

ENUGU RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE USE OF FACEBOOK IN ADVERTISING INDOMIE INSTANT NOODLES

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Abstract

Facebook is one of the leading social media platforms with billions of users. This explains the reason why advertisers resort to use it to get wider reach. To this end, this study sought to find out how residents of Enugu metropolis perceive Indomie Instant Noodles adverts on Facebook. The technological determinism theory was used as the theoretical framework of the study. The researchers used the survey research method. The population of the study comprised the residents of Enugu metropolis, which is 968,300. A sample size of 384 was determined, using the Australian Online Calculator. The multistage sampling technique was used in selectin respondents for the study. Findings revealed that 34.3% of respondents were of the view that the high purchase and consumption of Indomie Instant Noodles is not as a result of the Facebook Ads on Indomie Instant Noodles to which they were exposed. Findings further revealed that 41% of respondents were of the view that they see nothing wrong in the use of Facebook for Indomie Instant Noodles Ads. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that Indomie Instant Noodles Ads on Facebook should be more persuasive and appealing so that the tendency of influencing purchase from Facebook users will be high.

Keywords: *Public, Perception, Advertising, Facebook, Indomie instant noodles.*

Introduction

In recent times, social media have redefined the way people view the platform. From just a means of social interaction, producers of goods and services are beginning to view the social media as a viable means to reach the people in real-time. Almost all dot.com companies are online today to create easy means of information availability to their customers and prospective customers. In doing this, organisations and individuals have crated social media handles as a means of providing information and advertising their products and services. The social media, no doubt provided ample opportunities for brands to engage with consumers, one method being through interactive advertising (Akpan & Nwankpa, 2015). Recently, advertising has taken a digital twist. Some studies suggest that advertising is a force which moves people up in series of stages from being aware, like, prefer and decide to buy product (Ertugan, 2016 citing Lavidge, 1961). As it stands, it might seem subtle, but the social media is creating dramatic influences on every stage of the consumer decision-making process as

well as influencing general opinions and attitude formation (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

The way the social media is moving things closer to consumers, companies that have not seen the gains therein may be left out. Almost everyone within the youth category is on the social media, either as passive or active users. There is an assumption that in no little time, social media might become the primary means of advertising goods and services to the people (Yuanxian & Pittana, 2011). This is not unconnected to the fact that goods and services which were primarily advertised on conventional media are now being advertised on social media (Logan, Bright & Gangadharbatla, 2012).

According to Lua (2019), Facebook, is the leading social media with 2.23 billion users, hence the top of the priority for marketers as a result of its popularity and widespread use by people. For this reason, advertisers embrace the advertising features of Facebook, which include creating events, fan pages, games, applications and using best practices to direct users to their Facebook pages. The vast use of Facebook around the globe has made it a new and important advertising platform, where businesses place their ads to reach their prospective customers. As Vahl (2011) argues Facebook is facilitating the manufacturers and service providers to reach customers of specific age group and interest. Growing Facebook based advertising is perhaps an indication that it is becoming an important source of business presentation and the firms are taking Facebook advertisement as a useful strategy to attract customers. Among the companies that have seen the advantages of Facebook in advertising is the Indomie Nigeria company. This company has several noodle brands and has created Facebook handles called Indomie (<https://web.facebook.com/search/top/?q=indomie%20noodles>). The company also has a handle called the Indomie Instant Noodle (<https://web.facebook.com/indomieinstantnoodle>), which has over 9,014 people following it. This handle is different from the instant noodle group called the Indomie Instant noodle club (<https://web.facebook.com/groups/1089431354555062>). The Indomie instant club has over 720 members. All these are avenues for the advert of Indomie products and the Indomie Instant Noodle brand. The Indomie Instant Noodle is a highly celebrated advert with different advert designs on Facebook. There are adverts on: "Taste is the difference" with mother and daughter at the centre of the advert; "Indomie BBNaija, who will win", which focused on the BBNaija reality TV show; "Spot Indomie on this match", which is a football based advert; "Indomie Team Up with Mum", where mothers create talented arts or products using Indomie packs; and the "Indomie giveaway", where Infinix phones are given out to people (<https://web.facebook.com/indomieinstantnoodle>). All these adverts are on Facebook to further persuade customers to remain loyal to the product and also win the patronage of prospective customers.

Statement of the Problem

Facebook is certainly a medium of advertising because it is believed that half of the world's population dominates Facebook accounts (Su, 2010). Not minding the gains of Facebook, Akpan and Nwankpa (2015) citing Water (2010, p.35) aver that there is still some dark side to internet advertising, which include fake claims in adverts as a result of lack of censorship. Based on this, some people seem not to pay attention to these adverts or even click on them. With this type of problem in mind, one might worry on what becomes the fate of Indomie Instant Noodle adverts on Facebook. This study, therefore, sought to find out residents of Enugu metropolis perception of the use of Facebook in advertising Indomie Instant Noodles.

Objectives of the Study

The study sought to;

1. find out Enugu residents' exposure to Facebook adverts of Indomie Instant Noodles,
2. ascertain the views of Enugu residents on Facebook adverts of Indomie Instant Noodles, and
3. examine the influence of Facebook adverts of Indomie Instant Noodles on the buying behaviour of Enugu residents.

Empirical Studies

Akoja, Odibo, and Kareem (2019) did a study on Indomitable Advertisements on Noodles preference on findings show that 64.8% craved for Indomie noodles after watching the advertisement due to its appeals. It concludes that the indomitable advertisement influenced their perception and preference for Indomie noodles.

French and Story (2004) studied the effects of television food advertising on children food behaviour and found that children exposed to advertising will choose advertised food products at significantly higher rates than children who were not exposed. In addition, it was discovered that children's exposure to food television advertising increases the number of attempts children's make to influence food purchases their parents buy while purchase requests for specific brands or categories of food products reflect product advertising frequencies. In another study.

Chernin (2008) focused on the effects of food marketing on children's preferences by testing the moderating roles of age and gender. The study found that exposure to food marketing significantly increased children's preferences for advertised products. While it is often argued that younger children are more persuasible than older children, the results indicated that age did not moderate the effects of ad exposure on product preference. This suggests that knowledge of persuasive intent did not influence children's responses to the advertisements.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on The Technology Determinism Theory. The term technology determinism theory was propounded Thorstein Veblen. The theory explains how technology drives social change. In essence, technology is seen as a force of cultural change in a given society (Communication Theory, 2019). Langdon Winner, in expanding on the technology determinism theory, proposed two hypotheses namely: 1) The technology of a given society will fundamentally influence the ways the society orders its things. 2) Change in technology definitely leads to change in the society (Communication Theory, 2019). The central meaning of this theory is that technology possess the power to change the way things are originally done in a given society.

The relevance of this theory to this study is that social media such as Facebook has affected the way adverts are done before the advent of new media. Before now, adverts are placed on conventional media (radio, TV, magazine, newspapers and outdoor advertising) as a way of capturing the attention of the people. But, technological inventions like social media (Facebook), have altered these conventional means of advertising to meet people even in their private corners, through their cell phone. The new normal now is that individuals,

organisations and government institutions place adverts on social media platforms as part of the viable means of reaching the people. This is certainly a change in the social order of things.

Methodology

This study adopted survey research method. The survey method is the most appropriate for this study because it elicits the views of respondents on adverts of Indomie Instant Noodles. The data collection instrument used for this study is the questionnaire. Using Australian online sample size calculator, a sample size of 384 was drawn from a population of 968,300 (NPC projected population of Enugu Metropolis). The multi-stage and purposive techniques were used to select respondents for the study within Enugu metropolis, which is made up of Enugu South, Enugu East and Enugu North. The questionnaire instrument was used as the instrument for data collection. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of instrument and the result showed 0.970, which indicates a high level of consistency. The questionnaire was administered with the help of three research assistants. Analysis of data were presented in a table using simple percentages and numbers.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Given that 384 respondents were the sample size of this study, 384 copies of questionnaire were administered. Out of 384 copies of the questionnaire administered, 378 copies were returned. This translates to a 98% return rate. Therefore, analyses were done based on the returned copies of questionnaire. Findings revealed that respondents were made up of 58.2% male and 41.8%. An age bracket of 16 to 60 was used and study revealed that majority of respondents was between the ages of 15 to 45 which amount to 76%. Furthermore, the study revealed that majority of respondents was educated with a 69% accounting for it. While majority of respondents were artisans, civil servants and students with 84% accounting for it.

Table 1: Respondents view on exposure to Indomie Instant Noodles Ads on Facebook

Questions	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1. Respondents' views on the exposure to Indomie Instant Noodles Ads	Yes	378	100%
	No	-	-
	Can't say	-	-
2. Respondents' views on the frequency of exposure to Facebook Indomie Instant Noodles Ads	Once a day	184	48.7
	Twice a day	59	15.6
	3 – 5 times daily	26	6.9
	Twice in a week	54	14.3
	Once a week	24	6.3
	Sparingly	31	8.2
	Total	378	100

Source: Field survey, 2019

Data analysis revealed that 100% of the respondents were exposed to Indomie Instant

Noodles Ads on Facebook. It was also revealed 48.7% of the respondents were exposed to adverts on Indomie Instant Noodles on Facebook at least once a day. This implies that residents in Enugu Metropolis are exposed to Indomie Instant Noodles Ads on daily basis. This indicates that exposure to this adverts is high.

Table 2: Respondents' views on the use of Facebook in advertising Indomie Instant Noodles

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Appropriate	58	15.3
Very wrong	70	18.5
Not wrong	155	41
Can't say	95	25.1
Total	378	100

Source: Field survey, 2019

The above table revealed that 41% of the respondents were of the view that they see nothing wrong in the use of Facebook for the advert of Indomie Instant Noodles. This means that majority of the respondents studied see nothing wrong in using Facebook for Indomie Instant Noodles ads and are not worried with the way it appears on their page.

Table 3: Respondents' views on whether consumers buy Indomie Noodles base on Facebook adverts of Indomie Instant Noodles

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	85	22.4
Agree	68	17.9
Disagree	130	34.3
Strongly disagree	95	25.1
Total	378	100

Source: Field survey, 2019

Analysis of data from table 3 above revealed that 34.3% of respondents were of the opinion that their purchasing decision is not based on their exposure to Facebook ads of Indomie Instant Noodles. This means that buying behaviour of consumers is not predicated on Facebook ads on Indomie Instant Noodle.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of this study revealed that all the respondents are aware and exposed to Indomie Instant Noodles ads on Facebook. Findings also showed that 48.7% of respondents are frequency exposed (once a day) to Facebook Indomie Instant Noodles Ads. This corroborate the findings of French and Story (2004) where they asserted that children exposed to advertising will choose advertised food products at significantly higher rates than children who were not exposed. They further noted that children's exposure to food television advertising increases the number of attempts children's make to influence food purchases

their parents buy while purchase requests for specific brands or categories of food products reflect product advertising frequencies. Also, in consonance with this study finding Chernin (2008) noted that exposure to food marketing significantly increased children's preferences for advertised products. However, (Gaber, 2012) in his study found that the value of advertising is decreased when there is a high frequency of exposure. This finding is in agreement with the diffusion innovation theory because if the new innovation (Facebook) that is introduced is not accepted, people will not be exposed to it in the first place.

Communicating finding of this study, it was revealed that majority of the respondents make use of social media platforms. It was also revealed that 41% of respondents were of the view that they see nothing wrong in the use of Facebook for Indomie Instant Noodles ads. It is quite clear from their views that like every other advertising platform, Facebook can serve equal purpose of advertising with the possibility of reaching a great number of people. This gives credence to Champoux, Durgee and McGlynn, (2012) assertion that as Facebook has become the most-visited website site, it has become the first location for a company looking to modernize its communication strategy. In consistence with this finding Barnes and Hair (2012) revealed that the more the consumers like a website, the more positive the attitude they have toward its ads. Though, Kornias and Halalau (2012) in their study maintained that when users see advertising as troubling, invasive, disturbing, inferring, distracting, intrusive, forced, or obstructive and interfering with their goal oriented tasks for which they are present on Facebook, the ads are perceived as being annoying.

Analysis of findings showed that 34.3% of respondents are of the opinion that their purchasing decision is not based on their exposure to Facebook ads on Indomie Instant Noodles. This means that buying behaviour of consumers is not influenced by Facebook ads on Indomie Noodle. In as much as respondents are frequently exposed to Facebook ads on Indomie Noodles it does not necessarily mean they can be influenced by it as the study confirmed. In line with this finding Chernin (2008) study noted that knowledge of persuasive intent did not influence children's responses to the advertisements on consumable products. Supporting this finding Anyanwu (2005, as cited in Agu & Ogbuji, 2008), in their study observed that there are internal and external forces at work that cause the individual to want certain products prefer specific brands and stores over others. The internal factors are consumer needs, motives, perception, attitude and learning. The external determinants include; family, social, & cultural influences, business, economic factors. This simply means that there are factors responsible for the purchasing decision of Indomie Noodles by consumers other than Facebook ads on Indomie Noodles. However, contrary to this study finding Yuanxin and Pittana (2011) in their study, noted that Facebook, which is a part of the internet, is full of information. However, the quality of the information placed on Facebook might have an influence on the perceptions of companies and their products or services in the advertisements of the Facebook users. Therefore, information would be positively correlated with Facebook users' attitude. In contrast with the diffusion of innovation theory the new technology which is Facebook which ads can be placed may not necessarily be seen or adopted as a key variable that can influence consumers buying decision on Indomie Noodles.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The ever-changing landscape of advertising is having huge impact in the way advertisers decide to reach their target audience. There has been a paradigm shift in advertising from the

use of traditional media platforms to the new media of social networking sites. This paradigm shift is occasioned by the emergence of Internet technology. Popular amongst these social media platforms is the Facebook with billions of people already active users. The characteristic feature of Facebook has made it irresistible for advertisers, companies, organizations who would want to better their lot or fortune to ignore the strong pull.

Based on the findings, the researchers recommend that Indomie Instant Noodles advertiser should intensify their advertising campaigns so as to improve the exposure level of Facebook users to Indomie Instant Noodles ads. Also, in as much as respondents see nothing wrong with Indomie Instant Noodles ads being placed on Facebook, advertisers should take into cognizance the content of advertising message so that consumers' perception will not be affected negatively. Indomie Instant Noodles ads in Facebook should be more persuasive and appealing so that the tendency of influencing purchase from Facebook users will be high.

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