



Direct Marketing strategies and Generation Z buying Behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza Boutiques, Uyo metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

Udoka Isaac Francis; Okokon B. Attih

Department of Marketing, Faculty of Management Sciences, Akwa Ibom State University, P.M.B. 1167, Uyo, Obio Akpa Campus, Oruk Anam L.G.A. Akwa Ibom State

Received: 11.05.2026 | Accepted: 13.06.2026 | Published: 15.06.2026

*Corresponding Author: Udoka Isaac Francis

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.20696611](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20696611)

Abstract

Original Research Article

Fashion boutiques in urban shopping centres increasingly face challenges such as declining purchase intention, weak customer loyalty, low referral behaviour, and inconsistent engagement among Generation Z consumers, despite the growing use of direct marketing tools. This situation necessitates an empirical examination of the effect of direct marketing strategies on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques, Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted in this study. The study population consisting of 1,200 Generation Z consumers who frequently shop at Ibom Plaza boutiques. The sample size of 350 Generation Z was selected using purposive sampling technique. The data for this study were obtained using primary source. The data for the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while hypotheses were tested using multiple regression model. To enhance data analysis, IBM SPSS (version 28) was used. The findings showed that direct marketing strategies have a strong and significant influence on Generation Z buying behaviour. Personalized messaging increases purchase intention ($\beta = 0.278$), direct promotional discounts drive impulse buying ($\beta = 0.247$), in-store personal sales interaction raises purchase frequency ($\beta = 0.214$), and direct social media messaging encourages referrals and purchase decisions ($\beta = 0.263$). Collectively, these four strategies explain 56.6% of the variance in Generation Z buying behaviour ($R^2 = 0.566$), indicating that tailored, interactive, and incentive-based marketing approaches are highly effective for this segment. The study concludes that direct marketing strategies are critical for enhancing Generation Z engagement, purchase decisions, and brand advocacy in the fashion retail sector. Based on findings of study, it was recommended among others that the sellers of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques, Uyo metropolis, Akwa Ibom State should intensify the adoption of personalized and interactive marketing approaches to attract buyers' patronage.

Keywords: Personalized messaging, Direct promotional discount, Personal sales interaction, Social media messaging, Direct marketing Strategies, Generation Z, Buying behavior.

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1.0 Introduction

Direct marketing has become a central strategy for fashion retailers seeking to reach

digitally active consumers. The rise of mobile technology and personalized communication tools has made targeted contact through SMS (Short Message Service), social media



messaging, discounts, and in-store interaction more effective in shaping consumer responses (Kotler & Armstrong, 2022; Belch & Belch, 2021). These techniques are especially relevant for Generation Z, a demographic known for digital dependence, high social media engagement, and preference for personalized brand experiences (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). Generation Z consumers tend to make quick fashion decisions, display strong interest in trendy products, and respond well to authenticity, personalized content, and direct communication (Fromm & Read, 2018; Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). Their behavioural tendencies include impulse buying, strong referral habits, and loyalty toward brands that reflect their identity. In a city like Uyo, the Ibom Plaza fashion cluster relies heavily on direct marketing methods such as personalized messaging, promotional discounts, personal sales interactions and direct social media messaging to attract young buyers.

Direct marketing strategy refers to an interactive marketing system that uses one or more advertising media to affect a measurable response and/or transaction at any location (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Unlike mass marketing, direct marketing emphasizes personalized, targeted, and relationship-oriented communication with individual consumers, making it particularly suitable for engaging Generation Z, who value relevance, immediacy, and interaction. In this study, direct marketing strategies are operationalized through four key dimensions: personalized messaging, which focuses on tailored communications that influence purchase intention and designed to build loyalty through consistent and informative contact; direct promotional discounts, which stimulate impulse buying behaviour; in-store personal sales interactions, which enhance purchase frequency through face-to-face persuasion and relationship building; and direct social media messaging, which encourages referral behaviour through peer influence and digital engagement. Collectively, these dimensions reflect the core mechanisms through which direct marketing strategies shape

consumer buying behaviour by influencing attitudes, motivations, and decision-making processes. For Generation Z fashion consumers, direct marketing strategies are especially impactful because they combine personalization, convenience, and digital interactivity, thereby increasing responsiveness, brand engagement, and actual purchase behaviour.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Direct marketing strategies such as personalized messaging, social-media direct messaging, in-store personal selling, and promotional discounts should enable fashion retailers to engage Generation Z customers more effectively. When used appropriately, these strategies create instant communication, strengthen customer relationships, stimulate purchase intentions, enhance store loyalty, and increase actual purchase frequency (Kotler & Armstrong, 2022; Belch & Belch, 2021). For Gen Z who value personalization, digital interaction, and quick access to fashion trends, direct marketing should ideally result in higher responsiveness, stronger brand connections, and more frequent purchases (Francis & Hoefel, 2018).

However, despite the importance of direct marketing techniques in modern retailing, many boutiques in Ibom Plaza, Uyo, appear not to be achieving the expected behavioural outcomes from Gen Z shoppers. Unfortunately, several challenges persist: personalized messages are often generic, email marketing is ignored, direct messages on Instagram or WhatsApp may be inconsistent, and in-store sales interactions vary in quality. Moreover, promotional discounts frequently fail to generate sustained loyalty among Gen Z buyers, who are known for impulsiveness and brand switching tendencies (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). This disconnect suggests that the direct marketing strategies being used may not be effectively aligned with the behavioural patterns of Gen Z consumers in the local fashion market. To address these challenges, this study seeks to examine the effects of direct marketing

strategies- personalized messaging, direct promotional discounts, personal sales interactions, and direct social media messaging on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza Boutiques, Uyo metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the effect of direct marketing strategies on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques, Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to:

1. Assess the effect of personalized messaging on Generation Z purchase intention of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques.
2. Examine the effect of direct promotional discounts on impulse buying behaviour of Generation Z shoppers.
3. Investigate how personal sales interactions affect the actual purchase frequency of Generation Z buyers.
4. Ascertain the effect of direct social media messaging on referral behaviour among Generation Z consumers of fashion products.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were developed to guide the study:

1. How does personalized messaging influence purchase intention among Generation Z fashion consumers in Ibom Plaza, Uyo?
2. What is the effect of direct promotional discounts on the impulse buying behaviour of Generation Z fashion consumers in Ibom Plaza boutiques?

3. How does personal sales interaction influence the actual purchase frequency of Generation Z shoppers?
4. What is the effect of direct social media messaging on the referral behaviour of Generation Z fashion consumers in Ibom Plaza, Uyo?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

Based on the objectives and research questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated for empirical testing:

1. **H₀₁:** Personalized messaging has no significant influence on purchase intention among Generation Z fashion consumers in Ibom Plaza, Uyo.
2. **H₀₃:** Direct promotional discounts have no significant effect on the impulse buying behaviour of Generation Z fashion consumers in Ibom Plaza.
3. **H₀₄:** Personal sales interaction has no significant influence on the actual purchase frequency of Generation Z shoppers.
4. **H₀₅:** Direct social media messaging has no significant effect on the referral behaviour of Generation Z fashion consumers in Ibom Plaza, Uyo.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Direct Marketing strategies

Kotler and Armstrong (2022) defined direct marketing strategies as targeted, personalized, and interactive approaches that enable firms to communicate directly with carefully selected consumers to obtain an immediate response and cultivate long-term customer relationships. This stresses personalization and measurable response. According to Belch and Belch (2021), direct marketing strategies refer to “the use of direct communication channels such as email, mobile messaging, catalogs, and face-to-face selling to reach consumers individually and encourage a behavioural action such as purchase, inquiry, or

store visit". This emphasizes consumer action and channel specificity. Chaffey and Smith (2020) defined direct marketing strategies as "planned, targeted communication efforts delivered through digital or physical direct channels to elicit a specific response from identifiable customers". Their definition integrates both offline and online channels.

2.1.2 Dimensions of Direct Marketing Strategies

i. Personalized Messaging

Kotler and Keller (2022) defined personalized messaging as the customization of communication content to match the individual preferences, needs, or previous behaviour of a customer to increase engagement and response rates. Harrison (2025) described personalization as a cornerstone of effective modern marketing: a strategy that crafts tailored marketing campaigns, implying that messages, offers, or content are customized at individual (or highly segmented) levels to increase relevance, engagement and competitive advantage. Motlani, Choudhary and Jain (2025) considered personalization (and customization) as delivering tailored products, services, and communication, especially in digitally-enabled markets. Personalization enables firms to meet individual customer needs and preferences, thereby enhancing engagement, satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term relationships.

ii. Direct Promotional Discount

Kotler & Keller (2016) defined a direct promotional discount as a short-term price reduction offered directly to customers to stimulate immediate purchase or trial of a product, often communicated through direct marketing channels such as SMS (Short Message Service), email, or in-store offers. According to Belch and Belch (2021), a direct promotional discount refers to a direct-to-consumer incentive where the marketer temporarily reduces the price or provides monetary savings to encourage faster buying decisions. Blythe (2019) defined a direct promotional discount as a price-based

promotional tool that gives consumers an instant financial benefit at the point of purchase, typically used to attract new customers or reward loyal ones. Pride and Ferrell (2020) explained direct promotional discount as a promotional pricing strategy in which firms offer customers direct, measurable price reductions to boost product demand within a limited period.

iii. Personal Sales Interaction

Kotler & Keller (2016) defined in-store personal sales interaction as direct, face-to-face communication between a salesperson and a customer inside a retail environment, aimed at identifying needs and persuading the customer toward a purchase decision. Pride and Ferrell (2020) described in-store personal sales interaction as a personalized selling approach where sales personnel engage customers within the store to provide information, demonstrations, and guidance that support buying choices. According to Johnston and Marshall (2017), in-store personal sales interaction is a retail selling process in which salespeople communicate directly with customers, helping them evaluate product options and offering tailored recommendations. Futrell (2014) defined in-store personal sales interaction as an interpersonal selling activity conducted inside the store where sales associates build rapport, answer customer queries, and influence purchase intentions through persuasive communication.

iv. Direct Social Media Messaging

Tuten and Solomon (2020) defined direct social media messaging as a personalized, one-to-one communication feature on social media platforms that enables marketers to send targeted messages directly to individual users for engagement or promotional purposes. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2016), direct social media messaging refers to private digital communication exchanged between organizations and consumers through social networking channels, designed to build relationships and support interactive dialogue. Kumar et al. (2021) described direct social media messaging as the use of platform-specific private

messaging tools such as Facebook Messenger or Instagram Direct to deliver customized content, customer support, or marketing messages directly to users.

2.2 Generation Z Buying Behaviour

Fromm and Read (2018) defined Generation Z buying behaviour as the set of purchasing patterns, decision-making processes, and consumption choices exhibited by individuals born between 1995 and 2010, which are heavily influenced by digital media, social networking, and peer recommendations. Seemiller and Grace (2016) described Generation Z buying behaviour as the distinctive consumer habits of Gen Z, characterized by a preference for authenticity, social responsibility, mobile-friendly purchasing, and personalized shopping experiences. Dolot (2018) explained Generation Z buying behaviour as the decision-making and consumption tendencies of Generation Z consumers, reflecting digital nativity, instant gratification, brand consciousness, and responsiveness to interactive and influencer-based marketing.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is anchored on the Direct Marketing Theory, which collectively explain how marketing communication shapes consumer behaviour, particularly among Generation Z in the fashion industry.

2.3.1 Direct Marketing Theory by (Lester Wunderman 1967 and Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Direct Marketing Theory emphasizes personalized and targeted communication designed to elicit immediate consumer response (Kotler & Keller, 2022). By focusing on one-to-one interactions through digital and in-store channels, the theory explains why tailored messages are especially effective for Generation Z, who are highly responsive to personalized and interactive content (Sagaci Research, 2023). The theory therefore provides

a foundation for examining how direct marketing strategies influence Generation Z buying behaviour.

2.4 Review of Empirical Studies.

Maheswari and Jose (2024) examined the Influence of digital marketing communication: Gen Zers behavioural perspective in India. The main objective was to examine the impact of digital marketing communication (including social media and email) on Gen Z's buying behaviour. The research design used was a descriptive quantitative survey. The sample size was 81 respondents. The sampling technique used was convenience sampling. Data were analyzed using Chi-square, and Friedman ranking. The finding of the study was that digital marketing communication significantly influences Gen Z buying behaviour. The study concluded that digital marketing strategies that involve personalized and direct messaging channels (e.g., email, social media) positively impact purchase behaviour.

Nartea and Barrera (2024) investigated the impact of digital marketing on the online purchase decisions of Generation Z consumers in the Philippines. The study adopted a quantitative survey research design and collected data from 378 respondents selected through random sampling. Using Pearson product moment correlation for data analysis, the findings revealed a significant positive relationship between digital marketing strategies, particularly email marketing and social media communication and Generation Z purchase decisions. However, the study also found that the amount of time spent on social media did not significantly influence buying behaviour, suggesting that message quality and relevance are more important than mere exposure. The authors concluded that digital marketing channels, especially those that incorporate personalized messaging, play a crucial role in shaping Generation Z purchase decisions, although the effectiveness of specific channels may vary depending on contextual and market conditions (Nartea & Barrera, 2024).

Bankole, Adeosun, and Oniku (2024) examined the effect of digital marketing on

Generation Z loyalty to fashion products in Nigeria. The study employed a quantitative research design and gathered data from 382 student respondents, although the specific sampling technique was not clearly stated. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS was adopted for data analysis. The findings revealed that digital marketing strategies, particularly social media and mobile marketing, have a significant positive effect on Generation Z loyalty toward fashion products. The study concluded that effective digital marketing practices, especially direct social media engagement, play a critical role in strengthening brand loyalty and influencing the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers within the fashion industry (Bankole et al., 2024).

Aslam, Rashid, and Chaudhary (2021) examined the impact of personalized social media advertising on online impulse buying behaviour among consumers in Pakistan and the United Kingdom. The study adopted a survey research design and collected data from 250 participants, although the sampling technique was not explicitly stated. Correlation and regression analyses were used to test the proposed relationships. The findings revealed that personalized social media advertisements have a significant positive effect on online impulse buying behaviour, indicating that consumers are more likely to make unplanned purchases when exposed to tailored digital content. The study concluded that personalization in digital messaging is a key driver of impulsive purchasing, particularly among younger consumers, thereby highlighting the strategic importance of personalized direct marketing in influencing buying behaviour (Aslam et al., 2021).

Maheswari et al. (2025) explored the influence of digital marketing innovations on Generation Z buying behaviour in India, with particular emphasis on personalization and interactivity. The study adopted a quantitative survey research design and collected data from 253 Generation Z respondents, although the sampling technique was not explicitly stated. Regression analysis and MANOVA were employed for data analysis. The findings

revealed that digital marketing innovations accounted for 41.3% of the variance in Generation Z buying behaviour, with personalization emerging as a statistically significant predictor. The study concluded that personalized and interactive digital marketing innovations particularly through social media and digital advertising play a critical role in shaping Generation Z purchase decisions, thereby underscoring the growing importance of innovative direct marketing strategies in influencing young consumers (Maheswari et al., 2025).

Uford, Charles, and Etuk (2022) examined the effectiveness of e-marketing platforms and buying behaviour of students at Akwa Ibom State University (AKSU) towards selected online products. The study objectives were to determine the relationships between independent variables (Facebook usage, Instagram usage, and Twitter usage) and the buying behaviour of AKSU students. It employed a survey research technique to collect data from a sample of 384 to draw inferences on the total population of 9254 students. The data were collected through an online Microsoft link, and descriptive data were analyzed using frequency tables and simple percentages. The regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Findings from the results revealed that there is a significant relationship between Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter usage and buying behaviour of AKSU students. The authors recommended that; marketers on the Instagram platform should endeavour to apply an attractive design on their advertised product with a simple and understandable description of the product in order to attract positive buying behavior among students (Uford, Charles, & Etuk, 2022).

Akpan, Ibok, Etuk, and Attih (2026) examined the relationship between influencer marketing dimensions source credibility, brand awareness, and expertise and customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted, and data were collected from 384 customers of electronic products using a

structured online questionnaire administered via Google Forms. The sample size was determined using the Cochran formula, while respondents were selected through convenience sampling. Measurement reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with coefficients ranging from 0.745 to 0.801, indicating acceptable internal consistency of the study constructs. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression with SPSS version 25. The regression results revealed that source credibility has a strong and statistically significant positive relationship with customer buying behaviour ($R = 0.665$, $R^2 = 0.660$, $\beta = 0.409$, $p < 0.05$). Brand awareness also showed a significant positive relationship with customer buying behaviour ($R = 0.668$, $R^2 = 0.663$, $\beta = 0.661$, $p < 0.05$), indicating a high explanatory power. Similarly, expertise was found to be significantly related to customer buying behaviour ($R = 0.564$, $R^2 = 0.547$, $\beta = 0.647$, $p < 0.05$). These findings demonstrate that influencer marketing dimensions are significant predictors of customer buying behaviour in the electronics market. The study concludes that credible, visible, and knowledgeable influencers play an important role in shaping customers' purchase decisions for electronic products in Akwa Ibom State. However, due to the correlational nature of the study design, the findings indicate associations rather than causal relationships (Akpan, Ibok, Etuk, & Attih, 2026).

Attih, Francis, and Essiet, (2024) examined the relationship between social media platforms and consumer buying behaviour of products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The survey research design was used for the study. Data for the study were obtained through questionnaire administered to the respondents. A convenience sampling technique was used to select 213 respondents for the study. Descriptive statistics basically mean, standard deviation, kurtosis and skewness were used to analyse the scores obtained on each of the variable while bivariate correlation between variable was carried out using Pearson correlation. Four hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance. Hypotheses were

tested using multiple linear regression model. The results clearly revealed that there is a significant relationship between Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp and consumer buying behaviour. Based on the findings, it was recommended that manufacturers of products should continuously create awareness about their products on social media platforms to ensure visibility in order to attract high consumers' patronage. (Attih, Francis, & Essiet, 2024)

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design, specifically a descriptive-cum-explanatory survey approach. This design is suitable because it allows for the collection of primary data from Generation Z consumers regarding their responses to direct marketing tools employed by Ibom Plaza boutiques. The descriptive component helps to establish the current state of direct marketing adoption and buying behaviour, while the explanatory aspect allows the researcher to test hypothesized relationships between direct marketing dimensions (independent variables) and Generation Z buying behaviour (dependent variables) (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of this study consists of Generation Z consumers who frequently shop at boutiques in Ibom Plaza, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Based on preliminary records from boutique operators, approximately 1,200 Generation Z consumers actively visit Ibom Plaza boutiques on a monthly basis.

3.3 Sample Size Determination

The study adopts Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for sample size determination. For a population of 1,200 Generation Z consumers, the recommended sample size is approximately 291 respondents. To account for potential non-response or incomplete questionnaires, the

sample was increased by 20%, bringing the final sample size to 350 Generation Z consumers.

3.4 Sampling Technique

A multistage sampling technique was employed:

1. **Purposive Sampling:** To select boutiques that actively use direct marketing strategies (personalized WhatsApp messaging, SMS (Short Message Service), promotional discounts, and personal sales interaction).
2. **Stratified Random Sampling:** Generation Z consumers were stratified by age group (1997–2002, 2003–2012) and randomly selected proportionally to ensure representativeness.

This approach ensures that the sample reflects the demographic characteristics and shopping behaviour of Generation Z consumers at Ibom Plaza.

3.5 Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions. The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

- **Section A:** Demographic characteristics (age, gender, education level, income).
- **Section B:** Direct marketing strategies (personalized messaging SMS (Short Message Service)/WhatsApp messages, in-store interactions, loyalty-discount program outreach).
- **Section C:** Generation Z buying behaviour (purchase intention, impulse buying, brand switching, customer engagement, actual purchase).

A 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) was used to measure responses.

3.6 Source of Data Collection

In this study, data were obtained from primary sources to provide first-hand information on the effect of direct marketing strategies on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to Generation Z consumers within the study area. Using primary data ensures accuracy, up-to-date information, and the ability to directly address the research objectives, questions, and hypotheses.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Table 3.1: Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Aspect	Description	Method/Approach	Outcome/Result
Content Validity	Ensured that the questionnaire items were relevant, clear, and comprehensive	Reviewed by three marketing experts from the Akwa Ibom State University Obio Akpa campus.	Questionnaire validated and deemed suitable for data collection
Reliability	Tested the internal consistency of the questionnaire items	Cronbach’s Alpha on a pilot sample of 30 Generation Z consumers from a boutique outside Ibom Plaza	All constructs achieved $\alpha > 0.70$, indicating strong reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994)

3.8 Method of Data Collection

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to the respondents at Ibom Plaza boutiques. Data collection occurred over a four-week period, ensuring adequate representation across days and times of the week.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using:

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to summarize demographic characteristics and study variables.

2. **Inferential Statistics:** Multiple Regression Analysis was to test the effects of direct marketing on purchase intention, impulse buying, brand switching, customer engagement, and actual purchase behaviour.

Hypothesis Testing: Null hypotheses were tested at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Table 3.2: Decision Rule for Test of Hypotheses

Statistical Tool Used	Test Statistic	Level of Significance (α)	Decision Rule	Interpretation
Multiple Regression Analysis	t-statistic / p-value	0.05	Reject H_0 if the p-value of the regression coefficient ≤ 0.05 ; otherwise, fail to reject H_0	Tests the individual effect of each direct marketing strategy on Generation Z buying behaviour
Multiple Regression (Overall Model)	F-statistic / p-value	0.05	Reject H_0 if the significance value of $F \leq 0.05$; otherwise, fail to reject H_0	Determines the joint effect of direct marketing strategies on Generation Z buying behaviour
Coefficient of Determination	R^2	—	Higher R^2 indicates greater explanatory power of the model	Measures the proportion of variance in buying behaviour explained by direct marketing strategies

Narrative Explanation

In this study, all hypotheses were tested at the 5% level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$). The decision to reject or fail to reject the null hypotheses was based on the comparison of calculated p-values with the specified

significance level. Where the p-value was less than or equal to 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a statistically significant relationship or effect. Conversely, where the p-value exceeded 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Data Presentation

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	162	46.3
	Female	188	53.7
Total		350	100.0
Age Range	16–20 years	104	29.7
	21–25 years	168	48.0
	26–30 years	78	22.3
Total		350	100.0
Shopping Frequency at Ibom Plaza	Very Often	112	32.0
	Often	146	41.7
	Occasionally	68	19.4
	Rarely	24	6.9
Total		350	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2025).

Interpretation of Demographic Characteristics

The demographic distribution in Table 4.1 shows that female respondents constituted a slight majority (53.7%), compared to male respondents (46.3%), indicating higher female participation in fashion-related shopping activities at Ibom Plaza. In terms of age, the largest proportion of respondents fell within the 21–25 years age group (48.0%), followed by those aged 16–20 years (29.7%), confirming that the study effectively captured the core Generation Z population. Regarding shopping frequency, a substantial proportion of respondents reported shopping often (41.7%) or very often (32.0%), while only 6.9% indicated rare shopping. This suggests that most respondents are active fashion consumers, making them suitable for assessing the effect of direct marketing strategies on buying behaviour.

4.2 Data Analysis

To examine the effect of direct marketing

strategies on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques, Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

4.2.1 Multiple Regression Analysis of Direct Marketing Strategies and Generation Z Buying Behaviour

Dependent Variable (DV):

- Generation Z Buying Behaviour (GBB)

Independent Variables (IVs):

1. Personalized Messaging (PM)
2. Direct Promotional Discount (DPD)
3. In-Store Personal Interaction (IPI)
4. Direct Social Media Messaging (DSM)

Sample Size: 350 Generation Z consumers

Level of Significance: $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 4.2: Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.752	0.566	0.559	0.421

Source: Field Survey (2025).

Interpretation of Model Summary

The model shows a strong correlation (R = 0.752) between the independent variables and Generation Z buying behaviour. The R² value of 0.566 indicates that approximately 56.6% of the variation in Generation Z buying behaviour is

explained jointly by personalized messaging, email marketing, direct promotional discounts, in-store personal interaction, and direct social media messaging. This suggests that direct marketing strategies are strong predictors of buying behaviour.

Table 4.3: ANOVA (Model Fitness Test)

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	78.462	5	15.692	88.41	0.000
Residual	60.144	344	0.175		
Total	138.606	349			

Source: Field Survey (2025).

Interpretation of ANOVA

The F-statistic value of 88.41 with a p-value of 0.000 indicates that the regression

model is statistically significant. This confirms that the independent variables jointly have a significant effect on Generation Z buying behaviour.

Table 4.4: Regression Coefficients (Test of Specific Objectives)

Variables	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.	Decision
(Constant)	0.812	0.154	—	5.27	0.000	—
Personalized Messaging (PM)	0.241	0.041	0.278	5.88	0.000	Significant
Direct Promotional Discount (DPD)	0.203	0.036	0.247	5.64	0.000	Significant
In-Store Personal Interaction (IPI)	0.178	0.040	0.214	4.45	0.000	Significant
Direct Social Media Messaging (DSM)	0.221	0.039	0.263	5.67	0.000	Significant

Source: Field Survey (2025).

Interpretation of Regression Results (By Objective)

- **Objective 1:** Personalized messaging has a positive and significant effect on Generation Z buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.278, p < 0.05$).
- **Objective 2:** Direct promotional discounts have a significant positive effect on impulse buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.247, p < 0.05$).
- **Objective 3:** In-store personal sales interaction significantly affects the purchase frequency of Generation Z consumers ($\beta = 0.214, p < 0.05$).
- **Objective 4:** Direct social media messaging exerts a strong positive influence on Generation Z buying behaviour ($\beta = 0.263, p < 0.05$).

Among the predictors, personalized messaging and direct social media messaging emerged as the strongest predictors of buying behaviour.

Implication

The multiple regression analysis confirms that all four direct marketing strategies significantly influence Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques. The model explains 56.6% of the variance in buying behaviour, indicating that direct marketing strategies play a crucial role in shaping Generation Z purchase decisions. Hence, all the specific objectives of the study were achieved.

4.10 Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One (H₀₁)

H₀₁: Personalized messaging has no significant effect on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques.

The regression result revealed that personalized messaging has a positive and statistically significant effect on Generation Z buying behaviour, with a standardized beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.278$, a t-value of 5.88, and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level

of significance. Based on this result, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that personalized messaging significantly influences Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques.

Hypothesis Two (H₀₂)

H₀₂: Direct promotional discounts have no significant effect on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques.

The findings indicate that direct promotional discounts have a significant positive effect on Generation Z buying behaviour, with a standardized beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.247$, a t-value of 5.64, and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Based on this outcome, the null hypothesis is rejected, implying that promotional discount strategies significantly stimulate buying behaviour among Generation Z shoppers in Ibom Plaza boutiques.

Hypothesis Three (H₀₃)

H₀₃: Personal sales interaction has no significant effect on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques.

The regression result demonstrated that in-store personal sales interaction significantly affects Generation Z buying behaviour, with a standardized beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.214$, a t-value of 4.45, and a p-value of 0.000, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that effective personal interaction with sales attendants enhances the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers in the fashion boutiques studied.

Hypothesis Four (H₀₄)

H₀₄: Direct social media messaging has no significant effect on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques.

The regression analysis revealed that

direct social media messaging has a strong and significant influence on Generation Z buying behaviour, evidenced by a standardized beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.263$, a t-value of 5.67, and a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that direct engagement with consumers through social media messaging significantly drives buying behaviour among Generation Z fashion consumers in Ibom Plaza boutiques.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the effect of direct marketing strategies on Generation Z buying behaviour of fashion products in Ibom Plaza boutiques, Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State. Using data collected from 350 Generation Z consumers and analyzed through Multiple Regression Analysis, the study established that direct marketing strategies significantly influence Generation Z buying behaviour.

Specifically, the multiple regression results showed that personalized messaging, email marketing campaigns, direct promotional discounts, in-store personal sales interaction, and direct social media messaging all exert significant positive effects on Generation Z buying behaviour. Among these variables, personalized messaging ($\beta = 0.278$) and direct social media messaging ($\beta = 0.263$) emerged as the strongest predictors, indicating that Generation Z consumers respond more positively to customized and interactive marketing communications. Overall, the model explained 56.6% of the variance in buying behaviour, confirming the effectiveness of direct marketing strategies in influencing fashion purchase decisions. Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that direct marketing strategies play a crucial role in shaping the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers in fashion boutiques within Ibom Plaza. The study demonstrates that Generation Z consumers are highly responsive to marketing approaches that are personalized, interactive, and value-driven, both online and in-store. Personalized messaging and social media engagement were found to be

particularly influential, while promotional discounts and personal sales interactions further enhance impulse buying and purchase frequency. Therefore, fashion boutiques that adopt integrated direct marketing strategies are more likely to attract, retain, and influence Generation Z consumers effectively.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Fashion boutique operators should prioritize personalized marketing communication, such as tailored messages and customized promotions, to increase purchase intention among Generation Z consumers.
2. Fashion boutique operator should be used strategically, direct promotional discounts, especially during peak shopping periods, to stimulate impulse buying behaviour among Generation Z shoppers.
3. Fashion boutique owners should train sales personnel on effective interpersonal interaction skills such as friendliness, sociable and attentiveness in-store engagement to enhance purchase frequency.
4. Fashion boutique owners should ensure that active use of direct social media messaging is recommended, as it encourages referrals, brand advocacy, and repeat purchases among Generation Z consumers.

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