GENERATIONAL VARIATION IN SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS USE ON CONSUMER ONLINE PURCHASE INTENTION IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This research investigated generational variation in social media platforms use on consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Three hundred and fifty (350) respondents which formed the sample size of the study was determined using Topman's formula and copies of a validated and reliable research instrument were administered to the respondents. The stated hypotheses were tested at 5% level of significance and were analysed using PLS-SEM as well as aided by AMOS software. The study found out that consumers' use of Facebook does not have any positive and significant influence on consumer online purchase intention in the study area. The study equally revealed that Instagram, X (formally known as Twitter), and YouTube have positive and significant influence on consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria. The study also found out that TikTok use has a positive but non-significant influence on consumer online purchase intention in the study area. Again, the study disclosed that moderating effect of generational cohort indicated that millennials are significantly different from Gen Z in terms of how they make use of social media platforms. The study recommends that there should be conscientious attention to Facebook messages by businesses and consumers alike so that commercial messages would be digested well and culminate into unprecedented patronage by the target market, in the study area. The study equally recommends that the gains recorded by Instagram in the context of this study should be sustained and built upon for further business endeavours in the study area, among others.

Keywords: *Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Millennials, Gen Z.*

INTRODUCTION

The growth of internet technology has been astronomical in recent times and has equally changed the communication mode of the various generations (like Millennials, Gen Z etc.) across the globe, thereby making the world assume the status of a global village (Gautam & Sharma, 2017; Rastogi, 2021). The emergence of internet technology in this 21st century culminates into litany of digital platforms like the social media platforms, which comprises of Facebook, Twitter(X), Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp etc. (Kaur et al., 2021).

The presence of social media platforms has invariably changed the ways of transactions between individuals and firms in the marketing environment. The firms/companies now utilize these social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter(X), Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp etc.) to influence, inform, persuade and retain the existing customers and encourage the potentials customers to patronize their offers (Cheung et al., 2019; Cheung et al., 2020).

However, the incessant utilization of these social media platforms by consumers constitute both opportunities and threats to the marketers that use them as their main source of circulating information about their products and services (Njoku & Nkamnebe, 2024). It is pertinent to note that there is rise in the use of the internet and unprecedented use of mobile devices, among the Millennials and Gen Z consumers who seriously engage and spend enough time on these social media platforms, which invariably enhance their communication with firms that advertise their products and services online (Hutter et al., 2013; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015; Islam et al., 2018). However, the efficacy of social media platforms and it influence consumer purchase intention cannot be overstated (Njoku & Nkamnebe, 2024).

Salmiah, Sahir and Fahlevi (2024) aver that purchase intention remains an implicit promise that a consumer makes to repurchase the product anytime the need arises and shows in customer retention. Purchase intention has the capacity of making a consumer to engage in referral activities, in his/her environment. Purchase intention, as opine by Fahlevi et al. (2023) entails the decision taking by the consumers to purchase a product or service because they cherish the product's or service's function. Purchase intention is a precursor to the main decision of purchasing a product or service, and by extension, it is potentially influenced by promotional activities of firms in the business environment (Peter & Olson, 2010).

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the effect of social media platforms on consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria. In order to achieve this main objective, the study will also have the following specific objectives:

i.   To identify the extent of the significant influence between Facebook and consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

ii. To determine whether there is any significant effect between Instagram and consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

iii. To ascertain the extent of the significant impact between Twitter(X) and consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

iv. To assess the level of the significant influence between YouTube and consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

v.   To find out the extent of the significant effect between TikTok and consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

vi. To analyze if the relationship between social media platforms and consumer purchase intention is sequentially and positively moderated by generational cohort in South East, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated as well as stated in their null form and will be tested at 5% level of significance.

H_{01}: Facebook does not have any significant influence on consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria

H_{02}: Instagram does not have any significant effect on consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

H_{03}: There is no significant impact between Twitter(X) and consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

H_{04}: YouTube does not have any significant influence on consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

H_{05}: There is no significant effect between TikTok and consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

H_{06}: The relationship between social media platforms and consumer purchase intention is not sequentially and positively moderated by generational cohort in South East, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This subsection of this study consists of the various concepts (conceptual review) and theories that are relevant to the study. It has been structured under conceptual review, theoretical framework and the conceptual framework, which shows the schematic representation of the variables of the study.

Conceptual Review

The concepts that are relevant to this study were reviewed under this sub-section of the study for easy comprehension. They are as follows;

Concept of Social Media Platforms

Social media have gained wide acceptance and equally enjoying unwavering popularity among consumers and businesses around the globe, as the world now showcases the status of a global village. This unprecedented popularity by social media has effectively and efficiently changed the narrative in the traditional systems of carrying out business and marketing on daily basis (Nambisan & Baron, 2007; Turban et al., 2010). Consumers and businesses are deeply entrenched in the use of social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter(X), LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok, etc. and by extension, they spend quality time on these social media platforms. The time being spent on these social media platforms, invariably result to an increase in the communication through the social media platforms (Hutter et al., 2013; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015; Islam et al., 2018). In the words of Ewanlen and Denis (2023), social media have wide range of coverage of business application. Suffice it to say that the advent of social media platforms has tremendously altered the tools and approaches for communicating with customers (Ewanlen & Denis, 2023). However, Xiang and Gretzel (2010) opine that social media serves as an enabler for organizations to create and diffuse information with the sole aim of educating consumers about their products and for eventual patronage. Therefore, customers constantly make use of social media to engage in online activities, share information, and create contents (Ewanlen & Denis, 2023; Adeola, 2019). These social media platforms - Facebook,

Instagram, YouTube, X(formerly known as Twitter), and TikTok offer businesses/entrepreneurs the exceptional opportunity to showcase their brands, and build mutually beneficial relationship with their target market (Benson-Eluwa & Njoku, 2021). However, these social media platforms help businesses in building brand reputation, developing collaborative products and services, strategizing marketing for brand management, and offer of extra channel for the communication with existing and potential customers (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Laroche et al, 2013; Ngai et al. 2015; Bouwmwan et al. 2017).

Facebook

Facebook remains the world's highest and more accessed social network. Facebook was launched by Mark Zuckberg at Harvard University precisely on 4th February, 2004, as an undergraduate student. The headquarter is in Menlo Park, California. According to Brightpearl (2011), Facebook assist the retailers by offering numerous ways of interacting and attracting potential purchasers. Facebook has experienced unprecedented growth that culminated into the acquisition of Instagram in 2012 for a whopping sum of $1 billion, and WhatsApp in 2014 for $16 billion, even Oculus for $2 billion in 2014. Statistically, Facebook was reported to have 750 million active users in 2011, and 1.45 billion active users in the second quarter of 2015 and the most utilized social network platform across the globe (Taneja & Toomb, 2014). In the words of Njoku and Nkamnebe (2024), this social media platform is a universally accepted platform that can boast of over 3 billion active users monthly. According to Adeola (2019), it can be deduced that Facebook is one of the essential social media platform that comprises of over two billion active users, who can be found in different age categories, especially Millennials and Gen Z, who are highly tech savvy. However, businesses and consumers are at liberty to create their own page on Facebook.

Instagram

Instagram is a photo and short video sharing social network established in 2010 by Michel Krieger and Kevin Systrom. They are software engineer and computer programmer respectively. According to Kilipiri et al (2023), Instagram is the foremost social media platform that showcased the chance of social interactions whereby users acted like real-life friends. Instagram is being rated as the third among the leading social networking sites, after Facebook and YouTube across the world with over 1478 million active users.

X(formerly known as Twitter)

X(Twitter) remains a real-time micro blogging platform which came into public space on 21st march, 2006. As it was launched, its defining features were the tight limits placed on each post, known as a tweet. Originally, users could only use 140 characters, although that has been elongated over the years. Formed by former Odeo employees Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Evan Williams and Biz Stone, the site originally used SMS to send tweets onto the network. Twitter (X) commenced with tagline "what are you doing" which was appropriate for their model in its early stage (Curran et al., 2011). Twitter (X) wanted users to engage in discussions on the things that are going on in their life, in real time. However, as it grew, it began to evolve organically. Curran et al., (2011) averred that the users of Twitter (X) started sharing information on a world wide scale in real time, with businesses taking the opportunity to discuss their brands and news started to break through the social networking platform quicker and more efficiently than the traditional mainstream media services.

TikTok

TikTok is also known as Douyin in China where it was launched in September, 2016. It was launched primarily to serve as a short-form video sharing platform, for lip-syncing and dancing videos. However, it has metamorphosed into a fully-grown video service, with content being easily available and accessible for all types of viewers. TikTok as a Chinese app became accepted in markets outside the frontier of China as a result of the acquisition of musical.ly in November, 2017 at the cost of $1 billion. TikTok popularity increased in 2019 and 2020 with approximately 693 million times download in 2019 and 850 million times download in 2020.

YouTube

It was founded by Chad Hurlley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim, who are employees of PayPal in 2005. They ran the company from an office above a small restaurant in San Mateo. It is on record that the foremost video to be uploaded to the YouTube platform was "me at the 200" featuring Karim. Before the end of that year, YouTube was almost hosting about two million videos pay day on its website, with an average of over 20 million daily active users. However, Google scooped up YouTube and acquiring the startup for $1.65 billion in late 2006. Though this acquisition was seen as lacking the capacity or interest in generating profit but was later seen as one of the smartest acquisitions of the past two decades.

Consumer Purchase Intention

This is the stage in the purchase activities, where the consumers form their choices among numerous brands joined in the chosen set (Sudaryanto et al., 2022). However, purchase intention surfaces when the customer receives the stimulus of the existence of a product, from there comes the interest in trying the product until the final desire of purchasing and eventual use of the product (Kotler & Keller, 2016 as cited by Sudaryanto et al., 2022).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. In the words of Okpara, Njoku and Udodirim (2021), the survey design is normally used to assess and analyze the views, reactions and opinions of a vast number of people on a given topic. The study was conducted in the South East, Nigeria. The choice of the study area is apt, as a result of the fact that the area is heavily populated, with industrial, educational and commercial presence, as well as cosmopolitan lifestyle, which conduces to research. The target population/sample frame for the study is the civil servants, lecturers, students, business persons, transporters, farmers and self-employed who are within the Millennials and Gen Z that can understand and respond to the questions that relate to social media platforms and consumer online purchase intention. However, the population is unknown; hence, the sample size of 350 respondents was determined using the Topman's formula. The researchers adopted convenience non-probability sampling technique. The convenience sampling technique was employed in order to enable the researchers to administer the questionnaire seamlessly and hitch-freely basically on convenience. Structured questionnaire on 5-point Likert scale was adopted for the study and was administered to the respondents of interest through online Google form using the WhatsApp social media platform.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As per the sample size determined as 350, copies of questionnaire were distributed to respondents identified based on their engagement with conversations on social media. These respondents shared, commented, or liked videos, images, and stories about issues in the social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), YouTube and TikTok). After distributing the questionnaire and receiving the responses, 324 (92.6 percent) were returned valid and 26 (7.4 percent) were invalid and contained a lot of missing data. The rest of this section of the study is subdivided into the following: measurement model assessment, and test of hypotheses and discussions of findings.

Model Assessment

The measurement model specification relates to the assignment of the relevant observed items to each latent variable. This section assesses and reports the measurement model specification.

Table 1: Fit Indices for Measurement and Structural Models

Models	X^2/df	CFI	GFI	AGFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Threshold	< 5	>.90	>.80	>.90	>.90	<.08	<.08
Measurement Model	2.25	.93	.81	.75	.92	.052	.07
Structural model	2.83	.96	.96	.90	.71	.049	.050

Table 4.5.1 shows the fit indices for the measurement model with their corresponding thresholds. The CFA of the overall measurement model had an X^2/df =2.25 which confirmed that measurement model is a good fit with sample data. The other fit indices – CFI (0.93), GFI (0.81), AGFI (0.75), and TLI (0.92) were all above their respective benchmarks. Furthermore, RMSEA (0.052) and SRMR (0.07) values were below the threshold value of 0.08. These fit statistics suggested that overall measurement model had a good model fit. The factor loadings (FL), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) of the constructs are presented in Table 4.5.2. The model fit for the structural model also showed that except for the AGFI (0.81) all the fit indices CFI (0.93), TLI (0.92), and were all above their respective benchmarks. Furthermore, RMSEA (0.049) and SRMR (0.052) values were below the threshold value of 0.08 with an X^2/df = 2.25

Table 2: Measurement model summary – Factor Loadings, CR, AVE, and Cronbach alpha

	Factor Loadings	Cronbach
Facebook		
Q6	.64	
Q7	.75	
Q8	.86	0.753
Instagram		
Q9	.78	
Q10	.75	
Q11	.66	0.794
Twitter (X)		
Q14	.77	
Q15	.79	
Q16	.76	0.831
Youtube		
Q18	.72	
Q19	.73	

Q20	.68	
Q21	.70	0.801
TikTok		
Q22	.70	
Q23	.85	
Q24	.81	0.836
Q25	.67	
Purchase Intention		
Q26	.64	
Q27	.74	
Q28	.76	
Q29	.70	
Q30	.76	0.843

Note: *FL: Factor Loading; CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted*

As indicated in table 4.5.2, factor loadings of the items in the overall measurement model were above 0.5, the minimum required to ensure convergent validity. Table 4.5.3 reveals that AVE values of the variables were above 0.5. CR value of each construct was above the threshold value of 0.7. These statistics demonstrate the convergent validity of the constructs used in this study. The discriminant validity of the constructs was also examined following Fornell and Larcker (1981). The square root of AVE values reported in the upper diagonal in Table 4.5.3 for each variable was higher than that variable's correlation coefficients with other variables in the overall measurement model. Using this method, discriminant validity among constructs was established. The findings also revealed that the constructs significantly correlated with each other, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.02 to 0.82. However, all correlation coefficients were below 0.9, which indicates that there was no multi- collinearity between the variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014).

Table 3: Correlation, AVE and square root of AVE statistics for the measurement model CR

	CR	AVE	PI.	X	TikTok	FB.	YT.	Insta.
PI.	0.803	0.506	0.711					
X	0.817	0.598	0.690					
TikTok	0.843	0.576	0.690	0.660				
FB.	0.797	0.571	0.300	0.420	0.430			
YT.	0.800	0.501	0.640	0.620	0.690	0.200		
Insta.	0.775	0.536	0.810	0.650	0.820	0.410	0.650	

Note: *X - Twitter, FB - Facebook; YT = YouTube; Insta = Instagram; PI = Purchase Intention*

Test of Hypotheses

The SEM results reveal beta coefficients (standardised regression weights) and statistical significance (p-value) of beta weights for each path relationships. Combination of a beta coefficient and its p-value determines acceptance or rejection of a hypothesis. The p-value denotes statistical significance at the levels of .001, .01, and .05, respectively. The results of hypotheses testing are reported in the following subsections. The R^2 for the baseline model is 59% which suggest that the model explained 20 percent of the change in the dependent variable.

Table 4: Path relationships of social media platforms on consumer online purchase intention

Hypotheses	Relationships			B	S.E.	t-value	P	
H1	Facebook	⇨	Purchase intention	-.09	.05	-1.81	.07	Not Supported
H2	Instagram	⇨	Purchase intention	.54	.08	6.68	.00	Supported
H3	Twitter	⇨	Purchase intention	.25	.05	4.81	.00	Supported
H4	TikTok	⇨	Purchase intention	.09	.010	.91	.36	Not supported
H5	YouTube	⇨	Purchase intention	.22	.08	2.81	.00	Supported
Moderation Result (Multiple Group Analysis – Gen Z)								
H1	Facebook	⇨	Purchase intention	.07	.08	.95	.34	Not Supported
H2	Instagram	⇨	Purchase intention	.53	.11	4.77	.00	Supported
H3	Twitter	⇨	Purchase intention	.09	.08	1.08	.28	Not Supported
H4	TikTok	⇨	Purchase intention	.10	.13	.76	.45	Not Supported
H5	YouTube	⇨	Purchase intention	.34	.12	2.93	.00	Supported
Moderation Result (Multiple Group Analysis – Millennials)								
H1	Facebook	⇨	Purchase intention	-.15	.07	-2.24	0.03	Supported
H2	Instagram	⇨	Purchase intention	.53	.11	4.85	0.00	Supported
H3	Twitter	⇨	Purchase intention	.29	.07	4.26	.00	Supported
H4	TikTok	⇨	Purchase intention	.17	.17	1.00	.32	Not Supported
H5	YouTube	⇨	Purchase intention	.11	.17	1.00	.35	Not Supported

Test of Hypotheses 1

H$_{01}$: **Facebook does not have any significant influence on consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria**

The results reported in Table 4.6.1 showed that Facebook has a p-value of 0.07 which is greater than 0.05. Again, based on the decision criteria set out in section 3.9 above, we accept the null and reject the alternate. In other words, this suggests that consumers use of Facebook does not have a positive and significant influence (β= -.09, t = -1.81, p = 0.07) on Purchase intentions. Hence, H2 was rejected. The result suggests that a 1 percent increase in Facebook use will decrease consumer purchase intentions by .09 per cent. Therefore, consumers ability to use Facebook for information, as a good source to advertise and promote a firm's products/services, placing online orders of products, the opportunity to inquire, complain, and suggest about a company's product, price and delivery of services, is not a significant predictor of purchase intention in the context of this study.

Test of Hypotheses II

H$_{02}$: **Instagram does not have any significant effect on consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.**

For the second hypothesis, the results as shown in Table 4.6.1 above indicated that Instagram has a p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Again, based on the decision criteria set out in section 3.9 above, we reject the null and accept the alternate. In other words, this suggests that Instagram use has a positive and significant influence (β= .54, t = 6.68, p<0.001) on Consumer Purchase intention. Hence, H2 was accepted. The result suggests that a 1 percent increase in Instagram use will increase Online Purchase intentions by 54 per cent. Therefore, consumers Instagram use creates room for the diffusion of ideas about products and eventual, eliciting and receiving favourable e-Word-of-mouth (eWOM), especially by brand advocates who can boost of noticeable followers, as regular users of Instagram, the likes many likes and comments given for someone's posts on Instagram especially when it has direct bearing on my envisaged needs, and the feeling of being part of the Instagram community due to ones level of involvement on the platform, with respect to information search of the products that can satisfy my needs– is a significant predictor of online purchase intention.

Test of Hypotheses III

H$_{03}$:   There is no significant impact between Twitter(X) and consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

As shown in table 4.6.1 the result revealed that Twitter (X) has a p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05. Following the decision criteria set out in section 3.9 above, we reject the null and accept the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, this suggests that Twitter use has a significant and positive influence (β= -25, t = 4.81 p <0.00) on purchase intentions. Hence, H3 was accepted. In other words, Twitter use - a good source of product information and innovative products offering platform; encourage customers to be creative in their thinking, as it relates to the purchase of a product online; products are known and purchased almost on the go, because of the first-hand information about their existence by customers on X(Twitter); customers will likely express high level of satisfaction after purchasing products online via Twitter(X) platform – significantly predict online purchase intention.

Test of Hypotheses IV

H$_{04}$:   YouTube does not have any significant influence on consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria

As shown in table 4.6.1 the result revealed that YouTube has a p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05. Following the decision criteria set out in section 3.9 above, we reject the null and accept the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, this suggests that YouTube use has a significant and positive influence (β= .22, t = 2.81 p <0.00) on purchase intentions. Hence, H4 was accepted. In other words, YouTube use - with YouTube platform, products' features can be displayed in order to aid the purchase decision by the target market, it enhances the revenue base of the firms and individuals that advertise their products/services via this platform, I think the video contents about products/services on YouTube are very informative, valuable and impressive– significantly predict online purchase intention.

Test of Hypotheses V

H$_{05}$:   There is no significant effect between TikTok and consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria

The fifth hypothesis tests the effect of TikTok on Purchase intentions. The results as shown in Table 4.6.1 above indicated that TikTok use has a p-value of 0.36 which is greater than 0.05. So, based on a p < 0.05 benchmark set out in section 3.9 above, we accept the null and reject the alternate. Therefore, posit that TikTok use has a positive but non-significant influence (β= .09, t = .91, p= 0.36) on Purchase intention. Hence, H5 was rejected. Therefore, consumers'
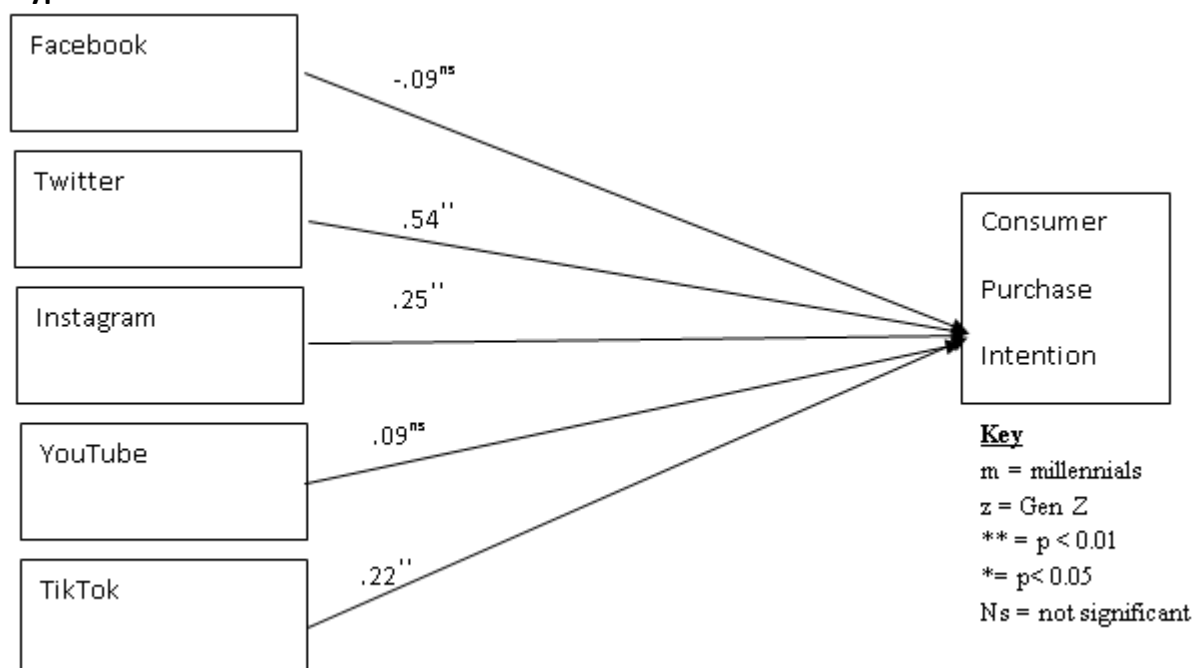
ability to use TikTok– for its reputation for providing interesting short videos that can convey messages on products/services, wide recognition compared to other short video platforms, as it relates to products/services awareness creation, I think the video content on TikTok is very attractive and valuable because it contains information on the existence of products/services in most cases, TikTok platform is famous and well known to convey information about products/services that would satisfy the needs of consumers in the study area., is not a significant predictor of purchase intention in the context of this study.
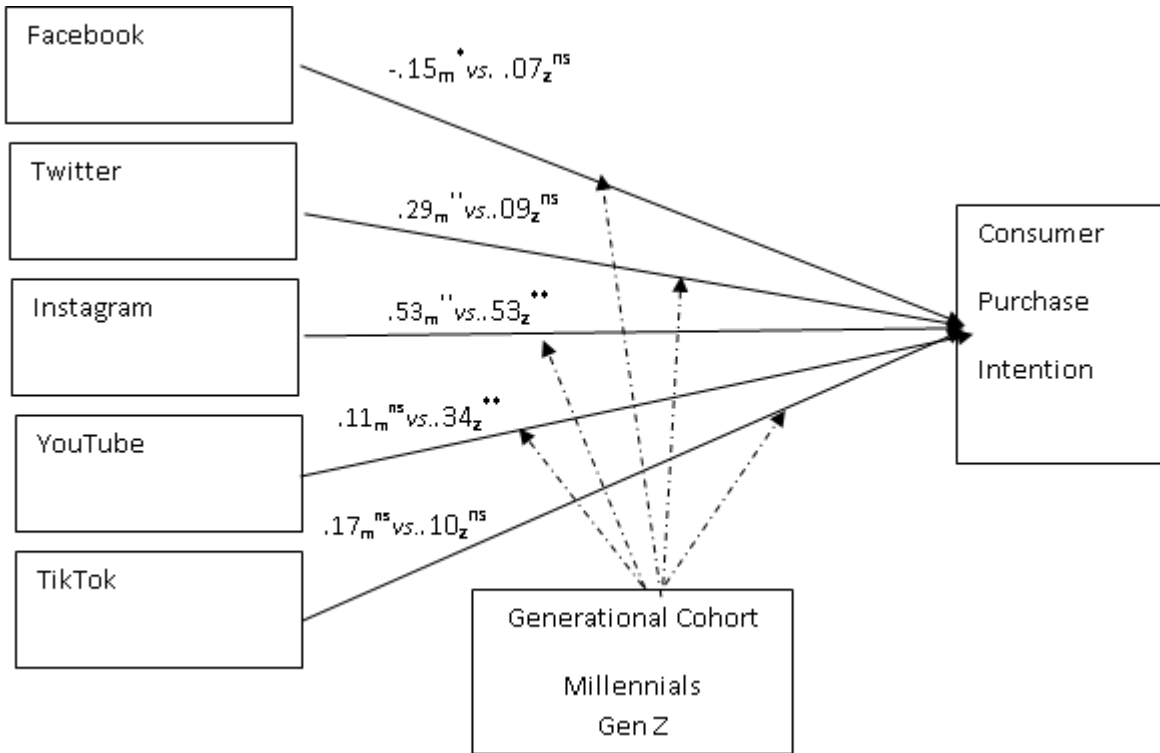
Test of Moderating Effect

H_{06}:   **The relationship between social media platforms and consumer purchase intention is not moderated by generational cohort in South East, Nigeria**
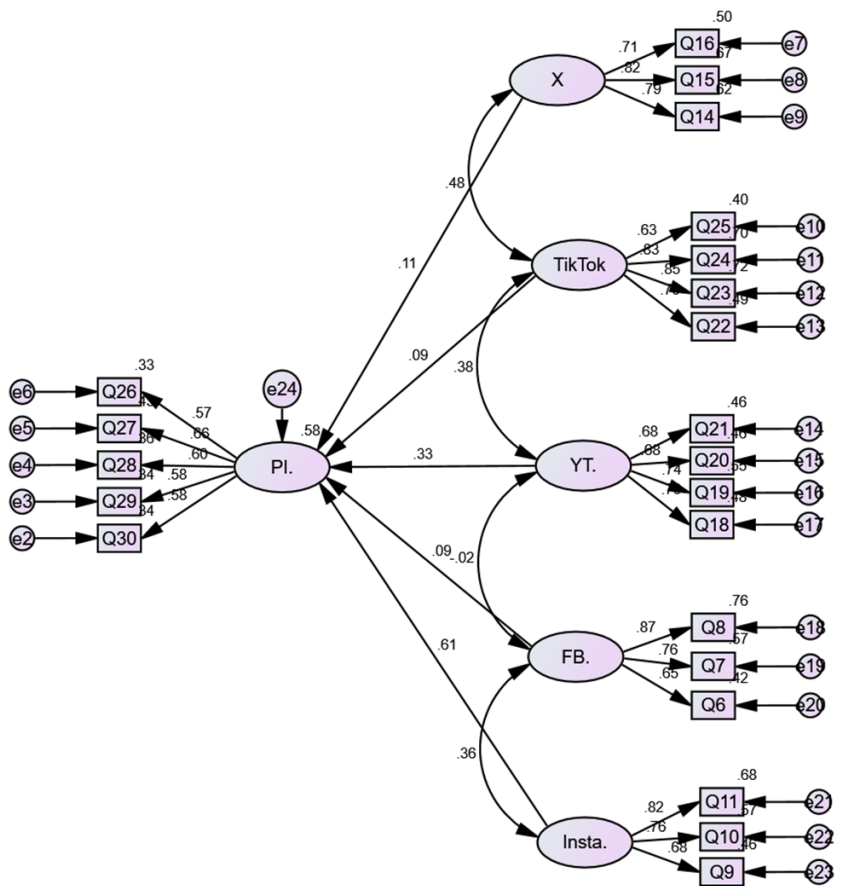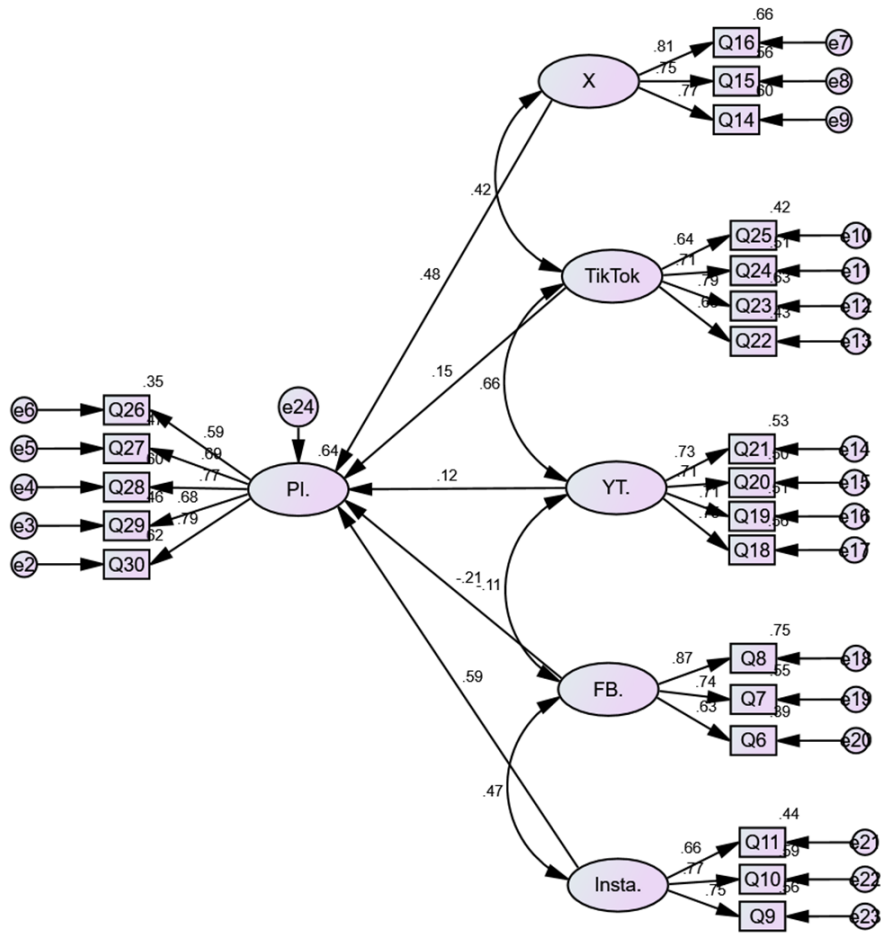
The study assessed the moderating role of generational cohorts on the relationship between social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok) and consumer purchase intention. To perform the moderation, the data for age was split between two groups – Gen Z (12- 29 years) and Millennials (30 -45 years). The chi-square difference test showed that the model for Gen Z is significantly different from the model for the Millennials (**X^2/df** = 1427.48, p < 0.01).The moderation model showed a R^2 of .58 and .64 which means that social media platforms accounts for 58% and 64% respectively, of the change in consumer online purchase intention. The moderation result showed that Millennials are significantly different from Gen Z with respect to how the use of social media platforms influences their purchase intentions. Specifically, while the use of Facebook is significant but negative for Millennials (β= -.15, t = -2.24 p <0.05), it has no significant effect for Gen Z (β= .07, t = .95 p =0.34). For Twitter, the result showed a positive and significant for Millennials (β= .29, t = 4.26 p <0.00), while the effect was not significant effect for Gen Z (β= .09, t = 1.08 p =0.28). Similarly, the use of YouTube for online shopping varies between the Millennials and Gen Z with the effect non-significant for the former (β= .11, t = .93 p =0.35) but positive and significant for the latter (β= .34, t = 2.93 p <0.01). For both generations, the use of TikTok was not significant – Millennials (β= .17, t = 1.00 p =.32) vs. (β= .10, t = .76, p =0.45) while Instagram use is positive and significant for both Millennials (β= .53, t = 4.85, p <0.01) and Gen Z (β= .53, t = 4.77, p <0.01).
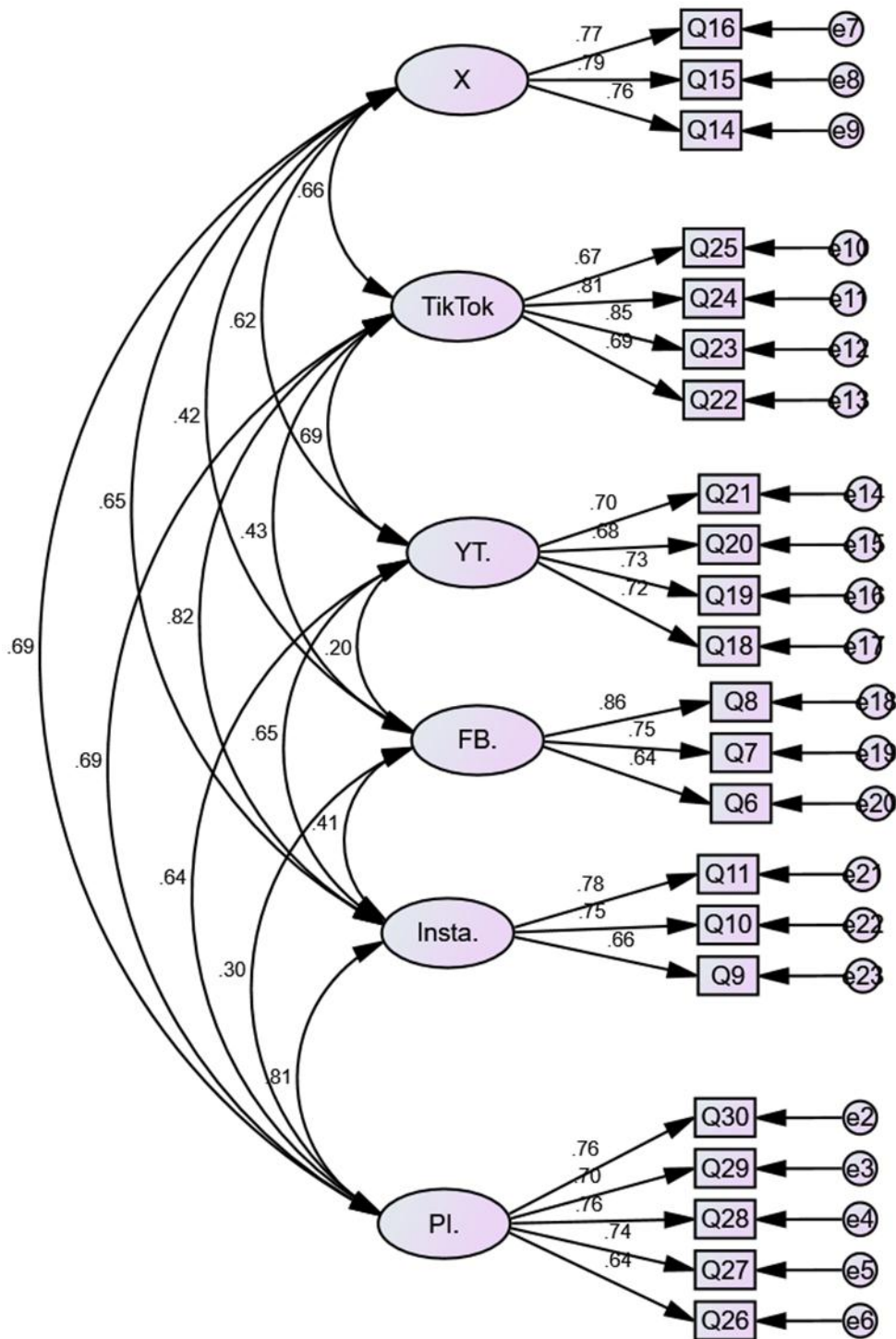
Hypotheses Results for Direct Effects

Hypotheses Results for Moderation effect

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

YouTube

TikTok

Consumer Purchase Intention

$-.15_m^*$ vs. $.07_z^{ns}$

$.29_m^{**}$ vs. $.09_z^{ns}$

$.53_m^{**}$ vs. $.53_z^{**}$

$.11_m^{ns}$ vs. $.34_z^{**}$

$.17_m^{ns}$ vs. $.10_z^{ns}$

Generational Cohort

Millennials

Gen Z

X

Q16 e7
Q15 e8
Q14 e9

.60
.77
.78
.77

TikTok

Q25 e10
Q24 e11
Q23 e12
Q22 e13

.40
.64
.77
.83

YT.

Q21 e14
Q20 e15
Q19 e16
Q18 e17

.52
.72
.89

FB.

Q8 e18
Q7 e19
Q6 e20

.74
.86
.75
.64

Insta.

Q11 e21
Q10 e22
Q9 e23

.52
.72
.75
.72

PI.

e24

.59

Q26 e6
Q27 e5
Q28 e4
Q29 e3
Q30 e2

.33
.57
.68
.69
.63
.69

.45

.39

.08

.53

.23

-.12 .08

.62

.45

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study reveal that consumers use of Facebook does not have a positive and significant influence (β = -.09, t = -1.81, p>0.07) on purchase intentions, according to H1, implying that a 1 percent increase in Facebook use will decrease consumer purchase intentions by 0.09 percent. This findings validate the findings of Armutcu and Dana (2023); Usman, Msughter and Ridwanullah (2022); Ismail (2021); McClure and Seock (2020); Yeo et al. (2020), and indicates that Facebook can be used to entertain, inform, share ideas and even advertise a product or service, without leading to purchase intention or eventual purchase of a product or service. However, the finding of Nasiketha et al. (2024); Baffa, Maiyaki and Baffa (2023); Anah and Kenechukwu (2023); Usman, Msughter

and Ridwanullah (2022) invalidates the finding here, as it revealed that Facebook can create content to attract the consumers in the study area to purchase online and their intention towards online purchasing is boosted with social media campaigns.

Again, the result of the second hypothesis (H2) suggest that Instagram use has a positive and significant influence (β = .54, t = 6.68, p<0.01) on consumer online purchase intention, meaning that a 1 percent increase in Instagram use will increase online purchase intentions by 54 percent. This finding is in line with the findings of Armawan et al. (2023); Hien and Nhu (2022); Chen et al. (2022); Karunasingha and Abeysekera (2022); Mason et al. (2021); Alfarraj et al. (2020), etc.

Furthermore, the hypothesis three (H3) of this study disclosed that (Twitter) X use has a significant and positive influence (β = -25, t = 4.81, p<0.00) on purchase intentions. This finding validates the findings of Islam et al. (2024); Hu and Zhu (2022); Oyewobi et al. (2022); Ismail (2021); Babaleye, Ibitoye and Odorume (2020).

In the same vein, hypothesis four (H4) revealed that YouTube use has a significant and positive influence (β = .22, t = 2.81, p<0.00) on purchase intentions. this finding is in agreement with the findings of Leite et al. (2024); Abdulraheem and Imouokhome (2021); Wali, Cyprian and Nkpurukwe (2020); Erkan and Evans (2018).

Hypothesis five (H5) discovered that TikTok use has a positive but non-significant influence (β = .09, t =.91, p>0.36) on purchase intentions. This implies that TikTok platform is not a significant predictor of purchase intention in the context of this study. This finding is supported or in line with the findings of Splendiani et al. (2023); Usman, Msughter and Ridwanullah (2022); Wali, Cyprian and Nkpurukwe (2020); Patanasiri and Krairit (2018).

This study considered the moderating role of generational cohorts (Gen Z - 12 to 29 years, and millennials - 30 to 40 years) on the relationship between social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok) and consumer online purchase intention in hypothesis six (H6). The moderation of these variables disclosed millennials are significantly different from Gen z with respect to how the use of social media platforms influences their purchase intentions. The use of Facebook is significant but negative for the millennials (β = -.15, t = -2.24, p<0.05), it has no significant effect for Gen z (β = .07, t = .95, p>0.34). Again, the use of Twitter(X) showed a positive and significant result for millennials (β = .29, t = 4.26, p<0.00), while the effect was not significant effect for Gen z (β = .09, t = 1.08, p>0.28). Similarly, the use of YouTube for consumer online shopping varies between the millennials and Gen z with the effect non-significant for the millennials (β = .11, t = .93, p>0.35) but positive and significant for the Gen z (β = .34, t = 2.93, p<0.01). However, for both generations, the use of TikTok was not significant - millennials (β = .17, t = 1.00, p>.32) Gen z (β = .10, t = .76, p>0.45) while Instagram use is positive and significant for both millennials (β = .53, t = 4.85, p<0.01) and Gen z (β = .53, t = 4.77, p<0.01).   These findings validate the findings of Horrich, Ertz and Behir (2024); Ngo et al. (2024); Salmiah and Fahlevi (2024); Sharma et al. (2024); Azhar et al. (2023); Jia et al. (2023); Herzallah, Leiva and Cabanillas (2022).

CONCLUSION

Drawing our conclusion from the findings of this study, it can be deduced that Facebook as a social media platform, does not have a positive and significant influence on consumer online purchase intention, despite the enormous exposure to this platform by its users. Again, Instagram, as a social media platform has a positive and significant influence

on consumer online purchase, thereby creating room for the diffusion of ideas about products or services, even eliciting and receiving favourable e-WOM, among other benefits. X(formally known as Twitter), in the context of this study has a significant and positive influence on consumer online purchase intentions in the study area, as it serves as a good source of product information and innovative products offering platform. Similarly, YouTube as a notable social media platform has a significant and positive influence on consumer online purchase intentions in the study area, as the responses of the respondents disclosed. However, TikTok use in the context of this study has a positive but insignificant influence on consumer online purchase intentions in the South East, Nigeria. Finally, it can be deduced from the findings that millennials are significantly different from Gen Z, as regards to how the use of social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter(X), YouTube and TikTok) influence their online purchase intentions in the South East, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There should be conscientious attention to Facebook messages by businesses and consumers alike, so that commercial messages would be digested well and culminate into unprecedented patronage by the target market, in the study area.

2. The gains recorded by Instagram in context of this study should be sustained and build upon for further business endeavours in the study area.

3. There should be periodic evaluation of the usage of X (Twitter) by individuals and firms in order to take its significance to another enviable height, as other generation of its use emerges.

4. There should be constant upload of commercial messages by firms who advertise their products or services on YouTube, since it has proven to influence consumer online purchase intention in South East, Nigeria.

5. There should be enough emphasis on the efficacy of TikTok messages as a social media platform, for it to gain the needed significance and positivity in the study area.

6. There should be programmes and incentives geared towards bringing the millennials and Gen Z generations at par with each other, as it concerns the influence of these social media platforms on their online purchase intentions in the study area.

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