Social Media Trustworthiness and Customer Patronage of Fast-Food Restaurants in Rivers State

**Akani, Godspower Henshaw, Ogan, Henrrenta Ingo, Osanebi, Chike Felix Jasmine
and David, Confidence Onyinyechi**
Department of Marketing
Faculty of Management Sciences
Rivers State University
akani.godspower@ust.edu.ng orcid number 0000-0001-7196-2248
ogan.ingo@ust.edu.ng

Abstract

The focus of this study was to investigate the relationship between social media trustworthiness and customer patronage of fast food restaurants in Rivers State. Specifically, this study was to investigate the relationship between social media trustworthiness and customer patronage of fast food restaurants in Rivers State. The population of the study was 66 fast food restaurants in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The Taro Yemen's formula was used to select 57 fast food restaurants out of the population. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select 171 respondents from the 57 fast food restaurants under study. Data were gathered through a questionnaire survey of 171 respondents. Out of the 171 questionnaires distributed, 100 were returned as usable, obtaining a 78.1 percent response rate. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) statistics were used to test the hypotheses. Social media trustworthiness has a strong, positive, and significant relationship with purchase intention and re-patronage intention, but a strong, positive, and significant relationship with re-patronage intention. The study therefore concludes that there is a positive and significant relationship between social media trustworthiness and customer patronage in fast food restaurants in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, and recommends, amongst others, that fast food restaurants' management should strategically use social media trustworthiness to improve the firms customer patronage..

Introduction

Advancements in communication technology using social media are changing the way business is conducted. We are living in a decade of instant communication and ease of information sharing, on which solutions are based. Apparently, consumers are constantly searching for easier and faster ways of carrying out their online activities, just like other businesses are searching for easier and more effective methods of doing business (Amangala and Akani 2020). Nwokah and Irimagha (2017) noted that social media has become the most recent IT-based solution. Social media usage is growing by the day as people shift from being passive consumers to active co-creators and

participants. Furthermore, most organizations have developed their social media sites to increase customer patronage. Consequently, social media has increased the number of users who connect using various media. As its platforms grow, businesses have more opportunities to interact with current and potential customers.

Social media platforms are increasingly being used by commercial organizations for direct marketing objectives, as noted by Okinda in 2014. Due to technical and sociological changes, the fast-food business, similar to the education industry, has shifted its investment from conventional media to online platforms (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011). Fast food companies compete fiercely with consumers in the 21st century to expand their market presence. The success of these fast-food restaurants in achieving their aim relies on their capacity to provide services that exceed the needs and desires of their target consumers compared to their rivals. They should enhance their service quality and delivery strategies while seeking innovative methods to consistently attract and retain consumers. Customer loyalty leads to increased sales volume, significantly impacting the company's profitability. Trust is crucial in electronic commerce (social media) since it influences the purchasing intention and motivation of online clients towards the online company and its products.

Prior research on fast food customer behavior focused on factors including company success, marketing effectiveness, and efficiency, among other variables. Researchers have used metrics similar to commercial or marketing performance to assess customer loyalty. Although the fast-food industry operates in a very intricate and ever-changing environment, there is increasing evidence that key metrics for fast-food restaurant consumption may be identified. This research assesses the criteria factors of purchase intention, patronage behavior, and repeat patronage. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as including videos, music, photos, news, text, and several other forms of information. Mobile and web-based technologies are used in social media to provide interactive platforms for sharing, co-creating, discussing, and modifying user-generated content.

Social media differs from conventional or industrial media in terms of quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy, and permanence. Moreover, social media enables companies to interact and share information with their consumers. Customers may share their experiences and ideas instantly due to the channels' real-time accessibility. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Fiber, WhatsApp, blogs, and other prominent social media platforms are examples. Favorable interactions and feedback from customers may be shared publicly for potential future use. Social media marketing has surprised the business industry by changing how clients may be reached as a group. Many people are still unfamiliar with the concept of social media marketing and its potential impact on their lives. Social media is a dynamic and engaging platform that has become very popular worldwide, making it essential for organizations of all sizes to use it (Shad, 2015). Facebook has 1.28 billion active members, establishing it as the most popular social network globally (Shad, 2015).
.

In view of the above, this study examined the nexus between social media trustworthiness and customer patronage of fast-food restaurants in Port Harcourt. The study used purchase intention, patronage action and re-patronage proxies of customer patronage while social media trustworthiness is un-dimensional in this study. The study is guided by the following null hypotheses and conceptual framework.

Ho1: Social media trustworthiness has no significant influence on purchase intention.

Ho2: Social media trustworthiness has no significant influence on patronage action.

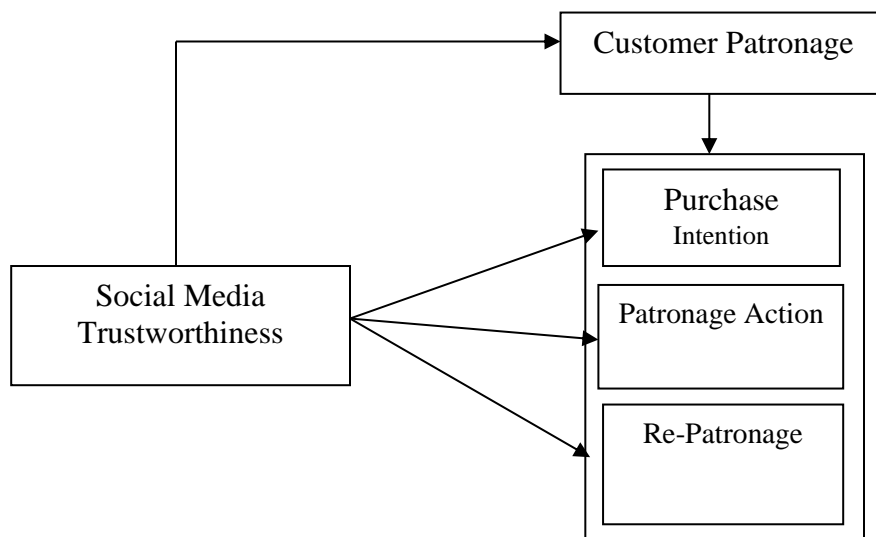**Ho3:** Social media trustworthiness has no significant influence on re-patronage.

Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework of the relationship between social media trustworthiness and customer patronage of fast-food restaurants in Port Harcourt

Sources: Researchers conceptualization, (2024)

Theoretical Foundation

This research is based on the "Theory of Consumer Behavior," which analyzes how people, groups, or society move through many phases to choose products or services to fulfill a certain need or objective. The theory aims to analyze individuals' decision-making processes by considering demographic and behavioral elements that influence their desires (Kuester, 2012). The consumer is seen as a buyer, payer, and user in the theory, with a strong interest in maintaining the importance of a customer, highlighting the need of customer retention and relationship management (Kahle & Close, 2011). The black box 9vf model was used to represent inciting communication, purchaser attributes, the decision procedure, and buyer emotions. Institutions design marketing incentives, whereas societal cultural, social, and economic events influence environmental stimulation.

The buyer's black box contains their qualities and the decision-making process that affects their reactions, which are seen as the result of a deliberate and logical decision-making process.

Customers compare brands by assessing the functional and psychological advantages they provide while considering alternatives. It is essential for a firm to comprehend the advantages that customers want and be aware of the other organizations they are evaluating. After the assessment, the customer is prepared to make a choice, which may not necessarily result in a purchase. Thus, companies use several strategies to ensure real transactions. According to Khosla & Swati (2010), examples of these tactics include flexible payment plans, discounts, and the opportunity to participate in a competition with a purchase. After purchasing a product, consumers engage in post-purchase assessment to evaluate factors like brand, price, and quality with their acquired things or services. Customers evaluate the perceived value against their expectations, which influences their decision to repurchase the goods.

The Concept of Social Media Trustworthiness
Trust is the reliance of consumers on other parties and their vulnerability during a process, with the expectation that the other party will adhere to acceptable practices and deliver the promised products and services (Budiantara, Gunawan, & Utami, 2019). Trust is the confidence that consumers have in businesses or their representatives (Sekhon, Ennew, Kharouf, & Devlin, 2014). Rotter (1971) defines trust as a broad expectation that an individual or group has, believing that the word, promise, vocal, or written expression of another person or group may be relied upon. Trust may stem from genuine information, viewpoints, or religion and may or may not elicit an emotional response (Ramli, 2020). Schurr and Ozanne (1985) emphasized the significance of trustworthiness and the parties' commitment to fulfilling their agreements. It may be inferred from the above information that confidence plays a significant role in defining trust (Sohail & Al-Jabri, 2012).

Iruka and Ateke (2014) suggest that partners should conduct acts that result in favorable results and trust that they will not take unexpected actions leading to bad consequences. Kotler & Armstrong (2016) state that trust is a subjective consideration that someone has towards anything. Keen (1999) asserts that trust is the cornerstone of e-commerce. Trust is essential in the digital realm (Ridings, Geren, & Arinze, 2002). Trust is a conviction that individuals have in people with whom they interact. Trust may be defined as the degree to which uncertainty can be firmly established. It reduces risks before making a purchase decision and maintains client connections (Wen, 2009). Social media users and marketers are focused on the trust that groups develop around certain goods and services, since this trust shapes the image of products and brands that impact consumer purchasing decisions (Ramli 2020).

Trustworthiness refers to the likelihood of a trustee upholding an individual's trust (Chopra & Wallace, 2002). It refers to the attributes of trustees who are reliable and willing to trust. Trustworthiness is the evaluation of a trustee's competence and character, as discussed by Gabarro in 1978 and referenced by Akter, D'Ambra, and Ray in 2011. Trust is a crucial element of human emotions like honesty in today's digital world, and it also plays a key role in building confidence in social media platforms. Fast food restaurant businesses need to establish trustworthiness on their social media channels to enhance customer trust in the online environment. A dependable social

networking platform may impact online consumer purchasing decisions. Trustworthiness is the primary factor influencing customer loyalty (Graf & Perrien, 2005; Lin, 2008).

Rotter (1971) defines trust as a widespread belief that an individual or organization can be relied upon to keep their word, promise, or declaration, as stated by Schurr & Ozanne (1985). This emphasizes the significance of reliability and the parties' commitment to fulfilling their responsibilities. The previous information indicates that confidence plays a significant role in defining trust, since satisfaction levels are influenced by this trusting demeanor (Sohail & Al-Jabri, 2012). Heightened pleasure enhances an individual's confidence and results in positive word-of-mouth referrals to other clients. Trust is crucial in online commerce due to the limited availability of comprehensive, verifiable information about the organization for clients.

Trustworthiness positively influences customer loyalty, as referenced by Razzaque & Boon (2003) and Lin (2009). Hodson (2004) proposed that trustworthiness consists of behaviors shown by the trustee that align with the trustor's expectations and are a defining trait of the trustee. Trust promotes consumers' likelihood to repurchase products (Grabner-Kräuter & Kalusha, 2003), as referenced in (Alam & Khokhar, 2006). Trust is essential for establishing the exchange relationships necessary for the marketing process (Sekhon, Ennew, Kharouf, & Devlin, 2014). The trustor evaluates the trustworthiness of the trustee based on their cumulative acquaintance with that entity (Kim, Dirk, & Cooper, 2009) for trust to develop. Trust is essential in business information transmission. Trust is a belief held by the trustor in a relationship, whereas trustworthiness is a quality of reliability anticipated by the trustee (Sekhon, Ennew, Kharouf, & Devlin, 2014).

A user is more likely to visit a website regularly if they feel comfortable using it. Satisfaction levels are influenced by this trusting mindset. Heightened contentment enhances an individual's confidence and results in positive word-of-mouth referrals to prospective clients. Trustworthiness is directly affected by the trustor's plans and behaviors, as stated by Sekhon, Ennew, Kharouf, & Devlin (2014). Trustworthiness is the trait of being reliable and dependable. Social media trustworthiness (SMT) is an individual's confidence in the dependability, credibility, honesty, and trustworthiness of social media platforms that significantly influence online purchasing choices. Customers evaluate the credibility of websites before engaging in a commercial transaction.

Sekhon, Ennew, Kharouf, and Devlin (2014) identified expertise, competence, honesty, consistency, shared values, communication, care, and kindness as factors that contribute to trustworthiness. They suggest that expertise and competence indicate capacity. A signal is crucial for enhancing credibility. Integrity and consistency are crucial aspects in the idea of trustworthiness. Communications has the potential to establish credibility. Concern and compassion are considered essential elements for achieving trustworthiness (Fang, Palmatier, Scheer, & Li, 2008). Trustworthiness is a critical factor that significantly impacts online purchase choices. Ateke and Ogbuji (2017) said that trust plays a crucial role in the buying choices of online customers and may directly or indirectly influence purchase intention. This happens when users

on a social media platform trust a particular organization and there is a positive flow of information between the users and the brand.

The Concept of Customer Patronage

Customers are individuals or organisations that maintain some degree of patronage in any establishment (Akani, Ehio, & Onyegbule, 2023). Customers often buy goods and services from organizations they trust. Patronage is the result of clients' strong commitment to a business, sometimes influenced by the perceived quality of a certain brand or the overall offers of the organization (Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwuju & Wali, 2020). Customer patronage is a marketing word that refers to customers' purchasing habits. Customer patronage involves the sharing of knowledge and ideas via virtual communities and networks (Tang & Whinston, 2012). Customer patronage involves using social media internet-based apps that are developed based on the ideological and technical principles of websites. Customer patronage involves the creation and sharing of user-created content via social media platforms. It refers to the proportion of a consumer's spending inside a certain industry or retail sector that goes to a particular firm (Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwuju & Wali, 2020).

Customer patronage refers to the perceived attitude of a consumer's spending inside a marketing organization. The metric entails dividing the amount spent by an individual at one firm by the total amount spent by that individual across all companies in the industry (Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwuju & Wali, 2020). Customer loyalty relies on using social media tools such as mobile and web-based technology to develop highly engaging platforms. Social media enables marketing organizations, people, and communities to share, co-create, debate, and alter user-generated content with the support of customer patronage. The research noted that people are more likely to support a firm that can fulfill or above their expectations (Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwuju & Wali, 2020). Social media has brought significant and widespread improvements to communication among enterprises, communities, and people via customer patronage (Kietzmann & Kristopher, 2011).

Customer loyalty, on the other hand, is a result of trust. Customers are more likely to buy products and services from any organization if they see the result as being value-driven (Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwuju & Wali, 2020). Customer engagement on social media involves electronic communication platforms like the Internet, websites, and mobile phones, primarily used for social networking and blogging. Users utilize these platforms to form online communities for sharing information, ideas, personal messages, and various content such as videos (Agichten, Carlos, Donato & Aristides, 2008). Without credibility, the marketing company will struggle to attract clients. Customers are more likely to support organizations that they believe really care about their well-being. Customers are more likely to choose or buy from firms they see as prioritizing customer interests rather than focusing just on profit. Customers buy from organizations that provide value in their products/services.

Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwuju, and Wali (2020) suggest that firms establish various structures

primarily to cater to clients, who ultimately dictate the success or failure of these enterprises. Customers must be handled with great care in order to attain the desired goals prior to establishing customer loyalty for the organization. consumer patronage signifies the trust that forms the bond between a consumer and a marketing organization, playing a crucial role in influencing many facets of the customer's purchasing behavior.

Purchase Intention

Trustworthiness is the trait of being reliable and dependable. Social media has become more popular as a consequence. SMT stands for an individual's confidence in a social network's reliability, authenticity, and honesty. Social networking sites' credibility significantly influences online purchasing choices. Customers evaluate the credibility of websites before engaging in a commercial transaction. Trustworthiness is a key factor that significantly impacts online purchase choices. Ateke and Ogbuji (2017) said that trust plays a crucial role in the buying choices of online customers and may directly or indirectly influence purchase intention. Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwuju, and Wali (2020) suggest that patronage intention is influenced by several aspects, including the implementation of optimal procedures and their efficient marketing management, resulting in high-quality service delivery and customer satisfaction..

Patronage Action

Patronage action occurs when a customer pays for and obtains a product or service. Patronage actions by customers are influenced by psychological principles that help businesses understand consumer needs. This understanding is used to develop, design, and communicate products in a way that meets the important needs of consumers. Grewal and Levy (2010) state that consumer choice making is a five-stage process that individuals follow when choosing which items or services to purchase or support from a company. Practitioners often define consumer decision making as a sequence of five advancing stages: need identification, information search, assessment of options, buy choice, and post-purchase procedures.

A choice is the act of choosing an activity from several options; consumers make decisions daily and consistently. At times, less consideration is given to the decision-making process. The decisions made by the economic man vary significantly from those made by passive, cognitive, or emotional individuals. Every purchasing choice is influenced by both rational and emotional factors. People decide to start and complete a purchase based on their perception of the items' worth. Baker et al (2002) discovered that customers are impacted by their impression of the value of a product, which affects their intention to make a purchase.

Re-patronage

Re-patronage refers to the act of buying the same product or brand again. These judgments are often made based on habit and routine, leading to a decrease in the search for knowledge over time (eds. Schiffman, O'Cass, Paladino, &. Carlson, 2013). Repeat purchase or patronage intention refers to the extent to which consumers are inclined to buy the same product or service. It is considered a straightforward, measurable indicator of future patronage behavior (Eugine & Nkosivile, 2015). Customer's choice to return may be influenced more by restricted options than by affinity to a certain brand. According to Daddie and Akani (2020), repeat purchase refers to the act of re-patronage, which involves purchasing things from a certain brand again. Daddie and Akani (2020) said that repeat purchase occurs when a satisfied client consistently purchases or supports a certain brand or product. Repeat consumers prioritize quality, value, exceptional customer service, convenience, and are often price-conscious.

Re-patronage in a different setting may be termed as "repeat purchase". Customer loyalty towards a bank is contingent upon the bank's ability to provide services effectively and efficiently (Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwuju & Wali, 2020). The study focuses on an individual's willingness to revisit a service organization (Wirtz & Lwin, 2009). Trust in a connection leads to commitment, which in turn becomes a significant indicator of future buying behavior. Repeat patronage refers to the likelihood that a consumer will continue to buy a product from the same organization, like in the case of banks (Chao-Min, Eric, Yu-Hui, & Hsin, 2014). According to Caudill and Murphy (2000), clients often patronize a certain company due to their feeling of trust. Repeat purchase is often used as an indicator of client loyalty to a brand. Repeat purchases are influenced by the brand's perceived commitment to a distinct customer value, rather than customer satisfaction. Daddie and Akani (2020).

Customer loyalty is shown by repeat purchase behavior or intention (Lam, Shanker, Erramilli & Mirthy, 2004).They feel that the corporation acts in their best interest while offering a service. Repeat purchases indicate consumer loyalty to a brand. A greater rate of repeat purchases signifies happy and loyal customers, leading to increased customer value and revenue. Jones & Sasser (1995) said that cultivating repeat patronage behavior is crucial for firms as it serves to boost the company's profitability and is a fundamental source of profit worldwide. Increased client loyalty may lead to greater profitability by excluding expenses related to acquiring new customers. Organizations may secure repeat purchases by soliciting and addressing consumer feedback, recommendations, and complaints, as well as by giving value-added services to enhance the customer experience.

The main objective a corporation may establish for its goods is to encourage repeat purchases, since it signifies a consumer's loyalty to a certain brand within a product category. Customer re-patronage is a strong predictor of an organization's long-term commercial viability and profitability as it reflects customer happiness and loyalty..

Empirical review of Social Media Trustworthiness and Customer Patronage

Akani, Ehio, and Onyegbule (2023) study showed that brand recognition has positive and statistically significant relationship with customer patronage, through repeat purchase and customer retention. Gao and Mattila (2014) discovered that customers experience higher satisfaction levels when they believe a company's social media material is authentic, meaning it is genuine and trustworthy. Razzaque and Boon (2003) discovered that trustworthiness positively influences customer patronage. Ramli (2020) studied how the sense of trustworthiness affects customers' inclination to utilize. Digital technology has made practically all actions easier, more efficient, and more beneficial. The research gathered data using a questionnaire from customers who used the mobile banking system in Jakarta, Indonesia. The study used quantitative research methods and utilized Purposive Sampling to choose the sample. The analytical technique used is Partial Least Squares (PLS). The research found that perceived utility and perceived value positively and significantly influence the propensity to utilize a mobile banking system. Perceived utility has a greater impact on trust than perceived value in the context of the mobile banking system. Wijayajaya and Astuti (2018) studied how trust and brand image influence repurchase intention in online buying. The research examined how e-service quality impacts customer satisfaction, how customer satisfaction influences trust and brand image, and how trust and brand image affect repurchase intention in online buying. The research included 130 respondents and used a quantitative data analysis approach known as Structural Equation Model (SEM). The findings indicate that e-service quality positively affects customer happiness, which in turn positively influences trust, and brand image positively influences repurchase intention. Shahid, Hussain, and Zafar (2017) analyzed how brand awareness influences customers' purchase intention. The research aims to explore the correlation between brand   awareness   and   customer   purchase   intention.

Uy, Opalla, Cabasa, Palacio, Torrefiel, Cabantud, Cabezas, Magnaye, Maluenda, & Fernandez (2019) conducted a qualitative research to analyze consumers' impression of the reliability of internet commerce. The study focused on examining the perceived trustworthiness of e-commerce to see whether it aligns with findings from previous research and to provide valuable information to online consumers to assist them in buying or selling things online. The research included purposive sampling and thematic data analysis as statistical methods. Trustworthiness was assessed in eight categories of competence, with three focusing on benevolence and two on integrity as key elements for the online firm. The research found that online consumers consider the expertise, compassion, and integrity of an online company to be important factors in seeing it as trustworthy. Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwujuand, and Wali (2020) studied the relationship between process management and customer loyalty in deposit money institutions in Nigeria. The research aimed to investigate the relationships between process agility and repeat buy, as well as between on-time delivery and repeat purchase in deposit money institutions in Nigeria, focusing on UBA and First Bank. Seven questionnaires were sent to bank personnel.The research consisted of 98 samples, with 92 copies obtained and 88 deemed genuine after data cleaning. The research used Spearman's rank-order coefficient with the assistance of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences 21. The research findings showed a strong and favorable correlation between process agility and repeat purchase, as well as between on-time delivery and repeat buy..

Methodology

This research examined the relationship between the credibility of social media and consumer loyalty towards fast-food establishments in Port Harcourt. This research used explanatory methods to elucidate the correlation between social media trustworthiness and client consumption of fast-food establishments in Port Harcourt. The design was suitable for the research as it aimed to elucidate the correlation between aspects of social media trustworthiness (moderating factors) and consumer patronage (dependent variables) of fast-food businesses in Port Harcourt. The survey included a population of 66 fast food outlets located in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. There were 57 fast food outlets included in the sample from Port Harcourt. Purposive sampling approach was used. Three managers from each of the restaurants, namely the sales manager, marketing manager, and supervisor, contributed data for the research. This totaled 171 respondents from the 57 fast food businesses included in the study. Information was collected using a structured questionnaire from 171 respondents. The questionnaire was created on a Likert 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree to acquire primary data from the intended respondents. Out of 171 questionnaires issued, 100 were returned and included in the research, resulting in a 78.1% response rate. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) served as the test statistic. The PPMC assumes that the researcher must adhere to three conditions: the study's variables must be interval or ratio scale, there must be a monotonic connection between the variables, and the variables must be roughly normally distributed. All assumptions were properly adhered to throughout the research. The research underwent scholarly evaluation to assess its validity. A pilot study was undertaken to assess the reliability of the research instrument. Data from respondents underwent a Chronbach's Alpha reliability test using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 22.0) with a threshold of 0.70.

When determining whether a correlation exists between variables, investigations also examine the relationship between the variables. The Pearson correlation is a widely used method for statistically measuring this phenomena (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The correlation coefficient between variables might vary from -1.00 to 1.00. A correlation value of -1.00 indicates a perfect negative association, 1.00 represents a perfect positive relationship, and 0 indicates no link between variables. A higher correlation coefficient indicates a more robust association between variables. This research uses the correlation coefficient threshold recommended by Shiu, Hair, Bush, and Ortinau (2009) to evaluate the link between the variables being studied. Shiu et al (2009) outlined the strength of the relationship between two variables based on the coefficient of determination: no relationship if the coefficient is .00, very weak if it is $\mp$.01-.19, weak if it is $\mp$.20-.39, moderate if it is $\mp$.40-.59, strong if it is $\mp$.60-.79, and very strong if it is $\mp$.80-1.0. The interpretation procedure was conducted at a significance level of 0.01 (two-tailed). The research evaluated client patronage based on three aspects: purchase intention, patronage action, and re-patronage intention. Social media trustworthiness was assessed unidimensionally. The test statistic used was Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), computed with SPSS version 20.0. Below is the shown result:

Table1. Reliability Analysis of Items on All Variables

S/N	Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients
1	Trustworthiness	4	.9988
2	purchase intention	4	.4312
3	patronage action	4	.4467
4.	re-patronage intention		.7469

Source: SPSS Output version 22.0

From table 1, it can be seen that all the variables have high correlation coefficients; surpassing the threshold of 0.70. This means, the questions were sufficiently reliable to measure the variables in the study. Data for this study were collected through primary and secondary sources. Pearson product moment correlation was used to measure the relationship between social media trustworthiness and customer patronage. These analyses were done with the help of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, Version 22.0).

Presentation Data Results
Table 4.1: Relationship between Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention (n=100).

Purchase Intention		Social Media Trustworthiness
Social Media Trustworthiness	1	.4312
Sig. (2-tailed)		.0000
N	100	100
Purchase Intention	1	.4312
Sig. (2-tailed)		.0000
N	100	100

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

Table 4.1 shows that the correlation coefficient between social media trustworthiness and purchase intention is r=0.43 implying there is a moderate positive and significant correlation. This implies that an increase in social media trustworthiness by food restaurants has significant effect on purchase intention.

Table 4.2: Relationship between Trustworthiness and Patronage Action (n=100).

Patronage Action		Social Media Trustworthiness
Social Media Trustworthiness	1	.5467
Sig. (2-tailed)		.0000
N	100	100
Patronage Action	1	.4467
Sig. (2-tailed)		.0000
N	100	100

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

Table 4.2 shows that the correlation coefficient between social media trustworthiness and patronage action is r=0.43 implying there is a moderate positive and significant correlation. This implies that an increase in social media trustworthiness by food restaurants has significant effect on patronage action.

Table 4.3: Relationship between Trustworthiness and Re-Patronage Intention (n=100).

Re-Patronage Intention		Social Media Trustworthiness
Social Media Trustworthiness	1	.7469
Sig. (2-tailed)		.0000
N	100	100
Re-Patronage Intention	1	.7469
Sig. (2-tailed)		.0000
N	100	100

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

Table 4.3 shows that the correlation coefficient between social media trustworthiness and re-patronage intention is r=0.43 implying there is a strong, positive and significant correlation. This implies that an increase in social media trustworthiness by food restaurants has significant effect on re-patronage intention.

Discussions of Findings

Social media authenticity plays a crucial role in enhancing client loyalty by influencing purchase intention, patronage behavior, and repeat patronage intention. Understanding purchase intention, patronage action, and re-patronage intention is crucial for ensuring the legitimacy of social media in fast food businesses. Social media authenticity is significantly related to purchase intention, patronage action, and repatronage intention, as expected and verified by our research. The results show important connections among the factors. Our research indicates that using social media authenticity effectively in fast food restaurants may stimulate patronage behavior, resulting in increased purchase intention, patronage action, and repeat patronage intention. The study's results align with Gao and Mattila's (2014) research, indicating that customers experience higher satisfaction when they believe a company's social media material is authentic, meaning it is genuine and trustworthy. Uy, Opalla, Cabasa, Palacio, Torrefiel, Cabantud, Cabezas, Magnaye, Maluenda, & Fernandez (2019) conducted a qualitative research on consumers' perceptions of the trustworthiness of internet commerce. The research found that online consumers consider the

expertise, compassion, and integrity of an online company to be important factors in determining its trustworthiness.

The research demonstrates a strong correlation between social media trustworthiness and purchase intention, patronage action, and re-patronage intention. Fast food businesses demonstrating strong social media trustworthiness signifies high professional competence and great outcomes for their clients. Therefore, players in the fast food restaurant industry should consistently evaluate and contemplate the trustworthiness of social media to improve purchase intention, patronage intention, and re-patronage intention. The study's results align with Razzaque and Boon's (2003) research, which concluded that trustworthiness positively influences customer patronage. Ramli (2020) studied how the impression of trustworthiness affects customers' propensity to utilize a product or service. The study found that perceived usefulness and perceived value positively and significantly influence the intention to use a mobile banking system. Perceived usefulness has a greater impact on trust compared to perceived value. Nkpurukwe, Igomu, Saidu, Nwujuand, and Wali (2020) studied the relationship between process management and customer loyalty in deposit money institutions in Nigeria. The research findings showed a strong and favorable correlation between process agility and repeat purchase, as well as between on-time delivery and repeat buy. Wijayajaya and Astuti (2018) studied how trust and brand image influence repurchase intention in online buying. The study found that e-service quality positively affected customer happiness, which in turn positively influenced trust, and brand image positively influenced repurchase intention.

Conclusion/Recommendations

The results of the quantitative analysis demonstrate that social media trustworthiness relates significantly with measure of customer patronage. The study thus concluded that social media trustworthiness relates with customer patronage of fast food restaurants in Rivers State. Therefore, the study recommended that fast food restaurants' management should strategically use social media trustworthiness to improve the firms customer patronage.

References

Amangala, E.A.& Akani,G.H.(2020).Students' intention to use mobile banking: the role of trust. Academic Scholars Publishing League. *International Journal of Management Sciences 8*(2), 01 – 10.

Agichten, E., Carlos, C., Donato, D., & Aristides, G. (2008). Finding high quality content in social media. *Business Horizons, 54,*24-251.

Akani, G. H., Ehio, V. N. & Onyegbule, C. C.(2023).brand recognition and customer patronage of deposit   money banks in Port Harcourt **.** *Nigerian Journal of Management Sciences,* 24(2a),55-61

Akter, S., D' Ambra, J., & Ray, P. (2011). Trustworthiness thing in mhealth information services: An assessment of hierarchical model with mediating and moderating effects using partial least squares. *Information Science and Society for Technoogy, 62(*1),100-116.

Alam, M. & Khokhar, A. U. R.(2006). The impact of the internet on customer loyalty in Swedish banks. Master thesis: *Submitted to the Department of Business Administration and e-commerce. Lulea University of Technology*.

Ateke, B.W. & Ogbuji, C.N.(2017). An exploratory study on online consumer protection concerns: The Nigerian case. *FUO Journal of Business Finance,7*(2),92-100.

Baker, J. Parasuraman, A.P. Grewal, D. & Voss, G. B.(2002). The influence of multiple store environment cues on perceived merchandise value and patronage intentions. *Journal of Marketing, 66* (2),120- 141.

Budiantara, M., Gunawan, H. & Utami, E. S. (2019). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust in online store, perceived risk. *Sebagai Pemicu Niat Beli Online pada Produk*

Bryman A., & Bell, E. (2007). *Business research methods*. 2nd (ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Caudill, E.N. & Murphy, P.E. (2000). Consumer online privacy: Legal and ethical issues. *Journal of Public Policy and marketing, 19* (1), 7-19.

Chao-Min, C., Eric, T. G. W., Yu-Hui, F. & Hsin-Yi, H. (2014). Understanding customers' repeat purchase intentions in B2C e-commerce: The role of utilitarian value, hedonic value and perceived risk. *Information System Journal, 24*, 85 – 114.

Chopra, K. & Wallace, W. A. (2002). Trust in electronic environment . *Proceedings of the 36th Hawai International Conference on System Sciences.*

Daddie, M. M. & Akani, G. H.(2020). Service Delivery Strategies and Customers' Loyalty to Online Retailers in Rivers State. *Journal of Contemporary Marketing*, 5(1), 57-66.

Eugine, T. M. & Nkosivile, W. M. (2015). The effect of buyer's remorse on consumer's repeat –

purchase intention: Experience of generation Y apparel student consumers within the Vaal Triangle. *International Journal of Research in Business Studies and Management,2*(5), 24 – 31.

Fang, E., Palmatier, R. W., Scheer, L.K., & Li, N. (2008). Trust at Different Organizational Levels. *Journal of Marketing,* 72(2), 80-98.

Grabner- Krauter, S. & Kalusha, E.A. (2003). The role of consumer trust in online- shopping. *International Journal of Human – computer Studies, 58* (6), 783- 812.

Graf, R. & Perrien, J. (2005). The role of trust and satisfaction in a relationship: The case of high tech firms and banks. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Association conference, Milan Italy.*

Grewal, D. & Levy, M. (2010). *Marketing.* McGraw- Hil Irwin.

Hodson, R. (2004). Organisational trustworthiness: Findings from the population of organisational ethnographies. *Organisation Science*, 15, 432-445.

Iruka, C.H. & Ateke, B.W. (2014). Customer involvement management practices and customer retention in the hospitality industry. *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences, 5*(8), 61-72.

Jones, T. O. & Sasser, W. E., Jr. (1995). Why satisfied customers defect. Harvard Business Review, *73*(6), 88 – 99.

Kahle, L.R. & Close, A.G. (2011). Consumer behavior knowledge and for effective sports events marketing. Routledge Publication.

Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite: The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons, 53*(1), 59–68.

Keen, P. (1999). Electronic commerce relationship trust by design. Prentice Hall.

Kietzmann, H.J., & Kristopher, H. (2011). Social media get serious: Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizon*, *53*(1),61-64.

Kim, P., Dirk, K., & Cooper, C. (2009). The repair of trust: A dynamic bilateral perspective and multilevel conceptualisation. *Academy of Management Review*, 34(3), 401-422.

Kotler, P. & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management.* 15th (ed.). Pearson Education Limited. England.

Lam, S. Y. Shanker, V., Erramilli, M. K. & Murthy, B. (2004). Customer value, satisfaction, loyalty, and switching costs: An illustration from a business to-business service context. *Journal of the Academy Marketing Science, 32*(3), 293 – 311.

Lin, J. S. C. & Liang, H. Y. (2011). The influence of service environments on customer emotion and service outcomes. *Managing Service Quality*, *21*(4), 350 – 372.

Lin, J.M.C.(2008). Ict education: To integrate or not to integrate. *Business Journal of Educational Technology, 36* (6), 1121- 1123.

Khosla, M. & Swati, T. (2010). Consumer psychology: The essence of marketing *International Journal of Educational Administration, 2 (2),* 220- 230.

Kuester, S. (2012). Mkt 301. Strategic marketing and marketing in specific industry context. *Universityof Mannheim,* 110.

Nwokah, N. G.& Irimagha, B.B. (2017). E-marketing orientation and social media implementation in the banking industry in Nigeria. *iBusiness, 9, 11-133.*

Nkpurukwe, O.I., Igomu,M.O. Saidu, R.A., Nwuju,L, M. Wali, A.F. (2020). process management and customer patronage of deposit money banks in Nigeria. *International Journal of Business Society*, *4* (8), 138-147.

Okinda, R.A.(2014). Assesing e- learning readiness at the Kenya technical teachers colleage. *Journal of Learning for Development,* 1(3), 1-8.

Razzaqucy, M. & Boon, T.G. (2003). Effects of dependence and trust on channel satisfaction commitment and cooperation. *Business Journal of business to Business Marketing….*

Ridings, C.M. Geren, D. & Arinze, B. (2002). Some antecedents and effects of trust in *virtal* communities. *Journal of Strategic Information Systems, 11*, 271-295.

Rotter, J. B. (1971). Generalized expectancies for interpersonal trust. *American Psychologist, 26,* 443-452.

Rusman, E. Van Bruggen, J. & Koper, R., Sloep, P. Valcke, M. (2011). Fostering trust in virtual project teams: Towards a design teamwork grounded in a trustworthiness antecedents. *International Journal of Human Computer Studies,68* (11), 834- 850.

Ramli, Y. (2020). The perception of trustworthiness that influence customer's intention to use. *American International Journal of Business Management, 3(*10), 72-79.

Shad, H.(2015). The use of social media among public relation students in the UAE. *International journal of Relationship Marketing and Management, 6,* (2), 15-30.

Schiffman, L.G.,O'Cass, A. Paladino, A. &. Carlson, J. (2013). *Consumer Behavior*. 6th (ed.). Australia: Pearson .

Schurr, P.H. & Ozanni, J.L.(1985). Influences on exchange processes buyers preconceptions of a seller trustworthiness and bargaining toughness. *Journal of consumer Research, 11(4), 939-953.*

Sekhon, H. Ennew , C. Kharouf, H. & Devlin, J. (2014).Trustworthiness and trust: Influences and implications. *Journal of Marketing Management, 30(3-4),409-430.*

Shiu, E., Hair, J., Bush, R., & Ortinau, D. (2009). *Marketing research*. European Edition. Berkshire:McGraw Hill Higher Education.

Sohail, M.S. & Al-Jabri, I.M.(2012). Mobile banking adoption. Application of diffusion of innovation theory. *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research, 13,*379-391.

Tang, Q.G.U.B., & Whinston, A.B. (2012). Content contribution for revenue sharing and reputation in social media: A dynamic structural model. *Journal of Management Information Systems,* 29,41-75.

Uy, J. Opalla, I., Cabasa, R., Palacio, M., Torrefiel, M., Cabantud, A., Cabezas, A., Magnaye, L. Maluenda, M & Fernandez, L. (2019). Customers' perception on the trustworthiness of electronic commerce: a qualitative study.

Weinberg, B. D., & Pehlivan, E. (2011). Social spending: managing the social media mix.

Business Horizons, 54(3), 275e282. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/ j.bushor.2011.01.008.

Wen, S. (2009). Institutional investors activism on socially responsible investment effects and Expectations: Business Ethics. *An European Review, 8(3), 308-333.*

Wirtz , J. & Lwin, M. (2009). Regulatory focus theory, trust and privacy concern. *Journal of Service Research, 12* (2), 190- 207.