Influence of Facebook Advertisement on the Buying Behaviour of Students of a Nigerian University

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of Facebook advertisement on young people's buying behaviour. In doing this, it 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. It 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. 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 396 respondents from the population using the Taro Yamene statistical sampling method. For clarity purposes, data obtained was reported using simple percentages and frequencies. Results of the analysis indicated that a majority of the respondents access advertisements on Facebook and see them as being targeted at the youths. The findings also reveal that there was no significant margin between those who patronize the products advertised on Facebook and those who do not, with 54.8% patronizing and 45.2% not patronizing. This calls for more concerted efforts on the part of ad agencies and advertisers to make the advertisements on Facebook more alluring and catchy as well as put all details needed to facilitate more patronage of the advertised product.

Keywords: Facebook, advertisement, buying behaviour, influence

1.0 Background of Study

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. 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. In fact, it is the leading social networking site based on Comscore Agency Reports, cited in Wikipedia (2010). Writing on social networking sites, Moriarty, Mitchell and Wells (2009) compared them to the old mall and arcade hangouts. According to them, "Like the old mall and arcade hangouts, these are places where teens spend hours talking to friends about their joys, crushes and disappointments." On the fast growth of Facebook, Moriarty et al assert that by 2007, the smaller but still phenomenally popular Facebook had created a community of 24 million members, comprising mainly college buddies who share photos, favorite music, and personal stories. Considering the ever changing and competitive field of advertising and marketing, advertisers and marketers are seeking new and easy ways to reach their target consumers.

They have found part of the solution in social networking sites which grant them the opportunity to speak to the consumers one-on-one. Buttressing this points, Moriarty et al (2009, p. 342) submit that "the reason these social networking sites are so attractive to marketers is that they engage the power of relationships. Because of these relationships, network members are more likely to respond to message on the sites, including advertisements, if they are effective at becoming part of the social context. Marketers are interested because these relationships also are influential in consumer decision making". Solaja and Odiaka (2010, p. 32) add that "Facebook, a social networking website created in February 2004, has become such a hit, with over 500 million active users as of July 2010; such a large population naturally offers a good basis for the adoption of the platform for marketing purposes". This huge population of users which is bound to have increased by now makes the Facebook a veritable channel of advertising. With the popularity of Facebook in Nigeria, especially among youths, most advertisements targeted at youths, that is, advertisements on youth-oriented products are placed on social networking sites, particularly on Facebook. This is because youths, the most computer literature segment of the Nigerian population, can create profiles and link with friends even with their cell phones, cameras, iPods, laptops and other digital tools which they can use to establish their online identities. Henry Jenkins, cited in Rodman, believes that social networks grant the youths the opportunity to hang out without adult supervision. According to him: "Their mobility and control over physical space is heavily curtailed and monitored. Although youth are able to socialize privately with one another in the homes of friends, most are not allowed to spend time hanging out in public, unaccompanied by parents or adults. They view social networking sites as places where they can be who they are, joke around with friends and make certain to stay in the loop about everything that is going on around them. Just as youth in a hunting society play with bows and arrows, youth in an information society play with information and social networks" (Rodman, 2010, p. 293). This study seeks to ascertain whether the youths, especially the undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria, access the advertisements posted on Facebook. It will also establish whether they patronize these advertisements knowing fully well that most people avoid advertisements on Facebook because of lack of trust.

2.0 Statement of Problem

It is widely believed that youths dominate Facebook accounts (Su, 2010) and Facebook is, therefore, seen as a good channel for advertisements of youth-oriented products. Water (2010, p.35) opines that, "Due to lack of censorship on the Internet, there has been a growing global concern about the nefarious activities of some Internet users which has made most people to avoid advertisements placed on the Internet". In line with the above statement by Waters, many Internet users, including Facebook users, may be afraid to access advertisements placed on Facebook because of lack of trust or because the ads take them entirely away to a different site from Facebook where they are having social interactions. Knowing fully well that advertisers spend money to advertise their products on Facebook and if these products are not accessed or patronized, they will not get value for their money, the researchers therefore sought to investigate whether these advertisements are accessed by Facebook users; in this case, undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria, and whether the advertisements influence them to buy the products. The questions that therefore arise are: Do these students take notice of advertisement placed on Facebook and see them as being targeted at the youths? And do the advertisements influence them to buy the products?

3.0 Research Questions

The following questions were formulated to guide this study.

1. Are the University of Nigeria students exposed to the Facebook medium?
2. Do the University of Nigeria students take notice of the advertisements placed on the Facebook medium?
3. Do the University of Nigeria students access advertisements on the Facebook medium and see them as being targeted at the youths?
4. Do advertisements on Facebook influence students to patronize the advertised products?

4.0 Literature Review

Facebook is one of the most popular social networking sites which provides users with a platform to create personal profile pages add friends and send messages. Since the company was founded in February 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, it has become the top ranked social networking site (Kazeniac, 2009; Wikipedia 2010).

According to Facebook statistics (2010), there are over 500 million current active users on Facebook. Second only to cell phone as the most popular communication tool (Van der pool, 2009), 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. In view of this, Lampe, Ellison and Steinfield, (2006) in their study on "A Face(book) in the crowd: social searching vs. social browsing" observe that Facebook users engage in searching for people with whom they have an offline connection more than they browse for complete strangers.

Looking at the amount of information Facebook users provide and the need for privacy setting, the relatively open nature of the information, and the lack of privacy controls enacted by the users, Gross and Acquisti (2005), cited in Ellison et al (2007) argue that users may be putting themselves at risk both offline (e.g. stalking) and online (e.g. identify theft). Although users put up all personal information willingly, they may or may not know that their information can be shared with a third party and most times, Facebook privacy settings are not always utilized by users. In support of the above assertion, a study conducted by Lange (2008) on "Feeding the privacy debate: An examination of Facebook" hypothesized that privacy settings may not be adjusted due to ignorance or the "it won't happen to me" assumption. Lange's study also points out that when users click the "Accept Terms and Conditions" button when joining a site or adding an application, they tend not to read the fine print which may say that the user is agreeing to sell or give away his/her personal information. In agreement with the above findings, Sherman, cited in Roberts (2010) adds that a term such as "Privacy Policy" on a website may make users automatically assume that their information is safe when that may not actually be the case.

In contract to the above views, Roberts (2010) in her study on "Privacy and perceptions: How Facebook advertising affects its users" found out that in terms of privacy, all students surveyed had taken some precautions and modified their privacy settings on Facebook. She adds that all participants knew what their settings were and none of the respondents classified himself/herself as having extremely open profile. This indicates that the students are concerned and aware that their information may leak out to third parties. However, Christofides, Music and Desmarais (2010) conducted a research on "Privacy and disclosure on Facebook: Youth and adults' information disclosure and perceptions of privacy risks" with the purpose of understanding individuals' perception of the risks of information sharing on social network sites and the extent of information disclosure by high school students and working age adults. They observe that while the majority of respondents including youth and adult samples reported knowing how to use Facebook's privacy settings, a significantly smaller proportion of individuals from both groups reported actually using these settings. They also observe that respondents in the youth sample who reported having a bad experience on Facebook were more likely to control their information through use of the privacy settings. In agreement with Christofides et al (2010) Govani and Pashley (2007), in their study of Facebook Users observe that out of the 84% of the participants who reported that they are aware that they can change their privacy settings, only 48% made use of the privacy settings. These finding suggest that there is need to emphasize the benefit of using privacy settings among Facebook users especially the youths in order to protect them from cyber bullying or harassment.

In view of this, Livingstong (2008) in his study on "Taking risky opportunities in youthful content creation: Teenager's use of social networking sites for intimacy, privacy and self-expression" points out that Facebook enables youths to share aspects of their personalities and their emotions in the way they create and modify their personal web page. He notes that for young people, factors such as the need for popularity and the importance of identity construction may take precedence over privacy concerns emphasizing that this is especially true in an environment like Facebook, where the amount you disclose and how much others contribute to your page may be the key ways to assess your popularity. He concludes that it seems that on Facebook, more than other environments, popularity is closely linked with one's level of information disclosure.

4.1 The Youths and the Use of Facebook

Facebook has been seen as a social medium widely dominated by the youths. Supporting the above claim, Su (2010) in her report submits that while Facebook began as a college-oriented site sparked in American institutions, it has since spread more evenly through most of the Western society, reaching both young and old. Buttressing her point with figures, Su asserts that some 56.9 million of total of 71.4 million Spanish-language audiences on Facebook are users under 35. Junco and Mastrodicasa (2007), cited in Christofides et al (2010) also observe that Facebook is very popular with young people, and it is estimated that 76% of generation 'Y', also known as Millenials, use Facebook. Existing research shows that young people are motivated to join these sites to keep strong ties with friends, to strengthen ties with new acquaintances, and, to a lesser degree, to meet new people online (Acquisti & Gross, 2006). At the same time, sites like Facebook allow them to exchange news and discuss issues, both public and private. Employing participant observation and deep hanging out method alongside qualitative interviews in the study "Why youth (Heart) social network sites: The role of networked publics in teenage social life" Boyd (2007) observes that by allowing youths to hang out amongst their friends and classmates, Facebook is providing them with a space to work out identity and status, make sense of cultural cues, and negotiate public life.

Using a random web survey research design in a study on "Lessons from Facebook: The effect of social network sites on college students' social capital", Valenzuela, Park and Kee (2008) find moderate positive relationships between intensity of Facebook use and students' life satisfaction, social trust, civic participation and political engagement. To ascertain how the youths use Facebook, Faudree (2009) conducted a research on "Is Facebook a useful tool for college students?" Manchester College students were studied and the findings show that Facebook is not just about data management. The findings reveal that the technical skills students use on Facebook allow them to use interpersonal skills. The study also indicates that Facebook is about coordination and facilitation of interpersonal imperatives that includes: affection, inclusion and control. These three imperatives draw the youth to the Facebook platform. The research also reveals that Facebook allows students to be alone in their rooms and still be able to be social with others, using their interpersonal and technical skills.

Using a self-administered online survey via Harris interactive proprietary web-assisted interviewing software, Pieters and Krupin (2010) conducted a research on "Youth online behaviour". They find out that being online is both a normal and integral part of life in the United States especially for the youth population. They observe that the youths have been accessing the Internet for most of their lives, and probably can't imagine life without it, stating that it is more evident in their Facebook usage. The study also shows that Facebook leads the pack as the most popular social networking site for every youth age group, with 3 in 5 youth overall having accounts. In contrast to the above claim, Swedowsky (2009) argues that Facebook is not being dominated by youths alone. He asserts that traffic to Facebook is up almost 200% over the last year, stating that social media is no longer just for techies or younger generation and that it has become a mainstream phenomenon. In line with Swedowsky's argument, Christofides et al (2010, p. 12) opine that "despite the popularity of Facebook, little is known about how youth and adults use the site. In fact, most of the research that exists (sic), including our own, focuses on Facebook use in (sic) university student". From the above review, the researchers deduced that in as much as people from all age brackets use the Facebook medium, it is largely dominated by the youths who are more conversant with the information and communication technologies than the older generation.

4.2 Facebook as an Advertising Platform

As a social networking site, Facebook provides people with the tools and opportunity to be of international communities that share opinions and contents and communicate directly with one another or to other large communities. Seeing Facebook as an advertising platform in a study conducted on "Facebook Me: Collective self-esteem, need to belong, and internet self-efficacy as predictors of the iGeneration's attitudes toward social networking sites," Gangadharbatla (2008) argues that Facebook is funded by sales of advertisement specially targeted to the person. In line with the above argument, Barnes (2006) in his study observes that statistical data collected from the profiles of site users are used to target the audience. Boyd and Ellison (2007) in their study on "Social network sites: Definition, history and scholarship," find out that the potential to reach consumers directly and in a personal and social environment has meant that marketers are keen to advertise on the Facebook medium. In support of the findings by Boyd and Ellison (2007), Manning-Schaffel (2010, p. 36) notes that "Many consumers are already sharing information regularly on Facebook; this is just one more way to quickly share information in a place where they are already spending time".

Waters (2007) also notes that use of Facebook as a platform of advertising is growing and more business organizations are integrating it into their advertising programmes while Saxena (2010) sees it as a big time monetizing platform for online advertisers; more so, Olumide (2010), cited in Solaja and Odiaka, points out that Facebook has been very instrumental to the success of several brand campaigns. According to her, "The use of Facebook pool engagement ads, for example, gave one of our clients an opportunity to carry out a market survey, while at the same time engaging their target demography. With the results of this poll, the brand's overall strategy was modified and the ensuing result has been impressive. Most first time clients start small, but once they measure the effect Facebook marketing and reporting tools have had on their brand, they increase their investment in the platform" (Solaja & Odiaka, 2010, p. 33).

Using the survey research design on the Facebook site to study the undergraduate students of four universities on how they view Facebook and its advertisers, Roberts (2010) in her study on "Privacy and perceptions: How Facebook advertising affects its users" finds out that students' reactions did not overwhelmingly lean in a particular direction. The study reveals that there is no overall consensus as to the effects of advertising on Facebook users and that individual users perceive the site differently, while some support Facebook advertising, others see it as a disturbance. It was also found that 80% of the respondents have advertisements that directly target their demographic data. Although some people believe that Facebook advertisements do not work for the simple reason that people don't visit social networks to view advertising, but to interact with their community, most advertisers all over the world are now turning attention to interactive advertising platforms (Chaney, 2009).

In another reflection, Stay (2008) argues that Facebook hasn't hit the sweet spot when it comes to giving a brand or business a place in its network. In a review of the opportunities and limitations of using Facebook for business, Stay outlines Facebook pages, groups, applications, advertising, polls and Facebook connect as the opportunities while more application integration points for pages, more pages integration with the rest of Facebook, skinning and customization on pages and finally better access to business tolls as what Facebook needs to do to be considered as a better platform for business. From the above reviews, the researchers realized that it is apparent that the personal and social nature of Facebook platform have given it an added advantage in advertising and have made it a useful tool for business if properly utilized. All social networking sites are concerned with building relationships with current and potential customers and Facebook is a great platform to do that.

4.3 The Benefits of Facebook as a Platform of Advertising

Explaining the importance of Facebook advertising, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, cited in Piskorski, Eisenmann, Chen and Feinstein (2010, p. 6) asserts that, "It's no longer just about message that are broadcast out by companies, but increasingly about information that is between friends. So we set out to use these social actions to build a new kind of ad system". Pointing out the benefits of Facebook advertising, Manning-Schaffel observes that: "The ease of creating content makes it so that we get very high engagement, far beyond typical page views. It also gives us a great platform to listen to the feedback we receive from our consumers. Every time we post photos, videos or status updates from the page, our fans are quick to tell us what they think. Their feedback is shared with their network of Facebook friends, exposing them to our fan page" (Manning-Schaddel, 2010, p. 36). Buttressing the above view, Wheeler, cited in Manning-Schaffel (2010, p. 36) submits that "Facebook helps us get a pulse on what is important to our customers. We can have a real dialogue with them about the values and ideas that they share with us". In line with the above statements, a study conducted by Learmouth and Klaassen (2009), cited in Roberts (2010, p. 26) reveals that "Facebook is an effective marketing platform because networking and communication are already taking place. This allows companies to be directly woven into conversation simply by appearing on the site." Another benefit derived from using Facebook for advertising is the site's growth. Klassen (2008) cited in Roberts (2010) reports a study where 43% of online purchasers named social network surfing as the reason they decided to make their purchase. This statistics shows the potential power that advertisers have to reach a willing and active audience on Facebook. Roberts also asserts that Facebook does not only increase interactivity but also allows a complete customization of advertisements by the ad creators. She adds that Facebook advertisements are relatively easy to generate, and allow the creator a variety of choices when making an ad. It lets advertisers select the exact demographic that sees the advertisement, which helps them not to waste time or energy on people outside their target market. An advertiser can view the results of who is clicking his/her ad, and modify it accordingly.

Facebook presents an entirely new way of scrutinizing a product or brand. In line with Robert's view, Swedowsky (2009) sums up that Facebook has not only transformed the research and purchase consideration phase, but it has also provided shoppers with a platform to advocate the products and stores they like. 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. It allows advertisers to better understand 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 profitably.

5.0 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 behaviour 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, (3) all mediums compete with other sources of need/goal fulfillment, (4) mass media goals can be found in the message of the source, and (5) cultural value judgments should not be taken into consideration as the audience explores their own opinions.

By directly applying these assumptions to this study, a few customized observations can be made. First, the average Facebook user is active as he/she has willingly created an account, and is a member of the site. Next, the user chooses Facebook as a means to fulfill his/her wants and goals over other sources. Essentially, the Facebook user came to the site for a unique purpose. It could be the need to connect interpersonally with friends, the need to promote a business or product, that is, advertising or the need to patronize a product.

6.0 Research Design

Survey research was appropriate for this study. The survey method was adopted for one obvious reason. That is, the researchers are interested in the attitudes and opinions of the undergraduate students concerning the advertisements placed on the Facebook medium. According to Ohaja (2003), whenever the source of primary data for a study would be the views of the public or any particular group, a survey would be required.

6.1 Population of Study

The population of this study includes the undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria (UNN) in all the nine faculties (Agriculture, Arts, Biological Sciences, Education, Engineering, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences and Veterinary Medicine) located at the Nsukka campus, Enugu State, Nigeria. The student population was thirty five thousand (35,000) (Personnel Records, UNN, 2010) as at the time of this study.

The choice of the students was informed by the elite nature of the citadel of learning and the fact that members of the university community are literate. As one of the major citadels of learning in Nigeria, the University of Nigeria is believed to be a meeting point of people from different parts of the country. It can be said that the university has practically all parts of the country in its community, including international students. The youthfulness of the population put them in the range of audiences targeted by advertisers' messages through a social medium like Facebook.

6.2 Sample Size

The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamene sampling formula. The statistical formula is:

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

Using the formula, the sample size was determined as 396. Details of the calculation are shown in appendix 1.

6.3 Sampling Technique

Stratified random sampling technique was used to divide the faculties into nine strata (Agriculture, Arts, Biological Sciences, Education, Engineering, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine). From each strata, one department was selected purposively and from each department, 44 respondents were selected using purposive technique. This gave a total of 396 respondents. Ohaja (2003, p. 82) explains that "purposive sampling is used when a researcher seeks certain characteristics in his sampling elements and wants to ensure that those chosen have those attributes." The researchers employed the services of three trained research assistants in the administration and collection of the questionnaire.

6.4 Measuring Instrument

The questionnaire and inter-personal interview were the instruments for data collection for this study. The questionnaire's objectivity, quickness and the ability to gather information from a large crowd (Milne, 2010) necessitated its choice. The researchers also interviewed some students in order to get some information which was not got from the questionnaire.

7.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaire were presented and analyzed in order to answer the research questions. Three hundred and ninety-six copies of the questionnaires were administered to the students of the University of Nigeria. Out of the 396 copies which were administered, three hundred and ninety copies were retrieved and analyzed. Frequency distribution and percentage were the statistical tools used in the analysis. The data generated is presented below.

7.1 Answering the Research Questions

Definite questions were asked in the questionnaire to enable the researchers to find answers to the research questions.

7.1.1 Research Question One: Are University of Nigeria students exposed to Facebook medium?

Items 4, 5 and 6 of the questionnaire were analyzed to generate answers to the first research question.

Items 4: Are you aware of the social medium called Facebook?

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to their Awareness of the Facebook Medium

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	390	100
No	0	0
Total	390	100

Item 5: Do you have a Facebook account?

Table 2: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to their Ownership of Facebook Account

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	390	100
No	0	0
Total	390	100

Item 6: How often do you visit this account?

Table 3: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to how often they visit their Facebook Account

Response	Frequency	Percentage
No specific duration	10	2,60
Once in six months	9	2.30
Once in a month	30	7.70
Once in a week	143	36.70
Every day	198	50.80
Total	**390**	**100**

7.1.2 Research Question 2: Do the University of Nigeria Students take notice of the advertisements placed on the Facebook medium?

The answer to the above research question came from items 7, 8 and 9 of the questionnaire.

Item 7: Do you see advertisements while on Facebook?

Table 4: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to whether they see Advertisements while on Facebook

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	380	97.40
No	10	2.60
Total	390	100

Item 8: If yes, what kind(s) of advertisements do you see? (Tick as many options as applied to you)

Table 5: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to the kind(s) of Advertisements they see on Facebook

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Political	122	17.70
Commercial	318	46.20
Personal	140	20.40
Religious	105	15.30
Others	3	0.40

Item 9: Where do you see advertisements on Facebook?

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents' Responses According to where they see Advertisement on Facebook

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Home page	108	22.60
Sidebar of peoples profile	215	45.00
Facebook applications	30	6.30
Friends' walls	125	26.20
Others	0	0

7.1.3 Research Question 3: Do the University of Nigeria Students Access Advertisements on the Facebook Medium and see them as being targeted at the youths?

To provide an answer to the above question which formed the crux of the research, items 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the questionnaire were used to gather the necessary data.

Item 10: Have you viewed any advertisements on Facebook before now?

Table 7: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to whether they have Viewed any Advertisements on Facebook before now

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	336	88.40
No	37	9.70
Can't say	7	1.80
Total	380	100

Item 11: If yes, which kind(s) of advertisements do you normally view? (Tick as many options as applied to you).

Table 8: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to the Kinds of Advertisements they normally view on Facebook

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Political	50	13.40
Commercial	234	62.90
Personal	79	21.20
Religious	6	1.60
Others	3	0.80

Item 12: Do you see the advertisements as being targeted at the youths?

Table 9: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to Whether they see the Advertisements they viewed on Facebook as being targeted at the youths

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	268	79.80
No	42	12.50
Can't say	26	7.70
Total	336	100

Item 13: If yes, state your reason(s)

Only the respondents who answered in the affirmative to item 12 were qualified to answer this question and they were 268 respondents representing 79.80%.

This is an open-ended question which elicited varied responses. The most frequent responses from the respondents include:

➢They are mostly products and services that appeal to the youths.
➢They are mostly youths' wears and accessories.
➢The products are trendy and youth orientated.
➢Most of the social and educational advertisements are on youth discovery and value orientation.
➢The advertisements are mostly on current issues affecting the youths and also on fashion.
➢The advertisements are mostly on issues that motivate the youths and Facebook is the avenue to reach them quickly.
➢The packaging and the contents appeal to the youths.
➢Most of the advertisements usually have age specifications.
➢The commercial advertisements are mostly on products that suit the youths more.

Item 14: If no, state your reason(s)

Only the respondents who gave a negative response to item 12 were qualified to answer this question and they were 42 respondents representing 12.50%. This is also an open-ended question and it elicited varied responses from the respondents. The most frequent responses include:

➢The advertisements are mostly accessed by all regardless of age.
➢Politics is an affair of the general public and political advertisements cannot be targeted at the youths alone.
➢Most of the products are goods used by all the age brackets and cannot be targeted at the youths alone.
➢The youths are not the only users of Facebook and the advertisements cannot be targeted at them alone.

7.1.4 Research Question 4: Do Advertisements on Facebook Influence the Students to Patronize the Advertised Products?

Responses to items 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 of the questionnaire were analysed to generate answers to this research question.

Item 15: Did the advertisements which you have viewed on Facebook make you feel like patronizing the advertised product?

Table 10: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to their Tendency of Patronizing the Advertised Products they viewed on Facebook

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	222	66.10
No	53	15.70
Can't say	61	18.20
Total	336	100

Responses from the three hundred and thirty-six respondents who claimed to have viewed advertisements on Facebook were used. (See Table 7.) From Table 10 above, 222 (66.10%) respondents felt like patronizing the products advertised; 61 (18.20%) was undecided while 53 (15.80%) didn't feel like patronizing the advertised products after viewing them. The result shows that a majority of the respondents felt like patronizing the products after viewing them on Facebook.

Item 16: If yes, how?

Only the respondents who answered in the affirmative to item 15 were qualified to answer this question and they were 222 respondents representing 66.10%. As an open-ended question, varied responses were given and the most frequent responses include:

➢I will like to get the addresses attached to the advertised products I viewed in case I want to purchase them in the nearest future.
➢I will always click on the products especially commercial or travellers' advertisements. Most times I buy books advertised on Facebook.
➢I see most of the products on Facebook as genuine products.
➢They usually arouse my interest which makes me click on them.
➢The advertised products are usually appealing, enticing and alluring.
➢I tried visiting the websites of the advertised product for more information.
➢Most of the products are trendy and attractive and I feel like buying them.
➢The knowledge of the advertised products makes me feel like trying the services or buying the products.
➢Some of the advertised products especially the modern wears (trousers, shirts and shoes) appeal to my fancy.

Item 17: Have you patronized any product advertised on Facebook?

Table 11: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to their Patronage of Products Advertised on Facebook

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	184	54.80
No	152	45.20
Total	**336**	**100**

Item 18: Can you say that the advertisements you see on Facebook are effective in selling the product advertised?

Table 12: Distribution of the Respondents' Responses According to their Assessment of the Effectiveness of Advertisements on Facebook in Selling Products Advertised

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	225	67.00
No	21	6.30
Can't say	90	26.80
Total	336	100

Item 19: If yes, state your reason (s)

Only 225 respondents representing 67% were qualified to answer this question because of their affirmatives response to item 17. As an open-ended question, numerous responses were given and the most frequent responses include:

➢The level of request for products is on the increase especially for books, wears and travelers information.
➢Many people I know patronize the products advertised on Facebook; l bought some item because l saw the advertisements on Facebook.
➢Many Facebook users have expressed their interest in the advertised products regularly.
➢Details of the products and how to get products advertised are usually given.
➢Once advertisement makes one feel like getting the advertised products, it is effective. Advertisements on Facebook beat the viewer's imagination, so, it should be considered effective.
➢ The world patronizes Facebook and it is good for business.
➢People know more about what is happening in politics through political advertisement on Facebook.
➢The advertisements on Facebook motivate potential buyers to buy the product.
➢Facebook is a social networking site and reaches a broad-base audience and the advertisements also get to broad-base audiences.

Item 20: If No, state your reason (s)

Only 21 respondents representing 6.30% were qualified to answer this question because they responded negatively to item 17. This is an open-ended question and various responses were given and the most frequent responses were:

➢Lack of trust makes people to avoid advertisement on Facebook.
➢The advertisements do not interest some Facebook users.
➢The advertisements are not compelling enough.
➢Some Facebook users may like the products while some may not like the products.

High rate of fraud make some Facebook users avoid advertisements on Facebook.

8.0 Discussion of Findings

The findings of the four research questions are discussed below. Answer generated to research question one show that the University of Nigeria students are exposed to Facebook medium. All the respondents were aware of the Facebook medium and all of them have Facebook accounts. In terms of Facebook usage, the majority of the respondents, 198 (50.80%) visit their Facebook account daily. This agrees with the study by Social Peel (2009) which shows that 70% of college students log on to Facebook daily and the study by Roberts (2010) who also found that 95% of the respondents check their Facebook at least once a day.

The findings of research question two show that the University of Nigeria students take notice of the advertisements placed on the Facebook medium. The majority of the respondents, 380 (97.40%) were aware of advertisements on Facebook while 10 (2.60%) were unaware of advertisements on Facebook. From personal interviews and interactions, the researchers found that the few respondents that were unaware of advertisements on Facebook always browse with cell phones which do not displace all the applications on Facebook which includes advertisements. The findings also indicate that commercial advertisements were the most viewed by the respondents. It was found that advertisements were seen more on the sidebar of people's profiles. The findings of research question two support the study on "How Facebook advertising affects its users" by Roberts (2010) who discovered that a majority of students are fully aware of advertising on Facebook and that common places these advertisements were seen were on the sidebar of other people's profiles. From answers to research question three, the University of Nigeria students access advertisements on Facebook because 336 (88.40%) respondents accepts that they view advertisements on Facebook and that they view more of commercial ads 234 (62.90%). This contradicts a report by Piskorski et al (2010) that Facebook users clicked on only 400 advertisements for every one million displayed, because if 336 respondents out of the 380 respondents who were qualified to answer the question click on advertisements, 500 million active users of Facebook cannot click on only 40 advertisements for every one million displayed. The findings of research question three also prove that a majority of the respondents, 268 (79.80%) saw the advertisement as being targeted at the youths. They gave numerous reasons why they believed so and this has been itemized.

Some respondents stated that the advertisements have age specifications while some said the advertisements were mostly on products, services and on current issues that affect the youths and also appeal to the youths. When the researchers interviewed some respondents to know why they do not access advertisements on Facebook, they complained that they have limited time and most times, the advertisements they click on take them away from the Facebook platform. The findings of research question four indicated that it is not certain whether the students patronize the products because while 184 (54.80%) patronize the products, 152 (45.20%) do not patronize the products. This shows that there is no significant margin between those that patronize the products and those who do not. Although a majority of the respondents, 222 representing 66.10%, felt like patronizing the products after viewing the advertisements but the number of respondents, 184 representing 54.80%, that actually patronize the product wasn't significant. The findings of research question four also shows that a majority of the respondents, 225 representing 67% believe that advertisements on Facebook were effective in selling the advertised products because they usually buy the products and many Facebook subscribers have indicated their interests in the advertised products regularly. This supports a study by Klaassen (2009) cited in Roberts (2010, p. 25) that 43% of online purchasers named Facebook surfing as the reason they decided to make their purchase. The summary of the findings is that students access the advertisements placed on Facebook and see themselves as the target. A majority of the respondents also believe that Facebook advertisements were effective in selling the advertised products, but there was no significant margin between those who patronize the products advertised on Facebook and those who do not.

9.0 Conclusion

Social interaction via social networking sites especially Facebook has provided advertisers a platform to reach their targets. Advertising on Facebook has also created an electronic marketplace where physical proximity is not longer needed for exchange to take place. Advertisers have thus resorted to advertising on social networking sites, especially on Facebook because it creates a good relationship and interaction between the advertisers and the consumer. Some studies have shown that the youths dominate Facebook. Since advertisements are seen on Facebook, this study was aimed at ascertaining whether the students, representing the youths, access these advertisements and see them as being targeted at the youths. It also sought to ascertain whether the students patronize advertised products on Facebook. 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 no 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 a university environment and see what the result would be. It would also be worthwhile if the study is repeated in some select universities in Nigeria and elsewhere.

10.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby made for consideration.

- Advertisers should make Facebook advertisements to be more appealing, trendy and catchy so that Facebook users, especially the youths, will not only feel like patronizing the products, but rather patronize the products.
- There is need for advertisers to give all the details that are needed for easy patronage of the products. There should be a way to re-adjust the issue of clicking on the advertisements and it will take the Facebook user away from the Facebook platform.
- The owners of Facebook or the manufacturers of cell phones should find a way to make all the Facebook applications to be accessed from the cell phones especially the advertisements.
- The advertising agencies should adopt Facebook as a platform for advertising their clients' products as it has been proven from this study as being effective in selling the advertised products. The manufacturers of products as well as service providers should also adopt this platform more for advertising their products and services.

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Appendix 1

n   =   Sample
N   =   Population size under study
I   =   Unit in value (always constant)
e   =   Estimated standard error margin of 0.05

$$N = \frac{35,000}{1+3500\,(0.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{35000}{1+87.5}$$

$$\frac{35000}{88.5} = 395.4862$$