

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA

**SOCIAL MEDIA POSITIONING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY FIVE
SELECTED FAST -FOOD BRAND IN GHANA**

JOSEPHINE LYDIA HILL-MENDS
(202142760)



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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I, **Josephine Lydia Hill-Mends**, do hereby declare that this dissertation, with exception of quotation and references contained in published and unpublished works, of all which have been duly identified and acknowledged, is entirely my original work, and that neither has it been submitted in part nor whole for any degree anywhere.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation were supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: MS. ABENA ABOKOMA ASEMANYI

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

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DEDICATION

Special dedication to my parents and sister who made my dream a reality

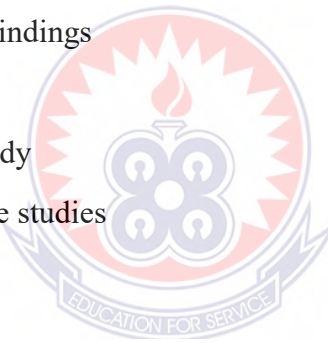


TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
DEDICATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABSTRACT	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.1.1 Fast-food brand (Quick Service restaurants)	4
1.2 Statement of the problem	7
1.3 Research Objectives	13
1.4 Research Questions	13
1.5 Significance of the Study	13
1.6 Delimitation of the Study	14
1.7 Organisation of Study	15
1.8 Summary	15
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	17
2.0 Introduction	17
2.1 Overview of Advertising and Social media Advertising.	17
2.2 Social Media	19
2.3 Social Networking Sites	22
2.4 Instagram	23
2.5 Fast- Food, Brands and Instagram	24
2.6 Brand and Branding	25
2.7 Market and Competition	27
2.8 Advertising Appeals	28
2.9 Brand Awareness (recall and recognition)	29

2.10 Theoretical Framework	31
2.10.1 The 4P strategic theory	32
2.10.1.1 Products	34
2.10.1.2 Price	36
2.10.1.3 Place	37
2.10.1.4 Promotion	38
2.10.2 Theory of Positioning	41
2.11. Relevance to the Study.	45
2.12. Summary	46
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	47
3.0 Introduction	47
3.1 Research Approach	47
3.2 Research Design	49
3.2.1 Qualitative Content Analysis	49
3.3 Sampling Strategy and Sample Size	51
3.3.1 Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) Ghana	53
3.3.2 Doughman Foods	54
3.3.3 Burger King Ghana	54
3.3.4 Papa's Pizza	55
3.3.5 Mr. Wu	55
3.4 Data Collection Method	56
3.4.1 Document Analysis	56
3.4.2 Interviews	59
3.5 Data Analysis	61
3.6 Trustworthiness	63
3.7 Summary	64
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS	65
4.0 Introduction	65
4.1 RQ1: What is the nature of post used by the fast-food brand on Instagram to achieve a competitive advantage?	66
4.1.1 Media Format	67

4.1.1.1 Images	67
4.1.1.2 Audio-visuals	74
4.1.2 Nature of Posts	82
4.2 RQ2- (a) What are the strategies the selected fast-food brand on Instagram use in achieving a competitive advantage?	90
4.2 (b) What brand visual identity elements are present in the Instagram post and how often are they used?	101
4.3 RQ.3 What is the dominant messaging strategy present in these posts?	111
4.3.1 Messaging Strategies	117
4.4 Summary	124
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	126
5.0 Introduction	126
5.1 Summary of Main Findings	126
5.2 Conclusion	130
5.3 Limitation of the study	131
5.4 Suggestion for future studies	132
5.5 Recommendation	132
REFERENCES	134
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE	154
APPENDIX B: CODING PROTOCOL	156



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Brand Account Characteristics (November, 2022)	65
Table 2: Strategic Alliances of the Five selected brand from October 2021 – March 2022	99
Table 3: The respective Logos for the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram.	103
Table 4: The respective brand colours for the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram.	105
Table 5: The respective brand tagline for the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram.	105
Table 6: The respective brand Mascot for the selected fast-food brand on Instagram.	107
Table 7: Cumulative frequency distribution Table of the messaging strategy used by the selected Fast-food brand on Instagram from October 2021- March 2022.	111



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: A cumulative visual representation of image post made by the five brands from October 2021- March 2022.	72
Figure 2:: A cumulative visual representation of audio-visual posts made by the five brands from October 2021- March 2022.	80
Figure 3: A pie chart showing the various nature of posts used by the five- selected fast-food brand on Instagram (Field Data, 2022).	82
Figure 4: An infographic post from KFC Ghana	84
Figure 5: Caption for the Duos Burger Deal	84
Figure 6.: A user-generated content post by Mr.Wu's.	85
Figure 7: A product Display Post by Papa's Pizza.	89
Figure 8: A target/ Market segmentation post by KFC Ghana.	93
Figure 9: Product customization post by Doughman Food	95
Figure 10: A Sales Promotion Post by Papa's Pizza.	98
Figure 11: A strategic alliance post by dough man foods.	100
Figure 12: The visual identity elements that were used by the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram from October 2021- March 2022.	101
Figure 13: Bar Chart of the appeals used by the selected Fast-food brand om Instagram from October 2021- March 2022	113
Figure 14: An informative Strategy post by Doughman Foods.	117
Figure 15: An incentive strategy post by Burger king Ghana.	119
Figure 16: An interactive strategy post by Papa's Pizza.	120
Figure 17: An entertaining strategy post by Papa's Pizza.	122

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the positioning strategies employed by fast-food brand on Instagram in Ghana with the aim of achieving a competitive advantage. The study utilizes a qualitative approach with purposive sampling and draws upon the theoretical frameworks of the 4P strategic theory (product, price, place, promotion) and the theory of positioning. The data collection process involved document analysis and interviews conducted with representatives from five fast-food brands operating in Ghana. Through the analysis of the collected data, the study uncovers valuable insights into the positioning strategies adopted by these brands on Instagram to gain a competitive edge. The findings reveal that infographics were the most frequently used nature of post across the five brands. This suggests that these visual representations of information are effective in conveying messages to the target audience in a clear and concise manner. By utilizing infographics, fast-food brands are able to communicate key product features, promotions, and other relevant information to their consumers on Instagram. Furthermore, the study identifies advertising appeals as an important component of the messaging strategies employed by the brand. By utilizing the emotional and rational, these brands seek to connect with their audience on an emotional level, highlight product benefits, and tap into social trends. This strategic use of advertising appeals helps to shape the perception of the brand and attract consumer attention in a competitive social media environment. The dominant messaging strategy observed among the brand was the informative strategy. This strategy focuses on providing relevant and valuable information to the audience, such as disclaimers and price increment. By positioning themselves as a trusted source of information, fast-food brand aim to build credibility, establish themselves as industry leaders, and differentiate themselves from competitors. Visual identity elements were found to play a significant role in the brand' Instagram posts. By maintaining consistent visual aesthetics, including colour schemes, logo placement, and image styles, the brand were able to create a strong visual identity that resonates with their consumers. This helps to enhance brand recognition, recall, and overall brand perception among consumers. Finally, the study reveals that fast-food brand in Ghana employed various strategies to achieve a competitive advantage. These strategies include target segmentation, product customization, sales promotion, and strategic alliances. By identifying specific segments of the market, tailoring products to meet local preferences, offering attractive promotions and discounts, and forming partnerships with complementary businesses, these brand aim to stand out in a crowded market and create a unique value proposition for their customers. This research provides valuable insights and practical implications for fast-food brand operating in Ghana, as well as other similar contexts. By understanding the effective positioning strategies employed by successful brand on Instagram, marketers and brand managers can optimize their social media presence, engage with their target audience more effectively, and ultimately achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The global economic recession has affected marketing strategies of many firms leading them to look for new tactics and develop crisis strategies to enable them be apart with this global challenge (Kirits & Karahan, 2011). This has led many firms and businesses to turn to social media. The digitization of media and communication has primarily changed the ways of advertisers (Gascon et al., 2017). This technological revolution has hugely impacted the traditional marketing approaches; totally changing the relationship between marketers and their consumers (Ertnel & Ammoura, 2016). Consumers are no longer passive receivers of advertising and marketing messages but also engaged in conversation with these businesses (Petina & Koh, 2012).

Over the years, many advertising and marketing approaches have evolved. The later part of the 20th century witnessed many developments regarding direct marketing which has become a vital promotional tool (Adan & Ahmed, 2016). Today, a more appealing and fast-growing aspect of advertising and marketing can be found in internet marketing. Social media offers firms a multi frivolous avenue to reach and communicate with their consumer (Hennig- Thurau et al., 2016). “Social media is growing fast and continuously” (Gercchia, 2015; p.789) due to this, products and services are constantly evolving and almost impossible to keep up with. Jones et al. (2011), describe the internet as one that is constantly shifting, growing and changing, with everything fleeting.

Parson (2013), conventionally states that, the discussion of marketing and advertising strategies would be incomplete without considering social media. Consumers are gradually turning away from the use of traditional media and

increasingly accepting the social media channel (Schivinski et al., 2016). Although traditional marketing differs from the ways of social media, there is still the need to put proper and proactive measure in place. A better understanding of consumer behaviours enables advertisers and marketers identify their potential customers to equip them with the appropriate ways to satisfy them (Bansal & Gupta, 2020).

The world is currently going through a revolutionary shift; it began with the industrial revolution, then the mass media revolution, and now the digital revolution (David, 2018) With decline in the use of traditional media and the astonishing growth of the social media medium, marketing has experienced a great increase on social media (Adegbola et al., 2018). Social media has become very obvious and without an indication of slowing down anytime soon (Gaber & Wright, 2014), it has become a vital part of our everyday life with uses ranging from social interaction to simple task like shopping or ordering a meal. Social media has become one that is within the reach of any individual with access to internet connectivity. An affordable medium for organizations to implement advertising and marketing campaigns to enable individuals communicate with each other and establish relationships (Bansal et al., 2014) thereby making it a go to for brand to interact with their prospective clients and gather useful marketing insights.

The present perspective on social media is its use for creating, accessing and spreading information (Appel et al., 2020). Beginning as an entertainment platform, social media has progressed to become a recent marketing phenomenon (Kirtis & Karaham, 2011). Prior to the introduction of the internet, advertising time slots were purchased by organisations on televisions and in the print media. Today, advertisers are zealously integrating social media into their marketing programmes to drive digital engagement (Voorveld et al., 2018) as consumers spend more time on social media,

leading to an outpour of communication on these new social network turf (Hunter et al., 2013).

For decades, advertisements in Ghana were predominantly print inclined (Assibey et al., 2021) giving marketers a platform to appeal their products to their consumers and later through television and radio commercials. The early 2000's saw a new digital age which birthed social media. Social media has given businesses the opportunity to engage and interact with their consumers with ease; providing marketing activities a manner to be carried out efficiently (Amoah & Jibril, 2021). Although traditional advertising methods have not faded out completely, social media now plays a huge role in marketing and advertising in Ghana and globally. Social media has created forums for businesses to directly reach their consumer base without third party involvement but through a platform that helps promote brand awareness, build a consumer base and potentially increase sales without draining a marketing budget.

Social media facilitates conversations among people who have common interest in a product, service or a topic. Dependent on their use, they could either be microblogging sites, video and image sharing and social networking sites. For innumerable Ghanaians, social media has become a vital part of their everyday lives; activities of their day are somewhat incomplete without it. The availability of the internet has made it accessible to anyone within its reach. Social platforms such as Facebook, snapchat, twitter and Instagram allow advertisers to market their product to a large audience within the shortest possible time and be able to collect reviews and feedback almost immediately.

Globally, the estimated number of social media users was 3.29 billion for 2022, representing a 42.3% of the world's population (Appel et al., 2020). Appel reasons that, with the massive potential audience of this platform, it is not surprising that advertisers

have embraced social media. The findings of the digital global overview report for 2022 indicates that, at the start of the year 12 and ½ trillion hours are spent on social media and online; thereby recommending social media for business expectation. At the start of January 2022, the total population of the world's social media users was 58.4% with an average spending time of 2 hours and 27 minutes per day (Chaffey,2022). The social media statistics for Ghana reported by data reportal is 8.80 million active social media users, representing 27.4% of the total population with an estimation of 7.3% annual increase.

With more and more people signing on to these platforms daily, Jackson (2019), states that, while Facebook still remains the world's most used social media platform, the advertising potential of Instagram has reached over a billion people. Facebook may have an advantage due to its user base and popularity as a result of its date of inception, however, Instagram's growth has been exceptionally powerful and it's continuing to climb. (Jackson, 2019). Recent research commissioned by Facebook via a poll indicated that 91% of users utilize Instagram as a tool to follow an interest. Finding of the study showed the top five interest which were food and drinks, travel, fashion, beauty and parenting. Out of these interest, food and drinks were marked at 43% (Hootsuite, 2022). Research by App Annie in 2022 indicates that, "Advertisers are taking note of the broad reach and deep engagement of mobile apps with mobile ad spend on track to hit \$350 billion in 2022, after surpassing \$295 billion in 2021", stating that, 2022 is expected to supersede the records in a transformed economy reliant on digital socialization, hybrid work and entertainment.

1.1.1 Fast-food brand (Quick Service restaurants)

Food is an integral part of life leading to the spread of food brand across the globe (Kashif, 2015). The fast-food industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in the food

manufacturing industry globally (Prabhavathi et al, 2014), and a representative of food retailer in many countries (Cheng et al., 2011). According to Mukucha & Jaravaza (2021), the global fast-food market has been steadily growing with an expected net worth of over US\$ 690 billion by 2022. Omari (2014), suggest that, globalisation is partly responsible for the wide spread of the concept for fast-food while urbanization and economic development accounts for the growth of the fast-food industry.

The fast- food industry is very dynamic and competitive globally due to the presence of a changing market environment and the presence of aggressive market players (Amue & Asiegbu, 2014). Fast-food has become a world- wide sensation and its patronage has become somewhat a daily routine for many regardless of the country and their level of development, shaping the buying and eating habits of many consumers (Asamoah, 2012). Today's consumers not only request for food but also actively request for serene and aesthetic environments, quality service and characteristics oof food and its flavours (Hung, 2018).

The traditional concept of fast-food is not new in Ghana, thus, an informal food outlet that sell fried rice, jollof rice and waakye on the streets of many urban areas in Ghana (Boafo, 2021). The term fast- food is defined and characterised based on different perspectives (Omari et al. 2013), these perspectives include; (i) food presentation, presentation and perceived value (ii) place of preparation and purchase or consumption (iii) health and nutrition and (iv) meal or snack (v) western or local.

The definition of fast-food by Ottenbacher & Harrington (2008), in citing Nimemier & Perdice (2005), refers to fast-foods as a quick service restaurant/food brand that relatively offers a limited menu and service at low cost. In their account, they posit that, foods served from these brand are ones that are semi-processed and facilitates in fast

preparation and quick serving focusing on consistency of food taste and quality. They further explained that, quick service restaurants are rather focused on adding more stores (locations) to their portfolio. The commercial focus of the fast-food industry is speed, uniformity and low cost (Prabhavathi et al., 2014). Prabhavathi et al. (2014), further supports the view of Ottenbacher & Harrington (2008), on the fact that, fast-food products are formulated to achieve a particular consistency and flavour due to the nature of the ingredients used.

Boafo (2022), however debunks the claims that fast-food products are sold at a relatively low cost. He argues that the price rate of fast-food products is subjective and based on the economic status of the country in which it is being sold. These claims however do not deter consumers from massively patronizing these food brand. Fast-food brand commonly use both print and electronic media to advertise their products and services (Xiao et al., 2018). According to Dipetro et al. (2012), many restaurants are using social media as a tool to communicate to their consumers and generate more interest in their brand. The study of Dipetro et al. ((2012), found that, fast-food restaurants use social media in five areas of their organisation;

- (i) Advertising and communication
- (ii) Virtual product sale
- (iii) Marketing research
- (iv) Human resource management
- (v) Internal process management

According to Hung (2018), establishing a unique image positioning in a consumer's mind helps effectively grab the consumer's need. This therefore becomes a critical issue for management in the food and beverage industries.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Historically, marketing communication targets were achieved through channels such as print, radio and television (Motameni & Nordstrom, 2014) until the rise of a new digital era. Social media has gained tremendous fame as a useful and an impactful channel of communication in this digital era, placing it on a pedestal across various streams for facilitating communication among business organisations and their consumers (Dwivedi et al., 2015). The transition from traditional advertising to online trends has been persuaded by consumers preference for digital media (Balanche et al., 2019). Many industries have adopted the use of social media marketing as a way to reach and communicate with their consumers. One of the many is the food industry. Fast-food restaurants are becoming prevalent in the cities and contribute massively to the provision of ready-to-eat foods (Omari,2014).

The restaurant sector represents the largest and fast-growing part of Ghana's domestic economy with an annual increase rate of 20% (Boafo,2021). Several studies have been conducted on how social media is used in various sectors to promote marketing and advertise products and services (Knoll, 2016, Gu & Wang, 2012, Amoah & Jibril,2021, Bansal et al, 2015). Hennig- Thureau (2010), Cerchia (2015), Eternel and Ammoura (2016), Hajli (2014), looked at the effects social media has on consumer perception, relationships and behaviours. Salleh (2015), da Silve et al., (2021), Gascon (2017), Celimli and Adanacioglu (2021), examine the social media presence and online activities in advertising and marketing of fast-food brand across various platforms. However, these studies are country specific and therefore excludes brand in Ghana. Research pertaining to advertising and marketing of fast-foods on social media in Ghana, primarily looks at the health implications while others focus on the consumer buying behaviour.

Kirtis and Karahan (2011), examined the marketing budgets of firms on social media strategies as compared to traditional media. Their study investigated whether companies spend less or more via social media strategies. They posit that, marketing has become a vital part for business to stay profitable and encourage consumer's responsiveness. The study looked at the importance of social media in the field of marketing. The findings of the study showed that, social media has a marketing advantage over the traditional methods due to its capability to reach enormous audience at a time. the study concluded that, marketers are increasingly using social media as a marketing tool in their strategies due to its lower cost.

Schivinski et al. (2016), look at how social media communication has an impact on the consumers perception of brand. Implementing a purposive sampling method, they investigated 504 Facebook users to observe the impact social media communication has on brand equity and used a conceptual analysis to analyse 60 brand across three different industries. Their work posits that, the application of online brand engagement on social networking sites have introduced new channels of communication. The general aim of the study was to examine how social media communications affect brand equity and attitudes, as well as how it impacts consumer purchase intention and industry specific difference. They also examined the interplay of firm generated communication and user generated communication. Finding of the study showed that, product-based companies, are highly into their consumers preference and taste. Another finding showed that, social networking sites, give marketers the ground to cooperate with consumers in order to increase the visibility of their brand. Their study finally concluded that, social media communication had a positive influence on both brand equity and attitude, however, firm created content only affected brand attitude.

Bragg et al. (2017), compared online marketing techniques on food and beverage companies' websites across six countries. The study sampled three Fast-food brand McDonalds, Coca-Cola and Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). The study was propelled on the basis of health and focused on the economic and financial status of the selected countries. The study employed a qualitative content analysis by developing a qualitative code book. Findings of the study showed promotions as the most prevalent marketing technique used by these food brand in reaching out to their consumer base.

Seric and Pranicevi (2017), examined the impact of consumer generated reviews on social media in the hospitality industry. Specifically, the fast-food chain brand. The study employed a convenience sampling method to gather their data. Findings of the study suggested that, social media can emotionally attach a consumer to a brand. The study posits that, loyalty, commitment and trust are essential to the fast-food industry.

Gascon et al. (2017), conducted a qualitative study to examines the online activities and social media presence of four leading fast-food companies globally; McDonalds, Burger King, Pizza Hut and Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). The study focused on how these companies use social media as a means of engaging with consumers and their success in doing so. The study analysed across five social media platforms; Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, twitter and google+ findings of the study showed that, the most active brand did not have the highest number of daily posts on the average. The results also showed that, all brand used Instagram to mainly promote their products whiles YouTube had the lowest online activities. Another key finding was the depiction of mouth-watering food and beverages in order to lure consumers.

Bragg et al. (2019), conducted a study to examine the marketing techniques utilized by Fast-food, beverage and snacks brand on social media. The study was

conducted across five social media platforms; Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Vine. The study examined 2000 posts made by the selected brand on their social media pages. The study employs a qualitative content analysis to examine the marketing themes and healthfulness of products featured in the posts. Findings of the study showed that, brand employed interactive tools and entertaining content to engage with their customers.

Adzovie and Jibril (2020), studied the factors that motivates consumers selection towards a particular “fast-food joint” in an underdeveloped country setting particularly Ghana. The study used a qualitative research approach, employing a convenience sampling method. The study further employed a structured survey questionnaire to intercept buyers of selected food joints at vantage points. Findings of the study showed that, menu price was a massive determinant for buyers’ intention toward the selected “fast-food joints”

da Silva et al. (2021), conducted a study to investigate advertising patterns on post made by fast-food chains in Brazil. They employed an exploratory cross-sectional study of three social media platforms; Facebook, Instagram and YouTube implementing a principal component analysis of 305 advertisements made in 2019 of one brand. The basis for selecting these social media platforms was due to their popularity in the country. Findings showed that, 82.2 % of advertisements made were that of visual representation of food. It also revealed that, the power of advertisement in relation to strategies were more frequent on YouTube than that of Facebook and Instagram respectively. The study was able to identify four patterns used in attracting consumers; kids and product exaltation, price and discounts, celebrity and innovation and celebrity and commemorative dates. The study concludes with advertising patterns

of these fast-food brand, being directed at children, addressed price, discounts and celebrities which signifies the use of influencers.

Cassidy et al. (2021), compared the marketing practices of McDonalds official Instagram accounts across 15 countries. The aim of the study was to determine the similarities and differences in marketing techniques across countries with varying economic status. The study employed a qualitative content analysis approach. Findings of the study showed that, McDonalds offered more special price promotion and utilized both child targeted marketing techniques as well as the use of celebrity and influencer endorsements.

Previous studies have predominantly explored consumer relationships with brands, online activities of brands, and consumer preferences in decision-making when it comes to fast-food advertising and marketing on social media. Specifically, the focus has often revolved around concerns about the health implications of fast-food, particularly in relation to nutritional value and the risk of obesity, particularly for youth and child-targeted advertising. In the context of Ghana, studies in the fast-food domain have primarily concentrated on informal fast-food outlets (such as roadside fast-food) as highlighted by Boafo (2021) and Omari (2014). Additionally, some studies have examined consumer behaviours and the influence of social media on purchase decisions due to its impact on consumers. However, there is a need for further research to explore the specific strategies employed in brand positioning and differentiation within the context of fast-food marketing and advertising on social media in Ghana.

Fast- Food brand use of social media accounts and profiles is relatively unexplored as it is an emerging sector (Bragg et al., 2019). With advertisements surfacing all over every social networking site, allowing businesses to target potential customers (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020), social media has given opportunities to both

start-up and large cooperation's the platform to easily advertise the products and services at a relatively low and convenient way. This has in turn led to the overflow of both marketing and advertising contents from various brand on social media particularly Instagram. The fast-food industry is a blossoming sector of Ghana's economy and a great business avenue for many (Boafo 2021). This has led to the up-spring for various brand across the country. These brands actively employ social media as a way to market and advertise their menu and promote their brand to a large number of audiences who are active users of the media platform. Studies of fast-food advertising and marketing on social media, focusing on brand positioning and differentiation strategies, has been explored in various regions worldwide. However, there is a notable gap in the literature specifically pertaining to Ghana.

Attracting consumer's attention has become a necessity for marketers in this attention economy where consumers are overloaded with information (Teixeria, 2015) As Instagram continues to grow in popularity, the platform becomes saturated with brands vying for the attention of users. This creates a challenge for businesses to stand out and effectively position their brand to attract and retain consumers. Instagram's algorithm determines which posts appear in users' feeds, and it has become increasingly challenging for brands effectively communicate their marketing messages to their consumers. To overcome these challenges, brands must generate compelling content that is authentic and appealing to their target audience, define a clear social media strategy, interact with consumers. This research therefore seeks to study the marketing and advertising strategies utilised by five fast-food brands in Ghana, investigating how they achieve a competitive advantage over the competitors in an advertising clutter digital era through brand positioning and digital content.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study sought to conduct an investigation on the use of social media as an advertising, marketing and promotional tool in the fast-food industry on Instagram.

Specifically, this study seeks to:

1. Examine the nature of the posts that are used by the fast-food brand on Instagram to achieve a competitive advantage.
2. (a) Investigate the strategies the selected fast-food brand use in achieving a competitive advantage on Instagram.
(b) Examine the visual identity elements used by the selected brand on Instagram.
3. Examine the dominant messaging strategy used by these brands on Instagram.

1.4 Research Questions

The research would be guided by the following questions

1. What is the nature of posts used by fast-food brand on Instagram to achieve a competitive advantage?
2. (a) What are the strategies the selected fast-food brand on Instagram use in achieving a competitive advantage?
(b) What brand visual identity elements are present in the Instagram post and how often are they used?
3. What is the dominant messaging strategy present used by the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The advancement of marketing methods and technological developments has brought about enhancements in contemporary marketing techniques (Celimli & Adanacioglu,

2021). Consequently, this has transformed how companies engage in the marketing and advertising of their products and services to present-day consumers. Social media platforms have evolved beyond their initial purpose of entertainment and now serve as active tools for advertising and promotion. Within the current business economy, social media plays a critical role in the advertising and marketing sector, with a strong emphasis on ensuring consumer satisfaction. Notably, social media marketing has been recognized as an influential factor in shaping a brand's image (Hanaysha, 2016), thus establishing its reputation as one of the most effective means of marketing products.

The primary objective of this study was to provide advertising and marketing firms with valuable insights into the various strategies employed in product advertisement, specifically within the realm of food marketing, to gain a competitive advantage on social media platforms. Additionally, the study aimed to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on social media advertising and marketing. Furthermore, the findings of this research would prove beneficial to marketing agencies in implementing effective strategies for advertising, marketing, and brand positioning on social media. Lastly, the study's outcomes would have significant implications for social media advertising, considering that a majority of consumers actively utilize social media as a means of gathering information about products and services prior to making purchases. The study findings can thus serve as a guiding resource for companies seeking to enhance their social media presence and improve their marketing methods.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

This research is concentrated on evaluating social media (Instagram) marketing strategies used by Fast-food brand in Ghana. However, the study is limited to Instagram with a study of five selected food brand Accra.

1.7 Organisation of Study

The study comprised of five chapters. The first chapter, an introductory chapter consolidating the background which inquires how social media has become an indispensable advertising and marketing tool, slowly replacing the traditional ways of advertising and marketing products and services. It also consists of research questions that would serve as an advisor for the study and provide the leeway within which the study employs as well as stating the purpose of the study.

The second chapter encompasses a review a related literature. This chapter looks at social advertising and marketing, social media, social media advertising, digital marketing, branding, positioning, the role of social media in today's advertising and marketing as well as the strategies employed. Additionally, the second chapter look at the theoretical framework that provides ideas and concepts for the study. It assesses the use of advertising strategies on social media by food brand through Theory of brand positioning and the 4Ps strategic theory.

The third chapter of the study introduced the methods and procedures used for the collection of data and analysis. This chapter defines the research approach; the research design, analysis, sample and sampling technique, data collection instruments and method of data analysis are discussed. The fourth chapter of the study is devoted to the findings and discussions of the study. It gives a summary of the findings surfaced out of the study and categorizes them into themes. The fifth and final chapter of the study draws conclusions and makes recommendations for further studies.

1.8 Summary

This chapter introduced the study with a general overview of social media and social media advertising. Although the issue of social media and fast-food advertising have been conducted, the problem is that little has been done in the area of marketing

strategies in the Ghanaian context. This study therefore seeks to add up to literature on the strategy for product advertisement and food marketing on social media in Ghana, studying a selected number of brands based in Accra. The next chapter review related literature and highlights the theoretical framework for the study.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

The second chapter reviews literature on social media advertising and the relationship between fast-food industries and social media advertising. It includes literature on digital marketing, advertising and marketing, social media, social media advertising and marketing and positioning strategies. It examines the role played by social media in the advertising of food and beverages as well as the impact of social media on brand purchasing. The related studies offer understanding from a global perspective with particularity to Ghana. The second chapter also outlines the concepts, ideas and theories that underpin the study, setting the grounds to understand the representation of fast-food brand on social media. Theoretical framework is described by Grant & Osanloo (2014), as the blueprint for a study's inquiry that serves as a guide on which a study is built and supported. Eisnhart (1991, p.205) defines it as "a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory... constructed by using an established, coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships".

2.1 Overview of Advertising and Social media Advertising.

Advertising is a widely used and prominent marketing tool (Gijsenberg & Nijs, 2018). As highlighted by Ghedier (2022), the effectiveness of advertising in promoting brands has led to its widespread use and the emergence of advertising-related issues. Brands utilize advertising intermittently rather than continuously, both online and through traditional media, allowing consumers to make purchases online or in physical stores among various competing brands (Gijsenberg & Nijs, 2018; Danaher et al., 2020). However, the management of advertising has become increasingly challenging in the

multichannel environment due to growing competition across different media (Danaher et al., 2020).

According to Tadon (2021), advertising is an effective method for persuading people to buy concepts, products, and services. Similar to this, Terkan (2014), contends that depending on the nature of the product and the appropriateness of the media used to deliver the advertising message, commercials can either be persuasive or informational. In order to inform potential customers about the benefits of a product and persuade them to buy it, advertising is defined by Durmaz (2011), as the whole activities involved in presenting a product or idea to that audience. Advertising, according to Santon (2002), is the practise of publicly endorsing messages—oral and visual—that are directed at certain audiences and promote a given good, service, or concept.

Terkan (2014), categorizes advertising as a form of communication activation within the marketing process, highlighting its roles in informing, persuading, and promoting and preserving the brand's image. Karimova (2011) distinguishes between traditional advertising, encompassing television, radio, and print media, and interactive advertising, which predominantly focuses on internet advertising with interactivity as a defining characteristic.

While traditional advertising methods are losing their efficacy and sustainability (Hoffmann et al., 2016; Geho & Dangelo, 2012), social media has emerged as a pivotal platform for future marketing (Geho & Dangelo, 2012). Businesses actively engage in social media advertising by establishing profiles and utilizing social networks to promote their products (Carmichael & Cleave, 2012). Technological advancements in

social media have revolutionized business practices, fostering collaboration between brands and consumers (Pan et al., 2019).

Numerous companies have engaged in social media advertising in an effort to control the social media environment after seeing its potential in a cutthroat industry (Constantinides, 2014). The utilisation of interactive user-generated material for display and distribution among customers is a component of social media advertising (Ertneel & Ammoura, 2016). Social media advertising often involves user-generated content, which can be interactive and shared among customers. This practice allows brands to engage with their audience and potentially increase brand awareness and customer participation.

According to Ahmed and Raziq (2017), companies use a variety of techniques to market their goods and services across online platforms, focusing on niche markets and preferred social media networks, including videos, banner ads, brand pages, images, embedded videos, classified and sponsored ads, and surveys. Gunelius (2011), highlights that social media advertising combines direct and indirect marketing strategies, aiming to create brand awareness, recognition, and recall through web tools like content dissemination and social networking. Consequently, numerous businesses are utilizing social media to generate informational content, ranging from product design to advertising campaigns (Pham & Gammoh, 2015).

2.2 Social Media

Social media has become an integral part of our daily lives in the digital era, offering a platform for like-minded individuals to connect through technology (Jones et al., 2011). The evolution and innovation of social media have transformed the way information is disseminated (Yang, 2021). Businesses have recognized the productive advertising

potential of social media (Amoah & Jibril, 2020), while traditional media is losing its impact on consumers in comparison to rapidly developing new media enabled by information technology (Xi et al., 2021). Initially intended for entertainment purposes, social media has now become a marketing phenomenon (Kirtis & Karahan, 2011).

Richardson (2016), suggests that social media may be the fastest-growing media in history. This growing recognition of social media's importance has become a crucial factor for the success of products and services (Hawkin & Vel, 2013). Brands actively utilize social media to promote products, maintain reputation, and compete with other similar brands (Arora et al., 2019).

Kaplan & Haelein (2010), define social media as web-based apps that make it easier to create and share user-generated content, expanding on the principles of web 2.0. Berton et al. (2012), hold a similar perspective, emphasising social media as an outcome of web 2.0-based internet-based applications. According to Appel (2020), social media is a group of applications, including as apps and websites, that offer users a digital environment for exchanging digital material inside a social network. According to Cerchia (2015), social media is a ground-breaking instrument that facilitates interactive contact and information sharing between people, businesses, and international groups.

Goyal (2013), broadly defines social media as any platform facilitating the sharing and exchange of ideas and information through user-generated content. Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), classify social media types based on media richness and self-disclosure. They identify collaborative projects, blogs, social networking sites, content communities, virtual game worlds, and virtual social worlds as different types of social media. Collaborative projects enable multiple users to jointly create content, while

content communities focus on sharing copyrighted materials. Blogs display date-stamped entries in reverse chronological order, resembling a diary, and social networking sites allow users to connect through personal profiles. Virtual worlds replicate three-dimensional environments, with virtual game worlds centred around multiplayer online role-playing games and virtual social worlds allowing users to adopt behaviour similar to their real lives.

Constantinides (2014), further categorizes social media into content communities, social networks, forums, weblogs, and content aggregators, with each type serving specific marketing objectives. Content aggregators offer customized and syndicated access, forums facilitate interactive information exchange within special interest groups, and weblogs are platforms for sharing ideas and opinions. Pham and Gammoh (2015), note that each type of social media platform has its own strengths, characteristics, and reach.

With millions of new users signing up every day and a fast-growing active user base on social media platforms worldwide, the rise of these platforms does not appear to be slowing down (Al Jahwari, Joshi, & Al Mandhari, 2020). Gascon et al. (2017), draw attention to the important role social media plays in brand management, particularly the direct influence it has on customers. The rapid dissemination of trends is made possible by social media platforms, creating a constantly-evolving environment in which brands must respond and adapt swiftly to stay relevant and competitive. McKee (2010), emphasises that social media encourages brand loyalty through networking, community development, and dialogues.

2.3 Social Networking Sites

The prominence of social networking sites as powerful advertising platforms has led companies to allocate a significant portion of their advertising budgets towards them, recognizing their potential for better reach and interactivity (Saxena & Khanna, 2013). The extensive audiences present on these sites have prompted brands to incorporate them into their media communication strategies, creating their own brand pages and attracting audiences (Langaro et al., 2015). Social networking sites have emerged as the most popular form of social media, with numerous platforms expanding continuously through the release of new applications (Santa et al., 2020).

Brands now employ social media advertising to boost sales, raise brand awareness, and improve communication (Anshu & Saidat, 2018). The use of social networking sites for advertising has grown dramatically. According to Rizavi et al. (2011), social networking sites are effective as platforms for advertising since they may draw clients from a range of places and demographics. Over 20% of online advertisements are found on social networking sites, according to Saxena and Khanna (2013). Global Media Statistics estimate that in 2022, each user will spend an average of two hours and twenty-seven minutes every day on social media. Social networking services enable the development of relationships between people who have common interests, independent of place or time (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). While it is true that social media platforms can have broad user bases, the effectiveness of advertising on these platforms can vary depending on the target audience, industry, and specific marketing objectives.

While the primary focus of social networking sites is connecting people, they offer an eclectic range of apps and services (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). User privacy is protected on these sites, with profiles typically requiring minimal information

(Abhyankar, 2011). Marketers and advertisers engage with consumers and enhance brand visibility by utilizing social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram (Schivinski et al., 2016).

2.4 Instagram

Social media platforms have become a popular choice for industries to promote their brands and maintain customer relationships, and Instagram stands out among others by focusing on visual content (Huey & Yazdanifard, 2014). Since its launch in 2010, Instagram has become the preferred marketing channel, surpassing Facebook and Twitter, making it a valuable tool for brand promotion and consumer engagement (Jaffary, 2015; Adegbola et al., 2018). Abdullahi (2020), asserts that Instagram is the most popular social networking site for advertising, offering diverse options beyond traditional advertising methods. As a photo and video sharing platform, Instagram relies on visual interactions to foster social networking (Hu et al., 2014; Abdullahi, 2020).

Due to Instagram's concentration on producing visually appealing material, brands prefer this platform over others as it gives them a distinct advantage in terms of clear product placement and positioning (Yang, 2021). According to Yang (2021), brands may generate a significant influence and product difference thanks to this clear product positioning, which helps them stand out in a competitive market. According to Belanche et al. (2019), Instagram is a useful medium for boosting company reputation and connecting with a lot of potential buyers. Santa et al. (2020), place even more emphasis on Instagram's significance for businesses looking to promote brand awareness because it provides a variety of tools including rewards, influencer marketing, and paid advertising to support online activities. Hu et al. (2014) categorize Instagram posts into eight types based on content, including fashion, electronics, nature, activities, friends, self-portraits, captioned photos, and food.

However, Abdullahi (2020), argues that while advertising on Instagram presents numerous opportunities compared to traditional advertising methods, it must be utilized properly to avoid negatively impacting the brand image. Each social media platform has its own distinct method of communication with users, with Instagram placing emphasis on captivating images and dynamic videos (Gascon et al., 2017).

2.5 Fast- Food, Brands and Instagram

Social media has become a crucial component of brand marketing strategies due to its cost-effectiveness, global reach, interactivity, and access to valuable analytics and data (Pinto & Yagnik, 2017). Instagram, in particular, attracts a significant portion of potential customers, making it an essential platform for businesses of all types (Staletić et al., 2021). By publishing posts on Instagram, brands can enhance their interactions with both current and potential clients (Coelho et al., 2016).

With over 200 million active business accounts and a significant number of consumers following brands, Instagram's potential as a marketing tool is clear (Chen, 2022). The growth of Instagram's advertising potential to smaller firms through sponsored sponsorships, as highlighted in Adebola (2018), enables them to effectively market their goods and services. According to user and demographic targeting, sponsored posts on Instagram are put purposefully in users' feeds (Khaimova, 2019). Brands' capacity to evaluate the effectiveness of particular advertising and campaigns in terms of impressions, reach, and frequency was further improved in 2014 with the launch of the Instagram business profile (Khaimova, 2021).

Instagram's popularity among brands continues to grow steadily, making it a platform of choice for businesses (Nanji, 2017). Russman and Svensson (2016), categorize roles on Instagram into two: posters, who are the account owners typically

representing brands, and followers, who subscribe to receive regular updates and can be seen as consumers. The distinction between a post and posting lies in the fact that a posting refers only to the picture or video content, while a post encompasses both the content and the followers' reactions to it (Russman & Svensson, 2016).

As customer preferences and trends can swiftly change, the rapid and extensive nature of social media in the food industry creates potential and difficulties for companies (Gascon et al., 2017). Consumer decision-making is greatly influenced by food promotion, and digital marketing on websites like Instagram has grown in popularity (Bragg et al., 2017). Incorporating interactive technologies to engage users, fast food firms employ Instagram's visual content capabilities to present their items through images and videos (Cassidy et al., 2021; Bragg et al., 2019). Incorporating social media advertising, particularly on Instagram, can provide a competitive advantage and facilitate interactions with potential consumers in the fast-food industry (Hanaysha, 2016). Instagram's focus on rich visual content gives it an edge over other social media platforms for advertising in the fast-food industry (Jenifer, 2014).

2.6 Brand and Branding

Marketers need to have a thorough understanding of the authenticity and nature of their goods and services, as well as its drivers and effects, in order to achieve successful and meaningful branding (Morhart et al., 2015). According to Isoraite (2018), brands are created based on distinguishing qualities and unique products that are important to consumers. A brand's name, logo, or other distinctive sign, which can be spoken or written, is what gives it its fundamental power (Michell et al., 2001). According to Morhart et al. (2015), Mitchell's (2001) contention that elements including culture, personality, positioning, and the organization's belief system influence brand identity

consistency is supported. They believe that, products and services are almost irrelevant without a strong brand.

Kotler (1997), defines a brand as terms, names, logos, drawings, symbols, or a combination of these elements that help distinguish one competitor's products from another. Lai et al. (2017), view branding as the process of managing product elements to develop a positive brand image. According to Sima (2021), describes branding as the process of empowering a brand's product or service. A brand is a business, and its image is derived from the consumers' perspective and market trends (Sima, 2021). Winarso (2012), defines brand image as the description of a company's offering, including the symbolic meaning associated with specific product attributes as perceived by consumers.

Aaker (1997), suggests that a brand serves as a signal to consumers, identifying the producer of the product and protecting both parties from competing products that may appear identical. Blackett (2004), notes that the term "brand" is primarily used in a passive form. According to Forman and Argenti (2005), a brand refers to how an organisation promotes itself in the market in terms of both kinships and cultural connotations. By cultivating consumer loyalty, effective branding boosts a company's financial and competitive performance (Cassia & Magno, 2019). According to Argenti and Druckenmiller (2004), smart brand management enhances an organization's reputation by directing and influencing the company's behaviour. Three aspects of brand building discussed by Hung (2014), are: functionality, experience, and symbolism. Functionality denotes the internal benefits obtained from utilising the product, experience denotes the characteristics of product use, and symbolism denotes the exterior advantages and social standing connected to brand support.

A critical assessment of these perspectives highlights the importance of branding and creating a brand identity. Branding helps establish consumer loyalty by enabling consumers to recognize a brand through elements such as the logo, packaging, and slogan. Strategic branding is often implemented by brands to combat growing market competition and improve brand recall and recognition in consumers' minds. Argenti and Druckemiller's (2004), emphasis on the relationship between branding and reputation. They explain the crucial role reputation plays in the success of an organization, thus; a positive reputation attracts consumers and encourages recommendations, while a negative reputation repels consumers and leads to negative publicity.

2.7 Market and Competition

The concept of a market can be understood by examining the concept of exchange, as described by Kotler (2000). Traditionally, a market was defined as a physical place where sellers and buyers would come together to exchange goods. However, in the 21st century, marketers now view the sellers as the industry and the buyers as the market (Kotler, 2000). Waheed et al. (2017), define a market as a specific segment that an organization targets, allowing buyers and sellers to interact with each other, whether in a physical or virtual setting. Kotler (2000), distinguishes between a marketplace, which is physical (e.g., shopping in a store), and a market space, which refers to digital platforms such as internet marketing and e-commerce.

Frew et al. (2017), outline four types of market competition that marketers can utilize individually or blend together when targeting different segments within a market. The four basic market types are perfect competition, monopoly, monopolistic competition, and oligopoly. In a perfectly competitive market, there are a large number of both sellers and buyers, and information is readily available. Neither consumers nor

producers have the ability to individually impact prices in this type of market. On the other hand, a monopoly market is characterized by a single seller with unlimited market power. Monopolistic competition involves a large number of firms producing relatively similar products, but consumers are able to differentiate between them based on the brand or producer. The fourth type of market described by Frew et al. (2017), is an oligopoly market, which features a few large producers and a relatively large consumer base. In this type of market, products are differentiated among producers, each having a considerable but not unlimited market power.

2.8 Advertising Appeals

The core element of an advertisement is the advertising appeal, which aims to capture the consumer's attention and influence their feelings and attitudes towards the advertised products (Das, 2020). This appeal comprises cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling), and conative (behavior) components (Das, 2020). Griguliunaite and Pileliene (2016), highlight the relationship between advertising appeals and consumer behaviour, specifically in terms of attention to the advertisement, attitudes towards the advertisement and brand, and purchase intention. Affective response, encompassing emotions, moods, and feelings, plays a crucial role in human motivation, cognition, social judgment, perceptions, and decision-making behaviours (Zhang, 2013). Wang et al. (2017), emphasize the connection between affective engineering, which links a consumer's emotional responses to product or service characteristics, and enhanced brand recall and purchase intentions.

King's JWT advertising planning guide (1974), which serves as the foundation for contemporary advertising plans. In a competitive market, consumer brand choices are based on the overall impression created by each brand. King (1974), suggests that a brand's total appeal is constructed over time using three types of appeal: senses,

reason, and emotion which are combined with different elements in various ways results in a unique blend of appeals. Reichert et al. (2007), note that advertising appeals are designed to evoke emotions and influence individuals' reactions based on their predispositions. Johar and Sirgy (1991), proposed two common approaches to advertising: value-expressive (image or symbolic) appeals and utilitarian (functional) appeals. The authors argue that the choice between these appeals depends on whether the product is perceived as value-expressive or utilitarian, and various situational and individual factors can guide this selection.

Kim and Han (2015), discuss two types of expression techniques employed in advertising appeals: rational appeal and emotional appeal. They emphasize the importance of cultivating a positive attitude towards the advertisement. With technological advancements, advertisers must consider the potential of these tools to persuade their target market and align advertising appeals with the nature and direction of communication (Raza et al., 2019). Ducoffee (1995), identified four variables that shape the dimensions of an advertisement's appeal and substantiate the value of a product: information, deception, irritation, and entertainment. Raza et al. (2019), expand on these dimensions by adding a fifth one, advertising value.

2.9 Brand Awareness (recall and recognition)

The competition among brands on social media has become increasingly fierce, evident from the growing number of social media users (Tritama & Tarigan, 2015). This online competition has blurred consumers' awareness of brands, leading to a significant reduction in the effectiveness of traditional marketing efforts (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). Consequently, consumers base their purchase decisions on brands they can recognize and recall.

Brand awareness, as defined by Tritama and Tarigan (2015), refers to the prospective consumer's ability to recognize and recall a brand within a specific product category. Khurram et al. (2018), describe brand awareness as the extent to which consumers are conscious of a brand, playing a crucial role in their decision-making process. They argue that the more exposure a consumer has to a brand, the higher the likelihood of them purchasing that brand's product. Consumers are more inclined to choose familiar brands over unfamiliar ones when making decisions between brands.

Percy and Rossiter (1992), distinguish brand recall and brand recognition as two separate types of brand awareness, with the distinction depending on the initial effect of communication in a consumer's mind. Brand recall is categorized as the need-first category, occurring when a brand is not present, but the consumer relies on memory to generate potential solutions based on their experience. Brand recognition, on the other hand, occurs when the brand is directly presented to the consumer, stimulating consideration and relevance to their current need. Brand recognition is thus categorized as brand-awareness-first.

Keller (2002), agrees with Percy and Rossiter (1992) and considers brand awareness to be a combination of brand recall and brand recognition. However, Tritama and Tarigan (2015), propose a four-stage division of brand awareness: brand recognition, brand recall, top of mind, and brand unaware. Brand recognition is regarded as the lowest level of brand awareness, occurring only when a potential consumer is aided in remembering the brand through slogans, jingles, or social media posts. Brand recall, or unaided recall, follows brand recognition, where consumers can remember the brand without any assistance. Brand unawareness occurs when a consumer is introduced to a brand for the first time. The highest level of brand

awareness, according to Tritama and Tarigan (2015), is top of mind, where the brand holds greater attention compared to competing brands within the product category.

Brand awareness operates on the premise that repeated exposure to a brand increases the likelihood of consumers remembering and distinguishing it from competitors (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). Brand recall, as Khurram et al. (2018) suggest, is the ability of a consumer to correctly remember a brand from their subconscious mind when given cues related to the brand. While Keller et al. (1998), argue that brand names play a crucial role in brand recall and recognition, Percy and Rositter (1992), counter that consumers do not necessarily need to remember a brand's name to make a purchase. Visual images of the brand, such as packaging and brand colours, can also stimulate cues and aid in brand recall and recognition.

Mikhailitchenlo et al. (2002), support Percy and Rositter's (1992) views, highlighting the integral and powerful role of visual imagery in influencing brand recall. However, the effectiveness of visual imagery depends on factors such as consumers' memory related to brand familiarity, product category experience, and their level of involvement. Brand recognition refers to a consumer's ability to differentiate a brand based on prior exposure through hearing or seeing it (Keller, 1993). Khurram et al. (2018), state that brand recognition confirms prior exposure to a brand when given cues related to it.

2.10 Theoretical Framework

Littlejohn and Foss (2011), define a theory as a “unified, or coherent body of propositions that provide a philosophically consistent picture of a subject” (p.19). According to them, a theory focuses an individual attention on certain relationships, patterns and variables whiles excluding others and used as an organized set of

explanation, principles and concepts to depicts certain aspects of human experiences. A theoretical framework guides a research work by determining the statistical relationships to look for in understanding a phenomenon (Tamene, 2016).

The 4P Strategic Theory and the Theory of Positioning are two theories that are used in this study to provide a thorough examination of the topic. The many components of fast-food marketing and social media advertising are examined using the 4P strategic theory, which includes Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. The study attempts to gather insights into the overall strategic approach used by fast food firms on social media platforms by taking into account how these four important aspects interact with one another.

Additionally, the theory of positioning is applied to investigate how fast-food firms position themselves in the market, distinguish their products, and create a distinctive personality on social media. The study seeks to offer a solid framework for comprehending and assessing the strategic facets of fast-food marketing and advertising on social media platforms by drawing from these two theories.

2.10.1 The 4P strategic theory

The concept of the marketing mix, first introduced by Borden in 1965, encompasses various elements that contribute to a firm's marketing strategy. Initially, Borden identified 12 elements including product planning, price, branding, distribution channels, personal selling, advertising, promotions, packaging, display, physical handling, servicing, and analysis. Singh (2012), defines the marketing mix as a combination of controllable variables that firms utilize to market their products and services. This mix comprises the optimal combination of marketing elements that influence consumer responses.

McCarthy (1964), introduced the 4P's of marketing, which are frequently referenced in relation to the marketing mix. McCarthy's model consolidates Borden's 12 elements into four categories: Product, Price, Promotion, and Place. Chong (2003), suggests that the marketing mix derives from the microeconomic theory's single P, which is Price. Dominici (2009), asserts that McCarthy's marketing mix is a theory employed both in academia and practice. However, Goi (2009), argues that the marketing mix is not a scientific theory but rather a conceptual framework aiding marketers in identifying key decision-making factors to satisfy consumer needs. On the other hand, Thabit and Raewf (2018), postulate that the marketing mix is not only a conceptual framework but also a scientific theory that clarifies marketers' decision-making efforts.

Kent (1986). refers to the 4P's of marketing as the "holy quadruple" of the marketing faith. Grönross (1994), explains that the components of the marketing mix enable the separation of marketing from other organizational activities, allowing for the delegation of marketing tasks and effectively altering a company's competitive position. The 4P's of marketing mix has been faced criticism, with propositions to replace it with the 7P's of marketing by Booms and Bitner (1981) due to its perceived generic nature, as noted by Rafiq and Ahmed (1995). Popovic (2006) argues that the 4Ps reflect a product-oriented definition of marketing rather than a consumer-oriented one.

Over the years, modifications have been made to the marketing mix, particularly since the 1980s when new elements were proposed. Goi (2009) suggests the addition of three new elements: participants, process, and physical evidence, introduced by Booms and Bitner (1980). Judd (1987) proposed a fifth P, which is People. Kolter (1986) introduced two additional Ps: Political power and Public opinion. Singh (2012) emphasizes that the 4Ps of marketing constitute the fundamental aspects of a firm's

marketing strategy and are interconnected. The 4Ps framework, which dates back to the 1960s, is a popular basic paradigm for marketing. Product, price, place, and promotion are the four main marketing pillars that are highlighted.

The essential components of creating and advertising a product or service are all included in these components. Understanding and putting into practise marketing strategy is made simple and practical by the 4Ps framework. It is frequently employed in conventional marketing settings and might be adequate for some product categories or businesses where the other three Ps (People, Process, and Physical Evidence) are less important.

2.10.1.1 Products

Product is the key component of the marketing mix, playing a central role in differentiating a company's offerings from competitors (Khan, 2014; Singh, 2012). It encompasses tangible or intangible items or services that customers are willing to pay for (Išoraté, 2016). According to Išoraté (2016), the reasons for purchasing a product are closely linked to the benefits derived by consumers. Additionally, products possess distinct characteristics, including intangibility, non-accumulation, non-severability, and heterogeneity (Išoraté, 2016).

Products can be categorized in various ways. Uznienė (2011), classifies them into five types: consumer products, necessary products, valuable products, exclusive products, and transgressed products. Consumer products are those purchased for personal needs and can be further subdivided into minimum, valuable, exclusive, and unmarketable products. Necessary products are frequently purchased without hesitation or comparison to competitors. Valuable products are consumer-oriented, with customers considering factors such as sustainability, price, style, and quality. Exclusive

products have unique characteristics that differentiate them, often associated with their brand. Transgressed products are those that consumers are unaware of or have no intention of buying (Uznienė, 2011).

Another categorization by Khan (2014), introduced three types of products: core products, actual products, and augmented products. Core products address consumer problems and provide specific benefits. Actual products encompass various elements such as design, quality, features, packaging, and brand name that combine to deliver the core benefits. Augmented products offer additional benefits beyond the core and actual product. Perception levels also play a role in consumer needs. Işorató (2016), proposed five levels: real benefit, main product, expected product, added product, and potential product. These levels help marketers understand consumer needs and tailor their product offerings accordingly.

In terms of product strategy, Singh (2012), emphasized the importance of product planning and highlights key decisions involved in bringing a product to market. These decisions include design, technology, usefulness, value, convenience, packaging, quality, branding, and warranties. Design is essential for attracting attention and influencing purchase decisions, while technology enables the development of user-friendly and differentiated products. Usefulness and value contribute to market share and competitive advantage. Convenience ensures ease of use for consumers. Packaging enhances the perceived value of the product. Quality and branding play a role in customer satisfaction and repurchase, while warranties provide assurance of durability and after-sales service (Singh, 2012). By understanding these aspects of the product, marketers can develop effective product mix strategies that contribute to their company's competitive advantage.

2.10.1.2 Price

Price is a crucial element in the marketing mix, following closely after the product (Thabit & Raewf, 2018). It has a direct impact on a firm's sales, profitability, and competitive position, making it the most flexible component (Işorató, 2016). However, Khan (2014), argues that price must be set in relation to the other elements of the marketing mix. Singh (2012), explains that price is influenced by various factors within the product and should be dynamic to accommodate changes over time.

Price can be defined as the amount of money customers pay for a product or service or the value exchange they receive (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011). Setting the price of a product depends on factors such as production volume, and Işorató (2016), suggests several considerations when determining the price, including cost-plus pricing, value-based pricing, competition-based pricing, input size pricing, discount pricing, unprofitable pricing, and psychological pricing.

Managing consumers' price perceptions is crucial for increasing satisfaction, according to Khan (2014). Building on this idea, Raiz and Tanveer (2012), propose four pricing strategies

Cost-based pricing: This straightforward strategy involves setting a price by adding a markup to the production cost. It is effective as long as the prices remain competitive with those of competitors. Break-even pricing: This cost-oriented strategy determines the price required to cover production costs or achieve the desired profit level. Competition-based pricing: In this approach, businesses set their prices in alignment with their competitors' pricing strategies. Customer value-based pricing: This strategy involves pricing products based on the perceived value they offer to customers. Firms research the value assigned by consumers to their own and their

competitors' products. By implementing these pricing strategies effectively, manufacturers can manage consumers' price perceptions and enhance customer satisfaction.

2.10.1.3 Place

Place refers to the method and processes by which a product is made available to consumers (Martin, 2014). To effectively sell products to consumers, it is crucial to ensure their availability at convenient locations where transactions can easily take place (Thabit & Raewf, 2014). Goi (2011), defines place as a strategy employed by organizations to distribute their products or services to consumers. This includes channels of distribution, transportation methods, warehousing facilities, and inventory control (Singh, 2012). Scholars, like Doyle (1994), use the term "distribution" interchangeably with "place" in the marketing mix.

Market distribution can be seen in two aspects, as explained by Uznieņe (2011). Firstly, physical distribution which encompasses local conditions, transportation, and technical feasibility, depending on the nature of the service. Secondly, distribution is perceived as a marketing channel that ensures accessibility and user-friendliness. To create an effective distribution channel, Uznieņe (2011) highlights the following steps:

1. Analyze consumers' needs.
2. Determine objectives for the distribution chain.
3. Identify key distribution alternatives.
4. Assess the alternatives.

Strategies for decision-making related to place and gaining a competitive advantage, as outlined by Singh (2012), include:

1. Retail: Retailers have a strong relationship with consumers as they offer products from various competitors, exposing consumers to a wide range of similar products. Retailers actively promote and market products to end users.
2. Wholesale: Wholesalers offer products at lower prices compared to retailers, making them a preferred choice for consumers.
3. Direct sales: This approach involves direct communication between the producer and the end user, without any intermediaries.
4. Peer-to-peer: Word-of-mouth marketing, where consumers recommend products to others, plays a significant role in this strategy.
5. Multi-channel: This strategy involves utilizing different channels of distribution to target diverse market segments with various products and services.
6. Internet: The internet provides a cost-effective way to reach a wide audience, with relatively low entry barriers and setup costs.

By implementing effective place strategies, organizations can enhance their distribution channels and gain a competitive edge in the market.

2.10.1.4 Promotion

Promotion serves as a powerful marketing tool for product placement and services (Novak, 2011). According to Kotler (2002), promotion refers to the activities undertaken by a company to communicate with both potential and existing consumers. It plays a crucial role in creating awareness of the available product choices (Khan, 2014). Khan also emphasizes the three essential roles of a communication program in a marketing strategy: providing information and advice about a product, persuading

target consumers of its merits, and encouraging consumers to take action within a specific timeframe.

Promotion aims to convince the target market to make a purchase by raising awareness of the product and highlighting its advantages to consumers (Išorató, 2016). Various promotional techniques can be employed, including coupons, discounts, samples, refunds, bonuses, product demonstrations, and contests (Išorató, 2016). Thabit and Raewf (2014), note that promotions consist of different components mixed together to achieve the company's marketing objectives and determine the product's positioning in the target market. The preference for certain promotional tools over others can be attributed to perceptions of their effectiveness (Goi, 2011).

The promotional tools commonly used include advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing (Išorató, 2016). Advertising, as a non-personal presentation of goods and services, is a powerful tool for creating strong brand associations (Khan, 2014). Novak (2011) refers to advertising as an essential promotional tool, as it informs about new products, price changes, suggests product use, and explains functionality. Sales promotions are short-term actions that drive sales by providing incentives (Išorató, 2016). They play a crucial role in generating interest among consumers, particularly when introducing a new product (Novak, 2011). Public relations involve communication between a company's management and the general public, aiming to provide positive information about the product (Išorató, 2016). Direct marketing involves interactive communication between a client and a manufacturer (Išorató, 2016).

Strategies for decision-making related to promotion and gaining a competitive advantage, according to Singh (2012), include special offers, endorsements,

advertising, user trials, direct mailing, posters/flyers, free gifts, joint ventures, and competitions. By implementing effective promotion strategies, companies can effectively communicate with their target audience, create brand awareness, and ultimately drive sales.

The 4P strategic theory is its comprehensiveness and systematic approach to marketing. The theory emphasizes four key elements: product, price, place, and promotion. By considering each of these elements in the marketing strategy, businesses can ensure a well-rounded and coordinated approach to their marketing efforts. The 4P framework provides a structure to analyse and plan marketing activities, enabling businesses to make informed decisions about product development, pricing strategies, distribution channels, and promotional tactics.

The 4P strategic theory's emphasis on the needs of the customer is one of its major strong points. The idea places a strong emphasis on the significance of comprehending client demands and adjusting marketing initiatives to satisfy those needs. Businesses can provide value for clients and forge lasting customer relationships by taking into account elements like product features, pricing that is affordable, distribution that is simple, and promotional messaging that appeal to the target market. The 4P framework encourages companies to match their marketing plans with consumer preferences, increasing client happiness and loyalty.

The assumption that there is a linear and sequential relationship between the components of the marketing mix is the 4P strategic theory's weakness. According to the theory, companies should define their product, decide on a pricing point, choose their distribution options, and only then should they start marketing it. These components must be taken into account holistically because they are frequently

interrelated in practise. The choice of distribution channels, for instance, may be influenced by promotional methods and the pricing implications of product development. Strict adherence to a sequential approach may miss opportunities for symbiotic relationships and integration between the marketing mix's components.

2.10.2 Theory of Positioning

The concept of positioning in marketing has a rich history and can be traced back to various authors and perspectives. Alpert and Gatty (1969) are recognized as pioneers who first identified positioning as the differentiation between brands based on consumer perceptions. However, Blankson and Kalafatis (2004), argue that the origins of positioning theory can be attributed to Ries and Trout (1981) and their book "Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind," which described how advertisers create a difference between brands to gain a competitive advantage.

Chew (2006), acknowledges both Alpert and Gatty (1969) and Trout and Ries (1981) for popularizing positioning in private sector marketing. According to Ries and Trout, positioning is not about creating something entirely new but rather about manipulating the existing perceptions in consumers' minds and establishing connections. They applied the concept of positioning to various entities, including products, services, and even individuals.

Salunke and Zaware (2018), view positioning as a key aspect of consumer behaviour, influenced by advertising that delivers information about a brand's product. Positioning involves communicating the attributes and benefits of a brand's product to target consumers based on their needs, communication channels, and competition in the market.

Aaker and Shansby (1982), emphasize that a brand or product has multiple associations that form a total impression. They argue that making positioning decisions sets one brand apart from another. Positioning decisions involve selecting and emphasizing certain associations while de-emphasizing others. Aaker and Shansby introduced six approaches to positioning strategy, including attribute positioning, price or quality positioning, use or application positioning, user positioning, product class positioning, and competitor positioning.

Blankson (2004) and Blankson and Kalafatis (1994, 2002, 2004, 2007) build upon Arnott's (1992, 1993, 1994) definition of positioning. According to Arnott, positioning involves adjusting the tangible characteristics and intangible perceptions of a marketing offering in comparison to competitors. Blankson and Kalafatis (2004), argue that positioning is a proactive and deliberate process that requires marketers' active involvement. They propose four bases of brand positioning: consolidation, latent position, deposition, and membership.

While some argue that product positioning and brand positioning are used interchangeably, Smith and Lusch (1976) differentiate between the two. They suggest that brand positioning focuses on subjective attributes compared to competitors, while product positioning deals with objective attributes and perceived consumer image.

Brand positioning is considered essential in modern marketing theory and advertising practice (Blankson et al., 2008). It determines the central marketing strategy and guides both long-term and short-term advertising goals to create value for the brand. Blankson and Kalafatis (2004) introduce a typology of positioning strategies, including "top of the range," "service," "reliability," "value for money," "country of origin," "attractiveness," "brand name," and "selectivity."

The evolution of brand marketing has witnessed a shift from a focus on products to consumer orientation, responding to social environment dynamics, digitization and convergence, and currently, human centricity (Sima, 2021). Brand positioning plays a crucial role in differentiating a brand, appealing to customer needs, and creating a unique brand essence (Ameyibor et al., 2021).

Competitive positioning establishes an immediate connection between a brand and its competitive advantage (Rua & Santos, 2021). It involves differentiating a product or service by identifying the target audience and demonstrating its value compared to competitors. Alden et al. (1999), proposed three types of brand positioning: global consumer culture positioning, local consumer culture positioning, and foreign consumer culture positioning. These positioning strategies leverage language, aesthetics, and story themes.

Components of brand positioning include pronunciation and spelling of brand names, spokespeople, brand logo, and a compelling brand mantra (Ameyibor et al., 2021). The selection of positioning strategies depends on cultural and environmental factors, consumer attributes, and product categorization. Developing and introducing a brand positioning strategy involves several stages, such as data analysis, trademark model development, differentiation feature selection, strategy development, goal setting, implementation planning, specific actions and measures, monitoring and evaluation, and adjustment (Fayvishenko, 2018).

According to Munteanu (2014), Potential errors in brand positioning include under positioning (failure to communicate a clear position), over positioning (narrow target market), and confused/blurred positioning (inconsistencies in marketing communication). Effective brand positioning activities create actual or perceived

advantages for the brand in the minds of potential consumers (Iyer et al., 2018). Positioning strategies revolve around target customers, target competitors, and competitive advantage, with differentiation being a crucial aspect (Gigauri, 2019).

Differentiation strategies focus on intrinsic product attributes, services, brand image, and marketing channels (Manteanu, 2014). A differentiation strategy helps a brand stand out by incorporating unique features that engage the target audience. Differentiation is important in a market where products and services often exhibit similarities (Ingenhoff & Fuhrer, 2010). Structural elements in creating a brand differentiation strategy include innovation/inventions, product-level differentiation, pricing, branding, packaging, service offerings, client interaction points, consumer convenience, and product diversity (Faivishenko, 2020).

In summary, positioning theory in marketing has evolved over time and involves differentiating brands based on consumer perceptions. It is a proactive and deliberate process that aims to communicate a clear brand position, create value, and maintain a competitive advantage. Differentiation strategies play a vital role in brand positioning, emphasizing unique features and engaging the target audience. The positioning theory has the advantage of recognising the significance of distinction and perception in consumers' thoughts. Businesses can forge a unique identity and secure a competitive edge by carefully putting a brand or product in the right place. By emphasising certain qualities, advantages, or niche markets that set them apart from rivals, businesses can position themselves more effectively. Increased market share, consumer fidelity, and brand recognition may result from this.

The positioning theory's customer-centric perspective is another asset. According to the notion, consumer perceptions and behaviour have the biggest impact

on positioning. Brands are able to better express the value and advantages of their brand or product by tailoring their positioning strategies to the needs, preferences, and perceptions of their target audience. Brands can also improve customer happiness and create powerful brand associations by positioning their services to match customer expectations.

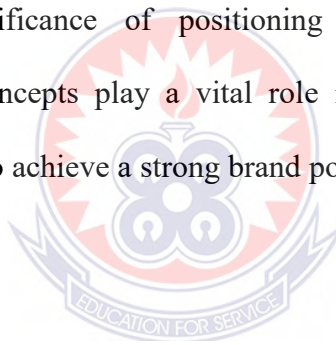
The static nature of placement theory is a drawback. The theory makes the assumption that a brand or product has a set and reliable positioning. However, positioning needs to be constantly reviewed and adjusted to changing customer preferences, the competitive landscape, and market trends in today's dynamic and quickly changing industry. Brand stagnation or misalignment with market demands may occur from failing to change positioning tactics. To be relevant and competitive in a constantly changing business environment, businesses must continuously evaluate and modify their positioning strategy.

2.11. Relevance to the Study.

The literature review highlights the diverse marketing and advertising activities on social media and the evolving notions of branding to create a strong brand position in the consumer's mind. This necessitates the use of contemporary marketing strategies to facilitate easy brand identification in a competitive market. The study incorporates the 4Ps strategic theory, also known as the marketing mix, to examine the strategies employed by Burger King, Mr. Wu's, Papa's Pizza, Dough Man Foods, and KFC Ghana in customizing their offerings to meet consumer preferences and achieve a favourable brand position. The theory, consisting of Product, Price, Place, and Promotion components, guides decision-making and adjustments to products and services to align with consumer preferences.

The theory of positioning emphasizes the importance of communication and marketing communication in establishing a brand's identity and perception in the minds of consumers. It serves as a foundation for developing communication strategies and programs that provide a clear orientation of what consumers can expect from a brand. Positioning is predominantly used in the marketing of goods, services, and brands, aiming to differentiate a product by highlighting distinctive traits that give it a desirable identity. By taking a favourable stance and effectively communicating these unique qualities, positioning helps set a product apart from its competitors in the market.

Overall, the literature review demonstrates the relevance of exploring diverse marketing and advertising activities, utilizing the 4Ps strategic theory, and understanding the significance of positioning in brand communication and differentiation. These concepts play a vital role in guiding businesses' marketing strategies and decisions to achieve a strong brand position and effectively engage with consumers.



2.12. Summary

The chapter set out to review related works on social media and the fast-food industry, with much literature being derived from the western world. Minimal literature that exists on the topic within the African concept and particularly in Ghana. From the available literature, studies focused more on consumers perception and decision making. Also, the study is grounded on the 4P strategic theory and the theory of positioning to explain how brand play an active role in creating awareness in a consumer's mind to aid in recall and recognition of the brand in an advertisement clustered platform of social media. The next chapter discusses the methodology used in data collection and analysis of the data.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter expound the methods and procedures used in the gathering and analysing of data to study the advertising strategies employed by fast-food brand on Instagram. This chapter further discusses the underlying principles for the selection of the methods and procedures for the data analysis. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the coding protocol and instrument and operational definition that led to the development of themes and categories that emanated in the analysis of data provided. Additionally, it includes the procedure for data collection as well as the methods that were used in the collection of data for each research question.

3.1 Research Approach

Creswell (2016), defines research approaches as plans and procedures for research that outlines from a broad assumption to detailing methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation. This research was conducted using the Qualitative approach. This study adopts a qualitative approach to analyze the research data. As noted by Lindlof and Taylor (2002), qualitative research is rooted in social practices and the meanings attributed by individuals within a specific historical or cultural context. Qualitative data, such as texts, symbols, or phrases (Krueger & Neuman, 2006), are utilized in this study. The choice of the qualitative method is motivated by the aim to describe and assess the positioning strategies employed by fast-food brands on social media in Ghana, with the objective of gaining a competitive advantage.

Qualitative research allows researchers to investigate particular phenomena or cultures by offering flexibility and facilitating a deeper comprehension of the subject or phenomenon at hand (Yin, 1998). By focusing on understanding the constructed

meanings and experiences of individuals, qualitative researchers can gain valuable insights. This perspective aligns with the objectives of the study, which involves examining the positioning of fast-food brands on social media and understanding the implications of the discourse surrounding this phenomenon.

This standpoint is pertinent to this study because the research involves the investigation of marketing and advertising strategies used by fast-food brand on the social media platform Instagram. Data were purposively selected from five food brand on Instagram. The platform of Instagram was chosen above other networking sites due to its popularity among young adults with approximately one billion active users per month (Cassidy et al, 20201). Instagram also provides a platform that enables brand to promote their products and services by sharing content with a visual based strategy (Huey & Yazdanifard, 2014). Yang (2021), asserts that, Instagram stand out from other social networking sites primarily because of the clear product positioning which enables brand to achieve product differentiation and strong brand influence.

Food brand usually market their products by using mouth-watering images of their products to engage with their consumers. These brand were chosen based a three criterion (1) The brand should have an official Instagram account (2) the brand should actively be using social media for marketing purposes social media presence, (3) the brand should have established a social media presence before or in 2021 and (4) the brand post should demonstrate the nature of themes being explored by the study. Data were gathered from the Instagram pages of *Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) Ghana*, *Burger King Ghana*, *Doughman Foods*, *Papa's Pizza*, and *Mr. Wu*. A number of research works that have examined the marketing strategies of food brand on social media employed the qualitative research approaches. This is because, qualitative research helps to effectively evaluate and gives a visual representation of the strategies

employed by the various food brand. The current study seeks to examine marketing strategies of fast-food brand on Instagram in Ghana and adopted a similar approach.

3.2 Research Design

According to Creswell (2016), research designs are types of inquiry within a qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches that provide specific direction or procedure in research. Upon deciding the research approach for the study, it is relevant to reflect on the method of inquiry within the chosen approach to serve as a structure or framework for the study. The research design allows the researcher to hone in on a research method that are suitable to the subject matter and set the study up for success. Dezin and Lincoln (2011), refer to the research design as a strategy of inquiry. Selecting a fitting design for a study is dependent on factors like the research problem, research questions, experiences of the researcher and the type of audience for the study (Creswell, 2014). This study employs the qualitative method of inquiry.

According to Pistrang and Barker (2012), the major strengths of qualitative approaches are the ability of giving an in-depth, textured and thick descriptions as well as helps to look at contradictions and investigating of personal meanings. Additionally, the qualitative study is valuable for inductively generating theories and give research respondents the freedom to describe their own experiences. Research designs in a qualitative study include narrative, phenomenological, ethnography qualitative content analysis and others. The qualitative approach has the ability to extract and generate detailed, rich and thick descriptions based on the views of the participants (Muzari et al.,2022). Hence the method of inquiry for this study is a qualitative content analysis.

3.2.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

Content analysis allows the researcher to test theoretical issues to enhance the understanding of the data and desilt issues into categories (Elo & Kyngas, 2008).

According to Schreier (2012), qualitative content analysis is one of the several qualitative methods currently available for analysing data and interpreting its meaning. Qualitative content analysis is one of the numerous methods used to analyse data text for subjective interpretation through a systematic process of coding and identifying themes and patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2015).

Qualitative content analysis emphasizes on an integrated view of speech/ text and their specific contents going beyond extracting of objective content to examining meanings, patterns and themes manifesting or being latent in a particular text, paying attention to unique themes that illustrates the range of the meaning of the phenomenon to numerical significance of the concept (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). This study employs a qualitative content analysis as its method for analysing data with the presumptions of Zhang & Wildemuth, (2009) to analyse Instagram posts from *Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) Ghana, Burger King Ghana, Doughman foods, Mr. Wu and Papa's Pizza* to observe, analyse and understand the social media marketing strategies of the selected food brand. It is a generic form of data analysis in that it is comprised of an atheoretical set of techniques which can be used in any qualitative inquiry in which the informational content of the data is relevant (Forman & Damschroder, 2016).

To Baxter and Jack (2008), a qualitative content analysis facilitates the exploration of phenomenon within a context using a variety of data sources to ensure that a phenomenon is explored thoroughly to be well understood. According to Elo et al., (2014), qualitative content analysis can be used either in a deductive or inductive way, both approaches involve a three-phase process; preparation, organisation and reporting of results. The inductive approach includes open coding, creating categories and abstraction while the deductive approach is often used to retest existing data in a new context (Elo & Kyngas, 2009). Graneheim et al., (2017), states a third approach;

the abductive approach which is employed to get a completed understanding of a phenomenon by shifting between the inductive and deductive approach. This study employed on the abductive approach to better understand both new and existing themes that were derived from the data,

3.3 Sampling Strategy and Sample Size

The strategy for the selection of participants must be integrated into the overall logic of the study (Punch 2004). Data gathering is crucial in research as data is meant to contribute a better understanding of the theoretical framework (Etikan et al., 2015). According to Lindlof and Taylor (2002), a good sampling strategy helps researchers make coherent contact with communicative occurrence without wasting effort. Choosing the appropriate sampling technique enhances the vigour of the study and therefore is an essential part of the entire research process (Gill, 2020). Again, Gills (2020), postulates that, researcher must be able to identify participants who can provide data to answer the research questions. Common qualitative sampling methods include, convenience sampling, snowball sampling, theoretical sampling and purposive sampling. The sampling technique for a study is determined by the objective of the study (Taherdoost, 2016).

The sampling strategy employed should reflect the study purpose and the ability of the selected participants to describe the phenomenon. (Moisey et al., 2022). Due to the objective of this study, the purposive sampling technique was employed. Purposive sampling is used to select participants that are most likely to provide the useful and appropriate data for the study (Campbell et al., 2020). Palinkas et al. (2015), defines purposive sampling as specific subjects that can provide the desired data because they conform to the criteria set by the researcher. The purposive sampling technique is a type

of non-probability sampling that is most effective when one needs to study a certain cultural domain with knowledgeable experts within (Tongco, 2007).

Tongco (2007) explains that, the inherent bias of the method contributes to its efficiency, and the method stays strong even when tested against random probability sampling. Campbell et al. (2020), also asserts that, the adoption of a purposive sampling strategy is based on the assumption of the aims and objective of the study. The study used the homogeneous purposive sampling method, since participants of the study share similar characteristics and traits. In regards to the assertions of Palinkas et al. (2015), this study selected subjects that can provided the needed data to answer the research question based on a set of criteria; (1) The brand should have an active social media presence, (2) the brand should have created an Instagram profile before or in 2021 and (3) the brand post should demonstrate the nature of themes being explored by the study.

For the purpose of this study, *Kentucky Fried Chicken Ghana*, *Burger King Ghana*, *Doughman foods*, *Mr. Wu* and *Papa's Pizza* were selected for possessing the characteristics based on the criteria as active food brand exhibiting marketing strategies on social media. The rationale for selecting these brand include: the speciality of food they offer on their menu, the number of branches (locations) they have (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2008), the number of followers they have on Instagram and the activeness on social media. KFC is the food brand that has the highest number of followers across all social media platforms. In terms of papa's pizza, the brand is considered as the leading, pizza brand in Ghana with over 43,000 followers on Instagram. Burger king Ghana is a renowned burger brand across the globe and was chosen a sample for this study because, burger king currently has the highest number of followers on Instagram in relation to brand which offer ham burgers as a speciality. Doughman with over 41,000 followers on Instagram can be consider as the top brand for doughnuts in the

region. Mr. Wu was considered for this study due the brand activeness and number of followers on the social media platform.

The justification for utilizing the purposive sampling technique is because, purposefully selecting the food brand will ensure that the data gathered would be necessary and vital for the study. In studying the social media advertising strategies of food brand on Instagram, it became necessary for selecting brand who have an active social media presence and use their platform to actively market their products and services to their consumers. This approach makes attaining the needed information easier and possible in satisfying the research objectives. Although a number of food brand made the criterion, the selected brand offered a diverse food representativeness to the sampling to help in making a generalization.

3.3.1 Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) Ghana

Kentucky Fried chicken usually called KFC is a global food brand under Yum! Brand which specialises in fried chicken. It is the world's second largest food brand after McDonald's with over 22,621 franchises worldwide. The core product offered is pressured fried on the chicken with a side dish of fries (potato chips) or a rice dish. KFC was established in 1952 in North Corbin, Kentucky in the United States of America by Colonel Harland Sanders. The products offered by KFC include: Fried chicken chickenburgers, Chicken sandwiches, Wraps, French fries, soft drinks Milkshakes and Salads. According to Peters & Kwarteng (2016), KFC started its operation in Africa in 2010 and aggressively began opening various shops across the continent. The first KFC shop in Ghana was established in 2011 under MASCO food Limited. Currently has over 25 branches across the country. KFC actively uses both traditional and new media for marketing and advertising of the products and services. KFC Ghana established a social media presence on Instagram in 2015 and has over 100,000 followers and made

over a 1000 post to engage and communicate with their consumers over the past years. The KFC Ghana Instagram page has a verification badge.

3.3.2 Doughman Foods

Established in 2016 by Francis Kofifah with the first shop in East Legon under African Franchise holdings. Currently the brand has three branches in Accra. Inspired by the Ghanaian traditional doughnuts ‘Bofroat’ Doughman foods offers an array of products with doughnuts as its main selling points. Their menu offers doughnuts with jam fillings, some are covered in chocolate and others have crushed groundnuts sprinkled on top. The food brand also deals in other pastries like muffins and its original “doughnut burger”. Doughman food is noted for its strategic positioning of their brand on social media. Soon after its establishment, Doughman foods established their presence on Instagram and have over the years amassed a follower of over 41,000 with 549 posts made to sell their brand to consumers.

3.3.3 Burger King Ghana

Proceeding from Insta-Burger King which was founded in on July 23, 1953 in Jacksonville, Florida, as global brand was started in 1954 by James W. McLamore and David Edgerton in Miami (Lewis, 2022). Burger King Corporation, restaurant company specializing in flame-broiled fast-food hamburgers. It is the second largest hamburger chain after McDonald’s. Burger King claims to have about 14,000 stores in nearly 100 countries. Their staple is the Whopper burger, with a commitment to premium ingredients, signature recipes, and family-friendly dining experiences (Burger King Corporation, 2021). Burger King franchise saw its first shop in Ghana in 2018 at the Accra and currently has four branches. The restaurant is independently owned and operated through a franchise agreement by SIA QSR Ghana LTD a subsidiary of

Servair. (Servair,2018) and African Franchise holdings. Burger king Ghana established its social media presence on Instagram in 2021.

3.3.4 Papa's Pizza

Papa's pizza is an independent food brand that specializes in pizza. Established in 2011 with a flagship of the East Legon branch the company currently has about 12 branches in Accra. The idea behind every branch is an initiative of getting tasty and quality food closer to its customers. Papa's Pizza is a Ghanaian owned fast-food company that infuses a spirit of the Ghanaian culture in the Italian originated dish made by the company. From the choice of toppings for the pizza to the name of the pizzas on the menu. The company is recognized as number one in the pizza market and this was earned through a conscious effort of putting the customer first always, with the call back strategy done after every purchase by the friendly call centre reception. Besides the speciality of pizza, they also offer other side meals such as rice dishes, fries (potatoes chips) and chicken. Papa's pizza actively does its marketing on social media and established its presence on Instagram in 2014 and has gained their verification badge on the platform. Papa's pizza has over 43,000 followers on the platform with over a 1000 post to engage with their consumers. Apart from using the platform to market their product and services, they also use the platform as a customer service centre. Papa's pizza is gradually growing to become the preferred pizza place in Accra.

3.3.5 Mr. Wu

Mr Wu, is a Chinese theme fast-food brand. Mr. Wu was established in 2011. The initial concept Mr. Wu brand was to develop a small restaurant showcasing some of the favourite food from the Asian community. Having a 4.3 rating for its service on Google and a five-star rating on Facebook, the brand has a following of over 10,600 and over

a three hundred post made. Mr. Wu. established their brand presence on Instagram in 2020.

3.4 Data Collection Method

An essential way for ensuring the credibility of a content analysis is the selection of the appropriate data collection method (Granehim & Lundman, 2004). According to Muzari et al., (2022), qualitative research employs four main data generation or collection procedures. These are interviews, observations, document analysis and focus group discussion. This research work utilises document analysis and interviews.

3.4.1 Document Analysis

Document analysis is an effective and efficient way of gathering data as these documents are practical and manageable (Triad 3,2016). Bowen (2009), defines document as a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents either printed or electronic that requires that, data be examined and interpreted to generate meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge. Document analysis could be both a primary and secondary data collection method and could include both solicited and unsolicited documents (Muzari et al., 2022). Creswell (2009), posit that, documents can be accessed at the convenience of the researcher and therefore is an effective means of collecting data. Bowen (2009) further asserts that, document analysis involves skimming, a thorough examination and interpretation and incorporates coding of contents into themes. O’Leary (2014), posits three primary types of documents; public records, personal documents and physical evidence. This study uses personal documents in the form of the brand social media posts as the document type.

Over a period of a months, (October, 2021- March 2022), I monitored various food brand on social media by following their official brand pages on Instagram to enable me keep up with their day-to-day social media activities. This process enabled

me to monitor and analysis the nature of content of the post made, the regularity and frequency these brand post on their social media pages. Using two different Instagram profile accounts (just_hillmends and Kraft_chest), I actively followed a number of brand pages both locally and international. The rational for following international brand pages was to compare if marketing techniques were similar across cultures as well as comparing the differences in the strategies employed. The big idea was to help in the generation of a code book and themes for the work. One account (kraft_chest) was dedicated to local brand only while the other (just_hillmends) was for following both local and international brand.

For the purpose of this study, two devices were dedicated for the course. A Samsung Galaxy A22 phone and a Dell laptop. The phone was the primary device for monitoring as it facilitated on the go monitoring while the laptop mainly served as a storage for captured or recorded files but was also used in the analysing of collected data. Both accounts were logged onto both devices to enable easy toggling between accounts. Manual collection of data began on the 5th of March, 2022. To begin the process, I began by making a list of popular food brand that used social media as a method of reaching out to their consumers limiting the range through their location. The shortlisted brand must be located within Accra. Secondly, food brand were shortlisted if they were popular among young adults who usually patronize these brand.

Each brand's posts consisted of both photo and video contents. Some posts published were accompanied with textual communication and these were considered and collected for analysis. Posts were collected in the reverse chronological order. Posts published between October 2021 to March 2022 were considered as the sample for the study. Brand post with multiple photos or videos were considered for the study. However, only the first post of the carousel was used while the subsequent ones were

excluded. It is important to note that, the frequency at which brand published post on their Instagram page varied therefore accounting for unequal number of posts which reflected for each brand during the specific time frame selected for the study. All post were captured using the screen capture or screen shot function on the phone and saved as a JPEG file for further analysis. Posts that were in the form of videos were downloaded via the phone with the help of an application- video downloader, story saver, repost) by Make life simple studio which was acquired from the google play store. All files were the group into folders based on the brand and later transferred unto the laptop for further and easy analysis.

To qualitatively analyse the marketing techniques used by the shortlisted food brand I developed a code sheet based on the content analysis guidelines described by Lombard et al., (2002) and based them on similar food marketing studies. The code sheet included variables such as (1) visual depiction of post (a) observatory (b) product promotion (c) presence of products (d) partnership (e) discounts (f) presence of interactivity (g) Celebrities/ influencers (h) comic/ entertaining (i) incentives (j) give away (k) new branch. (2) Food category.

After developing the code sheets, an additional assistant who was not previewed to the developing of the code book was trained and given the screen shot along with the code sheet to help answer the question based on the content present in the screenshot. A pilot coding was done in the form of a mini thesis to test if the themes and variables were applicable. The coding sheet helped in observing and analysing the marketing strategies used by food brand on social media in a time saving and efficient manner. The posts were captured over a period of time to ensure that, they were not deleted or archived in the future. Posts were also capture along with their captions in order to understand the point of view of the brand as some posts do not really correlate to their

captions. They study however focused on the visual depiction of posts rather than the textual concept.

3.4.2 Interviews

Interview is a method of collecting and generating data through a dialogue or verbal interaction in the effective solicitation for information for a specific purpose from participant in their natural social settings (Muzari et al., 2022). Trochim (2006), states that, interviews are used as a primary method of data collection which gives direct citations from respondents with regards to their thoughts and experiences on a phenomenon. Alsaawi (2014), mentions four types of interviews, the structured, semi structured, unstructured and focused group interviews. the structured interview is a type of interview that is controlled way to obtain information from interviewees. This format helps keep the interview focused tightly on the topic but however lacks richness. Contrary to the structured interview, the unstructured interview allows flexibility and gives the interviewees the opportunity to elaborate on a matter. A semi structured interview utilizes a mix of both the structured and unstructured format. This format of interviews follows a pre-set of questions and allow an opening for further probing to get depth and richness of responses.

The focus group interviews entail brainstorming focus group of usually six to twelve interviewees which generates “high quality data”. Interviewees can challenge, argue and debate with each other, and this technique usually leads to the emergence of in-depth and rich data. Based on the above, this study employed a semi structured interview. The rationale behind this choice was to give room for the researcher to ask follow up questions where clarifications were needed while following an orderly manner in conducting the interview.

To begin the process for the interview, a request for an introductory letter was submitted to the head of department. This was done in order to formally inform the school of my intention to visit the various establishment listed as the participant for the study. The purpose of the introductory letter was to enable me easily negotiate an entry into the establishment to gather relevant data for my study. Upon receiving the letter address to the various brand, I then took the initiative to personally visit these brand to introduce myself to the manager/ Chief executive officers of these brand and notify them of my intention for my future visit. Although the initial sample size for the interview was 5 representatives from the selected brand, during the course of the data collection stage, 2 brand refused to grant the interview. Thus: Mr. Wu's and KFC Ghana. However, the three successfully conducted interviews along with the other data collection methods would provide sufficient data to successfully answer the research questions.

In order to conduct successful and relevant interview for the study, an interview guide was created. This bared questions that were relevant in answering the research questions of the study. Representatives of the various brand were given the question ahead of the schedule date for the interview to help them prepare adequately for the sit-down interviews. Along with the interview guide, two devices were assigned for the purpose of recording the interviews. The rationale behind using two devices was to have a backup device should in case one device fails and is unable to record or pick up the voices of both the interviewer and interviewee. The devices used were a Samsung galaxy A22 and Infinix Smart phone. Each device had an in-built audio recording software. This software was employed in the recording of all interviews needed for the study the 12 day of August 2022 was used to test out the devices to ensure they were working properly for the conducting of the interviews. Dates were then set for a sit-

down face to face interviews with marketing representatives of the various brand. For where the schedule of the representative from the brand did not allow a sit-down face-to-face interview, the interview was conducted via a zoom video call. This online interview was recorded using the in-built setting of the zoom application. Then saved as an audio for later transcription.

The first interview with the brand marketing representatives took place on the 13th day of August, 2022. The other interviews were conducted in the days that followed. Each interview session lasted between 20 to 30 minutes. On 15th August, 2022, I began to manually transcribe the data into a Microsoft word file using an HP laptop and a Samsung phone. For easy transcription, I employed the use of the dictate option on Microsoft word, while listening to the audio, I read aloud the same sentences for the Microsoft word to turn it from speech to text. Where the AI programme was unable to get the word or sentence correctly, I manually input the word or phrase. Each interview took about 5 hours to fully transcribe. Each interview was transcribed before another was done to avoid a backlog and aid in a smooth and easy transcribing process. After the transcribing of the interview was done, the word documents were printed to aid in easy analysing.

3.5 Data Analysis

As cited by Creswell, (2016), Merriam (1988) and Marshall & Rossman (1989) contend that data collection and data analysis must be a simultaneous process in qualitative research. Baxter & Jack (2008) agree with the view of Merriam (1988) and Marshall & Rossman (1989), in any qualitative study, the collection of data and its analysis occur concurrently and further posit that, the type of analysis engaged depends on the type of study it is. Thematic analysis is the data analysis method this study utilized. According to Braun & Clarke (2012), thematic analysis is a method for systematically identifying,

organizing and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences is an approach that attempts to identify ideas, categories and themes that occur in the data under study (Pristrang and Barker, 2012).

For the purpose of this research, a theme can be defined as a pattern found in the data being interrogated. In line with the assertion in literature, a thematic analysis was employed to generate themes from the data collected. This was done based on the screen captured post that were coded and answers corroborated from the interviews. Interpretation of the findings was done using concepts and theories derived from the theoretical framework I based my study on. The initial step in conducting thematic analysis involved the utilization of a coding guide aimed at identifying distinct themes relevant to each research question. This guide facilitated the identification of strategies and categories present within Instagram posts.

Drawing from relevant literature, the coding guide incorporated similar categories that had been previously identified, including sponsorship, promotions, child targeting, brand elements, product imagery, brand characters, incentives, discounts, philanthropy, image, meme, video, vouchers, and gifs (Bragg et al., 2019; Bragg et al., 2017; Cassidy et al., 2021; Vassallo et al., 2018). This guide was then use to code the Instagram post included in the study. Where a post could not be suited into any of codes from literature, a new category was added to the coding guide. This was done to ensure that every single post was able to fit into the categories for creating themes and that, every post was accounted for.

The coding guide included instructions on how each post should be coded regarding its. For every post, an index of marketing strategy was recorded, where more than one strategy was identified in a post, a hierarchy was used in coding the post. Thus,

if a post contained Philanthropy the process for coding was; Philanthropy>Celebrities>Brand Character> Promotions/ discounts> Partnership/ sponsorship>Branding>Product imagery. The basic reason for establishing this coding hierarchy was to maintain consistency, thus null any reason to imply that one strategy was meaningful than the other. Strategies that were deemed to be more frequent were placed at the bottom for the hierarchy. Two individuals were assigned to the coding of each post. All brand post were independently coded by both parties. After codes were checked for any inconsistencies were discussed in the presence of a third party. Comments and descriptions of important features were also recorded. Where a post was difficult to code based on the image or video only, the caption was incorporated to help with the coding of the post. For coding of the interviews and answers to the qualitative survey, printed transcriptions and answers were reviewed. Important phrases and comments were highlighted and were coded in accordance to the coding guide. Where relevant phrases did not fit into a code category, and new category was added to cover that phrase.

3.6 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness enables the vetting and quality checking the accuracy of the data collected for the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Elo and Kyngas (2008) asserts that, the elements in a content analysis are universal to any qualitative research design and involve additional factors to consider when reporting the process of analysis and results. Muzari (2022), posits that, the issues of credibility can be addressed by using the fitting research instruments to collect first hand data. on the basis of this, the study adopted a multi theoretical framework; marketing communication theory and theory of positioning. The study employs the use of multiple data sources and research methods.

the data collected was subjected to peer review and presents a rich description of the entire process.

This study involves several strategies to ensure the accuracy and quality of the collected data. Drawing from Denzin and Lincoln (2000), trustworthiness serves as a means to vet and verify the data provided by the participants. Additionally, Elo and Kyngas (2008) highlight the universality of elements in content analysis within qualitative research, emphasizing the importance of reporting the analysis process and results.

To enhance credibility, the study employed appropriate research instruments to collect first-hand data, as suggested by Muzari (2022). This involved adopting a multi-theoretical framework, incorporating marketing communication theory and theory of positioning. By utilizing multiple data sources and research methods, the study aimed to ensure comprehensive data collection and analysis. Moreover, the collected data underwent peer review, further validating its credibility.

Overall, the study emphasizes trustworthiness by employing rigorous procedures to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data. The adoption of a multi-theoretical framework, utilization of multiple data sources, and peer review contribute to presenting a rich description of the entire research process.

3.7 Summary

This chapter provided a detailed procedure and process for data collection and analysis. The study, which is qualitative, drew on a content analysis of five (5) food brand on social media in Ghana (*Kentucky Fried Chicken Ghana, Burger King Ghana, Doughman foods, Mr. W and, Papa's Pizza*). Data was collected through only qualitative content analysis using a coding sheet. The collected data was analyzed using content and thematic methods of data analysis. The chapter that follows presents an analysis of the data gathered and discusses the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive discussion of findings from the data gathered from the use of the specified methods in the antecedent chapter, coupled with relevant theories and related literature. The study brought out fundamental patterns related to the creation of brand awareness on brand on social media. For an uncomplicated method of analysis and interpretation, the data collected was simplified into several thematic units which were described and critically analysed.

Table 1: Brand Account Characteristics (November, 2022)

Account Name and Instagram Handle	Number of followers	Post during the study period	Number of videos	Number of images
KFC Ghana	115k	76	28 (36.8%)	48 (63.2%)
Dough Man Foods	41.5k	94	34 (36.2%)	60 (63.3%)
Papa's Pizza	46.4k	130	30 (23.1%)	100 (76.9%)
Burger King Gh	12.3k	78	31 (39.7%)	47 (60.3%)
Mr. Wu's	14.7k	116	60 (51.7%)	56 (48.3%)

Note: This table demonstrates the account characteristics of the five selected brand in November 2022. It displays the number of followers, total number of posts made during the study period, as well as the number of videos and images published on the brand official pages.

Digital marketing and advertising have increased due to the number of hours consumers spend on social networking sites and its activities (Bragg et al., 2017). By capitalising on social media, brand are able to gain authentic recommendations from consumers and in turn gather a wide reach for the advertising content (Coates, 2019). Fast-food brands advertise and market their products by publishing image and video

contents via these platforms as well engaging their consumers through captions and comments of these post (Cassidy et al., 2021). Over the past few years, interactive marketing has become a key strategy for firms to build their brand and attract huge numbers of followings as consumers (Hanaysha, 2016). The ability to attract consumer's attention has become a necessity for marketers due to the excess of marketing and advertising contents in the media (Teixeira, 2015). Instagram has become the platform that provides interactivity between brand and consumers gaining both parties the power to create these contents (Belanche et al, 2019). Of the 5 Instagram accounts included in the study, there was one Chicken and chips brand (KFC Ghana), a burger brand (Burger King Ghana), a doughnut brand (Dough Man Foods), a Pizza brand (Papa's Pizza) and a Chinese food brand (Mr. Wu's).

4.1 RQ1: What is the nature of post used by the fast-food brand on Instagram to achieve a competitive advantage?

This research question addresses the nature of posts used by the selected fast-food brand on Instagram. Many authors (Hu et al., 2014; Huey & Yazdandifard, 2014) have indicated that, social media users and brand employ various features provided by the Instagram platform. These brand showcase either their products and services. To be able to find out what the nature of the post are there is a need to first find out the type of content used and how they lure consumers to these post on Instagram.

In order to investigate the nature of post utilized by the fast-food brand on Instagram, there was there need to categorize these posts into the media formats that were used. The data indicated that two main media formats were used; thus, audio visuals and images. The themes that were derived from the data for the nature of post were infographic/ motion graphic posts, product display post, product feature or

description posts, behind-the-scene posts and user generated oriented posts. These themes have been qualitatively discussed in further details with this section.

4.1.1 Media Format

The study revealed that all five fast-food brands- *KFC Ghana*, *Dough Man Foods*, *Burger King Ghana*, *Papa's Pizza* and *Mr. Wu's* actively used various media formats on the Instagram pages. The role of these contents was to primarily send informative contents to their consumers. The subject on these posts contained informative, educative, entertainment or evocative content (De Vries et al, 2012). These advertising and marketing methods, help improve the attitude of consumers towards a brand which can lead to an actual purchase (Pan et al., 2019; Gaber & Wright, 2014). *Mr. Wu's* the data showed that their Instagram page creates an avenue where contents are centred around consumers recommendations and consumer generated contents. As compared to other brand, *Mr. Wu's* also utilized 51.7% of post were video content rather than images. The data however showed that, image format was immensely used as compared to audio-visual format. The content of these posts was usually centred around the basic four elements of marketing thus; Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Contents gave insights on a product or service being offered in its availability. The 4P strategic theory makes sense of this assertion. The theory explains that marketers and advertisers combine different elements of the marketing mix to create a suitable package to meet a desired need of a consumer or particular target audience (Singh, 2012).

4.1.1.1 Images

KFC Ghana

In analysing KFC Ghana's use of image posts, it was observed that, different types of images are utilized to convey their brand image and engage with their audience. The

data presented in the figure below provides insight into the distribution of these image types and their respective percentages. User Generated Content (UGC) represents only 2.0% of the total images used by KFC Ghana. This suggests that KFC Ghana relies less on content created by their customers or fans to showcase their brand. UGC can often provide authenticity and social proof, so the relatively low percentage suggests that KFC Ghana may not heavily emphasize user-generated content in their social media strategy.

Behind-the-scenes/Throwback images make up 21% of the image posts. This type of content takes the audience behind-the-scenes of KFC Ghana's operations or shares nostalgic moments. By sharing such images, KFC Ghana aims to create a sense of familiarity, nostalgia, and transparency, fostering a connection between the brand and its customers. Infographics are the most frequently used image type, comprising 50% of the total. This indicates that KFC Ghana places a significant emphasis on visually conveying information, facts, or statistics through graphics. Infographics are useful for simplifying complex information and making it more digestible for the audience. By utilizing infographics, KFC Ghana aims to educate and engage their followers by presenting visually appealing and informative content. Product display images account for 27% of the total image posts.

Dough Man Foods

In examining the image posts used by Doughman Ghana, to gain insights into their strategic approach to visual content and how they engaged with their audience. The data provided in the figure below presents different types of images employed by Doughman Ghana and their respective proportions. Doughman food's utilization of user-generated content (UGC) accounts for a small portion, representing 3% of the image posts. This suggests that while they do incorporate UGC, it is not a dominant aspect of their visual

strategy. By featuring content created by their customers or fans, Doughman aimed to showcase the authentic experiences and satisfaction of their customers, fostering a sense of community and trust.

Behind-the-scenes and throwback images also constitute 3% of the total image posts. This type of content offers glimpses into the inner workings of Doughman Ghana's operations and shares nostalgic moments from the brand's history. By sharing such images, Doughman Ghana seeks to create a personal connection with their audience, evoking feelings of nostalgia and reinforcing a sense of tradition and authenticity. Infographics take up the majority of Doughman Ghana's image posts, accounting for 67%. This indicates a strong emphasis on visually presenting information, facts, and statistics. Infographics allow the brand to effectively convey complex information in a visually appealing and easily understandable format. By utilizing infographics, Doughman Ghana aims to educate their audience, enhance brand awareness, and position themselves as a knowledgeable and informative authority in their industry. Product display images make up 27% of the image posts. These images focus on showcasing Doughman Ghana's offerings, highlighting the quality and variety of their products. By visually presenting their menu items and food creations, Doughman Ghana aims to entice their audience, evoke cravings, and generate interest in their offerings.

Papa's Pizza

When analysing Papa's Pizza's use of image posts, I was able gain insights into their approach to visual content and how they engage with their consumers. Papa's Pizza incorporated user-generated content (UGC) in their image posts, which constitutes 13% of the total. By featuring content created by their customers, Papa's Pizza aims to showcase the experiences and satisfaction of their patrons. UGC added an authentic and

personal touch to their social media presence, fostering a sense of community and trust among their audience. Behind-the-scenes and throwback images made up 4% of the image posts. These images provided a glimpse into Papa's Pizza's operations and shared nostalgic moments from the brand's history. By sharing such images, Papa's Pizza created a sense of familiarity and transparency, allowing their audience to connect with the brand on a deeper level.

Infographics played a significant role in Papa's Pizza's image posts, accounting for 57% of the total. This highlights their emphasis on visually presenting information, facts, and statistics. Infographics allowed Papa's Pizza to communicate key messages and promote their offerings in a visually appealing and concise manner. By utilizing infographics, Papa's Pizza aimed to educate and inform their consumers while capturing their attention through eye-catching visuals. Product display images made up 26% of the image posts. These images focused on showcasing Papa's Pizza's delicious offerings, highlighted the variety and quality of their pizzas. By visually presenting their menu items and food creations, Papa's Pizza enticed their consumers, evoked cravings, and generated interest in their products.

Burger King Ghana

When examining Burger King Ghana's use of image posts, I was able to gain qualitative insights into their visual content strategy and how they engaged with their consumers. The data indicated that, Burger King Ghana incorporates user-generated content (UGC) in their image posts, accounting for 11% of the total. By featuring content created by their customers, Burger King Ghana showcased real experiences and interactions with their brand. UGC added an authentic and relatable element to their social media presence, fostering a sense of community and trust among their audience. Behind-the-

scenes and throwback images made up 21% of the image posts. These images provided a glimpse into Burger King Ghana's operations on the process products go through from production to distribution. By sharing such images, Burger King Ghana creates a connection with their audience, evoking a sense of familiarity, tradition, and transparency.

Infographics also constituted 21% of the total image posts. This indicates Burger King Ghana's emphasis on visually presenting information, facts, and statistics. Infographics allow the brand to convey complex information in a visually appealing and concise manner. By utilizing infographics, Burger King Ghana educated and informed their consumers, enhanced their brand awareness and positioning themselves as a knowledgeable authority in the fast-food industry. Product display images accounted for the majority, comprising 47% of the image posts. These images focus on showcasing Burger King Ghana's menu items and food offerings. By visually presenting their products, Burger King Ghana aims to entice their audience, stimulate cravings, and generate interest in their offerings.

Mr. Wu's

In exploring Mr. Wu's use of image posts, qualitative insights were gained into their visual content strategy and how they engage with their audience. The data outlined the different types of images utilized by Mr. Wu and their respective proportions. Mr. Wu incorporates user-generated content (UGC) in their image posts, accounting for 30.4% of the total. By featuring content created by their customers, Mr. Wu aimed to showcase the experiences and satisfaction of their consumers. UGC post added an authentic and personal touch to their social media presence, fostering a sense of community and trust among their audience. Behind-the-scenes and throwback images make up 5.4% of the

image posts. These images provided a glimpse into Mr. Wu's operations and share nostalgic moments from the brand's history. By sharing such images, Mr. Wu aims to create a connection with their audience, evoking a sense of familiarity, transparency, and highlighting the brand's heritage.

Infographics and product display images both accounted for 32.1% of the total image posts. This indicates Mr. Wu's balanced approach in visually presenting information and showcasing their food offerings. Infographics allow the brand to convey key messages, facts, and statistics in a visually appealing and concise manner. Through infographics, Mr. Wu aimed to educate and inform their audience, enhancing their brand awareness and positioning themselves as a knowledgeable authority in the culinary domain. Product display images focus on showcasing Mr. Wu's menu items and food creations. By visually presenting their products, Mr. Wu aims to entice their audience, stimulate cravings, and generate interest in their offerings. The emphasis on product display images suggests that Mr. Wu recognizes the importance of visually appealing food images in capturing the attention and interest of potential customers.

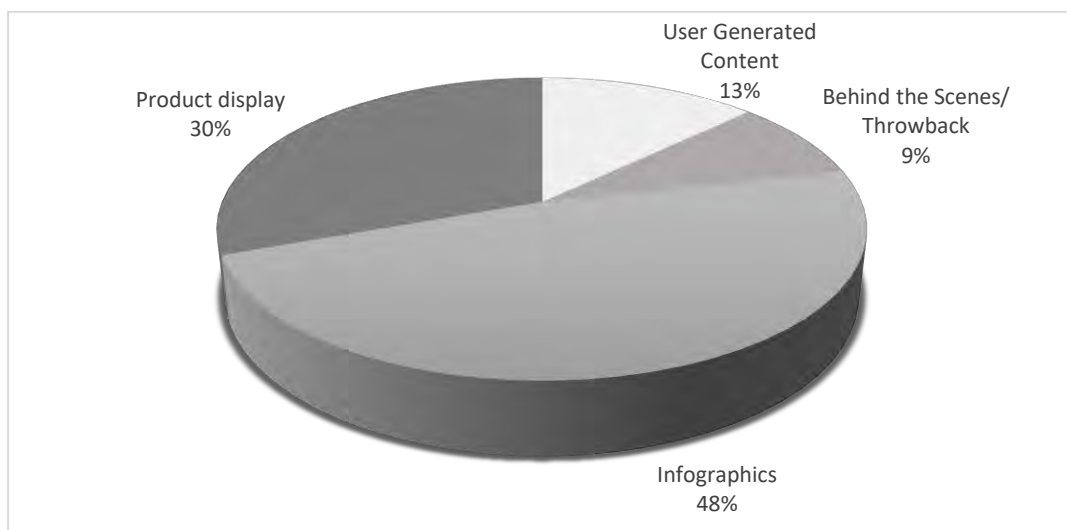


Figure 1: A cumulative visual representation of image post made by the five brands from October 2021- March 2022.

Figure 1 displays the total number of Image format published by the five selected fast-food brand for the 6-month period.

After coding each post published on the Instagram pages of the various brand over the 6-month period, the total number of user generated images published were 40 representing a total of 12.9%, Behind-the-scene/ throwback images were 27 representing 8.7%, Infographics were 149 out of the total of 311 representing a total of 47.9% and product display were 95 representing 30.5%. Also, from the table, it can be deduced that the dominant image type used by the various brand is Infographic images. Instagram works by applying visual based strategies (Hird, 2013). Images constitute to majority of the content posted on social media by both users (consumers) and brand. These images showcase different interest; these interests include fashion, lifestyle, travels and food. Images used by brand on Instagram convey various marketing and advertising messages to consumers that follow their page.

The study revealed that, all five fast-food brands – KFC Ghana, Burger King Ghana, Dough Man Foods, Papa's Pizza and Mr. Wu's each published various forms of images on their official Instagram pages. The results showed that, brand primarily used images to communicate to their target audience/ consumers on social media. Relatively, these images play the primary role of informative pieces. Mainly, they were to relay information about either new or available product and services. The subject for the content on the image varies and is somewhat determined by the season or month. Seasons includes; religious festivities, awareness months, sport seasons, promotional months and many others. The results indicated that, papa's pizza gave more room for the use of images as compared to the other brand; thus, 77% of the content over the study period were images. The theory of brand positioning works with the notion that, an image is worth a thousand words. That is visual communication has the ability to

evoke emotions, communicate ideas and tell and sell stories. The theory also asserts that, positioning is about manipulating a perception that is already in a consumer's mind. With little textual information and alluring pictures, brands are able to convince and sell the products to consumers as they make decisions to make a purchase.

4.1.1.2 Audio-visuals

KFC Ghana

User-generated content played a crucial role in building brand credibility and fostering a sense of community among customers. KFC Ghana has successfully leveraged this strategy, with 21% of their audio-visual posts falling into this category. By featuring content created by their customers, such as user-submitted photos or videos of their experiences at KFC, the brand establishes a genuine connection with their audience. This approach not only promotes engagement but also acts as free advertising when customers share their positive experiences with their own networks. Interestingly, KFC Ghana did not utilize behind-the-scenes or throwback content in their audio-visual posts. Motion graphics have become increasingly popular on social media platforms due to their visually appealing and attention-grabbing nature. KFC Ghana has recognized the power of motion graphics, as 42.9% of their audio-visual posts fell into this category. By utilizing animated graphics, dynamic text, and eye-catching visuals, the brand effectively captures the attention of Instagram users and communicates key messages in a concise and engaging manner.

Highlighting the features and descriptions of their products or services is essential for any brand, and KFC Ghana recognizes this with 10.7% of their audio-visual posts dedicated to this type of content. These posts may include close-up shots of menu items, videos showcasing the preparation process, or descriptive captions

outlining the unique aspects of their offerings. By using audio-visuals to showcase their products or services, KFC Ghana entices their audience and encourages them to make informed purchasing decisions. A significant portion of KFC Ghana's audio-visual posts (25%) focuses on product display. These posts likely feature high-quality images or videos showcasing the brand's menu items, emphasizing their visual appeal and mouth-watering qualities. By effectively displaying their products, KFC Ghana entices their audience, triggering cravings and desire to try their offerings. Such content has the potential to generate strong engagement and drive sales

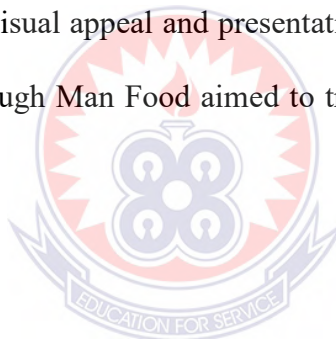
Dough Man Foods

User Generated Content accounted for 11.8% of Dough Man Food's audio-visual posts during the study period. This strategy involves sharing content created by customers, such as photos or videos featuring their experiences with Dough Man Food's products. This approach served as free promotion when customers shared positive experiences with their own followers, thereby expanding the brand's reach. Another 11.8% of Dough Man Food's audio-visual posts were behind-the-scenes or throwback content. This type of content offers a glimpse into the brand's internal operations, showcasing the cooking process, staff interactions, or memorable moments. By sharing behind-the-scenes footage, Dough Man Food establishes transparency and authenticity, building trust with their audience. Motion graphics make up a significant portion of Dough Man Food's audio-visual posts, accounting for 32.3% of their content. Leveraging animated visuals, dynamic text, and engaging transitions, motion graphics capture attention and effectively communicate key messages. This type of content is particularly effective in conveying information about new products, promotions, or

special events. By utilizing motion graphics, Dough Man Food showcases their creativity while delivering content that is visually appealing and engaging.

29.4% of Dough Man Food's audio-visual posts were to highlight product or service features and descriptions. These posts included close-up shots of their food offerings, videos showcasing the preparation process and voice overs detailing the unique aspects of their menu. By using audio-visuals to emphasize the quality and taste of their products, Dough Man Food entices their audience and encourages them to explore their offerings. This content type aims to inform and persuade customers to make a purchase decision. Dough Man Food allocates 14.7% of their audio-visual posts to product display. These posts featured high-quality videos showcasing their food items, focusing on their visual appeal and presentation. By showcasing their products in an appetizing way, Dough Man Food aimed to trigger cravings and desire in their audience.

Papa's Pizza



Papa's Pizza understands the power of user-generated content, as evidenced by 23.4% of their audio-visual posts falling into this category. By featuring content created by their customers, such as photos or videos of their pizza experiences, Papa's Pizza created a sense of authenticity and community. By leveraging user-generated content, Papa's Pizza effectively builds brand credibility and customer loyalty. Interestingly, Papa's Pizza's use of behind-the-scenes or throwback content is relatively low, with only 3.3% of their audio-visual posts falling into this category. Behind-the-scenes content offers a glimpse into the brand's operations, such as the team's dedication and a glimpse of how new branch opening went. By showcasing these aspects, Papa's Pizza

created deeper connection with their consumers. Utilizing throwback content could also tap into nostalgia, triggering positive emotions and fostering a sense of familiarity.

As motion graphics have become increasingly popular on social media platforms due to their visually captivating nature. Papa's Pizza recognizes this trend, with 30% of their audio-visual posts utilizing motion graphics. By using animated visuals, dynamic text, and engaging transitions, Papa's Pizza effectively captures the attention of Instagram users. These posts may showcase their menu items, promotions, or special offers, providing a visually appealing way to communicate key messages and entice their audience.

Highlighting the features and descriptions of their products or services is crucial for any brand, and Papa's Pizza recognizes this by allocating 13.3% of their audio-visual posts to this type of content. These posts included close-up videos of their pizzas, videos showcasing the preparation process, or descriptive captions outlining the unique aspects of their offerings. By showcasing their products or services through audio-visuals, Papa's Pizza aims to stimulate customers' appetites and generate interest in their offerings. A significant portion of Papa's Pizza's audio-visual posts (30%) focused on product display. These posts featured high-quality videos showcasing their pizzas in all their delicious glory. By effectively displaying their products, Papa's Pizza aimed to create cravings and desires in their audience. Such content not only drives engagement but also acts as a powerful advertising tool, enticing customers to visit their locations or place orders.

Burger King Ghana

Burger King Ghana incorporated user-generated content into their Instagram strategy, with a small percentage thus, 3.2% of their audio-visual posts falling into this category.

User-generated content allows the brand to tap into the authentic experiences and perspectives of their customers, fostering a sense of community and credibility. By featuring content created by users, Burger King Ghana can amplify positive reviews, testimonials, or visual representations of customers enjoying their meals. Burger King Ghana also utilizes behind-the-scenes or throwback content to a limited extent. Similar to User Generated content post, Behind-the-scenes post also accounted for 3.2% of the brands audio visual post during the study period. These types of posts provide glimpses into the brand's operations, such as the food preparation process or the team's dedication to quality. This content type can evoke nostalgia and create a sense of familiarity among followers. Motion graphics play a prominent role in Burger King Ghana's audio-visual posts on Instagram by accounting for 38.7% of the audio-visual posts. This dynamic and visually captivating content format allows the brand to convey information, promotions, or key messages effectively. By utilizing motion graphics, Burger King Ghana captures the attention of their consumers scrolling through their feed, enhancing brand visibility and engagement.

25.8% of Burger King Ghana audio-visual posts emphasized product or service features and descriptions in a significant portion of their audio-visual posts. These posts highlighted specific menu items, emphasizing their unique characteristics or the overall experience they offer. By showcasing their products or services through visual and audio elements, Burger King Ghana aims to entice their audience, generate interest, and drive cravings for their offerings. Product display plays a notable role in Burger King Ghana's audio-visual posts, accounting for 29.1% of audio-visual posts. Through videos, the brand showcases their menu items in an appealing and appetizing manner. By effectively displaying their products, Burger King Ghana sought to evoke desire and create a visual connection with their audience. Such content not only drives engagement

but also acts as a persuasive advertising tool, encouraging customers to visit their outlets or place orders.

Mr. Wu's

Mr. Wu's effectively incorporates user-generated content into their Instagram strategy, with a significant percentage (36.7%) of their audio-visual posts falling into this category. By featuring content created by their consumers, videos showcasing their experiences at Mr. Wu's, the brand establishes a sense of authenticity and community. User-generated content not only promoted engagement but also served as free advertisement when customers share their positive experiences with their own networks. This strategy effectively builds brand credibility and cultivates a loyal customer base. Mr. Wu's occasionally included behind-the-scenes or throwback content in their audio-visual posts. With only 5% of the audio-visual posts being throwback content, these posts provided a glimpse of past events that were held by the brand. 15% of Mr. Wu's posts were motion graphics. Mr. Wu's utilizes motion graphics in a portion of their audio-visual posts. Motion graphics offered a visually captivating and dynamic way to convey information, promotions, or key messages. By incorporating animated visuals, eye-catching text, and engaging transitions, Mr. Wu's captures the attention of Instagram users, increasing brand visibility and engagement.

Product/Service Feature or Description posts accounted for 11.7% of audio-visual posts. Highlighting product or service features and descriptions is an important aspect of any brand's Instagram strategy, and Mr. Wu's recognizes this by featuring this type of content in their audio-visual posts. These posts were close-up videos of menu items, videos showcasing the preparation process, or detailed captions highlighting the unique aspects of their offerings. By showcasing their products or services through

audio-visuals, Mr. Wu's aims to entice their audience, generate interest, and communicate the value of their offerings. A significant portion of 31.6% of Mr. Wu's audio-visual posts focused on product display. Through high-quality videos, the brand showcases their menu items in an appetizing and visually appealing manner. These posts act as persuasive advertising tools, driving engagement and encouraging customers to visit their restaurant or place orders.

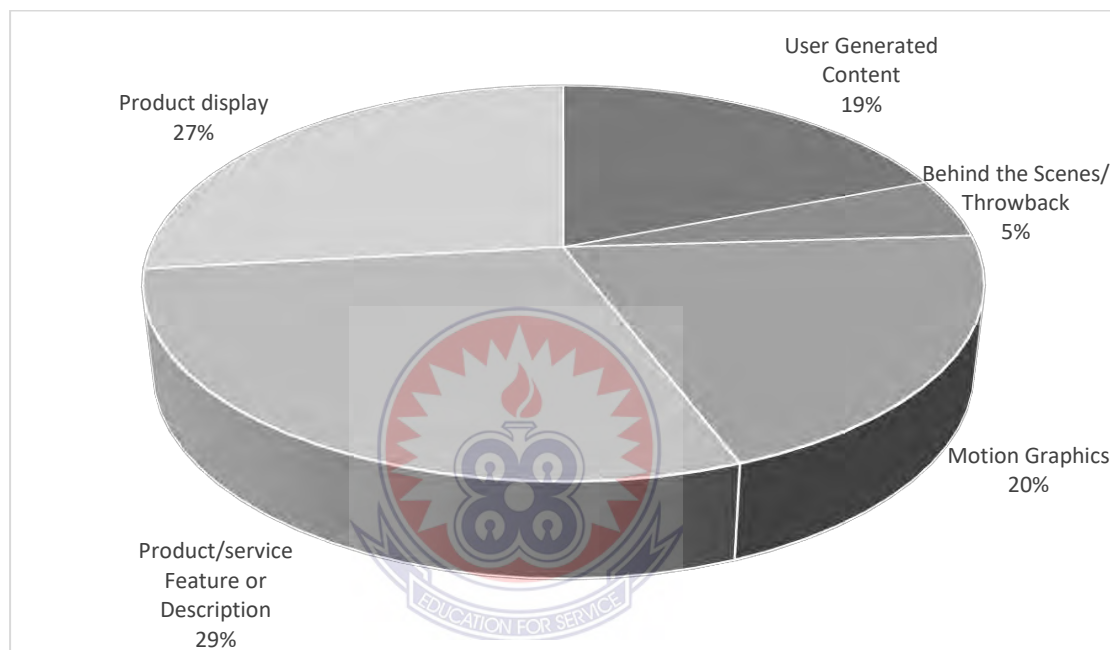


Figure 2:: A cumulative visual representation of audio-visual posts made by the five brands from October 2021- March 2022.

Figure 2 displays a compilation of the total number of audio-visual formats published by the five selected fast-food brand for the 6-month period. In addition, the table shows the overall sum of each image format type from October 2021 to March 2022.

After coding each post published on the Instagram pages of the various brand over the 6-month period, the total number of user generated videos published were 35 representing a total of 19.1%, Behind-the-scene/ throwback videos were 9 representing 2.9%, motion graphics were 37 out of the total of 183 representing a total of 20.2% and product display were 49 representing 26.8%. Also, from the table, it can be deduced

that the dominant video type used by the various brand is product/service feature or description represented by a total of 29%.

User-generated oriented posts were a relatively smaller portion of the overall content, comprising 15% of the total. This suggests that the brand or organization actively encourages their audience to create and tag them videos related to their products or services. User-generated videos adds authenticity and social proof to the brand's image, as they showcase real customers sharing their experiences or testimonials.

Behind-the-scenes posts form a minor part of the content, accounting for 7% of the total. These posts offer a sneak peek into the brand's operations or processes, giving viewers an exclusive look at what goes on behind closed doors. By sharing behind-the-scenes videos, the brand aims to build transparency, establish trust, and provide a unique perspective on their offerings.

Product or service feature and description content made up 7.5% of the total. This category included videos that focus on showcasing specific products or services, highlighting their unique features, and providing detailed descriptions. These videos aim to inform and educate viewers about the brand's offerings, enabling them to make informed purchase decisions. Infographics and motion graphics form a significant part of the content, making up 41% of the total. Infographics are visual representations of information or data, presenting it in a concise and easily digestible format. By utilizing infographics, the brand aims to educate and engage their audience, delivering valuable content that is visually appealing and informative. Motion graphics or slideshows represented a significant portion, comprising 10.7% of the overall content. These types of media often involve animated visuals, dynamic transitions, and engaging effects to convey information, promotions, or key messages. Motion graphics can capture

viewers' attention and effectively communicate important details about the brand's products, services, or campaigns.

Finally, Product display posts accounted for 29.9% of the total content. These posts focused on showcasing the brand's products in an appealing and visually captivating manner. By highlighting the products in action or displaying their features, the brand aims to attract viewers and create desire for their offerings.

4.1.2 Nature of Posts

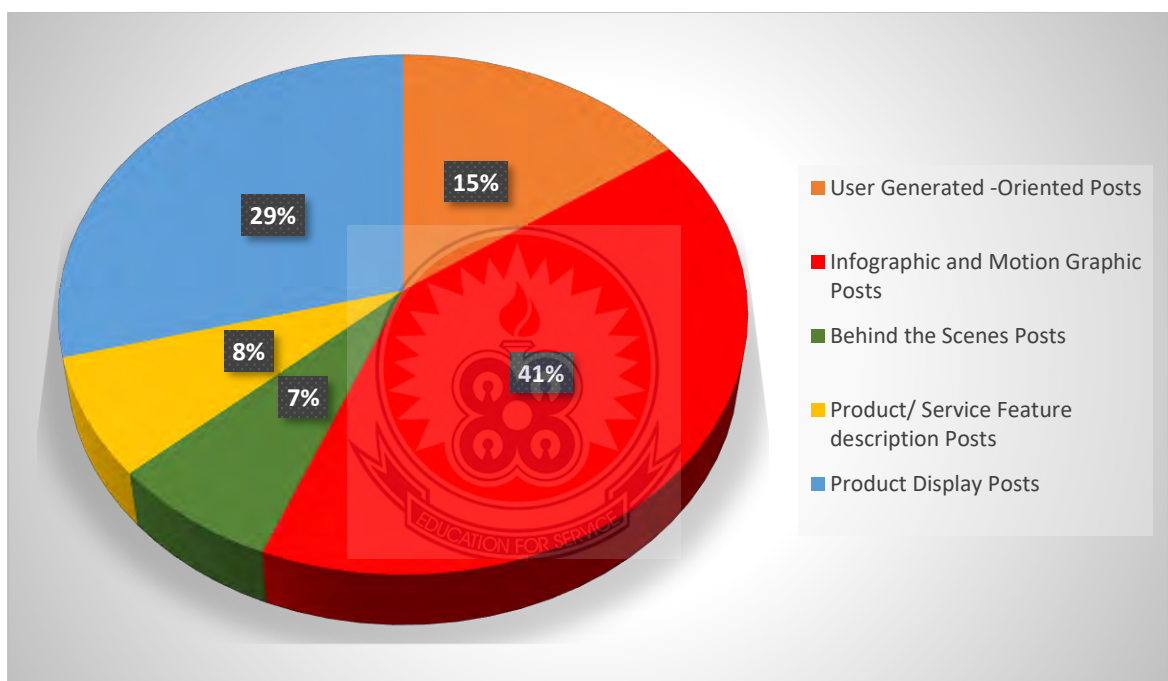


Figure 3: A pie chart showing the various nature of posts used by the five- selected fast-food brand on Instagram (Field Data, 2022).

a. Infographics/ Motion graphics

These posts consist of a mixture of both text and visual elements to explain a message in simpler term to consumers. These types of post are usually very colourful and catchy with the most important element emphasized. The layouts of these images are usually demarcated for both text and visual elements. Secondly text information follows a hierarchical order. Whiles infographics are stationary, motion graphics can be the video formats of these info graphical content. Certain components or aspects of motion

graphics may move. An animated text marquee, animated logos and icons, and moving images can all be used as these. Hanna & Coman (2021) assert that, motion graphics focuses on communicating with basic elements such as colour, space and typography which produces an output that appears to be rotating or moving digitally. It can be a fantastic addition to a boring social media post that does not get much attention. Brand pages use these media formats when announcing new locations, new additions to their menus, employing interactive posts with their consumers such as puzzles and quizzes or giving information about promotional deals. From the analysis, infographics were the most used image across all 5 brand with 30.2%. Characteristics of infographics and motion graphical posts mainly spelt out prices, products, locations and promotional packages which basically are the marketing mix.

Figure 1 is an infographic post/ poster which announces a new deal. It showcases the product offer and the price for the deal. To be classified as an infographic content, it displays both text and image messages. From the figure, it could be seen that, the text appears in a hierarchical order; name of the offer, then the price. This post utilizes three elements from the 4P strategic theory (Product, Promotion and Price). The theory suggests that, marketers combine various elements to suit the need of a particular target audience (Singh, 2012). Although the promotional aspect is not clearly seen, A burger's original price is GHS 28 and bottle of coke is GHS5. However, the deal consolidates 2 of each product to a reduced cost of GHS55. The target audience for this package is couples. In this instance, Isorate (2016)'s value basis of pricing and discount are seen at play. This is where the price is reduced to attract consumers and consumers perception of the product becomes value rather than the real cost (Isorate, 2016). This is in line with Goi's (2011)'s assertion that price is the only element that is set in relation to the other three elements and can be used to reinforce a promotional product. Cassidy

et al. (2021), asserts that, price is a key component of the marketing mix which consumers use as s decision criteria before making a purchase.



Figure 4: An infographic post from KFC Ghana

Figure 5 is the caption made for figure 4. The caption clarifies information that was left out in the visual component of the post. Here, the fourth element of the marketing mix which is ‘place’ comes into play by letting consumers know which branches would be excluded from the offer.



Figure 5: Caption for the Duos Burger Deal

b. User Generated Content

User generated content are unique content made for a brand by its consumers exhibiting the use of their products and posted on social media with a tag to indicate it the owner of the content. Kim & Johnson (2015) refer to them as media formats that are created

by consumers and often includes a brand related subject matter. With the current age of digital marketing, marketing has become more consumer centric leading brand to create opportunities where consumers are able to interact and engage with brand (Berman, 2012). User generated content serves as an electronic word of mouth channel (Kim & Johnson, 2015), as it helps to share experiences, ideas, feedback and other opinions about the brand with prospective consumers. User generated contents provides brand with social proof of validation, trust, reliability and authenticity and humanise brand in order to appeal to various consumers (Sayyed & Gupta, 2020). They provide the platform for brand to build an emotional connection with their consumers, gain trust and form meaningful relationships with them. User generated contents could be either images or video formats. Their main concepts were either to entertain or give consumer feedback on a product or service. From the data, 36.7% of video content and 30.4% of image content for Mr. Wu's were found to be user generated content.



Figure 6.: A user-generated content post by Mr. Wu's.

Figure 6, displays a snapshot of a user generated content from Mr' Wu's Instagram page. From the image, it can be seen that, the contented creator's user name is 'majorskyscraper' who tagged the brand '@mrwusgh'. It can also be seen that Mr. Wu. went further to post this content on their page as a post.

c. Behind-the-scene/ Throwback content

Behind-the-scene content aim to increase the feeling of connected and perceptions of authenticity by giving consumers a deep look into their products and services (Richards & Landrum, 2020). Behind-the-scenes videos are excellent tools used to show the quality of a brand product in a closer trust worthy way. These videos give consumers who are curious about how their favourite products/ meals were made the inside scoop on the production (Richards & Landrum, 2020).

An extract from the interview with the representative from Doughman foods on the importance of behind-the-scene post.

“There was this post, now people watched it and didn't see anything like a discount but it's more like, wow! you sort of hit on the emotional senses and will be like this is what actually happens and this what goes on during production... I mean you get the sentiment that people appreciate it and are like wow so this is what actually happens...”

(D.M.F., 2022)

The above extract from the interview, relates to how behind-the-scenes content are able to give consumers the feeling of connectiveness with the brand process of making and packing of the delicious savoury products they enjoy on a daily basis.

Behind-the-scenes contents provide the customers a look behind-the-scenes and a sense of inclusion that makes it easier for them to relate to your business on a deeper level. A behind-the-scenes video gives customers a glimpse into the real face of your business

or product. It also shares the brand's story, the tales of those associated with your company, and all the small details and character quirks that make your brand distinctive.

d. Product or Service Feature/ Description

Product or service feature description posts are content that describe what a product or a deal offers and its benefits to the consumers. This type of contents explains why a product is worth purchasing or as service is worth using. Product/Service feature or descriptions are crucial for a successful online business because they increase your online visibility, provide customers with the information they need to make a purchase choice, and ultimately increase sales. Product description works on the premise that, a consumer's choice is based on the benefits the product is able to offer consumers (Ponnam & Dawra, 2013). Mukherjee & Hoyer (2001) assert that, brand often try to improve and differentiate their products by introducing additional product or service features.

A transcription of a voice over from a Burger King Ghana feature description video post state that:

“100% flame grilled beef. Freshly sliced tomato and onion.

Lettuce, mayo, ketchup, zesty Pickles on a toasted sesame seed bun.

No artificial preservatives, colourings or flavours.” (B.K., 2022)

From the extract, it can be seen that, the content of the voice over explains the characteristics of components that make up a whooper burger which is the signature meal or product for the brand. The brand's voice may be heard in the product descriptions, which highlight the advantages of each choice. The capacity of product descriptions to assist customers in making informed purchasing decisions further emphasises the significance of these descriptions.

e. Product Display

Product display content used by brand are primarily high-resolution images or evocative videos of their product. From the data, the post contains no text or voice overs in communicating with consumers. They rely solely on the visual appeal of the product. Product display of fast-food brand works with the concept of commercial food photography as it helps them tell a story about their brand by showcasing items on their menu. product display makes using of one element in the marketing mix which is product. Singh (2012) describes ‘the product’ as the key element of any marketing mix. This assertion is to show that the product can be able to communicate its qualities without any description or price factor. She further states that the product is the starting point for all marketing activities. Fast-food advertising is usually categorised by the use of mouth-watering images and videos of food (Norman et al., 2016). Eye catchy images on their brand page is able to entice and introduce consumers to digital brand experience. Product display contents create lasting impressions of a menu item in a consumer’s mind. Given that the first interaction with food goods is frequently visual and affects subsequent readiness to accept a product, visual sensations also contribute to this perception (Imram, 1999). The concept of what you see is what you get, comes into mind when you see a product display on a brand page. It gives the brand the chance to control how consumers should perceive product/ meals offered by the brand in real time.



Figure 7: A product Display Post by Papa's Pizza.

Figure 7 is a product display post. From the image, it can be seen that, various high resolution and mouth-watering images of three different pizzas has been display. The caption of the image how ever does not include any of the other three marketing mix elements.

An extract from the interview with the Doughman representative states that:

“We showcase our packaging what happens when you get box and what you're supposed to see. More like what you see what you get. That's how we want it to be and that's how it has to be. It not it's not like you see some shiny Donuts and when it comes it's not that shiny. the way you see it is how you would get it...” (D.M.F., 2022)

The above statement describes the importance of product display posts on the selected brand' Instagram pages. The above statement suggests that, brand give a preview of what consumers should expect if they are to make a purchase from them. The statement also suggest that the selected brand do not engage in false advertising of products online.

4.2 RQ2- (a) What are the strategies the selected fast-food brand on Instagram use in achieving a competitive advantage?

The second research question sought to investigate the positioning strategies employed by fast-food brand on social media. Themes derived for research question 2 are target segmentation, product customisation, sales promotion and strategic alliances.

i. Target Segmentation

Target segmentation, helps brand to be able understand their consumers based on specific behaviours, preferences, characteristics and geographic locations. The data indicated that the most used target segmentation tactic by the fast-food brand were based on their geographic location. Others were centred around child targeting. Target segmentation allowed the brand identify the consumers base by considering demographics (age, gender and location) Psychographics (lifestyle, values) and their dining preferences. These informs the brand implements “student friendly budget” or drive through services.

An extract from the interview a representative from Quick Holding marketing firm for Burger King to give a scope of who their target group are.

“We are looking at people who are health conscious... we are looking at people between the ages of 18 to 35 years... then look at single parents then look at a young couple those who are like 28/29 who just got married. Then I mean 18 to the 24 are those in universities who love the Internet and they love to feel belonging for belong to a certain class in the society”. (B.K., 2022).

From the extract, it can be seen that, the brand has created a perception of the class of people they want to patronize their brand. The interviewee believes that people who associate with their brand associate themselves to a certain class of people the in society.

The response also shows that, the brand has carved out a value point for their brand and are not willing to step- down from that category. Iyer et al. (2018) asset that, targeting and segmenting of consumers helps brand be able to differentiate their brand's focus from their competitors to their consumers. This helps brand to have a clear perspective of what they want to offer their consumers without deviating from the set goal.

Target segmentation can be in assertion with Aaker and Shansby (1982)'s position with respect to a product class. From their view, position decisions are sometimes reliant on product class associations. For instance, consumers might purchase from brand like KFC Ghana and Burger King Ghana due to their association with the international market and may want to feel a sense of belonging to a particular social class.

In a similar instance for Doughman food states that,

“So literally the target group would be young adults... young adults with what I would call a sweet tongue, because I mean they are young people wouldn't take sugary stuff. and yes, now we are expanding to those aspects of what do we call them fries and grills and stuff like that. For now, the core thing is and has always been the doughnuts. So young adults with a sweet tongue” ... (D.M.F., 2022)

From the extract, it can be seen that, the product of the brand is tailored to meet their target group. Target marketing also allow brand to narrow their market scope to manageable groups in order to give them services and enable quality interaction between brand. Dolnicar et al. (2018), refers to this as hyper- segmentation. In their view, it allows brand to offer customized products or services to very small groups. Below are extracts from two interviews where the brand representatives give their thought on target marketing.

... now we have moved closer to people. So, in the past we just had two stores east Legon end Labone, so when you want to enjoy our products, you have to drive all the way from Dansoman to Labone, but now we've moved closer we have about 15 stores Currently in Accra. There is 1 in Awoshie, there is one in Dansoman there is 1 in Kasoa, Tema all the places you can think of... (P.P., 2022).

...Through our market database we are able to identify the large section of customers who have been urging from afar or further distance or location... this informs us to get closer to them so initially using a Dome branch as an example, we had customers as far as Amasaman, Pokuase, Nsawam who ordered in from the Dome branch and we realised that, we have a market there so we got closer to them so we now have the Kwabenya branch that takes care of the Brekuso, Nsawam, Amasaman. So, through feedback from the database, we get... we open new branches... (P.P., 2022).

The above extracts show the extent to which brand go to achieve an upper-hand in drawing in and maintaining their consumer base. In analysing the social media post, I realised that a number of posts made by these brands were to announce their new locations, these were sometimes done through interactive content such a quizzes and guess games with prizes to be won.



Figure 8: A target/ Market segmentation post by KFC Ghana.

Figure 8, is a post made by KFC Ghana to alert their consumers on a new target market they were about to serve. From the image above, it can be seen that in the comment section, consumers were eager to know when a branch was going to be opened closer to them. Riaz & Tanveer (2012), posit that, targeted markets are usually divided on the basis of geographical areas depending on the consumers' needs. Thus; region, cities and neighbourhoods.

Since positioning involves how consumers perceive a brand in their minds, being able to craft out a target group helps brand be able to segment and create product options that are of value to these respective market audience. Creating a target segmentation allows brand to have an advantage over their competitors by offering diverse and unique products at price ranges that are suitable to them (Bansal et al., 2014). This also enables brand to give the consumers the value offers they want at affordable prices while maintaining their standard quality.

ii. Product Customisation.

Product customisation offers brand the option to cater to individual preferences of consumers thereby developing a sense of personalization for consumers. The data indicated that, product customisation enabled brand develop their menu offerings to meet the dynamic changes in the market trends. Brand also encourage their consumers to share their customized creations through tagging and hashtag-ing. Interactive contents were also used to inquire from consumers their options on menu additions. The findings indicated that, Price and Products were the main elements used for product customization. Product customization posts were made during seasonal periods. (E.g. Religious festivities and Public Holidays). Pricing played an essential role in the creation of customized products. Product customization posts were based mostly on rational appeals rather than emotional appeals. When customising products, brand ensure that, their products are well designed, appropriately priced, easily accessible and effectively promoted to their target audience.

Below is an extract from the interview from the representative of Burger King Ghana on his views on product customisation.

“...we have stayed true to our primary product... if you watch some brand... they have diverted from their main concept by adding additional product offerings...” (B.K., 2022).

In the view of Papa’s Pizza,

“...Maybe in our packaging. Like I said our customer service and a variety of product... Well, through the standards we set. The quality of meals we provide cause our taste does not change. The taste that we knew in 2011 it has not changed but it has improved it has become much better and more receptive to different pallets all different type of

customers as well. ...I will think we are more concerned or particular with the customers. whatever we put in... or whatever meal we come up with, we have the customers consideration first. and we sought to satisfy the customers and so whatever we do we have the customers in mind first so it informs us to what they want so given us the competitive advantage...” (P.P., 2022).

The two extracts above, highlights how product customization help these brand be able to differentiate themselves from each other. As well as the extent to which they go to achieve uniqueness. From the extract, while some brand stick to their original menu items, others bring a variety of products to appeal to consumers of various target audience. From the data, it was seen that product customisation used two main elements from the marketing mix. Thus; product and price.

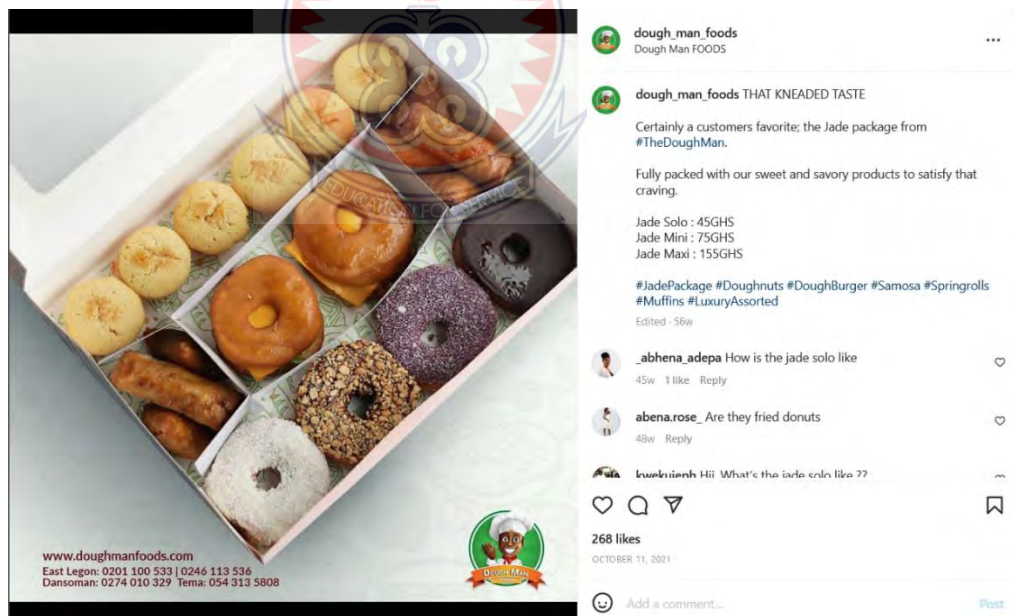


Figure 9: Product customization post by Doughman Food

Figure 9, is a product customisation post made by Doughman. From the image, it can be seen that, various products have been placed together to make a complete package. This gives consumers the option to get a variety of products from a single purchase at a price they can afford. The image also gives price options for consumers to choose

from. Khan (2014), suggests that, brand build an actual product around their core products then an augmented products around both the actual and core products. The core product he describes is the problem-solving product and the actual product refers to a products level of quality, packaging features and design. Price plays an essential role in creating these actual products as it is the only element that in the marketing mix that is set relation to the other elements (Khan,2014). Khan further states that, pricing of products depends on the competition and the intended target group's willingness to pay for the product.

Gwin and Gwin (2003), asserts that, consumers choose a brand to purchase from based on their budget. To be able to draw consumers to them, brand create menu deals that come with both quality and have affordable to able to reach all type of consumers. Brand either come up with new product, changes in existing products, price changes, product combination and many others. Creating a brand also relies on how unique a brand is from others. A major way to differentiate one brand from another is the ability to be unique either in terms of product, packaging or service offer.

iii. Sales Promotion

Sales promotion were a major marketing strategy used by the brand on Instagram. Sales promotion was used as a technique to reach a larger consumer base. These promotions took the form of discount codes and coupons; here, exclusive discount codes or coupons are given to consumers based on an awarding scheme. These techniques encourage consumers to interact with brand posts and helps build a sense of exclusivity and loyalty between the brand and the consumers. Another promotional tactic was the limited-time offers; these posts created a sense of urgency by highlight offers that were available for a short duration and incites a drive for immediate action for consumers.

The sales promotion tactics also gave the impression of value for money to consumers. The fast- food brand also used Instagram contests and giveaways as another form of their sales promotion; with these posts, consumers had the opportunity to win free meals, gift cards, branded souvenirs and other enticing gifts. This form of sales promotion helps increase the brand engagement, reach and brand awareness on Instagram.

During the interview, a respondent gave his view on the benefits of these sales' promotion posts.

"... that is massive if we do a 20% discount promo right now the phone lines will be buzzing... So, I mean promotions sales where discount is used play heavy role..." (P.P., 2022)

The extract above is in line with the assertion of Khan (2014), who posits that, sales promotion helps a brand to create awareness of a choice of product available to a consumer by creating a buzz around the product offer.

The representative of dough man foods however, gives the negative impact this strategy has on the brand which states that,

... "when you over reliant in that it takes a toll on your production because now you are... actually now people are having this perception that when the company runs a promo it means there is an original price. What we have given to our customers is what it supposed to... that is the exact cost when you run a promo because you want to push more volumes" ... (D.M.F., 2022)

The above extract emphasizes the negative impact on a brand's sales with the constant use of sales promotion. Kotler (2002), asserts that, sale promotion is promotion increase short term sales but however helps build a long-term relationship with consumers. In line with this assertion a brand is able to have an impact in a consumer's

mind and position as one that provides them with benefits (Salunke & Zaware, 2018). From the analysis, it was seen that pricing plays a significant role in these sales promotional posts.



Figure 10: A Sales Promotion Post by Papa's Pizza.

Figure 10, states the monetary benefits a customer gets from making a purchase within a stipulated time frame and through a particular method. Here, the brand urged consumers to make the purchase through their website, which takes the out the stress of walk-in purchase and enjoy additional benefit of 50% off their order. This gives consumers the idea of enjoying their favourite meal/pizza with additional benefits. Breidert (2006), asserts that, the price at which a product is offered interacts heavily with the other elements of the marketing mix. Sales promotion posts also drive actual purchase in store. The marketing elements features in this above figure are promotion; 50% off the original price, place; the brand website with the timeframe of 12pm -4pm, and product; all pizza's available on the brand menu

Aaker (1998) asserts that, a differentiation strategy must add value for the consumers, in addition, this added value must however be perceived by the consumer.

A clear value proposition outlines how a product solves problems for customers or how relevant it is to them, provides particular benefits, and informs the client why they should purchase your brand rather than that of the competitors. This means that when a consumer looks at a post, they should be able to know that the offer being made gives some of extra benefits. Sales promotion used by brand in in assertion with Aaker& Shansby (1982)'s positioning by attribute. This is where a product offers give more benefits to the consumers than that of their competitors. Gwin and Gwin (2003) assert that, consumers' have a perception of attributes offered by a product and a maximum amount that they are willing to pay for that. These benefits may be in the form of discounts, or cashbacks.

iv. Strategic alliances

Table 2: Strategic Alliances of the Five selected brand from October 2021 – March 2022

Fast-food Brand	Strategic Alliances/ Partnerships
Papa's Pizza	Tingg, Papcake.
KFC Ghana	Bolt Food, Jumia food, Glovo.
Dough Man Foods	Bold Food, Malta Guinness, Tymbark Juice, Surflin Ghana, Wildland Festival.
Burger King Ghana	Jumia Food, Glovo, Bolt Food.
Mr. Wu's	-

Note: This table demonstrates strategic alliance for each selected fast-food brand on Instagram from October,2021- March, 2022

From the table above, four brand utilized strategic alliances during the study prerioid. Three brand had a similar partner which is bolt food. From the data it can been seen that, KFC Ghana and Burger King Ghana both have a partnership with Jumia food and

Glovo. The data shows that the dominant strategic alliance used by fast-food brand is a delivery option/ partnership. Which can be associated with the marketing mix element ‘place’ of which distribution falls under. Thus; Jumia Food, Bolt Food and Glovo. Dough Man and Papa’s Pizza also had partnerships with complimentary food product; Malta Guinness, Tymbark Juice and Papcake.

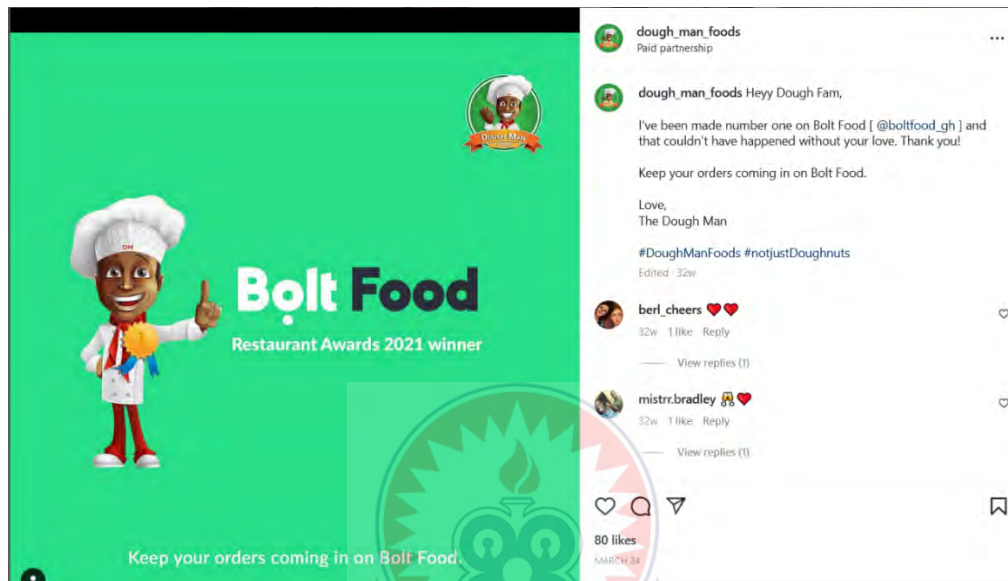


Figure 11: A strategic alliance post by dough man foods.

Figure 11; was a post made to appreciate both consumers for their purchase through the bolt delivery app. The bolt delivery app, provides an option for consumers who are unable to make walk-in and pick-up orders. This app grants consumers to order meals at their own convicence. From the caption, it can be said that, the consumers made a lot of purchases through the app which made the brand be ranked at number one ahead of their competitors in both on the app and the geographic location of the brand.

Brands seek out strategic partnerships with other companies operating in the same industry or in comparable industries to help earn competitive advantage over others. Strategic partnerships enable brand to grow up quickly, develop cutting-edge client solutions, break into new markets, and pool beneficial experience and resources.

The coordination through strategic alliances positively increases the value of partner companies (Mamédio et al., 2018). They further state that, alliances allow for brand to discover new opportunities for market expansion for the brand in a partnership. According to Mamédio et al. (2018), competitive advantage can be achieved through strategic alliances if brand are able to properly manage and structure these partnerships. These alliances could come in the form of delivery options or products which compliments a meal option of the brand.

4.2 (b) What brand visual identity element are present in the Instagram post and how often are they used?

The second part of research question 2 addresses the element of visual communication used by the selected brand on social media. Data was analysed based on brand visual elements that were present in the posts. A brand's visual identity plays a major role in communicating brand image in today's cluttered marketing environment. Themes derived from the data were; Logos, Brand colours, Taglines, Typography and Brand Mascots/ Characters.

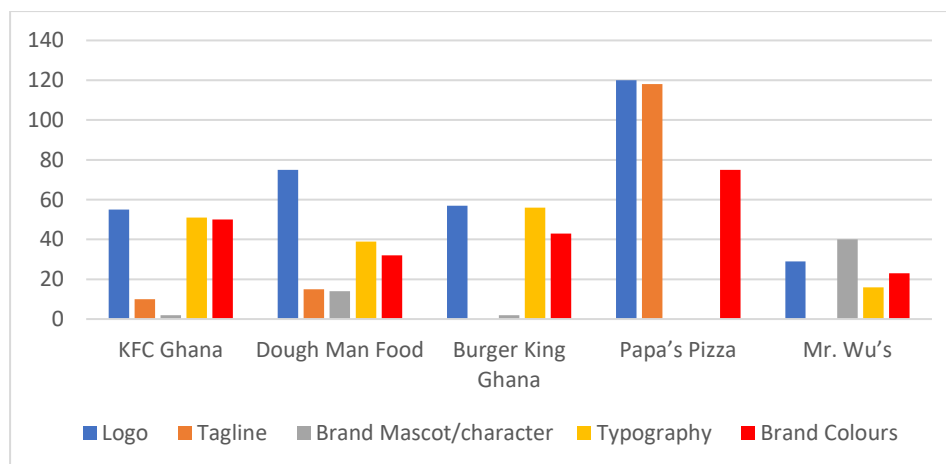


Figure 12: The visual identity elements that were used by the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram from October 2021- March 2022.

Figure 12, is a bar chart which is a visual representation of how frequent the various visual identity elements were used by the five fast-food brands on their Instagram post in the quest to achieve a competitive advantage.

Figure 12 details the visual identity elements used by the selected fast-food brand on Instagram. KFC Ghana used Logos, taglines(slogans) brand mascots, brand typography and brand colours. Chronologically, all brand used logos, and brand colours on Instagram. On Papa's pizza's Instagram page, the visual identity elements that were given much importance were the logo and taglines. It can be seen from the table that; all brand gave much relevance to the use of logos to identify themselves. Mr Wu on the other hand is the brand that gave more relevance to the use of brand character/Mascots. Out of a total of 116 post made during the study period, Mr. Wu used their brand character/mascot on 40 of their posts. With the issue of typography, Burger king is the brand that stayed true to their formal typography through their posts on Instagram. Post from Papa's pizza however did not have uniformity in their typography. The figure below, is a graphical representation of the visual identity elements that were used by the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram from October 2021- March 2022.

When asked what informs the decision of their brand to use visual identity elements on the social media posts, the representative of papa's pizza had this to say;






“we want to stay in your mind, i mean our red and yellow colours alone might not do extreme justice... i mean we now have a lot of ... i mean two or three other brand that use similar colours, pizza max, pizzaman chickenman and i think tic-tak pizza... a lot of upcoming pizza brand equally using the same colour scheme... so if we have papa's pizza there so we can differentiate ourselves. you notice that

papa's pizza is usually at the bottom right. with that, you should be able to identify us” (P.P., 2022).

The extract above, explain not only the importance of visual identity elements on brand posts on Instagram but also the need to use a combination of the various elements available. According to Kaur and Kaur (2010), a brand’s visual identity elements is a powerful means that demonstrates the distinctive image and uniqueness for its competitors.

1. Logos

Table 3: The respective Logos for the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram.

KFC Ghana	Dough Man	Mr. Wu’s	Papa’s Pizza	Burger King
				

Note: This table display the logos for each of the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram.

Logos without a doubt are the foundation of a brand’s visual identity. Logos are usually a combination of colours, symbols words and shapes that are easily recognizable and distinctive from other brands. During the analysis, logos that appeared on product packaging were not recorded as part of the number of times logos appeared. For instance, if KFC Ghana made a post of their chicken bucket, the logo on the chicken bucket was not recorded however, if the logo appeared at the bottom middle or top part of the post without a connection to a product, this was recorded as a logo appearance. Brand logo was a visual element that was regularly used by all five brands. For audio-visual content, the either appeared at the start of the video or at the final scene as an end note to the video. Papa’s Pizza was the only brand that had a dedicated location for their

logo on all their image publication. The logo could always be found at the right bottom corner of every image post. It is interesting to note that, only papa's pizza had a planned layout or aesthetic for how their image post should be.

Michell et al. (2001), asserts that, a brand inherent strength is generated through the leverage of its name, symbol or logo. Michell et al (2001), further explains that, these elements are the part of a brand that can be vocalised and communicated. A well-designed logo is able to set a brand apart from others and has the persuasive power to move consumers and make a lasting impression in their minds and be able to withstand the test of time. In as much as logos are not the brand's visual identity, it is the first image or impression a consumer thinks about when a brand's name is mentioned

2. Brand colours

From the data, it could be seen that, all brand had their specified colours. Some brand colours were pantones which means, these colours were specifically made for the brand, thus; no other brand is allowed to use them since they are trademarked and copyrighted. Brand colours were the second visual elements that were used by all brand. Brand sometimes used all the brand colours in a single post and other times used either 1 or a combination of certain colours. Again, from the data, it was seen that, post that were high graphic images (Pictures of event) were excluded of any brand colours. It is interesting to note that, some brand had a secondary brand palette.

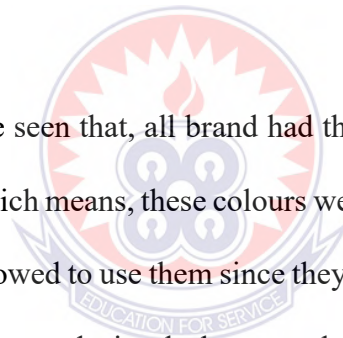


Table 4: The respective brand colours for the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram.

Brand Name	Brand Colours
KFC Ghana	Red, white black
Dough Man Foods	Green, orange, white
Papa's Pizza	Red and yellow
Burger King Ghana	Red, pumkin, auqatic white
Mr. Wu	Red, yellow, black

Note: This table display the respective brand colours for each of the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram.

Colour is an essential branding technique that has more persuasive power than shape and appeals to emotions rather than reason (Chang et al, 2018). One of the most effective techniques used by designers to convey a client's message is colour. It has the power to arouse feelings, convey personality, and establish the tone for a brand. Colour usage has a lot of different applications.

3. Tagline

Table 5: The respective brand tagline for the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram.

Brand Name	Tagline
KFC Ghana	Finger lickin' good
Dough Man Foods	That kneaded taste
Papa's Pizza	Taste it love it
Burger King Ghana	It Takes two hand to hold a Whopper.
Mr. Wu	-

Note: This table display the taglines used by each of the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram.

From the data, it can be seen that Burger King Ghana and Mr. Wu made no use of any taglines. Although Burger King has the tag line “*It Takes two hand to hold a Whopper.*”, the were not used on their post on Instagram neither were they used in the captions of the postings. Mr. Wu on the other had have no tagline (slogan). Papa’s pizza has the most recorded number use of tagline “taste it love it”. Their taglines were use both in audio-visual post and images. Like their logos, their tagline was place at the top part of their post; either the left or right and were written in a form of a hashtag *#tasteitloveit*. For Papa’s pizza’s use of tagline in audio-visuals they were always said aloud at the end of the message. As compared to Papa’s pizza, Doughman mainly used their tagline “*that kneaded taste*” in their caption for image post. For audio-visual post they were displayed at the end of the message. Just as Doughman and Papa’s pizza, KFG Ghana also used the tagline “*finger lickin’ good*” in the audio-visual post. However, these were only used in motion graphic post. Both KFC Ghana and Dough Man Foods used the tagline together with their logos at the end of the audio-visual post.

A tagline is a brief, memorable statement that expresses the brand concept concisely and comprehensibly. This succinct summary serves as the company's slogan and develops brand personality, both of which contribute to positioning the brand in the market. Taglines promotes consistency throughout an advertising campaign and captures the essence of positioning (Escámez Hernández, 2013). It is used to communicate the brand's main message. It communicates a brand's desired position in the market. Taglines strengthen the brand's image, highlight its benefits, and make it more memorable (Miller et al., 2007). A brand's tagline completes the brand identity trifecta together with its name and logo (Escámez Hernández, 2013). A slogan draws attention and aids in distinguishing a brand, just like a name and logo do.

4. Brand Characters/ Mascots

Table 6: The respective brand Mascot for the selected fast-food brand on Instagram.

KFC Ghana	Dough Man Food	Burger King	Mr. Wu
			

Note: This table displays the brand mascots for four out of the five selected fast-food brands on Instagram.

Out of the five brands only one brand did not have a brand character or mascot during the time of the study. Thus; Papa's pizza. Mr Wu. is the brand that had the highest number of posts with an inclusion of their brand mascot. For Mr. Wu's their mascot were used in very amusing ways. They could be found flying down in an audio-visual to introduce a new item to their menu or dance when announcing a working hour extension. Dough Man on the other had used their mascot to give out information with sensitive issues. The character on these posts usually has an expression on their face to seem more human when sending out these messages. KFC Ghana used their brand character twice to in an entertaining post. The purpose was just to amuse their followers.

A brand mascot/character is usually figure or avatar that stand in for a brand. It frequently acts as an ambassador for a business, item, or service. Brand mascots are used by businesses to promote their advertising and marketing plans. Customers may

find your brand to be more appealing, interesting, and unique as a result. These characters can be human characters (Real people, superheroes, fictional characters) animals or objects (fruits). A mascot's primary function is to convey emotions from the brand's face to the audience and make business communications with them more "human." Igenhoff and Fuhrer (2010) posit that, a brand's identity is passed on the brand's personality which is described by using human characteristics.

5. Typography

From the data, it can be seen that papa's pizza has no record for typography. This is because during the analysis it was noticed that, papa's pizza lacked consistency in the font the used on all their post. Burger King Ghana was the consistent with the use of the typography "flame" which is a customised typography for and brand and is used globally. it is inspired by the shapes of Burger King food thus; rounded, bold, yummy and brand's irreverent personality. Although KFC Ghana was consistent with their typography, the sometimes used a secondary type style.



Figure 11: A sample image of the typography Flame by Burger King

Figure 11 is the sample of the flame typography which is exclusive to Burger King

Typography is a fundamental component of a successful identity strategy. Without a distinctive and consistent typographic style, it is impossible to preserve a consistent corporate image. A brand typography's is a visual component of a brand's style guide or brand book that organises the written content for your company in a readable manner and harmonises it with your brand personality. It can be modern, vintage, romantic, shy or rigid. Whiles some brand use already existing font styles, other brand create their own font styles for their typography. According to Kaur and Kaur (2021), the consistent use of typography as a communication mechanism subconsciously soothes a consumer's mind as well reassures the consumer whiles reinforcing the brand's identity.

The second aspect of the second research question seeks to investigate the visual identity elements or positioning cues used by the five selected fast-food brand. During the data collection, it was noticed that brand combine a number of visual elements when creating their post to be published on their brand pages. With the help of how literature addressed these characteristics in creating and identity to help in a brand's positioning, the researcher operationalized the meaning of the categories mentioned above. These categories are logos, typology, colours, taglines and mascots

Distinctiveness and market attraction are viewed as strategies that help crate brand agility (Nazari et al., 2019). Brand use visual identity elements as indicators to help consumers to be able to identify their brand in the clutter of numerous competitors. Branding element/ visual identity elements can be found all around use, from social media pages to product packaging. Kaur and Kaur (2021) assert that, for a brand to create a strong identity, in the minds of consumers, they must build a special identity and establish a relationship with consumers by using the same 'look and feel to create a memory schema. Visual branding refers to all visual aspects of branding, and it affects

how customers perceive a brand by using visual components including colour, font, shape, imagery, and more (Kaur & Kaur, 2021). However, a firm's visual representation is more than just a design; it is a representation of the company. A strong visual identity can be very persuasive and help a brand gain a competitive advantage over their competition by establishing a non-price differentiation position (Ingenhoff & Fuhrer, 2010). A brand's visual identity is made up of a variety of visual components that serve to represent and distinguish it. It specifically refers to any observable elements, like a logo, brand colours or compelling brand mantra that aid consumers in recognising a brand. This increases brand identification by combining all of the branding elements into one style.

According to Kaur and Kaur (2010), visual identity elements improve a brand's visibility and recognisability when used consistently. Brand come out with layout by incorporating various elements which gives them a unique style on social media. In the view of Kotler (2003), a brand's position on the market can be perceived by a brand's image in a unique way which lingers in the minds of consumer. This creates a special recognition for these brands. Manteanu (2014), also asserts that a brand can create a differentiation strategy based on the uniqueness in the use of the brand's identity symbol that expresses the brand's personality. A brand's visual identity influences marketing outcomes mediated by perceived sustainability and perceived credibility (Vinitha, 2021) which creates a competitive advantage over their competitors.

To answer this question, data was analysed based on branding characteristics used by brand on social media Aaker and Shansby (1982) assert that, a brand's ability to form impressions relies on the amalgamation of a brand products and its associations. A brand is able to achieve a competitive advantage over competitors on the market depends on its ability to set themselves apart from the others. The present fast-food

industry emphasis more on quality service, comfort and physical evidence (Amue & Asigebu, 2014). Due to aggressive market players, and a very dynamic market environment, brands are actively trying to stand out in order to get a fair market share (Amue & Asigebu, 2014). To achieve this, they develop a strong brand identity. The broader concept of branding includes the use of distinguishing symbols such as logo, trademark or package design (Amue & Asigebu, 2014). The study showed that the brands were able to position themselves and create a competitive advantage through branding. Creating a recognizable identity that sells and creates a strong and lasting impression on their consumers. Creating a brand identity involves combining a number of elements in order to portray a brand in a particular way in a consumer's mind.

4.3 RQ.3 What is the dominant messaging strategy present in these posts?

To answer this question, an analysis was done on the various posts published by the brand taking into consideration their message content. Captions of these posts were also taken into consideration for the advertising messages that were being passed to consumers. Themes derived from the data were; informative, incentive, interactive and entertaining strategies.

Table 7: Cumulative frequency distribution Table of the messaging strategy used by the selected Fast-food brand on Instagram from October 2021- March 2022.

	KFC	BK	MW	DMF	PP	No.	%
Informative	30	58	83	62	51	284	58.1%
Incentive	0	0	0	3	2	5	1.0%
Interactive	10	4	3	4	11	32	6.5%
Entertaining	6	7	23	5	7	48	9.8%
Incentive & informative	24	7	3	13	25	72	14.6%
Entertaining & informative	0	0	1	1	7	9	1.8%

Informative & entertainment	1	0	0	0	3	4	0.8%
Interactive & informative	1	0	0	4	3	8	1.6%
Interactive & entertainment	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.2%
Interactive & incentive	3	1	0	2	12	18	3.6%
Entertaining & incentive	1	1	0	0	8	10	2.0%

Note: This table demonstrates the cumulative messaging strategies used by the selected five brands from October 2021- March, 2022. It displays the message strategy type, total number of times a message strategy was used by each of the five brands made during the study period and their respective percentages.

Table 8 details a summary and compilation of the messaging strategy used by each of the selected fast-food brand from October 2021 to March 2022. From the table it can be seen that, informative strategy was represented 58.1% of the total number of posts made during the study period., incentive being 1.0% with a total of 5 post. Out of the total of 494 post, 32 post made across the 5 selected brand were interactive only representing a total of 6.5%. From the total of 494 post, 72 posts made across the 5 selected brand were both incentive and informative based representing a total of 14.6%. Informative & entertainment post were 4 representing 0.8% of the total post made. Entertaining & informative posts were 9 representing a total of 1.8%. 1.6% of the post made across the five brands were Interactive & informative being a total of 8 posts. 10 entertaining & incentive post were made representing a total of 2.0%. Interactive & incentive post totalled 18 representing 3.6% of the total 494 posts. The least utilised messaging strategy during the study period was posts that consisted of both interactive & entertainment strategies. This is represented by 0.2% being a single post made by Papa's Pizza. Therefore, the dominate messaging strategy used by the 5 selected fast-food brand during the study period; October 2021- March, 2022 was the informative

strategy. Findings of the study also indicated that, advertising appeals play a major role in developing the messaging contents. However, only two advertising appeals were demonstrated in the post published by the five fast-food brands on Instagram. These were the rational and emotional appeals.

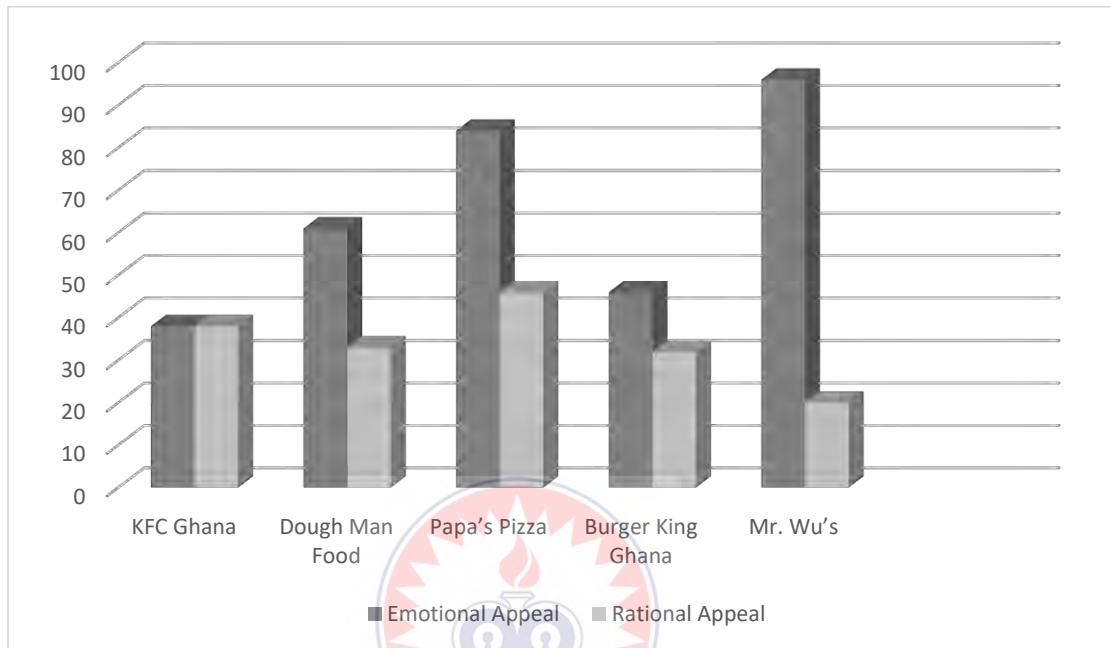


Figure 13: Bar Chart of the appeals used by the selected Fast-food brand on Instagram from October 2021- March 2022

Figure 13, details a summary and compilation of the messaging appeals used by each of the selected fast-food brand from October 2021 to March 2022. From the table it can be seen that, KFC Ghana used an equal amount of both rational and emotional appeals in delivering the message content to their consumers. The four others brand; Dough Man Food, Mr. Wu's, Burger King Ghana and Papa's pizza used more of emotional appeal as a messaging strategy as compared to rational appeal. From the data analysis, it was evident that, rational appeals were used by papa's pizza during a special promo period. These rational appeals were used in forms like meal combos, discount prices 2 for 1 specials and free delivery.

The data contradicts the assertion of the brand representative on the use of more rational appeals posts those emotional appeals. From the table above, it can be seen

that, out of the total 494 post made by the five brands during the period of study (October 2021- March 2022), a total of 325 emotional post were made representing 66% while 169 rational post were made across the 5 brands representing 34%. There the most used/ dominant messaging strategy used by the five selected fast-food brand on Instagram is rational appeal. In coding for the rational appeals, codes like meal combo, discounts, free delivery, two for one were used. To determine post that were emotional in nature keywords such as apologies, wishes, seasonal greetings, call to purchase used.

In addressing research question three on the dominant messaging strategy used by the selected brand on Instagram, the following themes were developed; informative strategy, incentive strategy, interactive or engaging strategy and entertaining strategy.

Rational Appeal

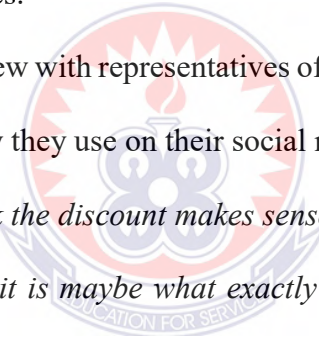
Rational appeal deals with logic rather than emotions. Posts that are rational or logical emphasises the importance and usefulness of a product by emphasising the benefits and price of the products. The goal is to convince the buyer that a particular purchase is fairer by appealing to his senses. These message content inform viewers of the advantages of buying a product. Rationally framed message appeals include factual information related to the product (Dolan et al., 2019). Informative and incentive-based messages have rational appeals rather than emotional as they seem to have remunerative benefits (Dolan et al., 2019).

Emotional Appeal

Instead of appealing to reason or logic, emotional appeal aims to evoke a strong emotional response. To engage the clients on an emotional level, emotional appeal is used. Fear, rage, love, and passion are just a few of the many feelings that an advertisement can arouse. Posts that use emotional appeals frequently do so merely to

make the consumer feel unique and cherished. Even though many customers have the ability to manage their emotions, most of them do so nevertheless. While fear may frequently assist elicit the right response, sometimes connecting with the customer also requires love or passion. Emotional appeals often highlight aspects of brand personality through the use of entertaining content such as remarkable facts, the use of emotion, emoticons, mentions of holidays and humour as well as teasers, slogans and wordplay (Dolan et al., 2019). Dolan et al. (2019), further states that, emotional appeals may be used to encourage social interaction among consumers through "relational content," such as asking them questions, creating conversation topics, and engaging in small chat or banter. These characteristics can be seen in interactive and entertaining based messages.

An extract from the interview with representatives of dough man foods shows the view of what messaging strategy they use on their social media page.



“I think both. I think the discount makes sense for somebody to order but the emotional bit of it is maybe what exactly we put in Word... if it was supposed to be percentages rational would be 60 or 70% and emotional would be 30 or 40%. With the rational, Ghanaians want to see this opportunity... but we do not really get as much as we get for emotional as we get rational appeal”. (D.M.F., 2022)

From the extract, the brand representative was vocal about the use of more rational appeal post as compared to the emotional appeal. In his view, rational appeal turns into actual purchase and consumer engage and react to these posts rather than emotional appeal posts.

In another instance, another representative expressed his views on the benefits of using emotional appeals as a messaging strategy.

“We use emotional appeals on post like Mother’s Day festivities. we use these emotion appeals to attract consumers to us... for them to have memories with use during these occasions and festivities” ... (D.M.F., 2022).

The extract explains how brand use emotional appeal to seem human to their consumers as in assertion with Tafesse and Wein (2017b) and show solidarity with them during observatory days and holidays. From analysing the data, it was seen that emotion appeals were used to communicate to consumers during holidays such as Christmas, easter, and various holiday seasons. This messaging strategy was also used during observatory days/ months. Another finding was that, emotion post usually used captions that made consumers feel like they were the priority of the brand.

From the data, it was show that the selected brand primarily incorporated two types of appeal; emotional appeal and rational appeal in their messaging strategy. To create a competitive advantage over their competitors, brand combine these appeals and the marketing elements (price, product, place and promotion) to create tailor made deals and messages to communicate with their consumers. Characteristics of these advertising messages are usually based on the following keywords; discounts, giveaway, meal combos, branch opening/ location, new product, competition, Delivery options, value for money/ cashback, premium offers, do it yourself offers, free delivery, happy hour, call to purchase/menu, humour, disclaimers, recruitment and consumer appreciation. For consumers to fully grasp their message, brand lace these appeals with various messaging content; informative, engaging, incentive and entertaining messages together with a combination of the four main marketing elements; price, product, place and promotion.

4.3.1 Messaging Strategies

a. Informative strategy

The study's findings showed that, the fast-food brand use informative messaging strategies on Instagram to gain a competitive edge in the market by disseminating useful information about branch openings, ingredient transparency, seasonal specials, new product launches, and sustainability initiatives. The data also indicated that, the brand position themselves as transparent and customer-centric through the use of the informative strategy.

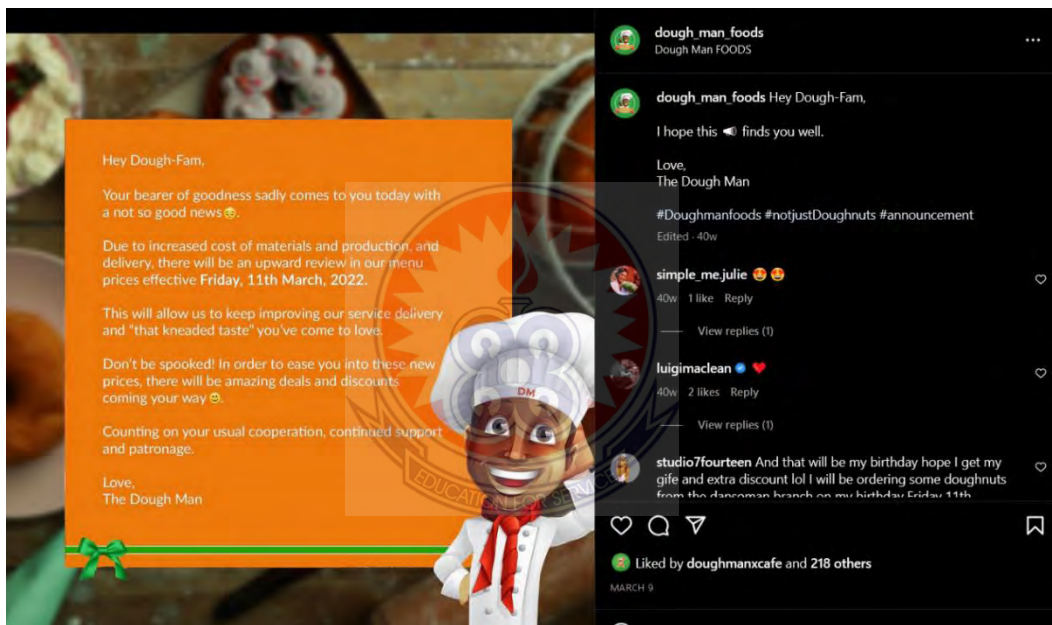


Figure 14: An informative Strategy post by Doughman Foods.

Figure 14 shows an informative post where the brand is announcing a change in prices while apologising for the inconvenience it would cause. They further explain the reason for the necessity in the price increment.

Tafesse and Wien (2017a), postulate that, informational messaging strategies present authentic product and service information in a comprehensible and concise term. Informative contents organise ideas and provide answer to consumers in an easy digestible format. Informative posts are made to announce changes or additions to

products or services and even issue disclaimers and clarify negative press surround the brand. These posts are used to also create awareness on social issues like breast cancer, Covid- 19 safety protocols. Brand use the 4p's to develop, implement and ensure that, the right information is passed to consumers through and appropriate channel.

b. Incentive Strategy

Findings of the study indicated that, the fast-food brand used the incentive messaging strategy as a catalyst to grab their consumers' attention and promote active participation. The brands incentivize consumers to follow their accounts and take part in their promotions by providing exclusive discounts and vouchers.

The study also found that, the fast-food brand' incentive messaging strategies mostly rely on loyalty schemes and rewards. The brands encourage their consumers to stay engaged and make repeat purchases by adopting loyalty programmes. These programmes frequently provide customised savings, gifts, or tiered incentive schemes, cultivating a sense of exclusivity and boosting client loyalty.

Product trials and new launches were also promoted through incentive messaging techniques. The brand utilised Instagram to provide customers with unique first looks at forthcoming menu items or promotions. Brand built excitement and motivated followers to interact with them in order to obtain these unique products by evoking a sense of exclusivity. This technique helped position the brand as innovative and ahead of the competition while also generating instant sales and brand buzz.

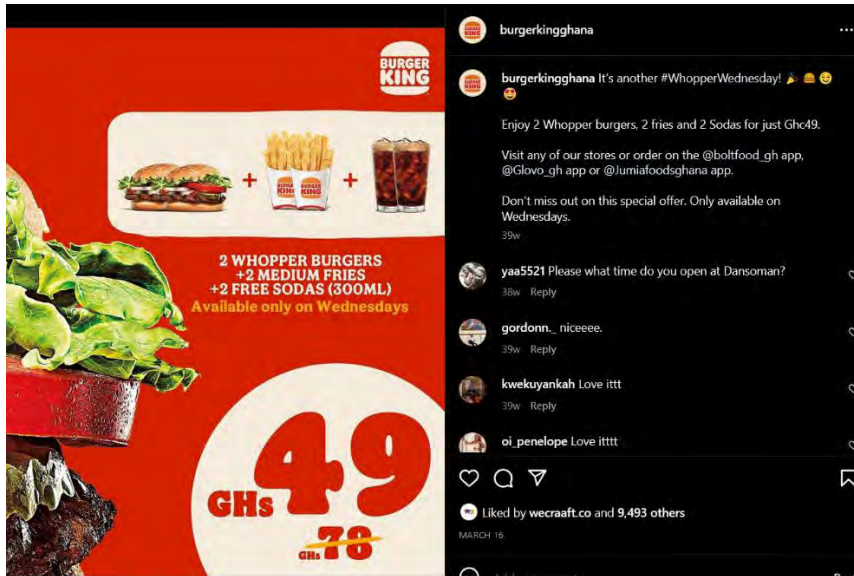


Figure 15: An incentive strategy post by Burger king Ghana.

Figure 15 shows an incentive post where the brand is a 2 for one for a promo package ‘whopper Wednesday’. From the post, it can be seen that, burger king is offering 2 burgers, 2 medium fries and 2 bottles/ glasses of soda for the price of one.

Incentives or rewards are at the core of loyalty programmes as well as strategies for attracting new audiences. Offering incentives to consumers have the ability to create a lasting impression in a consumer’s mind and create a memorable experience about the brand for the consumer. Incentives are a very powerful tool which helps brand to: improve brand awareness drive social media engagement, improve consumer retention, stimulate purchases and build a trustworthy relationship with long-term client (Dolan et al, 2019). The incentive content is content that provides incentives such as discount, loyalty cards, coupons and free-gifts.

c. Interactive Engaging Strategy

The data indicated that, the fast -food brand utilized interactive messaging techniques to actively engage their consumers on Instagram. The strategy enabled the brand nudge consumers to interact and voice their choices via tools like polls, quizzes, and tagging.

This interactive component not only drew attention, but it also encouraged a feeling of connection and involvement with the brand.

Another finding indicated that, Instant feedback and market research were gathered by the brand via the interactive messaging capabilities. Brand were able to learn about their consumers' preferences, tastes, and new product ideas by using polls, questionnaires, and surveys. This informed brand to alter their offers to better match client expectations, make educated decisions, and stay one step ahead of the competition thanks to this real-time input.

The study also found that, interactive messaging strategy facilitated the fast-food brand with a direct communication platform with their consumers. Brand were able to instantly address customer questions, complaints, and concerns through comments and direct messaging. This open channel of communication promotes trust and shows a focus on the needs of the customer. Brand ability to give instant feedback on customer requirements, quickly address problems, and offer a customised experience by actively participating in dialogues, gives them a competitive advantage.



Figure 16: An interactive strategy post by Papa's Pizza.

Figure 16 shows an interactive post where the brand gives their consumers a call to action. The post is an interactive game which ask consumers to unscramble a word which is an item on their menu. The Margherita Pizza.

De Vreis et al., (2012), defines interactivity as the degree to which multiple parties can communicate among each other of a single communication medium. A brand's development and expansion are much more likely to be aided by compelling content. Brand keep their audience interested and convert them into paying customers or converted leads, through content that speak to them. Engagement and conversation on social media are vital in order to build and maintain a strong brand presence. Interactive/engaging content also has the ability to keep consumers interested in a brand and drive traffic to their page.

Interactive messages enable brand to connect with their consumers on a personal level (Tafesse & Wien, 2017a). These content type encourages consumers to partake in certain actions which has the potential to build strong and lasting relationships between the brand and their consumers. They include content that is contest such as guessing names of products, ingredients and new branches. Engaging content also provides the platform for consumers to give their feedback on a brand product or service. Interactive content includes puzzles, polls and surveys

d. Entertaining Strategy

The study found that, the brand understanding of the importance of using captivating images in the communication tactics; the brand utilized visually appealing content that stand out in consumers' feeds by employing entertaining messaging techniques. Brand were able to capture the attention of their consumers and arouse desires for their food offerings with vibrant and alluring visuals.

Another finding was that, Entertaining messaging strategies often involved adds humour and wit into the messaging content. By leveraging puns, clever captions, or playful language, brands were able to capture the attention and resonate with their consumers. Humour evokes positive emotions, which made the brand more relatable and memorable.

Through the use of the entertaining strategy, the fast-food brands were able to create unique campaigns and deliver memorable experiences to their consumers. The brand also used the entertaining messaging strategy to develop a distinctive brand persona and tell captivating stories or narratives that resonated with their target audience. This was done through presenting a unique personality and sharing relatable stories, brand which forged emotional connections.



Figure 17: An entertaining strategy post by Papa’s Pizza.

Figure 17 shows an entertaining post where the uses a meme and a caption to send out a funny message to consumers.

The final type of content is entertaining content, whose aim is to create humour and put smiles on the faces of consumers. Entertainment content evokes positives emotions

which impact the attitude of consumers towards a brand such as build long term relationships (Sheth & Kim, 2017). The assertion by Sheth and Kim, (2017), implies that, entertainment helps brand have a more human side, which customers always find refreshing. The entertaining value of social media leads consumers to contribute, create and consume brand related content as they are fun, lash and exciting (de Vries et al., 2012). These content type helps brand connect with the internet community, which is great for brand to be able to relate to the everyday life of their consumers. Consumers are able readily relate to these entertaining contents when it is pertinent to problems that regular people face or current events (Dolan et al., 2019). By taking advantage of these opportunities, a brand is able demonstrate to their consumers that there are not just sending out automated posts but are truly sending them these post at real time. The use of entertaining content also has the potential in aiding a position and attract new customers; it has the power to drastically alter how consumers perceive your company. They include funny videos, memes and jokes.

During the analysis of the data, it was found that, some post had more than a single messaging strategy used. In an interaction with the brand representative of Doughman foods, he gave an insight to the type of messaging content they use and the incorporation of appeals to these contents.

“I think it’s a perfect mix of evocative and entertaining. I mean most of the things we post as opposed to evoke somebody or get somebody... to incite you to buy that’s like I would say it’s a 70%.... informational only happens when we are increasing prices or when we’re doing like a promo, I mean promo is both information now an incentive” ... (D.M.F., 2022)

The statement above suggested that, the brand posts used by Doughman foods interlaces the appeals with the messaging strategies in order to influence a consumer’s decision

to make purchase. The statement further goes on to suggest that, brand posts are usually a combination of two messaging strategies. Thus; a post could be both informative and incentive based or entertaining and interactive based.

The ability of a brand's character to be able to align with their consumer's lies in the messaging strategy which is a guiding principle that influences the content domain of a branded content (Tafesse & Wien, 2017b). The secret to successfully promoting your business is having a messaging strategy. Every piece of text related to your business is affected by how you position yourself, how you communicate, and how you do these things. Brand use subtle interactive message content to influence the decision process of the target consumers. (Bragg et al., 2019). Brand employ affective message strategies which are designed to elicit emotions and correlate them with the organisation, service, or product. Tafesse and Wien (2017b), make reference to Laskey et al. (1989) and Taylor (1990) who proposed typologies based on advertising dichotomies; rational and emotional appeals. Tafesse and Wien (2017b), assert that, these typologies provide a strong foundation to analyse and categorize brand post. Improve the product's likeability via all means as well as create memory of the appeal. Bragg et al., (2017) is of the view that, the persuasive potential of commercial message is on the rise due to the large number of people who use social media and the presence of inter-activeness in post.

4.4 Summary

This chapter presented a detailed and rich analysis of the findings from the data collected. The study sought to examine the differentiation and position strategies of five selected fast-food brand on Instagram in Ghana. The study found that, brand dominantly used infographic content to send the marketing message across to their consumers. Also, a well branded image on social media gives a competitive advantage

over competitors on the market and on social media. The study revealed that despite the difference in branding approach, brand used similar elements in creating their unique identity on social media. This shows confirms that positioning on social media plays an integral part in achieving a competitive advantage.

The study revealed that, messaging strategies used by brand were interlaced with marketing appeals to evoke and incite consumers. They strategies made use of the elements of the marketing mix (4P strategic theory).



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This study focuses on examining of positioning and differentiation strategies used by fast-food brand through their social media posts in Ghana. The research came out with various findings and analysis with respect to the dominate messaging strategy, use of visual identity and communication elements and the major type of media format used to achieve competitive advantage in today's competitive digital market share. This chapter synopsise the salient issues arising from the study, outlines appropriate conclusions and makes suitable recommendations on the subject of positioning and differentiation of brand on social media. This section of the research also indicates possible area of suggestion for further research.

5.1 Summary of Main Findings

The first objective of this study sought to investigate the dominant nature of post used by the selected fast-food brand on Instagram; the second objective was in two parts. The first focused on how brand are able to achieve a competitive advantage in the market share through the social media post and content while the second part addressed the use of visual identity elements in their post to create a positioning cue to their consumers on Instagram. The third research question of the study addressed the messaging strategy used by these selected brands in their post on Instagram. This objective sought to investigate the dominant messaging strategy used across the five selected fast-food brand.

The study revealed that, all five brands KFC Ghana, Burger King Ghana, Dough Ma Food, Papa's Pizza and Mr. Wu's all utilized the two media formats that the Instagram application offered thus; Images and audio- visuals. Themes derived for

this question were *product display, product/ feature description, behind-the-scenes, user generated oriented content and info/ motion graphics*. From these media formats the findings of the study showed that, Info/ Motion graphics were the dominant nature used across all five-brand representing a total of 40.9% of the total number of posts published during the period of the study. In terms of numbers for the individual media format, motion graphics was 10.7% and infographics was 30.2%. the main characteristics of this nature of post were bold price display and product display.

Findings of the study also showed that graphical post (info and motion) were most used to communicate promotional packages. This finding is in line with the 4P strategic theory which makes sense of the use of marketing elements. The theory explains how marketers incorporate and combine various marketing elements when sending out advertising messages to lure consumers to purchase their products and services. Throughout the data collection period, it was noticed that, graphical posts were categorized by bold colours, text and pictorial elements.

The first part of the second objective sought to investigate similarities and differences in the use of positioning strategies to create a competitive advantage. The research found out that effective branding strategies played a major role in a brand's ability to position and differentiate themselves from their competitors on social media. Also, the recurring brand themes that were present in these posts published across all brand were target market/ segmentation, strategic alliances, product customization and sales promotion. The data showed that although these brands varied in their menu offerings, all brand actively employed all four of these strategies. This research question is in line with the theory of positioning. The assertions of this theory indicates that, for brand to be able to achieve a competitive advantage on the market share, they must be able to identify who their target consumers are and find suitable ways to be

able to reach them. From the data gathered, it was indicated that, brand were able to reach new target groups through the opening of new branches which were announced to both potential and regular consumers through social media post.

Another finding was that, brand offered value for money opportunities to incite their consumers to purchase from them rather than their competitors. In respect to product customization, brand developed either new product on their menus or combine different items on their menu to be able to appeal to a new consumer base. Strong alliance which was the fourth strategy found gave brand the opportunity to liaise with other brand who are able to offered additional services in order to satisfy the consumers. A common strategic alliance that was seen across the brand was the collaboration between these fast-food brand and delivery or logistic companies. i.e., bolt food, Jumia food and glovo.

The second part of research question two addressed the use of visual identity elements to creating position cues for these brand on Instagram. The findings showed that as a part of their branding, brand develop different visual identity element which are used in the posts to help the consumer to be able to tell their post apart from all their competitors. From the data, there was a realization that, not all brand used every visual identity element that were present in the posts. Themes derived for this were, logos, typography, taglines, brand colours and brand mascots/characters. Findings of the study showed that the most frequently used visual identity element used across all five brands was logos. Logos appeared in both images and audio-visuals. For images they were located usually located at either the top or bottom of the post.

The study found that papa's pizza was the brand that had the most consistent use of logo with a specified position on their post which made it easier for their consumers to notice them. For audio- visuals, the logos appeared before the advertising

message or it is displayed in the final frame of the video. Finding of the study also showed that typography played a major role as a visual identity element. The brand that was consistent in the use of their typography was burger King Ghana. Brand colours were the second most consistent visual identity element used across all brand.

The findings showed that, all brand had their dedicated colours which serve a differentiation strategy for them. These brand colours were mostly used in image format post the study also revealed that papa's pizza had not set typography, there was evidence of inconsistency in the use of different type style through the study period. Brand characters were also another visual identity element that was used by brand from the findings of the study, papa's pizza was the only brand without a brand character. Whereas KFC Ghana and Burger King Ghana had these characters, they used them on twice and once respectively. Doughman used its brand character "the Dough Man" when delivering announcement and sensitive issues like price changes to seem human as possible to consumers. Mr. Wu on the other hand recorded the greatest number of times their brand character was used. The final visual identity element used was taglines, although four brand had a tagline, only three brand used their tagline in their post. Thus; Doughman foods, Papa's pizza and KFC Ghana. Just like the logos, papa's pizza was the most consistent in the use of their taglines. KFC Ghana on the other hand used it in audio-visual posts rather than image post whereas Doughman used them in the caption and some of their audio-visual post.

The third research question sought to investigate the dominant messaging strategy used by the five selected fast-food brand on social media. Findings of the study show that the message strategy used were based on the content of the post, to find these for themes were generated; informative, entertaining, incentive and engaging. The final category for messaging strategies were rational and emotional

appeal. For this research question data from the interview and social media contradicted each other. While the respondents were adamant that their brand used more of rational post appeals rather than emotional appeals, the data from their social media pages proved otherwise. The finding of the study showed that during the period of the study brand appealed to the senses of consumers rather than their reasoning or logic. The finding also showed that brand mostly used rational appeals during a specified promotional season. This finding can be attributed mostly to Papa's Pizza for the "faala" promo period and Doughman food who usually did this at the end of the month. Both forms of these appeals utilised the 4P's of marketing and therefore can be attributed to the 4P strategic theory.

5.2 Conclusion

The main goal of the study was to examine positioning and differentiation strategies used by five selected fast-food brands on Instagram in Ghana. The following conclusions were drawn based on the outcome of the study.

Firstly, the study concluded that, the selected fast-food brand take advantage of marketing functionalities that the Instagram app has to offer. Branding is the biggest category that brand fall on to differentiate and position themselves on the market to create a competitive advantage.

Furthermore, the study concludes that, brand use more infographic and motion graphic content to reach out and communicate with their consumers. As the types of post gives them the platforms to communicate clearly their product, price, place(location) and promotional offers in a catchy and easy way. This affirms and confirms the assertion of the 4P strategic theory the marketing mix offers a set of controllable variables which gives marketers the optimum combination of the marketing elements to sway consumers responses (Singh, 2012).

The study further concludes that, brand appeal to emotions of their consumer to give them a personality of one that care and relates to the consumers day to day activities. They are able to do this through the use of emotional cues in their post that stimulate the sense of their consumer to prioritize them over the other brands. Lastly, the study concludes that brands are able to differentiate themselves from their competitors through the use of a combination of visual identity elements this in in line with Kotler (1997), assertion that, brand use a combination of names, logos, symbols and drawings to aid in distinguishing a competitor from another.

5.3 Limitation of the study

Firstly, literature on the westernised context of the fast-food industry in Ghana and even within the African content seem scarce. Most of the literature reviewed on the fast-food industry in general concentrated on the western context. This is due to the fact that, generally, studies that have been conducted are based on the local concept of fast-food; “fast-food joints” in the Ghanaian and African context. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the minimal literature of the western concept of the fast-food industry in the Ghanaian and African context.

Again, the attempt to interview a representative for each brand become a limitation when two brand suddenly pulled out of the study leaving only three available brands to fully participate in the study. In order to meet deadlines, there were no other alternative brand that could replace the two brands. The researcher therefore had to make do with the three interviews along with the data collected from their Instagram pages. Nonetheless, the data collected from their Instagram pages over the 6-month (October 2021- March 2022) period was adequate to bring useful information to the study.

5.4 Suggestion for future studies

Future research on this topic should expand on the sample and include consumers view on the use of the strategies of fast-food brand on social media. Consumers are the most significant factors for the success of all businesses therefore, their contributions will be vital in enriching future studies. It is essential to include consumers who purchase from these brands and actively use social media to keep updated with their activities. This would motivate and encourage future researchers to fully examine the criteria brand take into consideration when positioning themselves in a competitive market without any exemptions.

5.5 Recommendation

The following recommendations are made based on the research questions and objectives, findings, discussions and conclusion of the research on the positioning and differentiation strategies of fast-food brand on Instagram.

1. The study recommends that, brand should incorporate other innovative ways (creating immersive experiences that go beyond the traditional dining experience such as food festivals, pop-up events or interactive installations that allow customers to engage with the brand in a unique and memorable way) to captivating their consumers rather than relying on a lot of promotion packages which can affect how consumers perceive the brand. If a brand is over reliant on these promo packages, consumers would rather wait for those opportunities rather than make regular purchases.
2. The study recommends extensive market research for brand on social media. This would help inform them the content type and messaging that the everyday consumer on Instagram looks forward to.

3. Brand should consider the use of more user generated content on their page as it helps consumers relate to these brands and seem more human. Brand should also consider using less graphical posts. Since they appear most often, they make a brand page look boring with on style of content type. A fair mixture of the various types of post would help boost the visibility of the brand.



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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

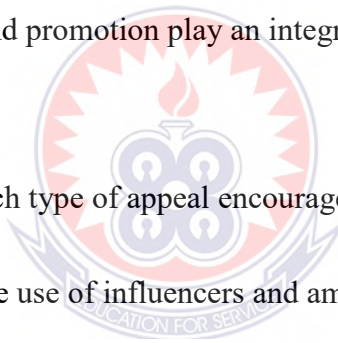
TOPIC: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF POSITIONING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY FIVE SELECTED FAST -FOOD BRAND IN GHANA ON INSTAGRAM TO ACHIEVE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

As a part of my Master's degree programme at UEW, it is required this interview session help the researcher gather information on the research being undertaken on the above topic. You are assured that; this research is purely academic and any information gathered would be treated with strict confidentiality.

Briefly give a historical background of the brand

1. Who are your target group?
2. In your view, what motivates your consumers to remain loyal to your brand?
3. How has your brand been able to withstand the market competition since its introduction to the market?
4. How is the brand faring now in the Ghanaian market in terms of production and distribution?
5. How does the brand differentiate itself from similar brand on the market?
6. How do you secure a competitive advantage over your competitors on the market?
7. How do you position your brand on social media and what influences your selection strategies?
8. To what extent does your brand ensure uniqueness from its competitors?
9. To what extent does your Instagram posts play in creating brand awareness

10. What type of posts do you publish on your Instagram page? (*Interactive, entertaining, evocative, informative*)?
11. What informs the decision to use the brand's indicators on your post? How do you think it facilitates brand recall in a consumer's mind?
12. What role does the price and promotion play in the recall of your Instagram post?
13. How would you describe consumers attitudes towards the various types of post published on Instagram?
14. How does your post elicit rational or emotional appeals or both?
15. How does price and promotion play an integral role in appealing to consumers?
16. In your view, which type of appeal encourages actual purchase?
17. Do you employ the use of influencers and ambassadors?
18. What role do they play in how your Instagram post appeal to consumers?
19. Any last words?



APPENDIX B: CODING PROTOCOL

Instructions

Please find below explanation for expressions and symbols used for the different items on the coding sheet. Please, read each item carefully. Five coding sheets were produced for the five selected fast-food brand.

Section 1- Media Formats

Image- record the sum of images posted by the brand

Video- record the sum if video posted by the brand

Record the sum of post with the following characteristics;

- gifs/memes/quotes
- high graphic images
- infographics
- screenshots
- behind-the-scenes
- feature / product description
- customer review
- slideshow
- live videos
- how to/ tutorials
- informational video
- motion graphics
- product display



Section 2- Appeals and Messaging

Record the sum of post with the following characteristics;

- Discounts
- Giveaway
- Meal Combos
- Branch Opening/ Location
- New Product
- Competition
- Delivery
- Value For Money/ Cashback
- Premium Offers
- Do It Yourself
- Free Delivery
- Happy Hour
- Call To Purchase/Menu
- Humour
- Recruitments Information & Disclaimers
- Appreciation
- Price
- Quality
- Convenience
- Product Imagery
- Celebrities
- Philanthropy / Charity



- Partnerships

Section 3 Positioning Cues

Record the sum of post with the following characteristics;

- Slogans
- Brand Colours
- Brand Name
- Logo
- Brand Mascot

