

Influencer Marketing, Purchase Intention and Buying Behaviour of Pepsi Brand Among Undergraduate Students of Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria

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Received: 19 November 2022; **Accepted:** 12 December 2022; **Published:** 3 January 2023

Abstract:

Consumer purchase intention and buying behaviour are critical to the sales volume of any organization. To achieve this, the brands or organizations have to get their products or services in the face of their target audience. One of the ways they do this is through influencer marketing. This study, therefore, examines influencer marketing, purchase intention, and buying behaviour of the Pepsi brand among undergraduates of Lead City University Ibadan, Nigeria. Theoretically grounded in source credibility theory and the theory of planned behaviour, the study made use of the survey research design, collecting data in one stream and surveyed 347 respondents in Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. The sampling technique was purposive sampling and a questionnaire was used to collect data. Data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings from this study revealed that Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria undergraduates know and consume the Pepsi product and are also aware of the influencers that are employed by the Pepsi brand to drive home their advertising messages. It also revealed that several factors influence purchase intention among which are brand colours and appeal, influencer marketing, price, and standards. Also, though the world has gone digital, traditional means of advertising should not be undermined. The study, therefore, recommends that Pepsi should continue with the use of influencers in promoting its products, consider nano influencers as well as influencer marketing contributes to the buying behaviour and purchase intention of youths in Nigeria.

Keywords:

Influencer Marketing, Buying Behaviour, Purchase Intention, Pepsi

1. Introduction

Making sales is the primary objective of any business or profit-oriented organization. Even when an organization is non-profit oriented or out to make sales,

they are after the goodwill of the people they are sending their messages to and want it to be effective. To do this, brands, businesses, etc. have sought various ways to reach their target audience to avoid fishing in the dark. Thanks to advertisements, making sure that target consumers are aware of goods, and services have been made possible. . However, there are lots of goods and services being placed in the media as advertising messages, this has therefore birthed a "survival of the fittest" approach, as the attention span of target consumers is very low, therefore there is a need to explore several ways to connect to the target consumers[1].

The quest for brand superiority, large acceptance, and loyalty of the target audience of companies and brands is an ever-increasing variable that just like man's wants is insatiable. A lot of brands and marketers are competing for the attention span of people targeted as consumers for their products hence the use of different attention-grabbing methods which has evolved [2]. Some of these brands are FMCG which is fast-moving consumable goods, one of which is Pepsi.

Opinion leaders and recent influencers have been identified to connect with the target audience of a business, organization, or brand and get them on board with what the brand is selling thereby birthing Influencer marketing. On popular social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, among others, many users often follow popular social media accounts, these accounts are called social media influencers [3]. Due to their popularity, many brands approach these influencers to endorse or review their products. The work of the influencers is to endorse or review the products of several brands. Influencers are there on almost all social media platforms and different types such as fitness, fashion, beauty, books, Do It Yourself (DIYs), and many more [1]. Influencing the purchase intention of people, especially young people can be a lot of work due to a lot of factors. It has been realized by brands in recent times that the most success is achieved when satisfied and happy customers tell their brand's story. Seeing a friendly and usually well-known face is usually considered to be the smartest and most effective avenue for companies to grow an association and a bond in the mind of its consumers [4]. Whenever consumers come across an actor, skit maker, or a well-loved sports figure endorsing a product, immediately, that product attains credibility. Advertising managers use popular people to give credence to their goods and services to position their goods and services well against its competitor [5].

The Pepsi brand which is the brand being studied is one of the leading brands in soft drink production in the world and makes use of influencer marketing to drive purchase intention and eventual purchase. This form of marketing is now being adopted even by smaller companies that are deemed to not have as much advertising and marketing power as big brands due to the rise of social media. There have been studies conducted on Influencer marketing but not much has been done to understand the dynamics of influencer marketing in Nigeria and if it is living up to the expectation of brands and marketers, which is influencing the purchase intention and ultimately the buying decision of the target audience. This study examines influencer marketing, purchase intention, and buying behaviour of the Pepsi brand among undergraduates of Lead City University Ibadan, Nigeria.

2. Materials and Methods

This research work aims to investigate the relationship that ties influencer marketing, purchase intention, and buying behaviour of Pepsi amongst undergraduate

students of LeadCity University, Ibadan, Oyo state. To reach this goal, the researchers adopted the field survey research method, using a questionnaire as the research instrument to reach undergraduate students of Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo state.

The procedure adopted for this study is purposive sampling. Since it is not feasible to study the whole Lead City University students, respondents were appropriately sampled. The reason for this technique is to give equal chances to every unit of the population that should be represented. Based on the population and 95% confidence level that is targeted in this study as is customary in social research, the appropriate sample size according to Krejcie and Morgan's sample size table is 357 respondents.

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.
 Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

Figure 1. Krejcie and Morgan table for determining sample size.

Data collected in this study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics used were frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The data was analyzed using SPSS.

Formula for determining sample size

$$s = \frac{X^2 NP(1 - P) + d^2 (N - 1) + X^2 P(1 - P)}{d^2}$$

s = required sample size.

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841).

N = the population size.

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

Figure 2. Formula for determining sample size.

3. Research and Discussion

In this study, the sample size was 357 and 357 questionnaires were distributed, 357 questionnaires were received and 347 were valid and therefore analyzed.

Table 1. Response Rate.

Population	Sample size	Questionnaire received
4, 706	357	347

3.1. Demographic Data Analysis

The main demographic characteristics in this study are respondents' age, gender, level of study, faculty, and religion. Table 4.2 presents respondents' demographic profiles in frequency and percentage format.

Age group

The age range of respondents in this study is between 15 and 30 (M=1.39, SD=.49). When the age was recorded into categories, respondents less than 20 constitute the majority of the students in this study, they accounted for more than half (60.5%) of the total respondents. The other respondents (39.5%) are between the ages of 21 and 30 and they constitute the other age group. This shows that the majority of the respondents in this study are young and make up a major part of Pepsi's Target audience.

Gender

A little over half (50.4%) of the respondents in this study were females while males accounted for 49.6%. This figure shows a balance to an extent in the gender of respondents in the study. And perhaps reflect the gender classification of Lead city university, Ibadan.

Table 2. Respondents' Demographic Profile.

Demographic Profile	F	%
Age		
Than 20	210	60.5
21 and above	137	39.5
Total (M=1.39 SD=.49)	347	100
Gender		
Male	172	49.6
Female	175	50.4
Total	347	100
Level of study		
100	57	16.4
200	103	29.7
300	89	25.6
400	98	28.2
Total	347	100
Religion		
Christianity	197	56.8
Islam	149	42.9
Other	1	.3
Total	347	100

Level of study

Students in the 200 level of their academic program are the majority of the respondents in this study. They accounted for 29.7% of the total respondents. They are followed by those in the 400 level who amount to 28.2%. Those in the 100 level are the least group in this study, they accounted for 16.4%

3.2. Research Questions

RQ1: What are the factors that influence the purchase intentions of Lead City University undergraduates to the Pepsi brand?

Purchase intention is the intent or thought of a consumer or customer to purchase a product or service. It refers to a consumer's attitude and willingness towards purchasing a product. Table iii presents factors that influence the purchase intention of the Pepsi product among the respondents.

Table 3. What are the factors that influence the purchase intentions of Lead City University undergraduates to the Pepsi brand?

Factors that influence purchase intention	SD	Level of agreement (%wa)					
		D	A	SA	N	M	SD
I will buy Pepsi because it's my favorite soft drink	5.8	17.6	29.4	13.8	33.4	2.72	1.08
If Pepsi becomes more expensive, I will still buy it.	3.2	12.4	36.0	17.9	30.5	2.47	1.02
I will buy Pepsi because of the size of the bottle	15.0	28.0	21.6	7.5	27.7	3.26	1.50
I will buy Pepsi because it is always available	7.8	17.9	36.0	12.7	25.6	2.72	1.13
Total						2.79	1.18

From the responses, 33.4% are neutral about buying Pepsi because it is their favorite drink, 29.4%, however, agree that they purchase Pepsi because it is their favorite drink while only 5.8% strongly disagree that they purchase Pepsi because it is their favorite drink. This means that for the 5.8% there are other reasons for purchasing the Pepsi product.

36.0% of the respondents agree that if Pepsi becomes more expensive they will still purchase the product. 30.5% of the respondents are neutral, while 12.4% disagree that if the Pepsi product becomes more expensive they will still buy it. From the responses presented in table 4.3, it is seen that majority of the respondents will still purchase the Pepsi product even if it becomes more expensive.

Pepsi launched a long-throat PET bottle and this garnered more sales for the brand, though they have now reverted to the 50cl PET bottle. This bottle however is still in the mental salience of a lot of people. 28.0% of the respondents disagree with buying the Pepsi product because of the size of the bottle, 27.7% are neutral, while only 7.5% of the respondents agree to purchase the Pepsi product because of the bottle. This means that the size of the bottle does not necessarily matter to the respondents who are also consumers of the Pepsi product. However, more research can be carried out to know if perhaps the bottle gets reduced and the price is constant, people will still purchase the Pepsi product.

Even if a product is well loved and accepted, availability in the target audience's stores, shops, and places where they can purchase the product is very important. If a

product is well-loved but unavailable, the competing product will be purchased at the point of sale. 36.0% of the respondents from this study agree that they purchase Pepsi product because it is always available. 25.6% of the respondents are neutral on this being a reason for the purchase, while 7.8% of the respondents strongly disagree. In the grand view of the respondents to this study, it is noted that availability is one major factor that aids the purchase intention of the Pepsi product.

RQ2: What are the factors that influence the buying behaviour of undergraduates of Lead City University towards the Pepsi brand?

A lot of factors influence the buying behaviour of individuals. Knowing which factors influence buying behaviour helps to know what attracts and informs buying decisions among the respondents in this study. Table iv presents factors that influence buying behaviours among the respondents.

Table 4. What are the factors that influence the buying behaviour of undergraduates of Lead City University towards the Pepsi brand?

Factors that influence the buying behaviour of Lead City University undergraduates	Level of agreement (%)						
	SD	D	A	SA	N	M	SD
I buy products because of the brand colors and appeal.	17.9	17.9	15.3	6.3	29.7	3.39	1.13
I will buy a product that my favorite celebrity works with	5.5	13.3	31.4	24.6	24.8	2.43	1.16
I always buy products advertised on my favorite social media handle	9.8	25.9	25.4	12.1	26.8	2.96	1.18
I don't buy expensive products even though they fit my standards	17.6	39.5	19.6	7.8	15.6	3.39	1.21
Total						3.04	1.17

Generally, respondents in this study strongly agree that certain factors influence their buying behaviour (M=3.04, SD=1.17). Specifically, 29.7% are neutral about buying products because of brand colors, 17.9% both disagree and strongly disagree respectively and 15.5% agree that they buy products because of brand colors. Overall on brand colors based on the respondents with the highest percentages are those that are neutral and disagree, so it can be generalized that brand colors do not necessarily contribute to buying behaviour.

On buying products that their favorite celebrity works with, 31.4% agree, 24.8% are neutral and 24.6% strongly agree. This means that engaging the favorite celebrities of the respondents contributes to buying behaviour.

26.8% of the respondents are neutral about social media advertisements on their favorite social media handles. 25.9% disagree, while 24.5% agree to social media advertisements on their favorite social media handles contribute to their buying behaviour.

On the cost of products being a determining factor in buying a product, 39.3% of the respondents disagree that if a product meets their standards and is expensive they will not buy such product. Only 7.8% strongly agree that if the product is expensive, though it meets their standards they will not buy the product. This means that Price and standards are also contributing factors to buying behaviour.

RQ3: What is the strength of Influencers employed by Pepsi Production Company on Lead City undergraduates?

Influencer marketing has been engaged by many brands to leverage the influence of the select influencers in engaging directly with the Influencers' target audience which also happens to be the brands' target audience. Table v presents the influence of influencer marketing on the purchase intention of the Pepsi product by respondents.

Table 5. *What is the strength of Influencers employed by Pepsi Production Company on Lead City undergraduates?*

Influencer Marketing on purchase intention	Level of agreement (%)						
	SD	D	A	SA	N	M	SD
I like Wizkid, Dj cuppy, Tiwa savage, etc so I buy Pepsi because they are their influencers	10.4	19.9	24.2	15.0	30.5	2.86	1.20
When I see my favorite influencer on the bottle, I always want to buy it.	9.5	21.6	30.0	7.8	31.1	2.95	1.05
I buy Pepsi because I like their adverts	7.5	29.7	18.7	8.1	36.0	3.10	1.05
If I have my way, I will buy any product that these influencers work for	10.4	14.7	29.1	16.1	29.7	2.74	1.20
Total						2.91	1.13

30.5% of the respondents in this study are neutral on buying Pepsi because of the celebrities and influencers who are brand ambassadors as well as influencers for the Pepsi product. 24.2% agree that these influencers play a role in their decision to buy Pepsi while 10.4% strongly disagree on Pepsi brand ambassadors/influencers influencing their decision to purchase Pepsi. The responses are tilted towards an agreement, therefore, Pepsi influencers contribute to the decision to purchase among respondents.

Pepsi had a campaign where they amplified the faces of their ambassadors on the PET bottle, though the campaign has ended, a lot of people still remember this campaign. Among the respondents in this study, 31.1% are neutral about purchasing Pepsi because of the faces of influencers on the bottle. 30% agree to buy Pepsi because their favorite influencers are on the bottle while only 7.9% strongly disagree with this. Overall, respondents agree to purchase the Pepsi product because of influencers on the Pepsi bottle.

The Pepsi brand is a brand that heavily invests in advertisements. Recently, Pepsi launched the Play to Inspire campaign globally featuring different sports players across the country as the faces of this campaign with a well-produced television commercial as well as the Confam SZN campaign for Nigeria. 36% of respondents in this study said they are neutral about buying Pepsi because of advertisements. 29.7% disagree with buying Pepsi because of advertisements while only 8.1% strongly agree. Overall, respondents disagree with buying Pepsi because of advertisements.

29.7% of the respondents in this study said they are neutral to buying products that their favorite influencers work with. 29.1% agreed to buy the products if they have their way while only 10.4% strongly disagreed.

Generally, in answering the Research question, Influencer marketing does influence purchase intention towards purchase intention of the respondents.

RQ4: What is the most preferred platform of exposure of Lead City University undergraduates to advertising messages of Pepsi products?

Advertisements are deemed intrusive and in the faces of target consumers however, this is the way to inform the target audience about a new product or service or to

increase awareness about an existing product. Table vi presents respondents' most preferred platforms of exposure to Pepsi's advertising messages.

Respondents in this study have the same level of agreement on watching Pepsi adverts on YouTube till the end, 29.7% were neutral, and 29.7% also agreed to watch Pepsi adverts on YouTube till the end. Only 7.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed with watching the adverts till the end. Pepsi adverts are usually short, 15-30 secs duration, though, it's short it pops up when the viewer is least expecting to see adverts while watching the content they came on the YouTube platform for. The majority of the respondents in this study agreed to watch these ads till the end. This means that the adverts are quite captivating to the target audience, hence Pepsi can continue with adverts on the video streaming platform.

Table 6. *What is the most preferred platform of exposure of Lead City University undergraduates to advertising messages of Pepsi products?*

Preferred platforms of exposure to adverts	Level of agreement (%)						
	SD	D	A	SA	N	M	SD
I watch the Pepsi advert on YouTube till the end.	7.5	27.4	29.7	5.8	29.7	3.01	1.05
I don't mind seeing Pepsi adverts on billboards	2.6	8.6	38.6	17.9	32.3	2.39	0.96
I like Pepsi merchandise and I will love to have them	8.1	22.2	29.4	13.8	26.5	2.81	1.17
I prefer to watch Pepsi commercials on Tv	4.9	14.1	26.8	30.8	29.7	2.46	1.14
Total						2.67	1.08

38.6% of respondents in this study do not mind seeing Pepsi adverts on billboards, 32.3% are neutral, and 2.6% disagree with seeing the adverts on billboards. Billboards remain a very useful above-the-line type of advertisement medium for passing advertising messages across to the target audience. This can be said for the respondents in this study.

29.4% of the respondents in this study agree to like Pepsi merchandise and will love to have them, 26.5% are neutral and 8.1% strongly disagree. Pepsi has several merchandises ranging from t-shirts, umbrellas, bottles, cups, etc., and recently in the Big Brother Season 7 Level up reality TV show, the brand unveiled a new collection featuring stylish suits and streetwear, these outfits also fall under Pepsi merchandise and the majority of respondents in this study agree to love to have these products. These products fall under the below-the-line medium of advertising for Pepsi.

30.8% of the respondents in this study strongly agree to prefer to watch Pepsi commercials on Television, and only 4.9% strongly disagree. Television is another major source of exposure to advertising messages and the respondents in this study still prefer it as the channel of exposure to advertising messages.

RQ 5: Are there demographic differences in the purchase intention of Lead City University undergraduates towards the Pepsi brand?

Are there differences in demography when it comes to purchasing intention of the Pepsi brand among Lead City University undergraduates? Table vii presents these differences.

A t-test was carried out to know if there was a significant difference between Christians and Muslims in purchase intentions. The results show that there is no

significant difference between being a Christian and a Muslim on purchase intention of the Pepsi product ($t=-.125$, $df=344$, $p=.459$). Also, the t-test checked for significant differences between ages in purchase intention of the Pepsi product. The results show that there is no significant difference between age on purchase intention of the Pepsi product ($t=.363$, $df=345$, $p=.872$). This means that there is no demographic difference in purchase intention of the Pepsi product among respondents in this study.

A t-test was conducted to check for significant differences between being male and female on purchase intention. The results show that there is no significant difference between being male or female on purchase intention ($t=-1.42$, $df=345$, $p=.616$).

Table 7. Are there demographic differences in the purchase intention of Lead City University undergraduates towards the Pepsi brand?

Demographic Variable	N	M	SD	t	df	p
Gender						
Male	172	2.78	.573	-.142	345	.616
Female	175	2.79	.648			
Religion						
Christianity	197	2.76	.639	-1.25	344	.459
Islam	149	2.84	.573			
Age						
>Than or= 20	210	2.80	.584	.363	345	.872
Above 20	137	2.73	.652			

There was also a t-test carried out to know if there was a significant difference between Christians and Muslims in purchase intention. The results show that there is no significant difference between being a Christian and a Muslim on purchase intention of the Pepsi product ($t=-.125$, $df=344$, $p=.459$). Also, the t-test checked for significant differences between age on purchase intention of the Pepsi product. The results show that there is no significant difference between age on purchase intention of the Pepsi product ($t=.363$, $df=345$, $p=.872$). This means that there is no demographic difference in purchase intention of the Pepsi product among respondents in this study.

RQ 6: Are there demographic differences in buying behaviour of Lead City University undergraduates towards the Pepsi brand?

To find out if there are demographic differences in buying behaviour of the respondents towards the Pepsi brand, a t-test was carried out. Table viii presents the demographic differences in buying behaviour.

Table 8. Are there demographic differences in buying behaviour of Lead City University undergraduates towards the Pepsi brand?

Demographic Variable	N	M	SD	t	df	p
Gender						
Male	172	2.96	.595	-2.49	345	.487
Female	175	3.12	.574			
Religion						
Christianity	197	3.03	.618	-.475	344	.185
Islam	149	3.06	.546			
Age						
>Than or= 20	210	2.96	.579	-2.66	345	.629

Above 20	137	3.15	.589			
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A t-test was conducted to see if there is a significant difference between males and females regarding buying behaviour. The results show that there is no significant difference between being male or female in buying behaviour ($t=-2.49$, $df=345$, $p=.487$). This negates a study carried out that states that there are notable differences in buying behaviour between men and women.

The t-test checked to see if there was a significant difference between being Christian or Muslim and buying behaviour. The results show that there is no significant difference between being either Christian or Muslim on buying behaviour ($t=-.475$, $df=344$, $p=.185$). The t-test also checked to see if there was any significant difference between age in buying behaviour and the results show that there is no significant difference ($t=-2.66$, $df=345$, $p=.629$). This means that there is no demographic difference in buying behaviour of the Pepsi product among respondents in this study.

A t-test was conducted to check for significant differences between being male and female on purchase intention. The results show that there is no significant difference between being male or female on purchase intention ($t=-1.42$, $df=345$, $p=.616$).

RQ7: Are there demographic differences in the strength of influencer marketing among Lead City University undergraduates towards the Pepsi brand?

A t-test was conducted to check for significant differences between being male and female and the influence of influencer marketing. The results show that there is no significant difference between being male or female and the influence of influencer marketing ($t=1.50$, $df=345$, $p=.152$).

There was also a t-test carried out to know if there was a significant difference between Christians and Muslims and the influence of influencer marketing. The results show that there is no significant difference between being a Christian or a Muslim and the level of influence of influencer marketing ($t=-.989$, $df=344$, $p=.355$). Also, the t-test checked for significant differences between age and level of influence of influencer marketing. The results show that there is no significant difference between age and level of influence of influencer marketing ($t=.369$, $df=345$, $p=.506$). This means that there is no demographic difference in the level of influence of influencer marketing on respondents in this study.

Table 9. *Are there demographic differences in the strength of influencer marketing among Lead City University undergraduates towards the Pepsi brand?*

Demographic Variable	N	M	SD	t	df	p
Gender						
Male	172	2.96	.547	1.50	345	.152
Female	175	2.86	.582			
Religion						
Christianity	197	2.89	.572	-.989	344	.355
Islam	149	2.95	.553			
Age						
>Than or= 20	210	2.92	.583	.369	345	.506
Above 20	137	2.90	.541			

Results of Test of Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were formulated in this study to examine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables in this study. To test the hypotheses a

multiple linear regression was conducted. However, concepts in this study were correlated as part of the requirement in a parametric statistical test. Table x reveals the results from the inter-items correlation.

Table 10. Inter-items correlation among independent and dependent variables.

	Buying Behaviour	Purchase Intention	Influencer Marketing
Buying Behaviour	1	.733	.104
Purchase Intention		1	.116
Influencer Marketing			1

There is a strong positive correlation between buying behaviour and Purchase intention (.733).

Buying behaviour and Influencer marketing have a very low positive correlation (.104).

The correlation between Purchase intention and influencer marketing is very low (.116). There is an inter-item correlation between all the scaled items. All correlations are significant at 0.01 levels (2-tailed). Besides, none of these items is extremely correlated with the other.

Table 10. One-way Anova.

Dependent Variables	F	p
Purchase Intention	1.230	.256
Buying Behaviour	1.431	.143

H₁: There is a significant relationship between influencer marketing and purchase intention

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to check for a significant relationship between influencer marketing and purchase intention, The one-way ANOVA revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between purchase intention and influencer marketing (F=1.23, p= >.001.)

This means that the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between influencer marketing and purchase intention is rejected. This disagrees with a study that indicates that compatibility between brands and influencers can influence purchase intention towards the brand that employs the use of Influencer marketing².

H₂: There is a significant relationship between influencer marketing and buying behaviour.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to check for a significant relationship between influencer marketing and buying behaviour. The one-way ANOVA revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between purchase intention and buying behaviour (F=1.43, p= >.001.)

This means that the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between influencer marketing and buying behaviour is rejected.

3.3. Discussion

This study examines Influencer marketing, purchase intention, and buying behaviour of the Pepsi product among undergraduates of Lead City University, Ibadan. Scholars across the world have documented factors that affect or influence purchase

intention, what contributes to consumer buying behaviour as well as what influencer marketing is and how it works and has worked for several brands. Celebrity endorsement has been around for a while however, with the advent of social media platforms and living in a post-pandemic world, several opportunities to build influence in several consumer touch points came up and so we have different levels of influencers i.e. Micro-influencers, macro, mega and nano-influencers all with different kinds of following and niche.

Given this, this study explored the level of influence of influencer marketing, purchase intention, and buying behaviour among youths in Nigeria who are huge consumers of carbonated soft drinks as a product for refreshment to understand what influences their purchase intention towards the Pepsi brand, their buying behaviour of the product and if influencer marketing employed by the Pepsi company is doing what it is intended to do, which is influenced more sales of the Pepsi product.

From the findings, it can be established that Lead City University undergraduates know and consume the Pepsi product and are also aware of the influencers that are employed by the Pepsi brand to drive home their advertising messages. It is one thing to know a product and another thing to consume the known product

To understand buying behaviour, there are a lot of contributing factors. In this study, respondents agreed that brand colours and appeal are major contributing factors to their purchase of a product. This, in turn, supports the study carried out on packaging and brand colors influencing buying behaviour where conclusions from the study state that colour as well as other elements make a brand more attractive and different from other brands[6]. Also, the respondents agreed that they will buy products their favorite celebrity works with. This resonates with the study carried out on celebrity endorsement and its impact on buying behaviour, where it was found that celebrity endorsement does have the maximum impact on buying behaviour [7]. Most respondents were mainly neutral on buying products from their favorite social media handles and on not buying expensive products they did disagree as well.

Respondents in this study agreed that several factors influence their purchase intention. Although the majority of the respondents are neutral on purchasing Pepsi because it is their favorite drink, a lot of them also slightly agreed to Pepsi being their favorite drink is an influencing factor for the purchase intention of the product. The majority of respondents in this study agreed to still purchase Pepsi, even if the product becomes expensive. Taking a cue from the respondents buying behaviour, they stated that even if a product is expensive but meets their standards they will still purchase the product. Therefore, it can be said that Pepsi product meets the standards of the respondents in this study, so they will still purchase it even if it gets expensive. Buying the Pepsi product because of the size of the bottle, the majority of the respondents in this study disagreed. As stated earlier, it alludes that the respondents purchase the Pepsi product because it fits their standards and not for the size of the bottle. The respondents also agreed to buy the Pepsi product because it is available. This negates a study carried out that states that product availability has no significant value on purchase intention [8].

In this study, respondents generally agreed that influencer marketing influences their purchase intention. The majority of the respondents in this study slightly agree that they like some celebrities/influencers employed by the Pepsi Company, therefore they buy Pepsi because of them. They also slightly agree to always want to buy Pepsi when they see the faces of their favorites on the Pepsi bottle. They were mostly

neutral on buying Pepsi because of advertisements but slightly agreed to buy all products their favorite influencer works with. To like an influencer means they are either credible, attractive, or trustworthy. This supports a study that found that purchase intention is directly affected by an influencer's trustworthiness and credibility [9].

In this study, the respondents are exposed to Pepsi's advertising messages on various platforms. The respondents agree to watch Pepsi adverts on YouTube till the end, and they also agree on seeing Pepsi adverts on billboards. The respondents also agree to like Pepsi merchandise and do not mind having these products. The respondents in this study also strongly agree to television is a preferred platform for exposure to Pepsi's advertising messages. Though the world has gone digital, traditional means of advertising should not be undermined as garnered from the findings in this study.

A one-sample t-test analysis was also carried out to check if there was any significant difference between demographic variables and the level of influence of influencer marketing, Buying behaviour, and purchase intention. It was seen that there is no significant difference.

A multiple regression analysis was carried out and it was found that there is a strong positive correlation between buying behaviour and purchase intention. Buying behaviour and Influencer marketing have a very low positive correlation. The correlation between Purchase intention and influencer marketing is very low.

A one-way ANOVA was performed to test the hypotheses raised and check for a statistically significant relationship between influencer marketing and purchase intention. The same was done to check for influencer marketing and buying behaviour. There was no statistically significant relationship as opposed to previous studies carried out. [10,3].

4. Conclusions

This study investigates influencer marketing, purchase intention, and buying behaviour of the Pepsi product among Lead City University undergraduate students. Previous studies have mostly been on halal foods, fashion items, and some select products that are not necessarily fast-moving consumable goods. It is very important to understand the buying behaviour and factors that contribute to purchase intention among youths because they constitute the majority with purchase power in Nigeria as of now. Also, influencer marketing vis-a-vis celebrity endorsement is doing exactly what it has been employed to do for the brands that use them. From the findings in this study, it has been concluded that influencer marketing works for the Pepsi product among Lead City University undergraduate students. This, perhaps, is the reason the Pepsi brand uses a lot of mega and micro-influencers that speak to their target audience in the market. This study has helped discover factors that influence purchase intention among Lead City University undergraduates which will aid researchers in consumer behaviour and purchase intention to know likely factors that influence the purchase intentions of youths in Nigeria.

This study also found that influencer marketing is effective in influencing buying behaviour and purchase intention among the respondents who are Nigerian youths; this invariably translates to influencer marketing influencing buying behaviour and purchase intention among Nigerian youths.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

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