

IMPACT OF FACEBOOK ADVERTISEMENT ON THE UNDERGRADUTE ADMISSION OF PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA (A STUDY OF CARITAS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS)

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Abstract

This study was aimed at ascertaining whether undergraduates private universities access advertisements on Facebook and whether such advertisements impacted on their choice of getting admission. The survey method was adopted while four research questions guided this study. Questionnaire and personal interview were the instruments for data collection while stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 380 respondents from the population using the percentage sampling method. For clarity purposes, data obtained was analysed using simple percentages and frequencies. Results of the analysis indicated that majority of the respondents access advertisements on Facebook and saw them as being targeted at them. The findings also revealed that there was no significant margin between those who patronize the university advertised on Facebook and those who do not, with 87% patronizing and 13% not patronizing. The study recommended that more concerted efforts should be paid on the part of advert agencies and advertisers to make the advertisements on Facebook more attractive and catchy as well as put all details needed to facilitate more patronage of the advertised product, such as University and admission.

Keywords: *Impact, Facebook, Advertising, Undergraduate, Admission, Private universities, Caritas.*

Introduction

Akpan, et al., (2013) states that Facebook was formerly a real time online platform for college students but is now being used by everybody. It belongs to a new category of websites that focus on social networking. It allows users to express themselves, interact with friends, share personal information with friends as well as publish their own views on issues on the Internet. They are also of the opinion that facebook remains the most popular interactive Internet platform where people meet, discuss issues and share ideas, hence the tag: "social media". It is the most popular social networking site in several English speaking Countries. Advertisers now uses facebook as a an important channel or platform to advertise their goods and services, for robust sale and awareness of their product. Advertisement is imperative in Modern business world, the strategy to keep the company, industry, government, and so on profitable and to make maximum customers. Advertisement plays an important role in the growth of any profit oriented venture. (Fahy and Jobber, 2002). It has been argued that for the fast moving consumer goods advertisement plays an important role; it helps to develop the brand and positive consumer perception.

Ayozie, A. (2006, 2013) a past president of AAPN (Association of Advertising Practitioners of Nigeria) and Past-Chairman of the APCON Council, sees advertising as "messages published in newspapers, billboards, radio, television, cinema, for products and services". Advertisements can be said to be a guaranteed plan of getting the attention of the masses an. This can be achieve by producing an interesting and an engaging advert, putting inn money, efforts, good advert message to get to your expected audience or user of your goods or services, Impact or benefits of an advertisement of any product may be immediate. You can notice this by increase in your product production, boosting of product, request for supply and so many other ways.

Onuora, J., (2018) in his book: Advertising and society; socio-economic issues in advertising & public relations defines advertising as the process of creating advertisements and placing them in the appropriate media where the target audience can be exposed to them and hopefully, be persuaded to respond according to the intentions of expectation of the advertiser. He also said that advertising is an aspect of marketing whose function is create awareness, associations, desirable attitudes and perception about the advertised product and ultimately persuade the target audience to patronize them.

According to Adebayo (2017), The earliest form of advertising in Nigeria could be said to be town crying. Other methods include signs and drawings on caves and mountains. Nigeria's advertising business has witnessed tremendous growth especially in recent times. Though the business is witnessing colossal growth, the industry, like most business sectors of the economy, had its humble beginning rooted in colonial history, advertising development could be traced to about 1928 with the birth of West African Publicity Limited. An off shoot of UAC, the company was set up to cater for the marketing activities of the colonial masters in both Nigeria and West Africa. This company was later to transform to a fully fledged advertising firm in 1929 known as LINTAS – Lever International Advertising Services with two other subsidiaries newly Afromedia, the outdoor medium and Pearl/Dean, the cinema arm. With the setting up of the companies then headed by expatriates. By the later 1970's however, two ambitious agencies, Rosabel Advertising and Insight Communication, sprang up.

Adabayo (2017) also said that, In the early days of advertising practice in Nigeria, Advertising was uncoordinated and unregulated. Many advertisers worked very hard to put in place codes of conduct but the law did not back them up. They were merely voluntary and ineffective since there were no laws to back them. Some of these efforts included the establishment of Association of Advertising Practitioners of Nigeria, AAPN and Advertising Council of Nigerian, ACON in 1977. These self-regulatory and voluntary associations could not achieve because the instruments of law did not empower them to regulate advertising at the time. Therefore advertising remained unorganized. The underdeveloped nature is clearly demonstrated because the majority of consumer products and services advertised in Nigeria were of foreign origin and mostly non-essential. The products advertised often targeted the elites because the Nigerian masses could not afford them. Financial advertisements were the most dominant products and services of Nigerian origin because they promoted more products and services that the average Nigerian could not afford.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to ascertain in broad terms the impact of facebook on Caritas University undergraduate admission. Specifically, this study focused on the following objectives;

- i .To investigate whether private universities access facebook advertisement for their admission purposes.
- ii. To examine the awareness of undergraduate students to facebook advertisement admission.
- iii. To examine the influence of facebook advertisement on Caritas undergraduate choice of their school.

Research Questions

The following questions were formulated to guide this study.

- i Do the private universities undergraduate access facebook advertisement for their admission purposes?
- ii. Are the Caritas University undergraduate students aware of Facebook advertisement?
- iii. Does Facebook advertisement influence the undergraduate students of Caritas in choice of their school?

Literature Review

This research work sourced it's literature from Internet, Mass-communication books, lecture notes, psychology books, memo graphs philosophy and sociology books. The evolution of advertising techniques in the digital age typically involves a shift from traditional methods to digital platforms, including the use of data analytics, targeted advertising, influencer marketing, and interactive content. It also encompasses challenges such as privacy concerns and ethical considerations related to consumer trust. Before the digital age, advertising primarily relied on traditional media such as print, radio, and television. Print advertising dates back to the 17th

century, with the first newspaper ads appearing in the late 1600s. Radio advertising gained prominence in the early 20th century, with the first paid radio commercial airing in 1922.

Television advertising began in the 1940s and became a dominant force in the advertising industry. Throughout the 20th century, these traditional media forms shaped advertising strategies and content, laying the foundation for modern advertising practices. In the historical context of advertising before the digital age, it is important to understand the evolution of advertising through traditional media channels. Here is a brief overview of advertising in print, radio, and television. Advertising is very important for the sale of goods and services. According to McCoy et-al (2014) stipulates that advertising as one of the ways we get into goods. Advertising help to these old and new cultural meaning and invest them in consumer goods where they become accessible to the consumer that is to say that advertising puts at the disposal of modern culture an area of play, experimentation and innovation with which to fashion new cultural meaning and recognize and reassign ones . Okoro (2013, p278) "the 21" century is bound to witness a good innovation and development in virtually every face of human endeavor, especially as it relates to how things are done" thus he noted, can be seen in the rapid growth of the internet and the credible flow of information such that the business of advertising has been transformed from what it is used to be to what is referred as to online advertising. Advertising is like a mirror or a kind of dictionary constantly keeping us to the new trends of consumer signified and signifiers. In this capacity, advertising makes an important contribution to the context of consumption.

Transition to Digital

The transition from traditional to digital platforms in advertising marked a significant shift in the industry landscape. As digital technologies emerged and gained prominence, advertisers began to recognize the unique opportunities and advantages offered by digital platforms. This transition involved the early adoption of websites and email marketing, as well as a gradual shift in advertising budgets from traditional media to digital channels. One of the earliest manifestations of digital advertising was the creation of websites. In the mid-1990s, businesses started to establish their online presence by developing websites to showcase their products or services. These websites served as digital storefronts, allowing companies to reach a global audience and provide information about their offerings.

E-Advertising

The introduction of the internet could be classified as one of the paramount technological advances in the world's history because of its great impact on the lives of almost every individual in the world. Its versatility in usage has made it one of the most accessed medium for information, entertainment and education. Okoro (2006) captured this tremendous innovation that says: Today, our world has become a world of fax machines, mobile phones, computers, satellite and video-text, telex and cable... thus giving rise to life at e-frequency namely: e-learning, e-business, e-trading, e-mail, e-library, e-fund transfer, e-banking, e-conferencing, e-enterprise, e-research. The central objective of any advertisement effort remain the same to get consumer attention and arouse their interest in the advertised product which will compel patronage Ayanwale, Alimi, and Anyawale (2005) were of the view that "advertising is a subset of promotion mix in the 4ps of marketing mix, that is, product price, place and promotion. As a promotion strategy, advertising serve as a major tool in creating product awareness and condition the mind of potential users to take eventual purchase decision. Facebook Ads is the advertising platform of the social network Facebook that aims to promote products and services through publications or ads of text, image or video. It is a marketing channel widely used by companies due to its large audience (about 2,200 million people) and its great possibilities of segmentation. <http://www.arimetric.com/en/digital/glossary/facebook.ad>

Facebook is one of the online media which many people use now to advertise their product. It has boosted the population of Caritas university undergraduate student because it is targeted on the youth. Facebook was being known as a real time online platform for youths but is now being used by everybody. It belongs to a new social networking social networking website group. it is open for users to express themselves, interact with friends, share personal information with friends as well as publish their own views on issues on the Internet.

Facebook

Facebook was launched in 2004 created by Mark Zuckerberg to connect with other Harvard students, facebook's popularity exploded. This gave right to more than one million users at the end of 2004. facebook has become one of the most used social media in world. It can boast of more than 3 billion users worldwide. It mostly use by advertisers of goods and services. This platform share profile information, send messages and post status updates on their walls. Data reporter ranked facebook as the most active network platform that it has more than 3 billion active users. Face book can be said to be one of the most popular digital social networking sites which provides users with a platform to create personal profile pages add friends and send messages hence Caritas university Amorji-Nike, Enugu, chooses it for undergraduate advertisement platform . Since the company was founded in February 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, it has become the top ranked social networking site. (Kazeniak, 2009; Wikipedia 2010). International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 5, No.7 July 2015 137. The internet has become major source of information consumption and to some extent, has replaced traditional media like the radio, television and the newspaper. The main advantages of the internet include its mass availability and its almost instant access to current information.

Online advertising, simply put, is advertising on the internet. Online advertising encompasses display adverts found on websites, adverts on search engines results pages, advertisement placed in e-mail, and other ways in which advertisers use the internet. Of course this is not just limited to computers, digital advertising can be found anywhere you access the web, for example, through the use of mobile devices. The internet, has become one of the easiest means to access information, entertainment and even education as users [which as at 2016 included more than 2.8 billion people] are increasingly spending more time online. The hours spent on the internet are starting to eclipse hours spent on other forms of media Beavillian and Tiger, (2013 p. 127), According to African internet and population statistics as cited by Asoto, (2010), internet penetration in Nigeria is now 28.9% at estimated 43,982,200m users. Facebook is not left out in the area this internet growth. As of December 2022, there were around 28 million Facebook users in Nigeria, accounting for 12.7 percent of the population.

Overall, 34.1 percent of users were aged between 25 and 34 years, making this age group the largest user base in the country, followed by those aged 18 to 24 years. of the platform for marketing purposes". [www.statista.com>internet>social media users content January, 2023](https://www.statista.com/chart/100000/100000-social-media-users-content-January-2023). Facebook allows users to post photos, videos, customize their profile content and other features. In line with the above statement, Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2007) using survey research design in their study on "The benefits of Facebook friends: Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites" explain that participants may use the site to interact with people they already know offline or to meet new people, adding that Facebook enables its users to present themselves in an online profile, accumulate friends who can post comments on each other's pages, and view each other's profile. They also observe that Facebook usage interacts with measures of psychological well being, suggesting that it might provide greater benefits for users experiencing low self esteem and low life satisfaction.

Facebook as Platform for Admission Advertisement

There is also the possibility of measuring the effectiveness of brand exposure on the Facebook platform. According to Olumide (2010), cited in Solaja and Odiaka (2010, p. 33) "One of the key advantages to Facebook and other similar platform is measurability. Companies are able to actually measure the performances of their communication on a near moment by moment basis. Caritas University is also in support of the above scholars view. Hence It allows face book advertisement allows their customers, and target their respective audiences more effectively, while incurring less advertising waste, thereby managing their resources more efficiently. "Moreover, Facebook continues to add new features and developments on a consistent basis. Companies can utilize features to their audiences in different ways. As a result of these features and developments, Gangadharbatla (2008) in his study submits that social networking sites are changing the way advertisers reach consumers, and that these changes are transforming online advertising altogether. He also observes that advertisements on Facebook are extremely relevant to users because the advertisements are so

highly targeted. From the foregoing discourse, it can be concluded that Facebook is a great platform for advertisers to make their products known across different social groups and backgrounds for maximization of profit and popularity.

Empirical Review

Akpan, et al., (2013) in their study investigated the influence of Facebook advertisement on young people's buying behavior. Their study seeks to ascertain whether the youths, especially the undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria, access the advertisements posted on Facebook. In doing this, the focused on the undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria, since the Facebook is a veritable platform for advertising youth oriented products given its popularity among young people. Their study was aimed at ascertaining whether these young people access advertisements on Facebook and see them as being targeted at the youths as well as to find out whether the advertisements influence them to patronize the product. They used survey method and were guided by four research questions for their study. Questionnaire and personal interview were the instruments for data collection. Looking at their work with its relationship with my work, both of us used youth/students to carry out our work. Their work is mainly on buying behavior of student University of Nigeria through the facebook advertisement, while my work is basically to know the impact facebook advert has played on the undergraduate student admission of a Caritas University.

Ajagbawa (2010) in view of Jessica topic "Influence of Facebook advertising on the undergraduate of University of Benin". The study looked at the pyridine shift and growth in use of social media and facebook particularly for personal and business communication. though past studies have proven the power of social imedia advertising in shaping purchase decision and consumer behavior without addressing the overall influence on users. The goal was to ascertain the effect of Facebook advertisement messages of Uniben undergraduates. Her work centered mainly to reveal the type of products advertised to Uniben undergraduates on Facebook, determine the level of exposure of Uniben undergraduate to facebook advertising messages, to ascertain and explain the rationale behind choosing Facebook as the medium of for reaching Uniben undergraduates. Uses and Gratification Theory and Social Presence Theory: her research was the two theories she used and her design was Survey research. The researcher concluded that Facebook advertising has a significant impact on both students and business organizations that use it for communication and marketing purposes. Based on the findings, the researcher made some recommendations, one of tne conclusions is that companies should employ the services of a trained business marketer to handle its facebook advertising campaign to yield desired results. The above can be to be related to the work they are looking at influence and impact of facebook on advertising goods and services. though the two study used same theories and research design but this work is looking at how Undergraduates students of Caritas university Enugu got admission into the University through facebook advertisement.

Theoretical Framework

This study is best explained within the framework of the uses and gratification theory because the theory provides insight into why Facebook is so widely used. The theory was propounded in 1974 by the trio of Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch. It was developed to explain why audiences do not passively wait for the mass media messages to arrive, but actively and deliberately seek out forms of content that provide them with information that they need, like and use. Analyzing uses and gratifications theory, Defleur and Dennis (1994), submit that it presupposes that members of the public will actively select and use specific forms of media contents to fulfill their needs and provide gratifications of their interests and motives. Sheldon (2008, p. 40) states that "As an audience based theory, uses and gratification theory hypothesizes that different consumers use the same media messages for different purposes, depending on their individual needs and goals" Similarly, Folarin (1998) observes that the theory perceives the recipient of media messages as actively influencing the effect process, since they selectively choose, attend to, perceive and retain the media messages on the basis of their needs and belief. The essence of the uses and gratifications theory therefore, is to consider media behavior in terms of how humans create and satisfy needs. The theory postulates that gratifications can be derived not only from media content, but as well as from the very act of exposure to a given medium, as well as from the

context in which it is consumed. Thus, despite the criticisms against the uses and gratifications theory, it remains the dominant model for answering the all important question: What do people do with the media? According to Katz et al as cited in Roberts (2010), the uses and gratifications theory is based on the assumptions that (1) the audience is active, (2) the media choice lies with the audience member.

Research Methodology

This study used survey research method. Okoro, (2011) opined that the survey method is best employed when the option, views and feelings of the population are desired. From the foregoing, it is evident that the survey research method focuses on people, their assessment, opinions, attitudes, motivations and behavior. Survey is conducted to collect and analyze data about the social, economic, psychological and other data about a given population.

Population of study

The population of the study consists of male and female undergraduate student of Caritas University Enugu State. According to exams and record which is a unit in Registrar department of the University 2022, the total population of the students is 2,800 .

Sample size: According to Obasi (2013) sample size can be defined as a small group of element or object drawn through a definite procedure that form the Specified population sampling hence we cannot study the entire population. Sample size refer to the number of participants or observations included in a study. This number is usually represented by n.

Sample Technique: The researcher used percentage sampling technique to collect data from the respondents. Percentage sampling is a process of selecting a sufficient number of elements from the population with properties or characteristics that make it possible to generalize the result to the entire population. It will be too cumbersome if the researcher tries to study the entire population. Percentage sample technique was used to calculate the sample size for this study Thus the statistical formula applied to determine a sample from a definite population as formulated by Taro Yamani as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = desired sample population
 N = the entire population
 E = Level of significant
 1 = unit (constant)

The researcher used the above formula in order to get a befitting or appropriate sample size of 400 to ensure that the population of the study is represented.

Discussions of Findings

With respect to the set objectives of this study and the research questions raised and answered in chapter one, this research work, was carried out to basically to assess the influence of face book advertising on Caritas University Admission.

A total of 400 male and female was selected across the university, but unfortunately, only 380 respondents properly filled and returned their questionnaires to the researcher. Demographic and psychographic were two division of the questioner. Findings relating to demographic variables of the respondents show the majority of the respondents were males, between the age of 19 and 21 youth (students). The discussion of the study is done based on the research questions as shown below:

Research Question 1: What is the Awareness of the under graduate Facebook adverting in Critas University admission ?

Question 5, 6 and 7-9 of the questionnaire were used to answer this question. Findings herein suggests that the respondents are aware of Facebook advertisement, as a majority of them often time see Caritas University

admission advertisement. The analysis shows that facebook advertisements have made youth/student to be aware of Caritas University admission and programs. This finding is supported by the works of Tosanswumi (2014 p. 68) that the media educate, inform and entertain. Beyond these functions, they also persuade and catalyze social mobilization.

Research Question 6: How often do you see Advertisement on facebook?

Table 4:6,10 4,11 and 4,12 provide answer to this research question. Data from table 4.10 show that facebook advertisement have highly influence on 220 respondents representing 57.9% of the studied group such that some of them have memorized, mimicking their adverts, gaining admission into Caritas University.

Data from table 4.12 also show that 260 respondents representing 96% of the sampled group Facebook advertisements have positively impacted on them. Table 4.13 show that that 260 respondents representing 68% of the sampled group see Facebook advert more appealing. From the questionnaire analysis above, the analysis shows that majority of the respondents view Facebook advertisement and are high influenced them positively. This shows that advertisement is a powerful tool for university admission

Research Question 3: What is the Perception users on the quality of facebook Advertisements? .

Table 4:14 shows that 200 respondents representing 52.6% of the sampled group strongly agree that fcaebbook advertisements production has improved. They are of the view that faecbook advertisements have excellent quality production that made Caritas University should continue to use it as her advertisement media.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn; Students access the advertisements on Facebook and see them as being targeted at the youths but there was a significant margin between those who patronize the products on Facebook and those who do not. This conclusion relates to the uses and gratification theory that forms the bedrock of this research which states that people use the media for unique purposes. The findings show that the students use their Facebook accounts for unique purposes, while some access advertisements while on Facebook, others do not access them. In order to further understand how effectively Facebook advertising works and to know the level of patronage of the advertised products by the youths, further research should be conducted. It would be beneficial to follow a specific company that manufactures a youth-oriented product and advertises it on Facebook and see how the company grows or changes as a result of Facebook exposure. Another research could also be conducted on the same topic outside caritas university environment and see what the result would be. It would also be worthwhile if the study is repeated in some private universities in Nigeria or outside Nigeria

Recommendations

Looking at the findings of this research, below are some of the recommendations propounded by the researcher

- i. Facebook should try as much as they can to make their advert to be attractive, trendy, catchy and appealing to the Facebook advertisers and users, mostly to the Students/youths, so that they can patronize the products.

- ii. Private Universities and other institutions of higher learning in the south east should give Advertisement utmost priority because of the increase in the establishments new and modern universities in Nigeria.

- iii Producers of goods and services and advertising agencies or personnel should make use of Facebook as their advertisement channel, hence from this research, it has been proven that most of the Undergraduate students of Caritas University got information about the school through facebook advertisement'

- iv. Manufacturers of android phone/cell phones and facebook should come in terms to make facebook applications easier to access by users and advertisers. The preason is because other platforms are competing too,

- v. Organizations should invest in advertising their products on facebook, it will help them to increase their brand awareness and sales.

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