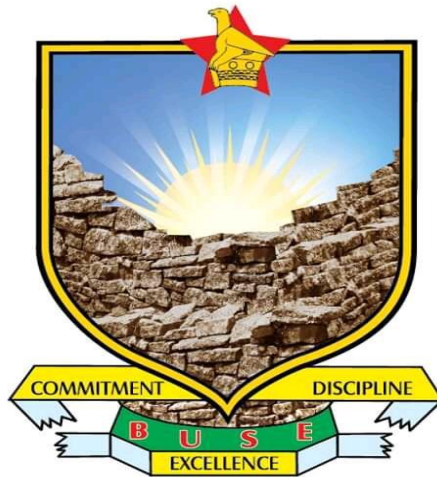


BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING



DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES USAGE ON THE BUYING
BEHAVIOR OF ONLINE SHOPPERS. A CASE OF EDGARS STORES LIMITED**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF COMMERCE (HONOURS) DEGREE IN
MARKETING OF BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION.**

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DEGREE IN MARKETING**

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DECLARATION

I, SHANTEL VIMBAINASHE MOYO, declare this research project herein is my own work and has not been copied or lifted from any source without the acknowledgement of the source.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late father Joseph Moyo, late grandfather Andrew J. Moyo, Grace Moyo and Dorothy Moyo for being my inspiration and giving endless love during the entire course of my education. Special gratitude also goes to my beloved friends Vimbai and Takudzwa, for all their moral support and encouragement. May the Lord bless you abundantly.

ABSTRACT

The research assesses the influence of social networking sites usage on buying behavior of online shoppers, a case of Edgars` stores limited. The research was guided by the following objectives to ascertain the influence of social networking sites usage on perceived value, to check the impact of social networking sites usage on purchase intention, to determine the influence of social networking sites usage on customer trust and to find the relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction. The study used causal research design. The population under study was 5 600 with a sample population of 361 customers being chosen by random sampling method. Data was collected through questionnaires and was analyzed by Simple linear regression through the SPSS-20 software. Research results were presented in the form of tables. Testing of the hypothesis showed that there is a positive relationship between social networking sites usage and buyer behavior, each hypothesis proved positive. Conclusively, it was recommended among others that retailers engage with customers on social sites and affirm their social presence in order capture the customers` trust, perceived value, purchase intention and boost overall satisfaction.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God for giving me the strength and courage to complete my studies. The success of this research project depends largely on the encouragement of my friends and family. I would like to appreciate my supervisor Dr T. Dube for his guidance. I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to my family for their prayers and financial support.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The chapter dealt with the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, hypothesis and objectives of the research. It analyzed the significance, limitations and delimitations of the study and the underlying assumptions. Definition of the key words used in this research were presented at the end of the chapter.

1.1 Background of the study

As of November 2022, there were more than 384 million Africans using social networking sites as a result of technological advancements (Statista, 2022). Social networking sites are websites and programs that let users communicate at the same time exchanging educational information, health trends and even information about goods and products, while giving them the chance to build links with companies and service providers (Techtarget, 2022). The sites have made it possible for customers to chat, shop and texting amongst other activities. Ola and Reem (2018), are of the view that the use of social networking sites has given customers a convenient way to socialize and marketers have discovered the sites to be a way of communicating with their customers with any geographical barriers.

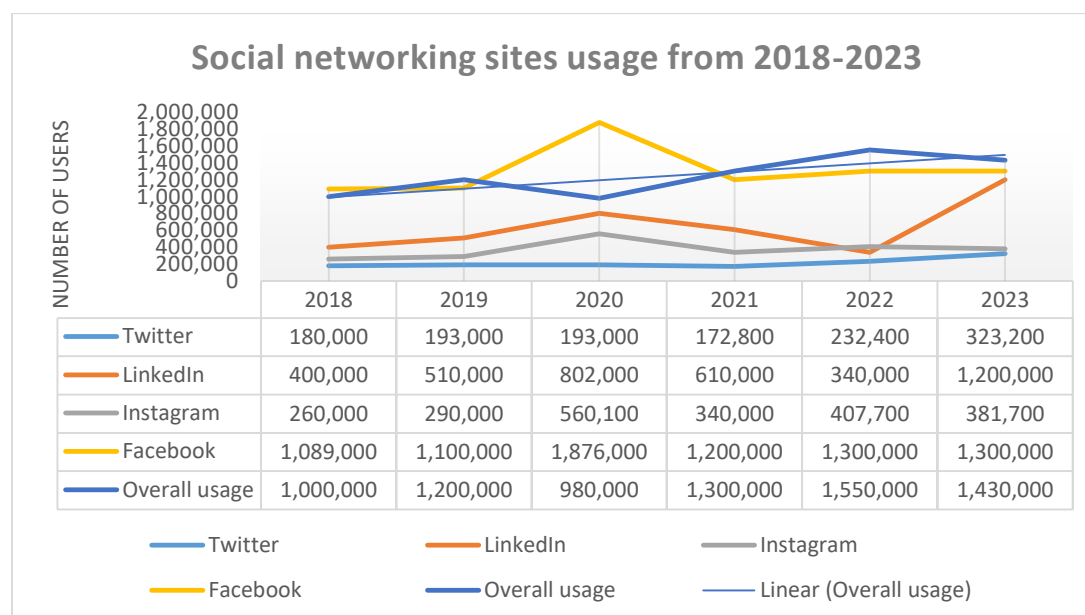
In February 2023, the statistics for social networking sites usage by people for Instagram had risen to 4.9% (GlobalStats, 2023) and statistics from Zambasa (2022), show that WhatsApp is being used by 44% of the people that can access the internet in Zimbabwe. The rise in the number of social networking sites users in the continent has led to the adoption of these sites for customer interaction by most businesses, with banks creating WhatsApp chat bots that assist in creating

convenience for interacting with customers and stores in the fashion industry now engage with their customers on these different sites which include WhatsApp, Instagram and Twitter to promote their apparel and clothing lines (Zambasa, 2022). Noticing that customers are more active on the digital platforms companies have taken advantage of this especially in the apparel industry as they now advertise their clothes, shoes and accessories so as to attract customers to their stores and also in a way influence their buying behavior, an example of one such company is Edgars.

Edgars Stores Limited, is one of the major clothing retailers, providing middle and upper class Zimbabweans with latest and fashionable brands at affordable prices. Its main product line consisting of apparel, shoes, textiles and accessories. With the rise of social networking sites usage in the country the store has established an Instagram account, WhatsApp shopping platforms and an online store at www.shop.edgarsstores.co.zw which were designed to increase convenience for the customers and also to make the business more competitive as customers make referrals which boost their morale to purchase from the store (Edgars, 2023).

The rampant use of social sites has made most companies have the need to know if the use of these sites affect their shopper`s buying behavior. This research is aimed at assessing the influence of social networking sites usage on the customer`s buying behavior of Edgars. Figure 1 shows changes in the usage of social networking sites from 2018-2023:

Figure 1: Social networking sites usage in Zimbabwe between 2018- 2023



Source: www.dataportal.com. And <https://population.un.org/>

1.2 Problem statement

With the increase of users on social networking sites as shown by the statistics from Data-e-portal (2023), NapoleonCat (2020) and Mudzingwa (2019) show that companies have created a competitive zone as they engage social media users in huge numbers to attract them to purchase their products and services through marketing and disseminate information that lures customers to favor their brand. The rising numbers of companies on the sites has created competition for customers and Zimbabwean companies have not been spared.

Due to the increase of usage of social networking sites by customers companies have to understand what factors influence the buying behavior of their shoppers, with a specific focus on whether the use of these social networking sites affects their customers` buying behavior. As Edgars is one of the companies that has resorted to attracting their customers through social networking sites, it is important to take note of what customers and potential customers are attracted to whilst on the company`s sites. It is important to understand what triggers their shoppers to make purchases online and to understand if the effects are brought about by the posts and information on their sites.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of social networking sites usage on the buying behavior of online shoppers, the customers that were used for assessment were from Edgars Stores Limited. The customer buying behavior was divided into 4 variables which included customer trust, perceived value, customer satisfaction and purchase intention. The independent variable for the study was social networking sites usage and the dependent variable was online shoppers` buying behavior. The purpose of the study was broken down into research questions, objectives and hypotheses.

1.4 Research objectives

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. To ascertain the influence of social networking sites usage on perceived value.
2. To check the impact of social networking sites usage on purchase intention.
3. To determine the influence of social networking sites usage on customer trust.
4. To find the relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction.

1.5 Hypothesis

This section shows statements of expectations and predictions that were tested in the research, which included:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between social networking sites usage and perceived value.

H₂: Social networking sites usage has an impact on customer's purchase intention.

H₃: Social networking sites usage influences customer trust.

H₄: There is a positive relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is significant to a number of parties, including the researcher, the institution and the organization employed in the study.

1.6.1 To the researcher

The study improves the ability to solve problems, gather and process data and communicate all of which will be helpful for future research projects and studies. The research is also an opportunity to put into practice the learnt theories during the course of the study in marketing. Furthermore, the research creates a basis of a deeper understanding of the world of marketing on the internet and also provides knowledge in the field of buying behavior and social networking sites usage.

1.6.2 To the University

The results from the research can be used by Bindura University of Science Education`s marketing department in the faculty of commerce as a way of showing future students the practical side of the learnt theories and some of the highlighted literature can compensate in the study of the topic in the future. The results can also be used by future students in their studies, for their literature reviews and members of staff who wish to understand or study in the area focused on in this study.

1.6.3 To the organization

The research will help Edgars Stores Limited`s management to have knowledge of how important their online presence can be and the importance of online customer engagement. To acknowledge the opportunities given by the increased use of social networking sites in their business environment and the results will help them create strategies to improve their customers` experience. Moreover, it will help the organization find ways to push the buying behavior to the positive position which will yield company`s profits, as the study shows the effect of social networking sites on the buying behavior of their customers. The study will also give ways which social media can be used to support growth and the fact that social networking sites can be useful in the transformation market constraints into positive business opportunities.

1.7 Assumptions

The research held that social networking sites usage has an impact on customer trust, perceived value, customer satisfaction and purchase intention. The study assumed that the online store was not affected by any network challenges which might have affected the customer`s responses.

1.8 Limitations

The responses were collected at different stores which were at different stations geographically which made it costly and also those collected online were printed out for the purpose of submission.

1.9 Delimitations

The research is only focused on a single organization, Edgars Stores Limited. The data collected was only from their online store shoppers and the walk in customers in the physical stores were not considered. The social networking sites considered from the organization were Instagram and WhatsApp and others were left out as they were not active.

1.10 Definition of terms

This section seeks to clearly define all of the key terms that have been used in compiling the study. The main terms used are social networking sites, buying behavior, perceived value, customer satisfaction, purchase intention and customer trust.

Social networking sites – according to Techtarget (2022), these are websites and programs that let users interact, share information, access it and develop relationships. Examples of these sites include Instagram, Twitter and WhatsApp. The study will focus on the usage of social networking sites.

Buying behavior - This is the sum of a customer's perceptions, tastes, intentions and choices surrounding their actions when making a purchase of a good or service (Grimsley and Hill, 2021).

Perceived value – It is the discrepancy that occurs when an end user weighs the advantages and disadvantages of a service or good as well as the options under evaluation (Kotler, 2003).

Customer satisfaction – It refers to the determination to buy a good or service once more in the long term, regardless of all other external pressures like marketing initiatives (Jamal and Anastasiadou, 2009).

Purchase intention – It is defined as the shoppers' commitment and ability to buy a particular good or service in the future after an assessment (MacKenzie, Lartz and Belch, 1986)

Customer trust – This is shopper positivity generated by the shopper's overall experience and understanding and conclusions reached using the characteristics and advantages conferred by the good or service (Mowen and Minor, 2002).

1.11 Summary

This chapter focused on the background of the research, problems and objectives of the study and the significance of the research to various groups and organizations. Moreover, the topic's limitations and delimitations were discussed and the definition of key terms that are used in the study. However, the next chapter will show the already existing literature about the subject under study. In the next chapter there is the theoretical literature and the empirical literature on the influence of social networking sites on the buying behavior of shoppers.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter reviews existing literature on the relationship between social networking sites usage and the buying behavior of online shoppers of an organization. The literature review is divided into two concepts which are theoretical literature and empirical literature. The relationship of the dependent and independent variables will also be explained further with theories and past studies associated with each of them.

2.1 Theoretical literature

2.1.1 Uses and gratifications theory

The uses and gratifications theory was developed by Blumler and Katz in 1974, the theory basically discusses with more focus on the needs, motives and gratifications of social networking sites users (Gordon, 2022). The theory outlines that users of social media will make decisions on the basis of the information that is provided to them on the social sites they visit, all these decisions are also controlled by the expected gratification (Bridge and McClure, 2019). The theory clearly explains the relationship between usage of social media and how they behave afterwards and best explains the relationship between social networking sites usage and customer buyer behavior (Zhang, Mao and Fu, 2019). The uses and gratifications theory has four categories which are information, entertainment, personal identity and social interactions. The categories of the uses and gratifications theory give a clear view that the information provided by companies on the social networking sites allows customers to be influenced towards purchasing their products which has a positive change in the customer`s buying behavior (Su, Yang and Liu, 2020).

Customers use social networking sites for social gratification which can be to satisfy social support and fulfil the need to belong to a certain group. Meaning the customer will be attracted to content that matches their social needs on the sites that they visit, such customers may prefer new products and those recommended by those in the desired social class (Flynn and Goldsmith, 2019). The uses and gratifications theory shows that the social networking sites usage has the power to influence the customer's buyer behavior through the gratifications they receive on the sites.

Curras-Perez, Ruiz-Maffe and Sanz-Blass (2014), are of the view that the Uses and gratifications theory helps show the main motivation of consumer purchase as the use of social networking sites leads to purchasing a good or service, hence showing that the use of social networking sites has an effect on the shopper's buying behavior.

2.1.2 Social networking sites usage and perceived value

Holbrook (1999), Woodruff (1999) and Zeithaml (1988) have given different definitions of perceived value. However, Kotler (2003) defines perceived value as the discrepancy that occurs when an end user weighs the positives and negatives of a service or good in comparison with the options under evaluation. Kotler (1997), explains customer perceived value further using customer satisfaction and delivered value with the customer's viewpoint. Social networking sites are defined as, websites and programs that let users interact, share information, access it and develop relationships (Techtarget, 2022). This study focuses on the usage of these platforms. Sanchez-Fernandez and Iniesta-Bonillo (2007) are of the view that perceived value is when the shopper and the goods and services on offer are in a specific environment and allows for a preferential decision to be made.

The relationship between perceived value and the use of social networking sites can be further explained by the Social Network Theory. The theory was first created by Barne's 1954 research which examined relationships between individuals of the same social class, this research gave rise to the terms "networking" and "social network" that are now being widely used. The research concluded that the relationship between individuals was characterized by either strong social ties or weak social ties. A further research into the theory by Granovetter (1973) titled the Strength of weak ties, showed that the relationships between individuals results in a flow of valuable information within the group or individuals. Liu, Sidhu, Beacom and Valente (2017) give a simple definition in relation to the buying behavior of customers, they outline that the theory shows that

when customers interact on social networking sites they gain social capital, through the social relationships formed. They further discuss that social capital is in form of information and support towards the purchase of a good or brand, allowing for a change in behavior and an increase in perceived value for a product or a brand or both.

Furthermore, Williams, Shires and Chapel (2021), mention that social network theory looks at various network of relationships between people and what makes them similar. The Encyclopedia of Social Measurement of 2005 states that Social Network Theory is a way in which social relationships formed by a customer help them reach information which improves their perceived value towards a product.

It can be safely said that the theory shows that when customers use social networking sites, they form relationships which help them gain social capital, which includes information about a product or service they desire to purchase or social support to purchasing a product or service. All this results in increased perceived value for a product (StudySmarter, 2022).

2.1.3 Social networking sites usage and purchase intention

Purchase intention has been defined as the shoppers` commitment and ability to buy a particular good or service in the future (MacKenzie, Lartz and Belch, 1986). The relationship between social networking sites has been seen to be existent as some writers such as Mangold and Faulds (2009) have given the view that the use of social networking sites allows customers to gain the advantage of information retrieval, at moments that suite them. Powers, Advincula, Austin, Graiko and Synder (2012), add that the information gathered aids them on deciding on what to purchase and it gives them more knowledge on the brands on offer and the new products available for purchase. They also add that the information gives a shopper a certain level of the intention to purchase. Social networking sites usage makes the customer view comments and ratings posted by other customers which gives them an idea of the product features and uses, this then influences them to purchase a product or good (Miah, Hossain, Shikder, Saha and Neger, 2022).

The relationship between the two is further solidified by the Social Cognitive theory. The Social Cognitive Theory was first developed by Bandura (1997), the theory postulates that individuals learn by observing other individuals and therefore behaving in the same way as them, it consists of six constructs with observational learning as one of the constructs. LaMorte (2022), mentions

that the Social Cognitive Theory takes into consideration the way in which people get information and maintain a certain behavior, theory also incorporates for a person's past experience which also affects the adoption of behavior. In the same article the theory's construct of observational learning is shown to refer to how an individual exactly copies a behavior after an observation of another individual performing the same action.

Therefore, people who observe others on social networking sites, purchasing a product or service have high chances of developing the intention to purchase a product for their own use or consumption.

2.1.4 Social networking sites usage and customer trust

Mowen and Minor (2002), define customer trust as the shopper positivity generated by the shopper's overall experience, understanding and conclusions reached using the characteristics and advantages conferred by the good or service. Social networking sites provide a large amount of information about an organization's customers' views about the products and services that they have interacted with, it also provide a platform for social interaction for customers which results in increased customer trust, which modifies the shopper's buying behavior (Hajli, 2014). Most writers have defined the role played by trust in consumer buying behavior, the major highlight being that customer trust enables a company to maintain loyalty or even increase it, which can be established through social networking sites (Chow and Holden, 1997).

The Social Presence theory was developed by Short, Williams and Christie (1976). An article by Dontigney (2023), reveals that the social presence theory seeks to explain the relationship that exists between tools of communication in real life in comparison with virtual chatting. The article also reveals that social networking sites allow organizations to engage with customers in a two way communication model, allowing the firm to respond in the shortest possible time at a personalized level resulting in a solidified social media presence which stabilizes the customer-business relationship. The online presence of a business on social networking sites by providing images, descriptions and interactions help build relationship with customer, leading to a sense of trust which paves way to product or service purchase (Study.com, 2023).

The social presence theory solidifies the view that a company's presence on social networking sites gives the customer who is using social networking sites high levels of trust towards a brand

or product which has a positive influence on the customer's buying behavior (Walter, Ortbach and Niehaves, 2015).

2.1.5 Social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has been defined as the determination to buy a good or service once more in the long term, regardless of all other external pressures like marketing initiatives (Jamal and Anastasiadou, 2009). The usage of social networking sites allows individuals to interact, make purchases, view recommendation made through social word of mouth and also gain access to information given by a company concerning products on offer among other activities which yields high customer satisfaction (Turban, Outland, King, Lee, Liang and Turban, 2018). Social networks enables customers who are satisfied with a product or service to interact with other potential customers, which results in an increased satisfaction as a result of the other positive reviews that will have been found during the use of the social networking sites (Herrando, Jimenez-Martinez, Martin-De Hoyos, 2021). When a customer who uses social networking sites finds personalized messages that they can relate to and product descriptions that they can closely associate with, then their satisfaction is greatly affected (Zhang, Wang, Chen and Guo, 2019).

Tajfel (1982), reveals that the Social Identity Theory suggests that person defines themselves on the basis of social and personal dimensions. Ashforth and Mael (1989) break down the two dimensions by showing that personal identity is grounded by distinct characteristics which include personal habits and their physical abilities, moreover the social identity is a result of how a group perceives one (commonly a social group online or offline). Tajfel (1981) has defined the social identity as a part of the self that emanates from the data gathered from a social group, value and the emotional importance of the social link. From the definition another scholar picks out that it depicts three parts of identity development which are cognitive, evaluative and affective, the cognitive is the dimension which refers to the individual's knowledge of membership and this involves a process of self-categorization. People may categorize themselves according to gender, race and profession (Luhtamen and Crocker, 1992). Wang (2017), postulates that the evaluative part is a representation of the group self-esteem. Lam, Ahearne, Hu and Schillewart (2010), shows that the evaluative dimension co-vary in social groups.

Through the usage of social networking sites customers and brands or companies form relationships, interact socially and share views and comments whilst getting immediate response

from the companies. Interaction with the customer creates a sense of social connectedness and a sense of belonging which results in customer loyalty, therefore an upsurge in the customer's satisfaction.

2.2 Empirical literature

2.2.1 The influence of social networking sites usage on perceived value.

Since the 1990s up to present day, the idea of perceived value has drawn numerous studies and has emerged as a key business issue (Sánchez- Fernández & Iniesta- Bonillo, 2007). Due to the results that have been produced in these studies, Mizik & Jacobson (2003) have shown that organizations have largely noticed that perceived value is key in strategic management. A study by Waweru (2017) on the factors that influence customer buying intention. Allowed for an assessment of the influence of the usage of social networking sites on the perceived value of shoppers. When shoppers use social networking sites they are able to gather information about the durability of products. The study further showed that customers can find more personalized service and products which suite them, whilst saving time and energy which could be used for other activities. Due to all these Waweru (2017) concluded that perceived value has an influence on the shopper's buying behavior.

The studies then solidify the hypothesis which states that:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between social networking sites usage and perceived value.

2.2.2 The impact of social networking sites usage on the customer's purchase intention.

Social networking sites give customers the chance to interact with companies and brands, allowing them to share their views on different products and services which enables them to make buying decisions in the shortest possible time. A research by Powers, Advincula, Austin, Graiko and Synder (2012) showed that the usage of social networking sites have a great effect on the customer's intention to purchase products as customers are able to ask questions and give feedback in real time without incurring any travel costs. The reviews from friends, family and other customers who have interacted with the brand provides positive influence on the purchase decision by customers as this information comes from trusted sources (Mangold and Faulds,2009). Usage

of social networking sites by companies allows companies to personalize their interactions with customers as building a social presence will help create relationships with customers and influence the purchase intentions of the target audience.

Additionally Yayli and Bayram (2012) mention that reviews of online shoppers has shown to have a causal effect on shopper`s intention to purchase. The research by Hu and Zhu (2022), unveils the pathway whereby social media usage serves to generate users` purchase intention on social sites, the research results show that social networking sites usage play an enabling role in the arousal of a shopper`s purchase intention. The quality of the information provided for a product together with informativeness of the site and the level at which information is persuasive, have a great positive effect on the shopper`s purchase intentions (Zhang, Zhao, Cheung and Lee, 2014). The usage of social networking sites is a major player in customer`s purchase intentions such that brands that are easily accessible online through these social network platforms have a greater chance of tapping into their customers mind. Reviews of online shoppers has shown to have a causal effect on shopper`s purchase intention.

The researches from the above mentioned studies ascertain the study`s hypothesis that:

H₂: Social networking sites usage has an impact on customer`s purchase intention.

2.2.3 The influence of social networking sites usage on customer trust.

Waweru (2017) `s study sort to establish the relationship of customer trust and social networking sites. The study outlined that the usage of social networking sites was fundamental in building the shopper`s buying behavior. The personalized responses to complaints that customers receive makes the customer feel in control and gives the impression that the company cares for the shopper which creates customer trust for the brand. A study by Nolcheska (2017), ascertained that the trust for certain brands arises when the business is able to show credibility of the brand by posting customer reviews, product information and other visuals from other influential people in the society on their social networking sites. Trust is built when an organization responds to customer queries posted on social sites and the willingness to consider the customers` feelings and comments about products is also an initiative towards customer trust (Smith and Barclay, 1997).

A study by Mainardes and Cardoso (2018), affirmed that the usage of social networking sites has a direct positive influence on the customer's trust fulfilment either for the product or the brand they desire to buy. Social proof shown by a company can help build customer trust as it entails the psychological habit where shoppers imitate the actions of their shoppers when purchasing products or services. When companies satisfy their customers' social proof needs then there is increased trust for the brand, which affirms the hypothesis that states:

H₃: The use of social networking sites influences customer trust.

2.2.4 The relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction.

Bradley (2010), describe social networking sites as tools that help businesses communicate with their customers at the end of it all satisfying their need. When companies ensure transparency in the information they provide on social networking sites with high levels of authenticity backed by immediate response to customer complaints increases the levels of satisfaction for customers (Khashman, 2021). Customer satisfaction is also significantly influenced by other customers' purchase or product experience which is easily accessible on the company's social sites in the form of reviews and referrals (Wen, 2012). The relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction is further brought to light by a study by Alamgir and Minho (2020), where the results show that when the company gives service quality that exceeds the shopper's expectations then there is creation of customer satisfaction.

This affirms the hypothesis stating that:

H₄: There is a positive relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction.

2.3 Gap analysis

Quite a few researches pin point the relationship of the general usage of social networking sites and buyer behavior. With most studies focusing on the aspect of the effect of online marketing and purchase intention, whilst some focus on online advertising and purchase intention, which are just but branches of social networking sites usage and buyer behavior. However, this study investigated

a broad relationship of the usage of social networking sites together with its branches which include informativeness, social cause and shopping (Khan, Azhar, Rahman and Akhtar, 2022) and buyer behavior taking into account the other variables of buyer behavior which include purchase intention, trust, customer satisfaction and perceived value (García-Salirrosas and Acevedo-Duque, 2022).

2.4 Summary

The chapter gave the main theory which was the backbone of the study, the Uses and gratifications theory and further gave other theories that ascertained each hypothesis of the study which include the Social network theory, social presence theory, social identity theory and the social cognitive theory. The chapter also gave an insight on the empirical studies that show a relationship between social networking sites usage and shopper`s buyer behavior. A gap analysis being explored by the study is also explained in this chapter.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to show how social media usage influences the buying behavior of Edgars` customers. This chapter highlights the research design, target population, sampling design, data collection methods, research procedures and data analysis methods that were used during the time at which the study was carried out.

3.1 Research design

Research design is a method, framework and an approach for gathering data for the purposes of discovering answers to research questions (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). The study used a causal research design in order to test the hypotheses of the research, in the context of Edgars Stores Limited. Causal research design was used to determine the extent and kind of cause and effect connections. It can also be used to evaluate linkages in cases where specific casual evidence is present (Zikmund, Babin & Griffin, 2012).

The study investigates how the independent variable influences the dependent variables, providing positive and constructive data (Hair, Black, Banin, Anderson and Tathan, 2006). The variables used for this study were customer buying behavior and social networking sites usage.

3.2 Target population

The target population is the group of individuals employed for observations. Bryman (2004) shows that the population refers to the individuals that exhibit the traits which the study is interested in

analyzing. The target population for this study was drawn from 25 stores, this made the target population for the study amount to an estimated 5 600 customers who are active on social networking sites. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the list of branches and respective online customers represented by those present on their social networking site which is WhatsApp.

Table 1: Edgars Stores WhatsApp platform users by branch

BRANCH	USERS	BRANCH	USERS
Stanley house	246	Marondera branch	215
Westgate	248	Masvingo branch	190
Eastgate	232	Mutare branch	180
ZB Centre	242	Herbert Chitepo	215
Borrowdale	222	Rusape branch	205
Avondale	210	Vic falls branch	220
Joina City	250	Zvishavane branch	210
Chegutu branch	195	Gweru branch	212
Leopold Takawira branch	230	Hwange branch	180
Herbert and 9 th avenue	245	Kadoma branch	190
8 th & Jason Moyo	241	Chinhoyi branch	180
Bradfield	210	Chiredzi branch	212
Kwekwe branch	200		

Source: www.edgarsstores.co.zw

3.3 Sampling frame

Kothari (2009) shows through the definition that samples are chosen from the whole population in order to form an opinion or draw conclusions for the study. Shin et al (2009) sets forth sampling frame as a summary of all qualified sample groups. Edgars Stores Limited served as the study's sample base.

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedure

Sampling technique that was used was random sampling where the first 15 customers who made purchases online through the WhatsApp platforms were chosen to complete the questionnaires, for the study. According to Steward and Kamins (1993), the fraction that is a representative of a wider population is what is known as a sample size. Using Saunders (2005), when the population is 5 600, then the sample size is 361 which is the number of questionnaires responded to. The table that shows the sample size consideration by Saunders (2005) is shown below:

Table 2: Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population

N	S
4 000	351
4 500	354
5 000	357
6 000	361
7 000	364
8 000	367
9 000	368

Note: N is the population size; S is the sample size

Source: Saunders 2005

3.5 Research instruments

This study used a questionnaire as a data collection instrument. The questionnaire was developed using measurement scales adapted from several authors who had previously studied the variables in this research. The research employed the use of questionnaires as the research questions, objectives and hypotheses were easily translated into statements that customers who were the respondents understood. The use of questionnaires assured uniformity of questions which enabled measurement of different research question that had different answers which made the information gathered to be more solid. The measurement scales used in designing the questionnaire are discussed in detail in the next section.

3.6 Measurement Scales

This section highlights the measurement scales used for the two variables under study which were social networking sites usage and the buying behavior of online shoppers. The section also gives a brief description of the origins of each scale (its development), reliability and the validity of each scale.

3.6.1 Social networking sites usage

Social networking sites usage was measured by a scale developed and validated by Khan, Azhar, Rahman and Akhtar (2022). The social networking sites usage scale has six constructs which include informativeness, education entertainment shopping socialization and social cause. Each construct was evaluated by means of a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 5(strongly agree), each having 3 items which gave the scale a total of 18 items. Data analysis gave an exploratory factor analysis of 0.70.

3.6.2 Buying behavior of online shoppers

To measure the buying behavior of online shoppers the PERVAINCONSA scale was used it was developed by García-Salirrosas and Acevedo-Duque (2022). The scale comprises of 4 sub constructs which include perceived value, purchase intention, trust and satisfaction. Each sub construct was evaluated by means of a 5 point Likert scale with a range of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All these sub constructs gave a total of 20 items. KMO = 0.958 and AVE >0.5 (for each sub construct).

3.7 Data collection procedures

The researcher approached Edgars marketing department and presented them with a summary of the objectives of the study and explained why it was crucial that it be undertaken for the retailing giant. After approval with strict emphasis on customer confidentiality, the questionnaires were distributed via WhatsApp. Those distributed through the WhatsApp platforms were responded to by the use of google forms, which enabled the respondents to use their mobile phones to answer the questions.

3.8 Reliability and validity

The reliability for the data was tested through Cronbach and validity was tested using AVE.

3.9 Data analysis and presentation procedures

Data analysis is the application of statistical and logical techniques to examine data collected from the research respondents and drawing conclusions that confirm the research hypotheses (Fox, 2009). The data that was gathered was captured and analyzed using SPSS-20 and the data presented was in tabular form. To check for the relationship between social networking sites usage and buying behavior of online shoppers, the regression analysis was used.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Ethics refer to the values and moral principles that a study follows in line with legal, social and professional requirements. The research was carried out after an approval from the store's management. Names and other personal data was excluded from being collected from the participants, the questionnaire also emphasized in text that the respondents were not supposed to write any personal information on the questionnaires. All respondents were treated with respect inconsiderate of age or gender. The respondents voluntarily participated in the study and their responses were kept confidential and private.

3.11 Summary

The chapter gave detailed form of the research methodology highlighting the research design, research instruments, target population, sampling design, data collection methods, research procedures and data analysis and presentation procedures. The chapter also includes the ethical considerations of the study during data collection.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation, analysis and discussion of the data collected through the distributed questionnaires. It also shows the results after the results had been analyzed through Simple linear regression on the SPSS-20 software. The chapter first presents the rate at which the questionnaires were responded to and the socio-demographic profiles of the respondents. Then it goes on to show in the form of tables and figures the results of the analyzed data and an interpretation of each. Included in the chapter is a discussion of the results of the study.

4.1 Questionnaire response rate

361 questionnaires were distributed amongst Edgars` online customers, of the total 350 were fully answered and returned and 11 were not returned. Which presented a response rate of 96.95%. A summary of the response rate is given in Table 3:

Table 3: Questionnaire response rate

Questionnaire type	Frequency	Rate (%)
Distributed	361	100
Returned	350	96.95

Source: primary data

As supported by Brinkman (2014), who alludes that an acceptable response rate for a quantitative research must be above 70%, this ascertains that the study's response rate of 96.95% was favorable and sufficient to draw conclusions from. The response was considerably high as customers could anonymously respond to the questionnaires and return them.

4.2 Socio-Demographic profile of respondents

This section focuses on the information about the socio-demographics of the customers that were respondents. The characteristics under observation included age, gender, marital status, employment status and usage of social networks.

Table 4: Socio- Demographic profile of respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	Frequency %
Age 20 and below	79	22.6
21-45	140	40
45-60	75	21.4
61 and above	56	16
Total	350	100
Gender Female	210	60
Male	140	40
Total	350	100
Marital Status Single	175	50
Married	140	40
Divorced	35	10

	Widowed	0	0
Total		350	100
Employment status	Unemployed	35	10
	Employed	175	50
	Student	35	10
	Retired	105	30
Total		350	100
Social sites usage	Yes	350	100
	No	0	0
Total		350	100

Source: Primary data

The first part of Table 4 shows that the study population had 350 people, with a dominant age group of 21 – 45 years with 140 respondents which was 40% of the sample population, second group being the age of 20 and below which had 79 respondents which amounted to 22.6% of the sample population, the third group was those between 45-60 years who were 75, 21.4% of the sample population and the group with least respondents was the 61 years and above which had 56, which was 16% of the study population. The low participation of older people in the study is justified by a study by Kemperman, Berg, Weijs-Perree and Uijtdewillegen (2019) that shows that older people are generally satisfied with their social lives and so they are less considerate about being on social networking sites.

The second part describes how the population divided in terms of gender where the female respondents were 210 and the male were 140, which made 60% and 40 % respectfully. This was as a result that the WhatsApp platforms that were used by the company were dominated by females. The study also had 50% of the sample population were those who were single, the married

constituted 40% and the divorced were 10%, the study had no widowed people as reflected by the responses collected from the questionnaires.

The study also captured the employment status of the sample population, were 50% were in the employed group amounting to 175 people, the unemployed and the students had 35 people each which means each group contributed 10% and lastly the retired group had 105 people which was 30% of the sample population. Lastly the table shows that all the people that took part in the study were users of social networking sites as all respondents answered ‘Yes’, with a response rate of 100%.

4.3 Scale- dimensionality analysis

Scale dimensionality assesses aspects of the study that are impossible to measure directly, such as temperature and height, because these measurements can only roughly predict the outcomes, it is essential to measure each dimension independently so as to precisely account for variance of each (Segars, 1997).

4.3.1 Component analysis for social networking sites usage (N=9)

Social networking sites usage is the rate at which people use social sites for interaction. In this study social networking sites usage was measured using 9 questions which were from a measurement scale developed by Khan et al (2022). Table shows how the factor analysis results from SPSS-20.

Table 5: Factor analysis for Social networking sites usage.

Item	Factor
I use social media sites to get information regarding fashion trends.	.783
I use social media sites to find the latest news on fashion.	.752
I use social media sites to gather information related to fashion.	.790
I use social media sites for distributing essential items.	.807
I use social media sites for crowdfunding	.726
I use social media sites for civil campaigns.	.712
I use social media sites to buy essentials.	.719

I use social media sites to purchase clothes.	.693
I use social media sites to buy stationery and e-books.	.705
Variance explained	55.35%
Eigen value	
The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.939
The Bartlett's test of sphericity	.000
Reliability	.917

Factor analysis was appropriate for data as the Bartlett's Test of sphericity was significant as $p < 0.001$ and the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.939, which was a high statistic indicating the appropriateness of the factor analysis as it was within the 0.5 – 1 range. The variable had a total variance of 55.35%. The reliability of scale was measured using Cronbach's Alpha 0.917

4.3.2 Component analysis for Trust (N=5)

Trust is the shopper positivity generated by the shopper's overall experience (Mowen and Minor, 2002). Trust is major role player when building customer buying behavior, as a customer will be will to buy from a trustworthy store, as a variable of Buyer behavior it has five items as per the PERVAINCONSA scale developed by García-Salirrosas and Acevedo-Duque (2022). The results for the factor analysis are shown below:

Table 6: Factor analysis for Trust

Item	Factor
Edgars' online stores;	
They strive for consumer satisfaction.	.741
They are honest and trustworthy about refunds or exchanging products.	.823
They strive to provide quality service.	.820
The information EdgarsZW provided is truthful and ethical.	.814
They provide confidence to make payment through electronic transactions.	.702

Variance explained	68.732%
Eigen value	3.437
The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.880
The Bartlett`s test of sphericity	.000
Reliability	.885

Source: SPSS-20 output

As shown in table 6, principal factor analysis is applied to evaluate the scale dimensionality of trust. The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling had a value of 0.880 and the Bartlett`s test of sphericity was 0.000 which indicated that the data was appropriate for factor analysis as  $p < 0.001$ . The Total variance as explained by factor analysis was 68.732%. Reliability for the variable trust tested by Cronbach`s alpha was 0.885 indicating consistency of scale items.

4.3.3 Component analysis for purchase intention (N=5)

Purchase intention is the shoppers` commitment and ability to buy a particular good or service in the future (MacKenzie, Lartz and Belch, 1986). As given by the PERVAINCONSA scale purchase intention is a building block for positive buyer behavior (García-Salirrosas and Acevedo-Duque (2022). The variable has a total of items, the results of the factor analysis are shown in table 7.

Table 7: Factor analysis results for purchase intention

Item	Factor
In the online store;	
I would buy	.749
I would consider buying online	.752
I hope buy on the online store	.633
I intend to buy clothes/shoes/accessories.	.632
I plan to buy clothes/shoes/accessories	.724
Variance explained	59.041%

Eigen value	2.952
The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.815
The Bartlett`s test of sphericity	.000
Reliability	.825

Source: SPSS output

The factor analysis for customer`s purchase intention showed the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin value of 0.815 and the Bartlett`s test of sphericity value of 0.000 which satisfied the condition that $p < 0.001$ making the data appropriate for factor analysis. Further analysis showed the Total variance to be 59.041% and the reliability value for purchase intention scale items was 0.825.

4.3.4 Component analysis for customer satisfaction (N=5)

Customer satisfaction is as the determination to buy a good or service once more in the long term, regardless of all other external pressures like marketing initiatives (Jamal and Anastasiadou, 2009). Customer satisfaction is used to evaluate buyer behavior as per the scale developed by García-Salirrosas and Acevedo-Duque (2022). Variable has 5 items and the factor analysis results are summarized in table 8.

Table 8: Factor analysis for customer satisfaction.

Item	Factor
I am very satisfied with the Edgars` online store with respect to ;	
The quality of the garments on offer.	.641
Prices of the purchased garments.	.548
The customer service they offer	.701
Delivery time.	.804
The designs of the garments offered.	.717

Variance explained	57.363%
Eigen value	2.868
The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.832
The Bartlett`s test of sphericity	.000
Reliability	.813

Source: SPSS-20 output

Factor analysis for customer satisfaction scale items gave a value of 0.832 for the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and 0.000 for the Bartlett`s test which satisfied the condition were  $p < 0.001$  showing appropriateness of the factor analysis for the data. The total variance was 57.363% and Cronbach`s Alpha was 0.813 showing good reliability value for the scale.

4.3.5 Component analysis for Perceived value (N=5)

Perceived value is the discrepancy that occurs when an end user weighs the advantages and disadvantages of a service or good as well as the options under evaluation (Kotler, 2003). As given by the PERVAINCONSA scale perceived value is a part of buyer behavior (García-Salirrosas and Acevedo-Duque, 2022). Perceived value has five items and the factor analysis results are shown in table 9:

Table 9: Factor analysis for Perceived value

Item	Factor
Buying clothes at Edgars` online store has given me good perceived value;	
Improved the way I am perceived	.837
I feel fashionable in Edgars clothes	.858
I feel good.	.851
It is a good choice.	.879
It suits me.	.698

Variance explained	74.499%
Eigen value	3.725
The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.888
The Bartlett's test of sphericity	.000
Reliability	.913

Source: SPSS-20 output

Perceived value had a Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy value of 0.888 and a Bartlett's test of sphericity value of 0.000, which showed that the data was appropriate for factor analysis as it satisfied the condition that $p < 0.001$. the total variance explained was 74.499% and Cronbach's Alpha showing a reliability value of 0.913 which depicted good consistency for the scale.

4.4 Reliability test

The questionnaire was tested for validity by Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability test was applied to the Social networking sites usage scale together with the Buyer behavior scale. An appropriate reliability for a scale should be within a range of 0.7-0.8-0.9, which is acceptable, good and highly reliable, respectfully (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). Table 10 shows a summary of the scale's reliability,

Table 10: Summary of reliability test

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
Social networking sites usage	0.917	9
Trust	0.885	5
Purchase intention	0.825	5
Satisfaction	0.813	5

Perceived value	0.913	5
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Source: primary data SPSS-20

The reliability results showed that the scale was reliable as all gave good reliability values that were greater than 0.8.

4.4.1 Convergent validity

Table 11: Convergent validity

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
SNU4	.843				
SNU2	.783				
SNU3	.770				
SNU1	.760				
SNU6	.706				
SNU9	.692				
SNU7	.680				
SNU5	.668				
SNU8	.655				
CBBPI5		.749			
CBBPI1		.729			
CBBPI2		.710			
CBBPI4		.625			

CBBPI3		.600			
CBBS4			.808		
CBBS5			.719		
CBBS3			.700		
CBBS1			.637		
CBBS2			.535		
CBBPV1				.866	
CBBPV3				.863	
CBBPV4				.848	
CBBPV2				.825	
CBBPV5				.597	
CBBT3					.784
CBBT4					.746
CBBT2					.745
CBBT1					.735
CBBT5					.621

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

Source: SPSS-20 output

Table 11 shows the pattern matrix which shows for convergent validity for the study variables. Social networking sites usage and constructs for buyer behavior which are trust, purchase intention satisfaction and perceived value are each loaded in their factor. In the first factor social networking sites usage loaded, in the second factor was purchase intention, loaded in the third factor was satisfaction, perceived value and trust loaded in the fourth and fifth factor respectfully.

4.4.2 Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity focuses on determining the actual lack of relationships between notions that are theoretically ought not to be associated with one another (Nikolopoulou, 2022). Table 12 shows the factor correlation matrix which illustrates the relationship amongst variables and factors.

Table 12: Discriminant validity –Factor correlation matrix

Factor Correlation Matrix

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
1	1.000	.427	.152	.296	.283
2	.427	1.000	.147	-.016	-.166
3	.152	.147	1.000	.126	-.033
4	.296	-.016	.126	1.000	.534
5	.283	-.166	-.033	.534	1.000

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

Source: SPSS output

Table 12 shows the results that show all factors are less than 0.8 which indicates that there is discriminant validity.

4.5 Statistical assumptions for simple linear regression

When using simple linear regression data must be tested for assumptions that include linearity, homoscedasticity and normality, these ensure the validity of the data that is to be regressed. Results for these assumptions were extracted from SPSS-20.

4.5.1 Linearity

Linearity is when mean values of a variable increase as the other variable increases lying in a straight line (introspective-mode, 2023). Test of linearity was made through ANOVA and the output is given in table 13. If there is no close association between the variables, then the value of the significant deviation is smaller than 0.05, which is required to demonstrate a linear relationship.

Table 13: Linearity between social networking sites usage and trust

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
(Combined)			133.574	33	4.048	6.259	.000
Trust	Between Groups	Linearity	32.289	1	32.289	49.932	.000
Social_networking_sites_usage		Deviation from Linearity	101.284	32	3.165	4.895	.000
Within Groups			204.345	316	.647		
Total			337.918	349			

Source: SPSS-20

As shown by the ANOVA results in the table there is no linear relationship between trust and social networking sites usage, this is because the value was less than 0.05 whereas it has to meet the significance level of $p > 0.05$.

Table 14: Linearity between social networking sites usage and purchase intention

Table shows results for linearity analysis between social networking sites usage and purchase intention.

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
(Combined)			97.955	33	2.968	6.101	.000
Purchase_intention *	Between Groups	Linearity Deviation from Linearity	41.222	1	41.222	84.721	.000
Social_networking_sites_usage	Within Groups		56.734	32	1.773	3.644	.000
Total			153.752	316	.487		
			251.708	349			

Source: SPSS-20

The ANOVA findings in the table demonstrate that there is no linear association between trust and use of social networking sites usage because the value was less than 0.05 when the significance level was $p > 0.05$.

Table 15: Linearity between social networking sites usage and satisfaction

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
(Combined)			18.629	33	.565	1.238	.179
Satisfaction *	Between Groups	Linearity Deviation from Linearity	4.104	1	4.104	9.002	.003
Social_networking_sites_usage	Within Groups		14.524	32	.454	.995	.478
Total			144.080	316	.456		
			162.709	349			

Source: SPSS-20

As the value was less than 0.05 and must reach the significance criterion of $p > 0.05$ there is no linear association between trust and social networking sites usage, as evidenced by the ANOVA findings in the table.

Table 16: Linearity between social networking sites usage and perceived value.

ANOVA Table

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
(Combined)	103.708	33	3.143	3.059	.000
Between Groups	37.259	1	37.259	36.271	.000
Deviation from Linearity	66.449	32	2.077	2.021	.001
Within Groups	324.608	316	1.027		
Total	428.316	349			

Source: SPSS-20

As shown by the ANOVA results in the table there is no linear relationship between trust and social networking sites usage, this is because the value was less than 0.05 whereas it has to meet the significance level of $p > 0.05$.

4.5.2 Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity is when the disturbance between the relationship of independent and dependent is the same amongst all independent variables.

Table 17: Homoscedasticity

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Trust	1.608	30	316	.026
Purchase_intention	2.495	30	316	.000

Satisfaction	1.266	30	316	.165
Percieved_value	3.121	30	316	.000

Source: SPSS-20

The results from the test of homogeneity of variances show that there is no homoscedasticity for trust, purchase intention and perceived value as they have p values of less than 0.05 which is the significant level. However, there is homoscedasticity for satisfaction as the p value was greater than 0.05 which is the significant level.

4.5.3 Normality

Normality is an assumption of simple linear regression, the test is to show whether collected data for the research follows a normal distribution. The test was conducted through the SPSS-20 software and the results are shown in the table below:

Table 18: Normality test

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Trust	.170	350	.000	.886	350	.000
Purchase_intention	.160	350	.000	.926	350	.000
Satisfaction	.131	350	.000	.910	350	.000
Percieved_value	.131	350	.000	.911	350	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Source: SPSS-20

The Sig values for the dependent variables was 0.000 which was a value less than 0.05 the threshold for Normality. The results of both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests indicated that the data was not normally distributed.

4.6 Hypothesis testing

This section analyzed the hypothesis of this study in order to test their applicability. The hypothesis were tested using simple linear regression on SPSS-20. The testing of the hypothesis was to measure the relationship between social networking sites usage and buyer behavior.

4.6.1 H1: There is a positive relationship between social networking sites usage and perceived value.

Table 19: Model summary

Model Summary ^b										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change	
1	.295 ^a	.087	.084	1.06006	.087	33.156	1	348	.000	1.293

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social_networking_sites_usage

b. Dependent Variable: Percieved_value

Source: SPSS-20

Table 19 shows model summary for the relationship between social networking sites usage and perceived value. Results show R^2 of 0.087, which means that social networking sites usage has 8.4% influence on perceived value.

Table 20: ANOVA Table

ANOVA ^a					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	37.259	1	37.259	33.156	.000 ^b
Residual	391.057	348	1.124		
Total	428.316	349			

a. Dependent Variable: Percieved_value

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social_networking_sites_usage

Model was significant with values $(1,348) = 33.156$ (F- Value), the values demonstrated how the model adequately explained the dependent variable use of social networking sites. The results show that the regression model was significant in predicting how social networking sites usage and perceived value.

Table 21: Coefficients Table

Model	Coefficients ^a				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.981	.230		8.601	.000
Social_networking_sites_usage	.341	.059	.295	5.758	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Percieved_value

Source: SPSS-20

A simple linear regression with a beta value of 0.295 as shown in table 21 demonstrates the strength of the association between the social networking sites usage and perceived value. This specifically means that with all other variables at a constant, perceived value should rise by 0.295 for every increase in social networking sites usage. This shows that there is a positive relationship between social networking sites usage and perceived value

4.6.2 H₂: Social networking sites usage has an impact on customer`s purchase intention.

Table 22: Model summary**Model Summary^b**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.405 ^a	.164	.161	.77772	.744

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social_networking_sites_usage

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase_intention

Table 22 shows model summary for the relationship between social networking sites usage and purchase intention. Results show R^2 of 0.164, which means that social networking sites usage has 16.4% influence on purchase intention.

Table 23: ANOVA**ANOVA^a**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41.222	1	41.222	68.152	.000 ^b
	Residual	210.486	348	.605		
	Total	251.708	349			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase_intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social_networking_sites_usage

Source: SPSS-20

Model was significant with values $(1,348) = 68.152$ (F- Value), the values demonstrated how the model adequately explained the dependent variable use of social networking sites. The results show that the regression model was significant in predicting how social networking sites usage and perceived value.

Table 24: Coefficients**Coefficients^a**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.507	.169		14.832	.000
1 Social_networking_sites_usage	.359	.043	.405	8.255	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase_intention

Source: SPSS-20

The table showed a beta value of 0.405 in simple linear regression analysis shows the strength and direction of the relationship between social networking sites usage and purchase intention . The positive beta value indicated that as the value of social networking sites usage and purchase intention. The magnitude of 0.405 indicated that the relationship was relatively strong.

4.6.3 Social networking sites usage influences customer trust.

Table 25: Model summary**Model Summary^b**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change	
1	.309 ^a	.096	.093	.93715	.096	36.765	1	348	.000	.457

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social_networking_sites_usage

b. Dependent Variable: Trust

Source: SPSS-20

Table 25 shows model summary for the relationship between social networking sites usage and trust. Results show R^2 of 0.096, which means that social networking sites usage has 9.6% influence on trust.

Table 26: ANOVA For Social networking sites usage and trust**ANOVA^a**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.289	1	32.289	36.765	.000 ^b
	Residual	305.629	348	.878		
	Total	337.918	349			

a. Dependent Variable: Trust

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social_networking_sites_usage

Source: SPSS-20

Table 27: Coefficients for social networking sites and trust**Coefficients^a**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.377	.204		11.672	.000
	Social_networking_sites_usage	.318	.052	.309	6.063	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Trust

Source: SPSS-20

The coefficients table shows a beta value of 0.309 from the simple linear regression analysis showed the strength and direction of the relationship between social networking sites usage and Trust. The positive sign of the beta value indicated a positive relationship between the two variables, which means that as the value of social networking sites usage increases the value of trust also increases. The magnitude of 0.309 indicates the strength of the relationship.

4.6.4 There is a positive relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction.

Table 28: Model summary for social networking sites usage and satisfaction

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.159 ^a	.025	.022	.67510	.530

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social_networking_sites_usage

b. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

Table 28 shows model summary for the relationship between social networking sites usage and satisfaction. Results show R^2 of 0.025, which means that social networking sites usage has 2.5% influence on satisfaction.

Table 29: ANOVA for social networking sites usage and satisfaction

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.104	1	4.104	9.006	.003 ^b
	Residual	158.604	348	.456		
	Total	162.709	349			

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social_networking_sites_usage

Source: SPSS-20

Model was significant with values (1,348) = 9.156 (F- Value), the values demonstrated how the model adequately explained the dependent variable use of social networking sites. The results show that the regression model was significant in predicting how social networking sites usage and satisfaction.

Table 30: Coefficients for social networking sites usage and satisfaction**Coefficients^a**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.408	.147		23.228	.000
Social_networking_sites_usage	.113	.038	.159	3.001	.003

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

Source: SPSS-20

The coefficients table from the simple linear regression showed a beta value of 0.159 which indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between social networking sites usage and satisfaction. The positive beta value suggests that there is a positive linear relationship between the variables.

4.7 Discussion

The goal of the investigation was to assess the influence of social networking sites usage on the buying behavior of online shoppers. Simple linear regression was used to test for the research's hypothesis. Whilst using simple linear regression, some of the assumptions required by the statistical tool, such as normality, homoscedasticity and linearity, were not satisfied by the data.

From the calculated data, it is evident that there is a positive correlation between social networking sites usage and buying behavior of online shoppers. The results show that usage of social networking sites have a great impact on the factors that build buyer behavior which include perceived value, purchase intention, trust and satisfaction. However, the linearity test showed that there was a linear relationship between social networking sites usage and satisfaction, this showed that customers who use social networking sites are more likely to be satisfied by brands, products and services that they have interacted with on social networking sites or that have gathered information about these brands from people who have purchased them. A study by Malthouse and

Calder (2016), showed that customers who interacted with their retailers on social networking sites had higher levels of satisfaction than those who did not.

The results also showed that there was appositive relationship between social networking sites usage and customer trust, this is because customers after visiting their social networking sites get to interact with other customers and even friends and family who have interacted with the brands products or the retail store itself. A study by Liu and Arnett (2000), found that customer trust was significantly influenced when they used social networking sites as they got credible information from company sites. According to Walter, Ortbach and Niehaves` findings in 2015, the Social presence theory establishes the notion that a company`s existence on social networking sites results in a high degree of confidence in customers who frequently use such sites. Consequently, this has a beneficial influence on their purchasing habits and attitudes towards a brand or product.

After statistically testing the hypothesis that social networking sites usage has an impact on customer`s purchase intention, the results showed that there was a strong positive relationship between the two variables. When customers use social networking sites they are able to gather more information regarding product use and availability, this information can be generated through other customers or even marketing advertisements by the retailers which improves the intention to purchase, as most customers who search for a product are willing and able to make a purchase. Liang, Choi and Joppe (2017) `s study found that social media reviews and recommendations positively influence a customer`s purchase intentions, which significantly influences the buyer behavior. Larmothe (2022) explains that the social cognitive theory considers how individuals acquire information and sustain certain behaviors. Additionally, this theory integrates an individual`s previous experiences, which can influence their likelihood of adopting a particular behavior.

The hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between social networking site usage and perceived, gave a positive result after being tested on the Simple linear regression. This is because as customers use social networking sites they are attracted to brands, products and retailers that suite their style of living therefore are likely going to have a high perceived value for the products they choose to purchase. One study supporting the notion that customers who use social

networking sites are more likely to enhance their perceived value for a brand is one by Limayen, Khalifa and Frini (2010), the research showed that social networking sites have a significant impact on the perceived value of an online shopping experience, which ultimately influences the perceived value.

As all hypothesis tested positive when they were tested this shows that social networking sites have a strong influence on the buying behavior of online shoppers.

4.8 Summary

In this particular chapter, the focus was centered on the presentation and examination of data, whereby the research findings were discussed. The demographic profile was highlighted, showcasing representation of both genders within the population. Statistical assumptions for single linear regression were acknowledged and hypothesis tests were conducted to establish relationships between independent and independent variables. Consequently it was concluded that there existed a positive correlation among the variables. A thorough explanation of the results was provided. The subsequent chapter will shift its attention towards summarizing the results obtained and proposing recommendations and potential avenues for future research.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The main focus of this chapter is to provide a condensation of the research findings, as well as presenting the conclusions and recommendations that can be derive from them, additionally the chapter highlights any potential avenues for future research to be explored.

5.1 Summary

The study was aimed at assessing the influence of social networking sites on the buying behavior of online shoppers. The objectives of the study were to ascertain the influence of social networking sites usage on perceived value, to check the impact of social networking sites usage on purchase intention, to determine the influence of social networking sites usage on customer trust and to find the relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction. The literature review showed that the main theory for this research was the Uses and gratifications theory. Other studies were also included in the development of the hypothesis. The research design was causal and involved a sample size of 361. Data was collected using questionnaires on a 5-point Likert scale and was then analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science version 20 (SPSS-20). The statistical tool employed in the analysis was single linear regression.

According to the results of the study, a correlation exists between social networking sites usage and perceived value with the two factors having a positive relationship. A possible reason for the positive relationship between the two is these online platforms allow individuals to connect with their peers, friends and followers, creating a sense of belonging and community that can enhance

their perceived value and self-esteem. Additionally, social networking sites often provide users with various opportunities for information seeking and entertainment, allowing them to access a wide range of resources and activities that can enhance their life satisfaction and overall experience. As users continue to engage with these sites and experiences positive outcomes, they may come to perceive brands as valuable and beneficial, leading to a positive relationship between social networking sites usage and perceived value.

Whilst checking for the impact of social networking sites usage on purchase intention the results signaled a positive relationship between the two. The positive relationship maybe as a result of the fact that websites provide social influence, where individuals are influenced by the opinions and recommendations of their social connections. Social networking sites allow for targeted advertising, which means that individuals may be exposed to products or services that are more relevant to their interests and needs. This exposure might increase the intention to purchase, the social networking sites also allow for social comparison, which may motivate individuals to purchase products or services in order to keep up with their peers or showcase their social status.

The research results also showed that social networking sites usage had an influence on customer trust. This result could have emanated from the concept of social proof. Where when customers see their peers or people they trust have positive experiences or opinions about a brand or product or service on social networking sites, they are more likely to trust that brand or retail store. Companies that are transparent and responsive on social networking sites, such as addressing customer complaints promptly and honestly, can also increase customer trust in their brand.

The last objective of the research sought to find a relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction and the results showed that there was a relationship which was positive. This positive correlation can result from that by engaging with a company through social networking sites customers may feel a great sense of connection and personal interaction with the retail store. Online sites also provide customers with a way to easily share feedback and receive responses from the company which can help to improve overall satisfaction, following and interacting with a brand on the social networking sites makes customers be more informed and involved in the company`s products or services, leading to a higher level of satisfaction.

6.2 Conclusions

Based on the aforementioned findings, as per the results provided previously, it can be concluded that the usage of social networking sites have significant influence on the buying behavior of online shoppers. This is brought about by that all the factors that make up buying behavior of a customer which are perceived value, purchase intention, customer trust and customer satisfaction where positively affected by the usage of social networking sites. Therefore, taking necessary steps to influence each branch of a shopper's buying behavior through social networking sites yields positive results.

6.3 Recommendations

In order for retail stores to build a positive buying behavior amongst their customers who are social networking sites users they have to consider what makes their customers use these sites and generally how their usage of these sites affect their buying behavior. A recommendation for each branch of buying behavior is given in the next sections

6.3.1 To ascertain the influence of social networking sites usage on perceived value

Edgars' stores limited is recommended to provide quick and responsive online customer service which can help increase perceived value for their apparel. Customers appreciate timely and helpful responses to their queries or issues, by offering quick and effective online customer service, Edgars' can enhance the customer experience and demonstrate a commitment to providing excellent service. This makes potential online shoppers feel valued, therefore it improves their perception of Edgars' brands and products. The store can also offer exclusive social media promotions creating a sense of exclusivity, customers feel special when they receive an offer that is only available on social networking sites and exclusivity can boost their perception of the product's value. The store can also showcase its products across a number of on social networking sites in order to create product awareness which can improve Edgars' visibility and allow potential customers to become more familiar with their brand and products.

6.3.2 To check the impact of social networking sites usage on purchase intention

Edgars' retail is recommended to increase purchase intention through social networking sites by providing exclusive promotions and discounts, engaging with customers on social networking

sites, using targeted adverts and engaging in influencer marketing. Providing exclusive promotions and discounts on social networking sites can incentivize potential customers to make a purchase. This can encourage customers to visit Edgars` social sites regularly to stay updated on the latest offerings. The sense of exclusivity can also create a feeling of urgency, pushing customers towards an immediate purchase. Social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram allow retailers like Edgars` to target specific demographic with their advertisements. By using data such as browsing history, interests and location, the store can place targeted adverts in front of shoppers who are more likely to be interested in their products, which also increases sales as purchase intention becomes positive

6.3.3 To determine the influence of social networking sites usage on customer trust

The retail giant is recommended to take steps to use social networking sites to improve customer trust, these include sharing user generated content, encouraging customer reviews, providing transparent information and collaborating with influencers. Sharing user generated content can help Edgars` to increase customer trust by showcasing real people wearing and enjoying their products, this can be in form fashion shows exclusive to social networking sites users. Encouraging customer reviews can also assist by providing social proof and allowing potential customers to see the experiences of others, providing transparent information, such as clear pricing and delivery policies can help to build trust by showing that the retailer is honest and upfront with their shoppers. Collaborating with influencers can also help to increase trust by associating the retailer with trusted and respected individuals in the industry.

6.3.4 To find the relationship between social networking sites usage and customer satisfaction

Edgars` is recommended to improve its customer satisfaction through social networking sites by responding to customer enquiries promptly, using social sites to gather feedback and engaging with customer on their social sites. Responding to customer enquiries promptly is crucial for any business, including retailers, customers feel valued and heard, which can lead to increased satisfaction. Using social sites to gather feedback is also of importance as it allows the retailer to understand its customers` needs and preferences, the information can be used to improve products and services, ultimately leading to higher customer satisfaction. Engaging with customers on social sites is critical for maintaining a positive brand and building lasting relationships which will affect

their satisfaction, when retailers respond to customer inquiries and concerns it develops positive relationships between the shopper and the retail's brands and products.

6.4 Areas of further study

The research's focus was on the influence of social networking sites on the buying behavior of online shoppers. However, it can be noted that other there is need to magnify the other branches of the usage of social networking sites and assess them against customer buying behavior branches. The results can be better improved by creating a larger sample size by widening the research to look at the industry as a whole.

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APPENDIX A: CODED QUESTIONNAIRE

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF COMMERCE



Dear participant

I would like to thank you for your participation in this study. I am Shantel V. Moyo, a marketing student at Bindura University of Science Education, conducting a research on **The influence of social networking sites on the buying behavior of online shoppers. A case of Edgars Stores Limited.** This research is in partial fulfilment of my Bachelor of Commerce Honors Degree in Marketing.

I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study. Responses will be indicated by means of a tick. All the answers you will provide are neither right nor wrong. The information that you are going to provide will be **strictly** used for **academic purposes only**. Every answer that you will provide will be kept with confidentiality.

For further clarity; Shantel

Contact: +263 712 720580 / +263 773 388829

Email: moyoshantel34@gmail.com

Section A: Demographics

This section is only will only collect data that is concerned with the characteristics of the population under study, information to be collected include age, gender, marital status, employment status and whether one uses social networking sites.

Instructions

Do not write your name on the questionnaire. Please place a tick [✓] in the box of your preferred answer. Please attempt all questions.

1. **[DA]** Age (years)

- i. 20 & below ☐
- ii. 21-45 ☐
- iii. 45-60 ☐
- iv. 60 & above ☐

2. **[DG]** Gender

- i. Female ☐
- ii. Male ☐

3. **[DMS]** Marital status

- i. Single ☐
- ii. Married ☐
- iii. Divorced ☐
- iv. Widowed ☐

4. **[DES]** Employment status

- i. Unemployed ☐
- ii. Employed ☐
- iii. Student ☐
- iv. Retired ☐

5. **[DSNSU]** Do you use social networking sites (social media)?

- i. Yes ☐
- ii. No ☐

SECTION B: SOCIAL NETWORKS USAGE

This is section will collect information that shows how social networking sites are used by shoppers. The section will check whether customers use social networking sites for socialization, information collection, entertainment, education, social cause or shopping.

Instructions

Please place a tick [✓] in the box of your appropriate ranking of your choice.

(SD) Strongly disagree (D) disagree (N) neutral (A) agree (SA) strongly agree

Please attempt all questions?

CODE	ITEMS	SA	A	N	D	SD
SNSU1	1. I use social media sites to get information regarding current fashion trends					
SNSU2	2. I use social media sites to find the latest news on fashion					
SNSU3	3. I use social media sites to gather information related to fashion					
SNSU4	4. I use social media sites for distributing essential items					
SNSU5	5. I use social media sites for crowdfunding					
SNSU6	6. I use social sites for civil campaigns					
SNSU7	7. I use social media sites to buy essentials					
SNSU8	8. I use social media sites to purchase clothes					
SNSU9	9. I use social media sites to buy stationery and e-books					

SECTION C: Consumer Buying Behavior

This section will collect information on the variables that help understand the customer's buying behavior. It is concerned with the information on trust, purchase intention, satisfaction and perceived value.

Instructions

Please place a tick [√] in the box of your appropriate ranking of your choice.

(SD) Strongly disagree (D) disagree (N) neutral (A) agree (SA) strongly agree

Please attempt all questions?

CODE	ITEMS	SA	A	N	D	SD
	A. Trust: Edgars Online Stores;					
CBBT1	1. They strive for consumer satisfaction.					
CBBT2	2. They are honest & trustworthy about refunds or exchanging products.					
CBBT3	3. They strive to provide quality service.					
CBBT4	4. The information EdgarsZW provided is truthful & ethical.					
CBBT5	5. They provide confidence to make payment through electronic transactions.					
	B. <u>Purchase Intention</u>: In the online store;					
CBBPI1	1. I would buy					
CBBPI2	2. I would consider buying					
CBBPI3	3. I hope to buy					
CBBPI4	4. I intend to buy clothes/shoes/accessories.					
CBBPI5	5. I plan to buy					

CODE	ITEMS	SA	A	N	D	SD
	C. <u>Satisfaction</u> :I am very satisfied with the Edgars Online Store with respect to;					
CBBS1	1.The quality of the garments on offer					
CBBS2	2. Prices of the purchased garments					
CBBS3	3. The customer service they offer					
CBBS4	4. .Delivery time					
CBBS5	5. The designs of the garments offered.					
	D. <u>Perceived value</u>: Buying clothes from Edgars has:					
CBBPV1	1. Improved the way I am perceived.					
CBBPV2	2. I feel fashionable in Edgars clothes					
CBBPV3	3. I feel good					
CBBPV4	4. It is a good choice					
CBBPV5	5. It suits me					

Thank you for your cooperation!