20% of the total respondents for the study claimed to use it for online purchases.

The next popularly used social media platform is Twitter, which covers 13% of all students used for the study. LinkedIn and Blog were seen to be the least most used social tools for shopping representing 5% and 2% respectively of the entire sample size (see figure 4.2). 3% of the total sample size stated that there are other social media platforms besides Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and Instagram that they use for online shopping as shown in figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2: Most used Social Media Tool**

Source: Field Survey, 2021

This implies that, among GIJ graduate school students used for study, the majority of students use WhatsApp to shop online. In other words, customers use WhatsApp to shop, compared to the social media platform or tools. This finding disagrees to the study by Ali Taha et al. (2021), who concluded that most people used Facebook for shopping as compared to other social media tools. The finding is inconsistent with the study of Curran et al. (2011) who claimed that social media such as Facebook, is better than other platform because they store information for consumers and allow them to reach their retail marketing target market.

However, the results confirm the study by Koli et al. (2016) who identified that most smart phone users use WhatsApp to shop online as compared to other form of social media tools.

### **4.3 Factors that Motivate Student to Engage in Social Media Shopping**

The study carefully followed the work of Al-Debei et al. (2015) who suggested some factors that are able to influence people to engage in social media shopping. The suggested factors include; ease of access to product information for customers, low cost of evaluating product information,

privacy, and customer care, influence the use of social media in online shopping. Therefore, the current study wants to examine whether these factors influence the students to engage in social media shopping.

The study used 5 points Likert scale to measure the factors influencing social media shopping. However, the study collapsed the 5-points Likert scale by merging strongly agree and agree together as one indicator and named it as agree, also collapsed strongly disagree and disagree into disagree and maintained neutral. Hence the variables of indicators include; agree, neutral and disagree as shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Factors that Motivate Student to Engage in Social Media Shopping**

Statements	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Total
Easy access to product information motivates me to shop online	97	21	35	153
Access to a variety of products motivates me to engage in social media shopping	77	58	18	153
I am motivated to shop online because of privacy and confidentiality	110	32	11	153
Good customer service is assured when I shop through social media	40	90	23	153
The high trust level of the information on social media motivate me to shop online	34	35	84	153
Convenience is the reason why I will prefer social media shopping	100	21	32	153
My interaction with other customers on social media motivates me to engage in social media shopping	40	79	34	153
The type of social media channels or sites motivate me to engage in social media shopping	81	20	42	153

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The results in Table 4.2 showed that 97 participants agree to the statement “easy access to product information” whilst 21 of the respondents disagree with the statement. The remaining respondents with a frequency of 35, are undecided about the statement. This however implies that most of the respondents prefer to use social media tools for shopping because they can easily access any information on various products. These findings confirm the results of Kirti (2019), who found that social media sites provide information about different brands of different products. Social media sites offer a lot of suggestions and recommendations about the products you want. As a result, consumers get the information they need about different products from different brands.

Again, access to a variety of products was seen to be another motivating factor influencing social media shopping. It was identified that 77 of the total sample agreed that access to a variety of products motivates them to engage in social media shopping (see Table 4.2). The finding from Table 4.2 suggests that 58 of the students used for the study disagree that access to variety of products motivate them to engage in social media shopping whereas 18 of the respondents are undecided about the statement “access to variety of products motivate them to engage in social media shopping”. By implication, most of the respondents are motivated to engage in social media shopping because of access to variety of products.

Furthermore, customers’ confidentiality and privacy were seen to be very relevant when dealing with social media shopping. This is evident in Table 4.2 as most respondents (110 out of 153) agree that they prefer social media shopping due to confidentiality and privacy. Although, there are some respondents who disagreed (32 out of 153) and were undecided (11 out of 153) confidentiality and privacy in social media, comparatively it can be concluded that most of them are influenced by this factor (see Table 4.2).

Unlike other factors discussed above, good customer care does not influence or motivate student buyers to engage in social media shopping. For instance, just a few respondents agree that good customer care motivates them to engage in social media shopping with a frequency of 40 respondents as shown in Table 4.2. Most respondents (90 out of 153) disagree that good customer care motivates them to engage in social media shopping whereas the remaining

respondents were undecided about the statement “good customer care motivate them to engage in social media shopping” with its frequency of 23 (see Table 4.2).

Also, most respondents were undecided about the trust level of information shared on social and how it will motivate them to engage in social media shopping with a frequency of 84 respondents representing 55% of the entire sample size (see Table 4.2). According to Table 4.2, as 34 respondents claim that the trust level of information shared on social media motivates them to use social media shopping, 35 respondents are of the view that the trust level of information shared on social media does not motivate them to use social media shopping.

Most graduate students are workers and schooling as well, thus they prefer convenience in all their transactions including social media shopping. The findings from Table 4.2 showed that 100 participants agree that convenience motivates them to engage in social media shopping. As 32 respondents were undecided about convenience, 21 respondents disagree that convenience motivates them to engage in social media shopping as shown in Table 4.2. The results are consistent with a study by Ying et al. (2021), who argue that convenience is seen as an incentive for social media users to shop online.

In relation to referrals, it was shown in Table 4.2 that most respondents do not depend on referrals to engage in social media shopping since 76 out of 153 participants disagreed with the statement that “My interaction with other customers on social media motivates me to engage in social media shopping”. In a ranking manner, disagree had a frequency of 79 participants followed by neutral with 44 participants and then agree with a frequency of 30 participants.

Lastly, most participants feel that the type of social media site they mostly use motivate them to engage in social media shopping. This is evidence in results as presented in Table 4.2 where 81 participants agree to the statement that “The type of social media channels or sites motivate me to engage in social media shopping” followed by 42 respondents whose responses were neutral and the least responses by 20 respondents who argued that the type of social media tool is not a motivating factor.

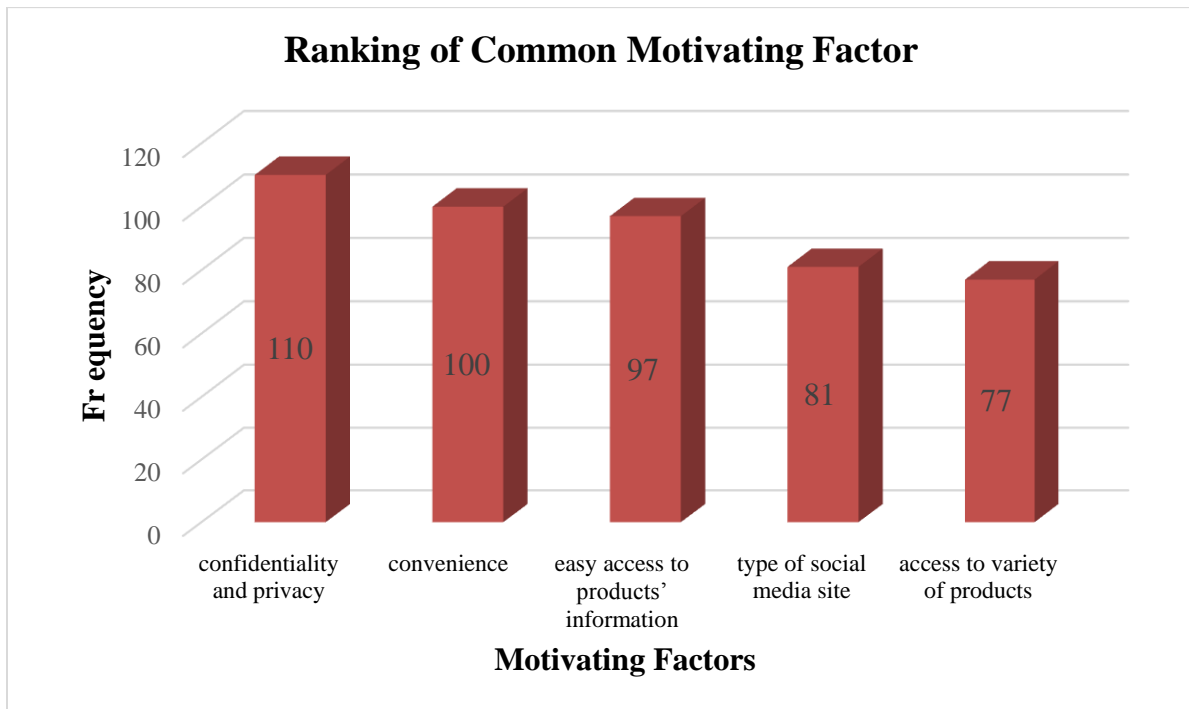
In summary, it was revealed that 5 out of 8 factors really motivate most of the respondents (GIJ graduate students) of the study as shown in Table 4.2. These factors include easy access to

product’s information, access to variety of products, confidentiality and privacy, convenience and the type of social media site or platform used by the participant.

### 4.3.1 Common Motivating Factor

The study sorted out the factors that really motivate most of the graduate students of GIJ and seeks to identify which factor is the highest and the least. This was achieved by using the responses obtained on “agree” from Table 4.2. The results are presented in figure 4.3

According to figure 4.3, the highest motivating factor is confidentiality and privacy (1<sup>st</sup>), followed by convenience (2<sup>nd</sup>). The 3<sup>rd</sup> motivating factor is seen to be easy access to products’ information whereas the 4<sup>th</sup> motivating factor is the type of social media site. However, access to variety of products was seen to be the least motivating factor (5<sup>th</sup>) that influences student buyers to engage in social media shopping.



**Figure 4.3: Ranking of Common Motivating Factor**

Source: Field Survey, 2021

#### 4.4 Social Media Shopping and Buying Behaviour

The study seeks to identify the role of social media shopping on the changes in buying behaviour of the respondents. The study started by looking at how online advertisements influence buying behaviour and trust in social media shopping changes buying behaviour. This section also considered how well the graduate students are satisfied with the social media shopping and finally how social media influence the buying behaviour of the respondents.

##### 4.4.1 Social Media Advertisement and Consumer Buying Behaviour

This section deals with how often social media users click on the advertisements that pop up when using the platform. It also examines how these advertisements affect buying behaviour.

From Table 4.3, plainly around 38% of the respondents were rarely interested in clicking on the advertisements seen on the social media home pages followed by 31% of the respondents who clicked only sometimes. This might indicate that more often than not the advertisements were ignored or seen with significantly less interest.

**Table 4.3: Social Media Advertisement on Buying Behaviour**

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you consider opinion/ reviews posted on social media sites for buying decision?	11%	21%	41%	24%	3%
How frequently do you click on the advertisement seen on social Media?	0%	12%	31%	38%	19%
How frequently do you purchase good and (or) services based on the advertisement clicked?	8%	30%	9%	27%	26%

1= Always, 2= Most often, 3=Sometimes, 4=Rarely, 5=Never

Source: Field Survey, 2021

However, it was seen that most participants “most often” purchase a product online by 30% whereas 27% rarely purchase a product based on the advert (see Table 4.3). This implies that adverts on social media platforms affect the buying behaviour of GIJ graduate school. The results, therefore, confirm with the study by Tobi et al. (2020) who concluded that online advert influences consumer buying behaviour which later leads to unplanned purchases.

### 4.4.2 Social Media Marketing on Buying Behaviour

The study went further to identify the level at which social media shopping influences the respondents buying decisions. The study used 5 points Likert scale to measure the level at which the respondents (GIJ graduate students) buying behaviours are influenced by social media marketing. However, the study collapsed the 5-points Likert scale by merging strongly agree and agree together as one indicator and named it as agree, also collapse strongly disagree and disagree into disagree and maintain neutral. Hence the variables of indicators include; agree, neutral and disagree as shown in figure 4.4.

The findings presented in figure 4.4 indicate that Social Media had increased the frequency of the products being purchased online. Figure 4.4 shows that 57% of the respondents agreed that social media has influenced their purchasing decision, followed by 18% who are indifferent (neutral) and didn't have any effect on their overall purchasing or purchasing decision

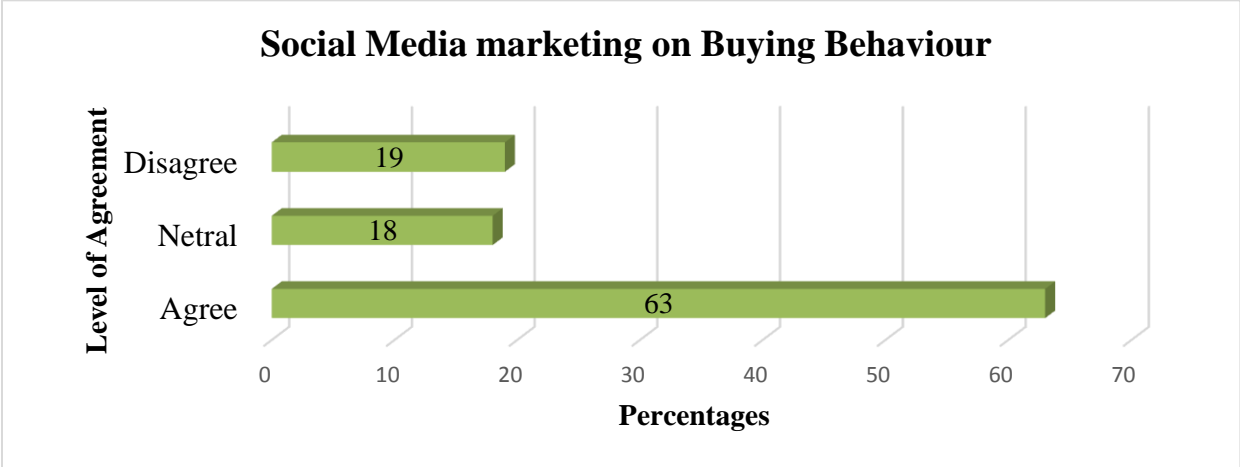


Figure 4.4: Social Media Marketing on Buying Behaviour

Source: Field Survey, 2021

#### 4.4.3 Level of Satisfaction from Online Shopping

After the study has considered how social media platforms influence buying behaviour, the study then examined the graduate students' satisfaction level on online shopping. The results are shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: The Level of Satisfaction from Social Media Shopping**

Statement	Frequency	Percentages
Highly satisfied	19	6%
Satisfied	182	57%
Neutral	90	28%
Not so satisfied	19	6%
Dissatisfied	10	3%
Total	320	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The above indicated that 57% of the respondent were satisfied with their online purchases and while the rest were either neutral (28%) or a small fraction indicated dissatisfaction. This may hint that the people who made online purchases were overall satisfied with their choices.

#### 4.5 Challenges of Engaging in Social Media Shopping

Despite the benefits of social media, there are some challenges that social media shopping encounters. The responses to the challenges are presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Challenges**

Statements	N	Mean	Std.Dev	Min	Max
Customers are distracted by hackers when shopping	153	1.10	0.323	1	5
Social media shopping reduces face-to-face communication with the supplier or the seller	153	1.82	0.635	1	5
Social media shopping exposes me to offensive materials	153	3.11	1.259	1	5
Customers encounter cyberbullying	153	2.15	1.275	1	5
My private information is published	153	4.12	1.692	1	5
The cost of using social media for shopping	153	3.23	1.342	1	5
Inconsistence internet access	153	4.25	1.8723	1	5
The integrity of the source of advertisement is low	153	3.31	1.893	1	5
Sometimes the sellers are fraudsters	153	1.43	0.549	1	5
Products from social media shopping are not quality	153	3.01	1.324	1	5

*Rank: [1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Strongly Disagree, 5= Disagree]*

*N=observation; min=minimum value; Max=maximum value; Std. Dev.=Standard deviation*

Source: Field Study, 2021

The rank under Table 4.5 means that from 0 to 1.49 is strongly agree, 1.5 to 2.49 is agree, 2.5 to 3.49 is undecided, 3.5 to 4.49 is disagree and 4.5 to 5.5 is strongly disagree.

Table 4.5 showed that customers are distracted by hackers when engaging in social media shopping with a mean of 1.10, which suggest that customers strongly agree that they get distracted by hackers, for instance, hackers trying to break into customers' credit cards. Also, "Social media shopping reduces face-to-face communication with the supplier or the seller" has

a mean of 1.82 which signifies that most respondents used for the study have a challenge of not having direct interaction with the supplier of the product they intend to buy (see Table 4.5). The findings of lack of face-to-face communication corroborate the study of Keegan and Rowley (2017) who argue that customers do not have face to face communication with suppliers or sellers when engaged in social media shopping. Cyberbullying was seen to be a challenge student buyer face when engaging in social media shopping since it has a mean of 2.15. The mean of 2.15 suggests that most of the respondents agree that they are faced with cyberbullying.

Unlike the above-discussed challenges that most students claim they encounter, publication of private information was seen not to affect most respondents since most participants disagree with the statement “My private information is published” with a mean of 4.12 (see Table 4.5). Also, Table 4.5 showed that most respondents are indecisive about the cost of internet with a mean of 3.23. This could be attributed to the fact that the cost of internet is dependent and subjected to individual respondents like where the respondent works, the income level of the respondents and other engagement of the respondents with respect to social media. Most respondents claimed that inconsistent internet does not pose a challenge to them when engaged in social media shopping. This had a mean of 4.25 (that is disagree).

In addition, the results from Table 4.5 shows that “The integrity of the source of advertisement is low” has a mean of 3.31 implying that most participants of the study are undecided about the fact that the integrity of the source of advertisement is low. Most of the graduate students used for the study strongly agree (mean of 1.43) that sometimes the sellers are fraudsters. This could be the fact that the product advertised is far different from the product delivered. This action or perception can sometimes reduce the trust level of the products advertised online. Lastly, most respondents were undecided (mean of 3.01) about claim that “Products from social media shopping are not quality”.

In summary from Table 4.5, it was identified that chief among the challenges most GIJ graduate students used for the study is distraction from hackers. The common challenges identified are distraction from hackers, lack of face-to-face communication with the supplier or the seller, cyberbullying and sometimes the sellers are fraudsters.

The responses from the open-ended questions suggest that most respondents encounter additional challenges such as late delivery, wrong package and additional delivery cost.

#### **4.6 Chapter Summary**

In summary, the study identifies that the sample used for the study has more male than female whereas most of them are single. Also, with regard to age, most of the respondents are in the age bracket of 25-34 years. It was revealed that 88% of the entire sample size uses social media for shopping. Among the social media tools, WhatsApp was seen to be the most used social media tool for shopping. In summary, it was revealed that 5 out of 8 factors really motivate most of the respondents (GIJ graduate students) of the study as shown in Table 4.2. These factors include easy access to product's information, access to variety of products, confidentiality and privacy, convenience and the type of social media site or platform used by the participant. However, the main motivating factor is privacy and confidentiality.

The findings indicate that Social Media had increased the frequency of the products being purchased online. Most of the respondents were satisfied with online purchase. However, there are some challenges encountered. The common challenges identified are distraction from hackers, lack of face-to-face communication with the supplier or the seller, cyberbullying and sometimes the sellers are fraudsters. The chief among the challenges most GIJ graduate students used for the study is distraction from hackers.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings, draws conclusions based on the findings, and provides recommendations. The chapter was structured into four sections. Section one is the summary, which begins with the main objectives of the project, methods and tools and the key results or findings. Section two gave conclusion to the entire study. Then section three is the limitation of the entire research. The last section is made of recommendation for policy implication and further studies.

#### 5.1 Summary of the Study

The introduction of e-learning platforms in schools has assisted students to experience a state of cognitive absorption, where they are exposed to other technological advances such as social media. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the influence of social media shopping on student buying behaviour (decision). This was achieved by first identifying the factors that motivate students to engage in social media shopping; second, how social media shopping influences buying behaviour and lastly, the challenges consumers encounter. The study used quantitative approach whereas descriptive research design was used that helped the researcher to use descriptive statistics such as tables, frequency, and charts to depict the relevant data. The target population for the study is all GIJ graduate school students while 153 students was selected for the study. The study used questionnaire for data collection and these data was analyzed with Microsoft excel and SPSS.

The study identified that most of the respondents were males, of which the majority are unmarried and they are between the ages of 25-34 however most of them use social media for online shopping. Also, it was identified that WhatsApp is the most used social media platform for shopping as compared to Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Bloggs, LinkedIn and others. The study also looked at what influences GIJ graduate students to use social media, it was identified that most respondents are motivated to engage in social media shopping due to easy access of product's information, access to variety of products, confidentiality and privacy, convenience

and the type of social media site or platform used by the participant. However, it was identified that confidentiality and privacy encourage the respondents to mostly use social media for online shopping. In addition, it was seen that channels like advertisement and overall benefits of social media affect customer buying behaviour. Lastly, the study showed that challenges such as distraction from hackers, cyberbullying, reduction of face-to-face communication and publication of offensive materials were encountered by most participants for the study during the usage of the social media platforms for shopping. However, distraction from hackings is the common challenge most respondents faced.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The study identified that most of the respondents were males, of which the majority are unmarried and they are between the ages of 25-34 however most of them use social media for online shopping. This however implies that most male prefer schooling than female in Ghana. Also, since most male are far addicted to technology, it can be seen that male prefer online shopping. This can be attributed to connivence and stereotype that the physical market is for females. Hence, sellers who intend using media should target those who are single and within the age bracket of 25-34. However, the seller should not abandon those who are in these categories (married and are not in the ages of 25-34) but should consider them.

The study concludes that WhatsApp is the most popular social media platform used in online shopping. Most respondents use WhatsApp because it is a social media platform that organization and institutions use for meetings and socialization. For instance, in GIJ every class has a group page on WhatsApp platform where lectures time table are pasted and every information about the class are communicated there. In same manner, product and services are advertised on same page, this will however motivate the student to use WhatsApp for online shopping. This is akin to “uses and gratification” theory that argues that individuals use the media to meet different needs, and that the behavior of using the media has a specific cause.

Similarly, privacy and confidentiality motivate customers to buy products online compared to other variables. By implication, most of the element in the sample used for the study are mindful of where they patronize their goods and services, hence they don't want their consumption pattern to revealed. This corroborates with TAM who states before a consumer will use a specific

technology, they tend to perceive and examine the usefulness of a technology. This suggest most respondent examine how useful social media will be in terms of confidential and privacy. Therefore, when the privacy level of a particular platform is efficient, it enhances the usage of such platform for shopping.

Once again, advertising on social media platforms influences customer behavior. Advertisement on social media plays a major role in changing the buying behavior of consumers because when a message is able reach a consumer properly, it changes their decision. This suggest that online advertising influences customer behavior and leads to unplanned purchases. This claim supports the media richness theory which argue that the ability of a medium of a message to convey a message to the recipients has the potential to influence the decision of the recipient. It means that when WhatsApp platform for instance, has the ability to carry message (advert) to the recipient, it will inform the recipients decision. Hence, sellers should enhance on the level of advertisement. This is because customers like it when companies respond to them directly and social media makes it easier

The findings show that the main challenges that students face when using social media is distraction from hackers. Buyers feel that they should be protected and respected when they are using their money and time to purchase. So, they when they shopping online, they do not like to be disturbed or distracted. Notwithstanding, the case of online shopping is different because an attempt to shop online, then hackers are making every effort to hack you and steal either your money or product. Therefore, owners of these social media platform should try as much as possible to limit the activities of these hackers.

### **5.3 Limitation of the Study**

The researcher encountered quite a few challenges in conducting the study. Some of these challenges hindered the progress of the study and limited its findings. A few challenges encountered in the conduct of the study include the following:

Some graduate school students were not ready to discuss issues in relation to their social media shopping with the researcher. In addition, since most of the respondents are workers, it was difficult to collect data from them, hence the researcher spent a lot of time collecting data from the respondents.

Time allocated for the study was barely enough to collect required data and make relevant conclusions. The researcher was expected to conduct the study within a limited time frame together with other academic work.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

The research is recommended for both further studies and practical implications for policymaking.

### **5.4.1 Recommendation for Practical Implication**

- i Since it was identified that WhatsApp is mostly used for online shopping, sellers who use social media for business should make frequent use of WhatsApp.
- ii It was also identified that advertisements on social media platforms influence consumer buying behaviour, hence sellers should improve upon the utilization of adverts on various social media platforms most especially WhatsApp.
- iii The study identified that privacy is the greatest motivating factor for using social media, hence both owners of social media sites and sellers should improve on privacy level.
- iv Policymakers must create and maintain an atmosphere of respect and fairness, and sanctions must be imposed for violations. Policy makers must implement policy that create environment where social media users can feel comfortable transacting business on social media.
- v Owners and management of different social media platforms should review existing bullying policies to see if they allow for discipline of agents who engage in cyberbullying.
- vi Owners and management of the various social platforms should develop creative strategies for deterring cyber bullying.

### **5.4.2 Recommendation for Further Studies**

The study suggested areas that further studies can capitalize on. These include the following;

- i. Some aspects of structural measurement in relation to research should be improved by looking at more literature or by evaluating future research from social media experts.
- ii. Second, as this research focuses on factors that generally influence consumer or student purchasing behavior in the social media context, future studies may examine population sample differences. For example, on social media, there may be gender differences or age differences that influence on consumer behavior. This can be a difference in user behavior between users of different social media platforms.
- iii. In addition, this review ignores other variables, such as product-related factors. These variables may also be included in future studies.

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## APPENDIX

### QUESTIONNAIRE

**Dear Respondent,**

In fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the master's degree in development communication from the Ghana Institute of Journalism, I am carrying out a study that seeks to explore "THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA SHOPPING ON BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF STUDENTS OF GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM. I crave your indulgence to spare me few minutes to fill out this questionnaire. Please be assured that any information you provide will be treated with caution and utmost confidentiality.

Thank you!

**Please tick appropriate choice.**

## SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF THE PARTICIPANTS

1. Gender:

Male

Female

2. Status:

Single

Married

3. What is your age range?

18-24 years

25-34 years

35-50 years

Above 50 years

4. Do you use any social media tools for shopping?

Yes  No

5. Which social media sites do you mostly use to shop?

Twitter

Facebook

WhatsApp

Instagram

LinkedIn

Blogs

Others

## SECTION 2: FACTORS THAT MOTIVATE SOCIAL MEDIA SHOPPING

INSTRUCTION: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Tick **against the relevant answers provided**

Where 1-Strongly Agree; 2-Agree; 3-Neutral; 4-Disagree; 5-Strongly Disagree

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
6. Easy access to product information motivates me to shop online					
7. Access to variety of products motivates me to engage in social media shopping					
8. I am motivated to shop online because of privacy and confidentiality					
9. Good customer service is assured when I shop through social media					
10. The high trust level of the information on social media motivate me to shop online					
11. Convenience is the reason why I will prefer social media shopping					
12. My interaction with other customers on social media motivates me to engage in social media shopping					
13. The type of social media channels or sites motivate me to engage in social media shopping					

### **SECTION 3: HOW SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS INFLUENCE BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF CUSTOMERS**

14. How often do you consider opinion / comments posted on social media / social networking sites to make purchasing decisions?

Always

Most Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

15. How often do you click on ads posted on social media (to access the site or purchase the product)?

Always

Most Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

16. How often do you buy products / services based on the ad clicked?

Always

Most Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

17. How would you rate your level of satisfaction from social media shopping?

Highly satisfied

Satisfied

Neutral

Not so satisfied

Dissatisfied

18. Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the following statement - "Social networking/media has increased my frequency of buying products online or use of online services."

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Indifferent

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

**SECTION 4: CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED WHEN ENGAGED IN SOCIAL MEDIA SHOPPING**

INSTRUCTION: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Tick **against the relevant answers provided**

Where 1-Strongly Agree; 2-Agree; 3-Neutral; 4-Disagree; 5-Strongly Disagree

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
19. Customers are distracted by hackers when shopping					
20. Social media shopping reduces face-to-face communication with the supplier or the seller					
21. Social media shopping exposes me to offensive materials					
22. Customers encounters cyber bulling					
23. My private information is published					
24. The cost of using social media for Shopping					
25. Inconsistence internet access					
26. The integrity of the source of advertisement is low					
27. Sometimes the sellers are fraudsters					
28. Products from social media shopping are not quality					

29. What other challenges do you face when using social media for shopping?

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Thank You!!!