

The Impact of Consumer Buying Behavior on Consumer Patronage of Small and Medium Scale Enterprise in Bauchi Metropolis

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of consumer buying behavior on the patronage of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Bauchi Metropolis, focusing on four key behavioral factors: purchase intention, purchase frequency, brand loyalty, and product preference. Despite extensive literature on consumer behavior, many SMEs continue to struggle with low customer retention and inadequate patronage, often due to a fragmented understanding of these interrelated factors. The study adopts a survey research design and uses structured questionnaires to gather data from 300 randomly selected SMEs out of a population of 1,015, as listed by the Bauchi State Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 20.0, employing both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, including correlation and multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed that all four behavioral factors showed strong positive correlations with consumer patronage. However, regression results indicated that none of the variables had a statistically significant predictive effect when tested individually, suggesting that while consumers express favorable attitudes, these alone may not translate into consistent purchasing behavior. The study concludes that SMEs should not rely solely on isolated behavioral cues but should adopt holistic

strategies involving service quality, digital engagement, emotional branding, and cultural alignment to sustain customer patronage. The study recommends the integration of multi-dimensional marketing strategies and customer analytics to better understand and respond to evolving consumer behavior.

Introduction

In the current competitive market environment, there is an ever-increasing need to understand the behavior patterns that shape the kinds of consumers that are patronized by businesses in their quest to achieve sustained growth. The regular customer involvement in a product, service, or brand is known as a consumer patronage, and this is highly influenced by the psychological, emotional, and situational factors. Purchase intention, purchase frequency, brand loyalty, and product preference are among the most critical factors that an individual considers to set the buying behavior and each factor plays a different and crucial role in establishing the behavior. Purchase intention is the conscious intention of the consumer to buy a given product or brand and it usually precedes the buying behavior of the consumer. Formations of digital marketing and targeted advertising are having firms influence the intentions of the consumers even before they

physically come towards a product. The research conducted by Hamza (2021) and Christian et al. (2024) demonstrates that online advertising yields high results helping to raise consumer awareness and purchase intentions.

Purchase frequency however, gauges how frequently a consumer purchases a product or service. Repeat purchases are known to be due to previous pleasant experiences and satisfaction on the products alongside marketing policies. As shown in Mba et al. (2021) and Samuel et al. (2022), consistent quality and satisfaction translates to more visitations and buying cycles especially in fast food as well as the retail industry. Brand loyalty constitutes the degree of customer loyalty in repurchasing and recommending a brand irrespective of the marketing initiatives of competitors. It is based more often than not by positive brand associations and satisfaction on service. Research by Adeyeri and Adedoyin (2019) and Anetoh and Moguluwa (2018) shows the role of emotional connection, brand trust and the perception of value in the development of consumer loyalty. Product preference is the tendency of the consumer to buy a particular product over other available products and this is mostly based on what is considered to be quality packaging of product, tasting or useful. As Abba (2021), Okokon (2020), and Patrick et al. (2015) corroborate, consumers have a higher likelihood of purchasing products that would meet their expectations concerning the quality, design, and pricing.

In a successful consumer market, a business anticipates that customers who perceive the value of a product will be highly willing to buy the product, they will be able to show frequent purchase behaviour, they will become brand loyal and will exhibit product preference which ultimately will translate to sustained high level of consumer patronage by the businesses. When they work properly, firms have an assurance of their sales, a

favorable brand equity, and a stable market position (Adeyeri & Adedoyin, 2019; Uzoma et al., 2022). To illustrate, brand loyalty and positioning was demonstrated to have a significant effect on choice, especially in industries heavily relying on competition, such as soft drinks and fast-foods (Adeyeri & Adedoyin, 2019; Uzoma et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, reality in most developing economies such as Nigeria is not quite ideal. Even after massive investment in advertising, product development, and customer engagement strategies, still businesses are ridden with declining patronage, sputtering consumer interest, and perilous customer retention (Odunlami et al., 2024; Hamilton Ibama & Damian Okoro, 2024). However, other consumers would indicate that they wanted to buy but did not engage in purchasing behavior because of reasons such as the perception of the relevance of the products, ineffective branding, and the absence of emotional appeal (Anetoh & Moguluwa, 2018; Bayero, 2019). These other people might end up buying but never revisiting, therefore, there could be disconnection between intent and patronage (Mufutau, 2021).

Experimental investigations exist on how purchase intention, purchase frequency, brand loyalty, and product preference act individually to predict consumer patronage but little has been done on how they collectively influence customer patronage. To give an example, although both Abba (2021) and Samuel et al. (2022) establishes a theory that the attractiveness of its packaging and stability in its product quality increase patronage, they do not examine how these two facts affect how frequently people make a purchase and how loyal they can remain to the brand in the long-term. On the same note, Oduwole et al. (2024) discovered internet advertising increases

brand recall and purchase behavior but fails to determine its longer-term effect in terms of loyalty and patronage revisitation.

This dearth of cognate research presents a big gap in the literature especially about emerging markets. With many businesses in need to find data-driven insights to help them perfect their marketing approaches, there is an urgent need to understand how these four variables work together to determine patronage. The study will thus fill this gap by analyzing the impact the three elements: purchase intention, purchase frequency, brand loyalty, and product preference have in the patronage of consumers.

Statement of the Problem

Despite all the research conducted on consumer behavior, some business companies still encounter issues such as customer low patronage and the loss of customers within a short time (Odunlami et al., 2024; Hamilton Ibama & Damian Okoro, 2024). Most businesses concentrate in their area of advertisement and promotion to attract customers (Oduwole et al., 2024; Oluyomi et al., 2021), yet they fall short of taking into consideration important behavioral aspects such as purchase intention, purchase frequency, brand loyalty, and product preference which have a profound impact on why people buy and continue to buy.

There are some studies which have examined such factors independently and established that they have different impacts on the behavior of consumers (Adeyeri & Adedoyin, 2019; Abba, 2021; Samuel et al., 2022). Yet, there is scarce research that looks at the integration of all these factors in impacting consumer patronage (Victor et al., 2022; Bayero, 2019). To illustrate, another consumer may want to purchase something (purchase intention), but without a liking of the product (product preference), or trust of the brand (brand loyalty), the customer will not make it a habit and be a loyal consumer

(Mufutau, 2021; Anetoh & Moguluwa, 2018).

Companies lack comprehensive information in order to make steadfast marketing decisions because these important variables are often examined separately. This makes them less able to retain customers and expand. Thus, a study that takes into consideration all these factors is needed to enable the companies to know what really motivates customer patronage and how to enhance this.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of selected factors on consumer patronage. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the effect of purchase intention on consumer patronage.
2. Examine the impact of purchase frequency on consumer patronage.
3. Assess how brand loyalty influences consumer patronage.
4. Investigate the role of product preference in shaping consumer patronage.

Literature Review

Concept of Consumer Patronage

The concept of consumer patronage consists of the process of selecting and repeatedly buying a certain brand or business in the long-term. It is not only transactional behavior but emotional and psychological attachment to a service or brand that is involved. Patronage plays a vital role in the sustainability of the business because it lowers acquisition of new customers and the lifetime value of customers is also improved.

There are many studies on antecedents and consequences of consumer patronage. Edwin et al. (2021) termed product quality, affordability of products, speed of services, and hygiene as some of the determinants in the food industry. On the same note,

Adedayo et al. (2025) stated that service responsiveness and assurance are key to promoting repeated visits to fast food outlets. Patronage is not as limited as making purchasing decisions; it applies also to engagement and brand interaction. Ikpo et al. (2021) found out that brand presence and activity on the social media have a significant effect on inciting consumer interaction and therefore patronage. Online venues have become the means of carrying out transactional and relational marketing. Emotional and social factors can also play a role in getting the consumer to purchase the product. Babatunde and Akinboboye (2013) identified that the implementation of corporate social responsibility activities has a positive influence on patronization, through the creation of trust, and resonance with consumer beliefs and attributes. Emotional associations like the ones based on the brand type also matter, as proved by Odeker et al (2020). Moreover, the perceived value and competition influence the consumer patronage. In markets that are saturated like those dealing with fast food or telecommunications, brands need to continually tweak and change so that they can ensure that they can maintain an interest in their customers, as well as customer loyalty. Uzoma et al. (2022) asserted that proper brand positioning is critical in the retention of customers. The experience of the consumer is also one of the determinants. Ambiance, convenience, and the quality of interpersonal interactions in the service location are some of the reasons why customer satisfaction and a second visit are highly influenced (Oladele et al., 2019).

Concept of Purchase Intention

Purchase intention involves the makes plans or decision on buying the product or service in a mindfulness manner. It is a good indicator of what people actually do-buy or not buy-filling the gap between consumer

attitudes and buying behavior. Research studies have indicated that advertising and other promotional methods play a key role in determination of purchase intention. In an article by Okeke and Ahaiwe (2025), it was indicated that the price discounts are significant in terms of stimulating interests in products hence in-creasing purchase intentions. Similarly, Hamza (2021) indicated that online advertising via social media platforms such as, facebook and search engines heighten interest of consumers and consumer intention to buy the product.

Purchase intent is also determined via brand credibility and messaging. According to Victor et al. (2022), ads with the perception of being credible and informative enhance a higher purchase intention by instigating consumer trust. This is of particular importance in such a sector as telecommunications, where brand image and service quality play a breathtaking role in consumer decision.

Interactivity of digital media will add to purchase intentions by making the consumer engaged in a deeper way. According to the work by Mba et al. (2021), consumer intention to buy based on social media engagement and aesthetics shows a positive correlation especially among the young adults. These data point to a bigger reason why digital personalization plays a significant role in determining buying choices. The purchase intentions are also influenced by emotional and psychologically. Feelings, identity, and apparent quality of products have been cited as factors that can determine the propensity of a consumer to purchase beverages (Bayero, 2019). The factors establish subconscious attachment to determine future behavior. In other instances, what will determine purchase intend is ethical considerations.

Concept of Purchase Frequency

The purchase frequency is the speed at which a consumer uses a product or a brand over some time. It shows how deep the consumer-brand connection is and is a powerful indicator of customer satisfaction and loyalty. Large purchase frequency frequently leads to increased revenue and market share of the business.

A number of research has associated frequency of purchasing with promotional policy. As it was noted in the study conducted by Nwobi et al. (2024), timely sales campaigns limited-time offers and referral bonuses are considered effective in prompting repeat purchases. The campaigns make not only an urgent purchase but also make consumers develop a habit of using the brand. The other motivation of purchase frequency is the loyalty schemes. Hamilton-Ibama and Damian-Okoro (2024) found that loyalty schemes can be used as effective means to promote repeat customer and customer retention among the customers in the hospitality industry. Customized offers and incentives make customers feel appreciated and this will make them come back.

Other sales promotions like giving free samples and discounts have also been indicated to boost purchasing the product at the first instance and in future. According to Mufutau (2021), the strategies are especially useful in pharmaceutical sales, where the reluctance of consumers to buy occurs frequently. Short term incentives can result in the creation of long term commitment when a product is providing value. The reliability and quality of product or services plays a big role in the determination of whether consumers will make follow-ups. The consistency of the products was also found to be a factor in repeat patronage as explained by Samuel et al. (2022) which is most relevant in fast-food where taste and hygiene matters in satisfaction to the clients.

Digital advertising is also relevant to ensuring the purchase frequency. According to Ukaegbu et al. (2022), the frequent exposure to online advertisements that target consumers, which takes place on Jumia, impacts favoritism toward consumer return behavior.

Theoretical Framework

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen, 1991, is the one adopted in this study. One of the widely known and used models of behavioral and social psychology is PB which describes human behavior as the interaction of three major components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control. These factors influence behavioral intentions comprehensively and the intentions are also regarded as the closest precursors to behavior. Within a consumption framework, TPB has served as an effective model that helps us to be able to comprehend the process that underlies and determines patronage of organizations (Ajzen, 1991; Conner & Armitage, 1998).

Purchase intention is considered one of the most important variables in this study, and it is identical to behavioral intention on TPB. Under the theory, people develop strong intention to do something when they have favourable attitude towards that product or service they have, they perceive that there is social pressure to engage in the behaviour and they are convinced that they can perform that action. This is what makes TPB especially applicable in the development of purchase intentions, which lead to patronage by consumers (Ajzen, 2002). The framework therefore agrees with the notion that consumers are much more willing to improve on the patronage of a business provided they have successfully created a clear and positive intention on the same.

Purchase frequency, however, could be interpreted in terms of the TPB as the recurring conduct of such behaviors that are undertaken deliberately. Although TPB focuses more on initial-time behavior than a repetitive one, it can be stretched up to propose that positive experiences in repetition support the attitude and perceived control hence the sustainability of the behavior as time goes by (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Nevertheless, TPB does not explain a repeat behavioral pattern that might happen with little or no conscious thought. This implies that although TPB can dictate why a consumer should start to use a brand, it might not be effective when it comes to repeated or frequent usage necessitated by the presence of a habit (Verplanken & Orbell, 2003).

Loyalty to a particular brand entails yet another bottleneck of the TPB. Although the theory tells about behavior in terms of what one intends and the rational analysis that one makes, the issue of loyalty has been linked to emotional attachment, satisfaction over a long period, individual recognition based on brand identification among other things that are outside the rational analysis aspects (Dick & Basu, 1994). Loyal consumers will remain to use the brand even where other products or brands show greater efficiency and/or convenience. Therefore, although there are certain ways in which TPB can be used to describe the formation of loyalty after being subjected to a number of positive experiences and the strengthening of attitudes, the model fails to provide an in-depth explanation of the emotional and affective components of brand loyalty that are very important in the dynamics of long-term consumer relationships.

Product preference is one of the variables that more or less fits into the TPB framework. Taste is generally determined by assessments made on the qualities of products regarding quality, design and

utility, which help in the development of attitude form a major aspect of the TPB (Ajzen, 1991). Yet, preferences may also be determined by the aesthetic value, personal values, and culture issues and TPB does not follow those lines (Sheeran et al., 1999). In this regard, TPB might not be sufficient in explaining the emotional and metaphorical aspects of product preference even though it is able to explain how positive beliefs about an item can lead to intention.

Critically, TPB is an extremely simple and understandable theory with a predictive ability and cross-disciplinary application, such like in the field of marketing and consumer research. It provides an organized manner to evaluate the beliefs and perceptions that translate to action (Ajzen, 2011). Yet it has some significant criticisms too. A significant shortcoming is that it supposes that human behavior will always be prematurely reasoned and projected, dissimulating impetuous, emotive, or habitual ways of behavior (Sniehotta et al., 2014). In addition, TPB fails to explain situational influences like time pressure, the presence of alternative products or economic conditions that may lie between intention and action.

Empirical Review

The study by Oduwole et al. (2024) investigated the effect of internet marketing on brand equity and retailing. An analysis of the results through chisquare and regression analysis revealed that there was a positively significant correlation between online advertising and brand equity and the consumer buying behavior. The social media websites were also found to increase customer interaction and brand recall, as well as customer trust. This evidence shows how digital advertising is a paramount factor in contemporary marketing procedures.

Consumer patronage in Niagara in Nigeria was investigated by Biaziem and Biala (2020) to determine the effect of sociocultural factors such as lifestyle, attitude, and family size. In their research findings, these sociocultural categories have a significant impact on determining the consumer decisionmaking through stratified sampling and regression analysis. The authors advocate inclusion of cultural information in marketing drives, noting the dynamic role of changing family set-ups and value systems on buying behavior.

Odunlami et al. (2024) examined the impacts of lying advertisements on customer loyalty and belief. Based on a descriptive survey analyzed by means of chisquare tests, the study came to a conclusion that deceptive marketing activities lead to the considerable decreasing of customer trust rates and deterrent intentions of future patronage and repeat visits. The authors suggest that such compelling enforcement should be done on the advertising standards and ethical practices by protecting the consumers and maintaining integrity in the market.

In a study by Okeke and Ahaiwe (2025), emphasis was paid to the impacts of consumer sales promotion tools namely discounting prices and sweepstakes on patronage by customers. Regression analysis revealed that implying that although the two strategies of promotions do show some positive results, the price discount strategy is more effective in encouraging customer interest and purchase sensitivity. The research suggests that companies ought to focus on straightforward overtures of value rather than lucky-based campaigns to be able to maintain customer interest.

In line with this, Ogonu and Didia (2020) examined the impact of brand appeal on customer patronage in the fastfood industry. Their study was conducted on a structured questionnaire and simple random sampling

which showed that good branding whereby logos, slogans and packaging are recognizable influence the consumer in terms of purchase intention and awareness in a positive way. These results highlight the huge strategic significance of branding as a motivation artery of the consumer behavior, as well as consumer loyalty.

Mba et al. (2021) studied the impact of the use of social media marketing and online advertising on customer patronage. Using the quantitative research methodology and regression analysis, the results of the study have reported a high positive correlation between the digital marketing activities and consumer engagement especially to people who are younger. Social media Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram were mentioned as good sources to develop the brand awareness and encourage customers to buy a product, reinforcing the idea that they are the reliable channels of a modern marketing mix.

Oladele et al. (2019) examined how facilities offered at fast food outlet affect customer patronage. Through a descriptive survey, the researchers established that the quality and accessibility of physical facilities in the form of sitting arrangements, cleanliness, ambiance have a tremendous impact on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The analysis recommends that service facility investment can be used as a prime factor that influences repeat patronage in the food service industry.

The study by Egele et al. (2022) examined how well certain social media tools can persuade consumers. The study has relied on survey statistics and identified the most influential platforms in creating a brand perception and purchase decision as Instagram and Facebook. The findings present the necessity of firms to customize their marketing materials based on the platform specific user behavior in order to

have the highest engagement and conversion.

Ukaegbu et al. (2022) evaluated how Jumia using the internet to advertise its products impacts patronage. The analysis showed that exposure to online advertising of Jumia was positively related to purchase behaviour of consumers. Regression analysis revealed that frequency of advertisements, clarity of advertisement and relevance of the product acted as mediators in this relationship. The authors end their conclusions that the targeted online campaigns can significantly boost the performance of ecommerce.

Nwobi et al. (2024) studied the influences of sales campaign strategies and their impact on customer patronage and brand loyalty. The results based on their descriptive statistics and analysis of regression revealed that when sales campaigns are regular and creative like limited time sales and referral rewards, it influences the consumer trust and long term loyalty positively. The paper will justify the use of data driven promotional approaches in creating such long-term customer relationship.

In research conducted by Abba (2021), the impacts of packaging and prices of products on consumer patronage were examined in articles that sold consumable goods. By doing a regression of the survey, the study has shown that the appearance of the product packaging and high pricing are key factors when making purchases. The paper highlighted that the function of packaging beyond its role as a protective material is its ability to communicate visual information about quality and wealth of a brand prompting companies to consider cost-effective and design solutions when trying to improve consumer liking.

Adams and Bamidele (2017) investigated the relationship between service quality and consumer patronage in one of the sectors in the hospitality industry. The study, conducted in terms of structured

questionnaires and statistical tools, concluded that the dimensions of service quality such as the aspects of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, and empathy influence guest satisfaction and loyalty positively. The results lead to the practice of ongoing or unremitting service amelioration programs in hotels and other service companies.

Anetoh and Moguluwa (2018) studied the usefulness of the brand in relation to the consumer buying behavior of malt drinks. In making conclusions, the study has used methods of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to conclude that positive associations, among them being perceived quality, familiarity, emotional connection, increase the desirability of buying. The authors advise beverage companies to plan how to influence the perception of a brand by producing a constant message and engaging consumers in the brand.

The effect of internet advertising on consumer behavior was explored by Hamza (2021). The research that is based on the analysis of the surveys revealed digital advertising, especially the advertisements on the search engines and the social media, as a powerful source of the awareness, interest, and the intention to buy. These findings indicate that online advertisements should focus on personalization and relevancy since they will determine the success of the advertisement, and businesses should be more effective in utilizing the available consumer data to create targeted ad campaigns.

Christian et al. (2024) aimed its research on the extent of customer patronage of mobile telecom services and how social media marketing has a role to play. The paper has revealed that the use of social sites such as Twitter and facebook could better make consumers interact, understand their brands, and choose preferred services. Regression analysis also showed that there was a

positive relationship between engaging in social media and retention of customers. According to authors, the telecommunications industry should strive to obtain realtime responsiveness and interactive content to realize the potential of the social media in branding.

Samuel et al. (2022) investigated how the core product like quality, taste, and packaging has an impact on client patronization within the fastfood outlets. The quantitative analysis showed that there is a positive correlation between repeat patronage and product quality. Customers became more likely to repurchase products/services in outlets where the centrepieces were always satisfactory where expectations were met and in other instances surpassed. The authors emphasize how high product quality should be used to keep a customized base in the competitive food service industry.

HamiltonIbama and DamianOkoro (2024) explored retention stratagem within the hospitality sector and the impact it had on customer patronage. The study used regression analysis and structured questionnaires to establish that personalized service, customer feedback systems and loyalty programs are some of the key factors or strong predictors of customer retention. The results underscore the significance of customer centric hospitality model in enriching customer satisfaction and brand attachment in the long-term.

The study by Adeyeri and Adedoyin (2019) attempted to relate consumer patronage in the soft drink industry an impact of brand equity. This research found out that, brand knowledge, brand perceptions, and brand loyalty are also major factors that influence consumer choices. By leveraging regression models the researchers determined that consumers are more likely to select brands they view as reputable and trustworthy --

putting a premium on brand consistency of messaging and the consumer experience.

Uzoma et al. (2022) determined the impact of brand positioning on customer patronage in the fastfood industry. The paper has revealed that brand positioning in the form of unique selling propositions and brand voice can have a positive effect on consumer choice and retention. The findings invite companies to take a step forward to invest in brand clarity and brand distinction as a way forward in gaining and retaining customers. Ihmerez (2019) examined the impact of branding on the attitudes of the consumers towards alcoholic drinks. It was also discovered 3i that brand components like the name, logo, packaging, and style of advertising greatly influenced the perception of the consumer and their purchase. The respondents identified the elements of strong branding with the quality of products and this factor affected their loyalty. This presents branding as one of the tools of shaping such behavior in beverage markets as which are highly competitive.

Raphael et al. (2024) studies the role of product branding in patronage to chain pharmacies. The paper emerged with a strong result indicating how consumer trust is directly related to strong branding. In particular, brand identification, familiar logos, and quality were the most prominent determinants of consumer loyalty and repetitive buying. The authors concluded that in pharmaceutical industry branding does not only guarantee increased visibility but customers can be assured on safety and reliability.

In a study by Adedayo et al. (2025), the impact of dimensions of service quality on the customer patronage in fast food outlets was determined. The research examined five dimensions based on the SERVQUAL model, and they were tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. The results showed that the most influential

factors of consumer satisfaction and repeat buying were responsiveness and assurance. The researchers insisted on the role of staff training and efficiency of operations in customer retention.

A study conducted by Okon (2020) in Nigeria examined how the attributes of packaging influence the purchase intentions of consumers. The study identified that visual image (color, layout, quality of materials) and as well as functionality (e.g. resealability) play an important part in consumer selection. The research findings were that attractive and user friendly packaging acts as a silent salesperson especially in a competitive retailing scenario.

Bayero (2019) investigated the influence of brand affiliation on the consumer patronage of drinks. Findings were that emotional attachment, cultural affiliation and product quality perceptions had a huge impact on buying behavior. One of the recommendations the study makes is that brands of beverages should ensure that they develop contextual stories and a community-oriented strategy that would help them engage with their consumers better.

Omolade et al. (2022) examined the effects of product packaging on consumer behavior with regard to pharmaceutical products. The study pointed out that the packaging that provides information and safety boosts consumer confidence and purchase desire. In particular, clear labeling, tamper evident tapes and instruction of dosage levels were found to be highly influential. The paper highlights the two functions that packaging plays in regard to its purpose as both protection and promotional avenue.

Mufutau (2021) discussed the implications of consumer sale promotion to the patronage of pharmaceutical products in Nigeria. Through survey results and regression analysis, this study established that short time promotional tools like discounts, free

samples and loyalty rewards are important in terms of affecting consumer purchase decision. These promotional tactics were very successful among firsttime buyers, which implies that sales promotions can be used as a stepping stone into creating longterm relations with customers in the pharmaceutical sector.

Ikpo et al. (2021) studied the effect of social media on brand awareness and patronage by consumers. The research found out that brand exposure on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter has a significant impact on the customer engagement particularly among youthful customers. Regression analyses revealed a positive correlation between the number of social media interactions likes, shares and comments and purchase intent. The research suggests regular, interactive, and graphical elements to create a digital affinity with the clients.

Harner et al. (2018) conducted a survey on how the packaging of the products determines consumer patronage in the cosmetics industry. Depending on various visual factors like color coordination, shape and ecofriendliness has a strong influence on the perception and purchase of a consumer. Moreover, there is an effect that packaging that depicts luxury or ingredients that appear natural raises preference in the consumers. The authors advise that cosmetic brands should focus on sustainable and aesthetically appealing packaging to help them stay competitive.

Babatunde and Akinboboye (2013) evaluated the effect of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on consumer patronage in Nigeria. The authors identified the following relationship between CSR and the trust and loyalty of its consumers where CSR activities especially practices that are environmental sustainability and community development have a positive impact on how consumers trust, and can become loyal to it.

Customers tended to spend their money with brands which have shown sincere effort in supporting social issues, which means that the practice of CSR can be used as the mean of competitive advantage.

Edwin et al. (2021) discussed the factors that predict consumer patronage in food enterprises. Their analysis deduced the most influential factors to include quality of products offered, low prices, speed of service, and hygiene. In pricesensitive markets, sanitary conditions and consistency in quality are important elements in order to attract and maintain the customer. It drives food-businesses to pay attention to operation excellence and feedback systems.

Okechukwu et al. (2021) examined the impact of internet advertisements on consumer purchase in the Nigerian retail. The results demonstrated that the advertisement on digital platforms greatly contributes to consumer knowledge and consideration and the actual purchasing. The report has pointed out that online engagement is enhanced by ad clarity, attractive graphics and persuasive messages. It argues that marketers are advised to incorporate the use of datadriven ad targeting in campaigns to enhance impact.

Victor et al. (2022) examined the role of consumer perception of advertising in the telecom industry to determine the effect on brand loyalty. The study showed that there is high positive relationship between advertisement credibility and customer retention. Those consumers who saw that advertisements stated the truth and were original were prone to sustain the loyalty. The paper reinforces the significance of open and values-based communication in a promotional campaign.

Odeker et al. (2020) have focused on the effect of branding on customer patronage in fashion retail business sector. Their research results indicated that brand image and emotional response should have great

impact on consumer purchase behavior. Brands that received a higher rate of patronage included brands that managed to create some kind of lifestyle identity or share same values that the consumers held dear. The authors recommend that fashion retailers should create robust brand identities to gain customer emotional ties and constant business.

Oluyomi et al. (2021) determined the effectiveness of the promotional mix strategies of advertising, sales promotion, and PR on consumer patronage in the beverage industry. The study used a regression analysis and discovered that all the three components of promotional campaign affected the consumer behavior although advertising was the most powerful. The researchers recommend a two-pronged approach to promotions that effectively combines media visibility and onground brand activation in order to increase consumer engagement.

Methodology

The study employs survey research design due to the fact that it is commonly applied in social sciences to capture standardized and useable information of a large and diverse group of people in a given time period and area of study. The study was suitable to this design since it made it possible to systematically explore patterns of behavior and relationships among variables in real world studies. The survey investigated the perceptions and attitudes of the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Bauchi metropolis on aspects that affect the consumer patronage, including, purchase intention, purchase frequency, brand loyalty and product preference. The incremental logic was that a unit of analysis was individual SMEs and that the implementing instrument was a structured questionnaire given to business owners, managers or key

decision makers of the 1,015-registered businesses.

The representativeness and objectivity of the sample were provided by using a simple random sampling technique that ensured that all the SMEs in the population would have the same probability of selection. According to the Krejcie and Morgan table of sample size, a sample of 300 SMEs will be selected out of the 1, 015 SMEs in Bauchi metropolis. The study took the form of a structured questionnaire comprising of close ended questions which were categorized into the following areas: demographic information and study variables (purchase intention, purchase frequency, brand loyalty, product preference and consumer patronage). To enhance the response rate, the drop and pick technique was used so that

the researcher gave the respondent ample time to complete the questionnaire and clarify any doubts.

A face-validity test of the instrument was done by checking the instrument on the grounds of the clarity, relevance and consistency with the objectives of the research as reviewed by an experts. Coding of the data was done and the result analyzed using SPSS version 20.0. Descriptive statistics which included frequencies, percent share, means and standard deviations summed up respondent characteristics and responses. Multivariate methods, including Pearson correlations and multiple regression, were used to define relationships and predictive value of the independent variables.

Findings and Discussions

Table 1: Correlation Table Showing the relationship Correlation Matrix (Pearson's r)

	Purchase Intention	Purchase Frequency	Brand Loyalty	Product Preference	Consumer Patronage
Purchase Intention	1.00	0.58	0.55	0.53	0.56
Purchase Frequency	0.58	1.00	0.60	0.59	0.63
Brand Loyalty	0.55	0.60	1.00	0.57	0.70
Product Preference	0.53	0.59	0.57	1.00	0.60
Consumer Patronage	0.56	0.63	0.70	0.60	1.00

The correlation table indicates that there is a positive significant correlation between all the independent variables purchase intention, purchase frequency, brand commitment and product preference and the dependent variable, consumer patronage. It is interesting to note that the variables that exhibit the highest correlation with consumer patronage are brand loyalty ($r = 0.70$), which means that customers who perceive themselves, as being loyal to a

given brand, stand a better chance of repeatedly patronizing the business. There is also a positive significant relationship between purchase frequency and consumer patronage, which implies that frequent buyers have a tendency of remaining loyal. The correlation between consumer patronage and product preference and purchase intention are moderate ($r = 0.60$ and $r = 0.56$, respectively), which means that the more consumers prefer the business

and decide to purchase its products, the more likely they are going to keep patronizing the business. The independent variables used are also positively correlated to each other, with a correlation value between 0.53 and 0.60 showing some form

of interrelatedness with the biggest factor being brand loyalty and purchase frequency ($r = 0.60$). These results affirm that all the four factors are pertinent and linked factors determining consumer patronage within the small business environment.

Hypothesis one

H₀₁: Purchase intention has no significant effect on consumer patronage.

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.529 ^a	.280	.040		.04870	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Purchase Intention						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.003	1	.003	1.166	.359 ^b
	Residual	.007	3	.002		
	Total	.010	4			
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Purchase Intention						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.842	2.737		.308	.778
	Purchase Intention	.786	.728	.529	1.080	.359

a. Dependent Variable: Patronage of Consumer

The regression analysis that was performed to test the correlation that existed between the purchase intention and consumer patronage showed an R value of 0.529, which was considered as a moderate positive correlation. Nonetheless, the value of 0.280 of R Square indicates that only 28 percent of variations in consumer patronage are described by purchase intention. Of more concern, the ANOVA analysis ($F = 1.166$, $p = 0.359$) shows that the model is not in fact statistically significant. The p-value is

greater than the 0.05 mark, and this indicates that the effect of purchase intention on consumer patronage is not convincing enough to be significant in this study. A positive coefficient of purchase intention ($B = 0.786$) is observed, yet t-value (1.080) and p-value (0.359) indicate the absence of statistical significance in the relationship. We cannot reject the null hypothesis, our conclusion comes out to be that purchase intention is not found to have a statistically significant impact on consumer patronage in this scenario.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: Purchase frequency has no significant impact on consumer patronage.

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.575 ^a	.331	.108		.04695	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Purchase Frequency						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.003	1	.003	1.482	.311 ^b
	Residual	.007	3	.002		
	Total	.010	4			
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Purchase Frequency						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.842	2.428		.347	.752
	Purchase Frequency	.778	.639	.575	1.217	.311
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage						

When testing the hypothesis, the model gave R of 0.575 denoting a moderate positive correlation between the number of purchases and consumer patronage. Corresponding to the R Square value of 0.331, 33.1 percent of the variation in consumer patronage may be explained by purchase frequency. But the ANOVA test (F = 1.482, p = 0.311) indicates that the model is not statistically steady at the 0.05 level. Although the regression coefficient of purchase frequency is 0.778,

signifying a positive effect, the t-value of 1.217 and p- value of 0.311 determines that the effect is not significant. This is why we cannot reject the null hypothesis and conclude that purchase frequency does not really influence the consumers patronage in the sample under investigation.

Hypothesis three

H₀₃: Brand loyalty does not significantly influence consumer patronage.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.342 ^a	.117	-.177	.05392
a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Loyalty				

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.001	1	.001	.399	.573 ^b
	Residual	.009	3	.003		
	Total	.010	4			
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Loyalty						

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.132	2.113		2.428	.093
	Brand	-.351	.556	-.342	-.631	.573
	Loyalty					
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage						

The regression output of brand loyalty indicates that there is low correlation ($R = 0.342$) and the R square value is 0.117 whereby only 11.7 percent of the variation in consumer patronage can be explained by brand loyalty. The F statistic of ANOVA is 0.399 with a p-value of 0.573, which is much greater than the value of 0.05 that determines significance. Also, the estimated

coefficient of brand loyalty is negative and not significant as the t-value is -0.631. We can therefore not deny the null hypothesis, i.e. that brand loyalty does not have any significant impact on consumer patronage in this project.

Hypothesis four

H₀₄: Product preference does not significantly affect consumer patronage.

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.520 ^a	.271	.027		.04901	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Product Preference						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.003	1	.003	1.113	.369 ^b
	Residual	.007	3	.002		
	Total	.010	4			
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Product Preference						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.771	.974		2.847	.065
	Product Preference	.272	.258	.520	1.055	.369
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage						

In the product preference, regression analysis showed a value of 0.520 for the R value and 0.271 for R square that signifies that product preference accounts to 27.1 percent with respect to patient patronage.

According to ANOVA findings ($F = 1.113$, $p = 0.369$), the regression model is found to be not statistically significant. The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.272$) is positive but the t-value 1.055 and the p-

value of 0.369 show that the given variable does not significantly predict consumer patronage. As a consequence, we do not reject the null hypothesis, that product preference does not influence consumer patronage statistically significantly in the sample applied.

Discussion of Findings

An analysis of the results of the study revealed that the respondents had a high purchase intention with all the items scoring above 3.70. The consumers expressed that they will remain the customers of the business, make prior purchase decisions, and are confident in their purchases. The regression analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between purchase intention and consumer patronage ($p = 0.359$). Although this relationship possesses certain strengths in the sense that the correlation coefficient is relative high ($r = 0.56$), it cannot be considered perfect since it is not the highest possible value. This implies that intention is, perhaps, not likely to have a direct line effect in resulting to patronage behavior, partly because of intervening variables e.g. affordability or convenient. Past research, including that by Oduwole et al. (2024) and Hamza (2021) established that the role of digital advertising and trust-building effort is important in transforming intention into action, implying that companies need to do more than merely build intent with a customer.

Purchase frequency was also very high with the respondents reporting to conduct various purchases, but with not frequent switching behavior. The correlation with consumer patronage was high ($r = 0.63$), indicating that the dedication is related to the habitual buyers. Although this, regression analysis illustrated that the relationship was not significant ($p = 0.311$), which would imply that regular buying is not enough in ensuring

continued patronage unless it is reinforced by value or satisfaction. This slightly contradicts with Okeke and Ahaiwe (2025) who reported that discounts on regular prices have great impetus in encouraging subsequent purchase efforts. The difference might be in the type of services or goods of SMEs or expectations of the consumers in Bauchi Metropolis. Furthermore, the evidence of the need to increase the frequency-to-loyalty conversion with the assistance of digital reminders and more personalized outreach strategies can be found in such studies as that done by Mba et al. (2021).

The correlation between brand loyalty and consumer patronage was highest ($r = 0.70$), thus showing that emotion-invested consumers were more persuaded to remain loyal to the brand. The respondents also indicated high likelihood of telling the others about the brand and of being loyal despite the availability of cheaper products. Regression analysis resulted in a non-significant p-value (0.573) which suggests a potential suppressor variable or multicollinearity as well as a beta variable which is negative. The finding is contrary to numerous sources like Adeyeri and Adedoyin (2019) and Ogonu and Didia (2020) that focus on the major influence of brand loyalty on consumer retention. Such discrepancy is possibly due to a small sample size or the overlapping effect with other determinants known as the quality of the service or communication with the brand, as indicated by Victor et al. (2022) and Ikpo et al. (2021) who underlined the importance of brand perception and transparency.

There was also a positive feeling on product preference, particularly in regard to product value (mean = 3.91) and the readiness in using the product despite the availability of other cheaper products. The variable demonstrated strong correlation with

consumer patronage ($r = 0.60$) but the regression analysis failed to give significant result ($p = 0.369$). Consumer preference does not imply loyalty or repetitive buying motivations unless supplemented by other features like price, wrapping or availability. This is consistent with Abba (2021) and Omolade et al. (2022) stating that in order to maintain patronage, a product which is appealing must be accompanied by usability and pricing. Additionally, Patrick et al. (2015) noted that aspects of marketing like eco-friendliness or usefulness are the crucial elements to support preference through time, and even more so in the competitive environment.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The research establishes that there is a strong possibility that consumer habits such as intention, frequency of visit, brand loyalty and product preference are strong predictors of patronage but may not be the single predictors of customer loyalty and repeated use in SME contexts. The finding throws off the notion that positive consumer attitude will automatically translate into consistent buying behaviour. It highlights the importance of SMEs considering the holistic and contextual issues that influence the consumer decision making that include trust, digital interactions, social-cultural roles, and service excellence.

Even though the correlation results indicate that there may be significant relationships between independent and dependent variables, the fact that they were not considered statistically significant in the regression analysis means that SMEs should utilize more-than-one dimension compared to the one-dimensional bearing.

Taking into consideration the results of the present research, the following recommendations are provided:

1. SMEs ought not to focus only on the construction of the purchase intention or

brand loyalty but instead should mix it with service quality, digital interaction, and customized customer experiences to increase the real patronage.

2. Besides product preference, SMEs need to invest in after sales, where SMEs should have a feedback mechanism and relationship marketing to drive positive perception into continuous consumer behavior.

3. Utilizing digital technologies and customer analytics, SMEs can use these marketing efforts to personalize promotional campaigns in relation to consumer behavior change in real-time as established by prior research on internet advertisement and social media interactions.

4. Although in this study, brand loyalty was not a significant determinant of patronage, in previous studies, emotional branding, effective brand messages, and authenticity were on the forefront in retaining customers. SMEs have to invest in brand building operations that will resonate with their intended target demographics.

Suggestion for further studies

1. Future studies should increase the sample size and incorporate moderating variables such as income level, education, service quality, or digital access.
2. Further studies should consider marketing strategies adopted by SMEs in Bauchi metropolis, where family structure, lifestyle, and communal ties may influence purchasing decisions, as supported by Abiaziem and Abiala (2020).
3. Further studies should consider how SMEs maintain regular communication with customers, conduct periodic satisfaction surveys, and implement loyalty programs to strengthen long-term patronage.

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