

INFLUENCE OF ADVERTISING ON ABUJA WOMEN'S CHOICES OF E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS

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ABSTRACT

Evolution and dynamic penetration of the Internet provided radical paradigm shifts in different aspects of life. Such sectors include, but are not limited to education, health, governance, marketing among others. E-Commerce platforms or online marketing are among significant beneficiaries of the exponential growth of users of the Internet. Taking advantage of the various features of the Internet, e-marketers use strategies, including advertising to attract and persuade their target customers. This study sought to know the influence advertising exerts on women who live in Abuja to choose specific e-Commerce platforms for their online purchases. Theories used to underpin the study are Technological Determinism theory and AIDA Formula. Using DUSICK Online Sampling Calculator, an approximate of 384 females were stratified among women in Wuse, Gwarimpa and Garki areas of AMAC, to harvest data out of an estimated population of 1.75m women, resident in Abuja. A multi-stage sampling approach was adopted for the study, and tools used to gather data were the Questionnaire and FGD. ANOVA was used to measure the extent advertising influences patronage of E-platforms by respondents. It was revealed that advertising played a significant role in determining respondents' choice of online malls, while other variables contributed to pull customers to specific E-platforms. It is recommended that e-marketers adopt a holistic marketing communications approach, and use proper audience and positioning strategies to attract right customers to their e-platforms.

Keywords: online marketing, advertising, females, preferences, positioning strategies

INTRODUCTION

Growth and application of the Internet as one of the newer technologies gave rise to its popularity as a communication technology which can be exploited in different spheres of life. Its emergence has radically changed the way things are done, and has in no small way fulfilled Marshall McLuhan's hypothesizing of the World as a 'Global Village'. Described as the Information Superhighway, the Internet provides broad-band capabilities through which services such as telephone calls, video applications, interactive TV and other multi-media applications are harnessed. On the other hand, it possesses features which provide users with abilities to interact, reach, and personalize the various activities they carry out online. Further they are also able to engage in intimate, immediate and personal activities with others who may be in outermost parts of the World. As Ibraheem (2014) observed, "new information and communication technologies, especially the Internet are driving forces to ensure societal transformations between and across countries. (p. 411). Baran (1999) cited in Okiyi & Eteng (2014) observed that, the ability to transfer information created the Internet (or Net) which is "a global network of interconnected computers that communicate freely and share and exchange information" (p.196). As they further noted, 'from the Internet other communication forms and services developed such as online and the web services (World Wide Web). The web ensures interactivity and connectivity to more information about a subject or is linked to another site or theme.' Through the availability of the Internet, communication has become immediate, interactive and provides users with options of what to do with contents which they can generate, store and retrieve at will. The Internet has revolutionized the World in all ramifications, and created a radical paradigm shift which affected every sphere and aspect of human communication and relationships. This is seen in every sector including governance, commerce, health, education, advertising and so on.

Potentials of the Internet are numerous, and hold capabilities which are being explored and exploited by big businesses given the realization of its viabilities. According to Watson (2003), "big businesses had discovered the Internet... It was given energetic exploitation, a fabulous new marketplace, the global shopping mall" (p. 241). Such capabilities present more opportunities bearing in mind that the Internet can be accessed virtually from anywhere and by various means. Taking into cognizance opportunities on the Internet, advertising has taken a major foothold which has transformed to \$100s billion in profits for the various kinds of online businesses and marketers. As Dominick (2011) noted, "global e-commerce came to account for approximately \$250 billion online spending by 2008, from being non-existent in 1990s" (p. 291). E-commerce activities include advertising and other marketing activities are carried out online to sell products and services directly from websites such as Amazon, E-bay, Alibaba, Jumia, Konga and other platforms through which buyers can buy products. Through the Internet, businesses deal directly with the potential buyer without going through a middleman. And such is done in several ways including providing information, entertainment and also pushing

advertisements to the user, while also providing the user the opportunity to interact with the product and the marketers.

Given the popularity and availability of these E-Commerce sites or online platforms, the study was carried out among literate and working class women who reside in different parts of the Abuja Municipal Area Council, AMAC.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of online advertising on the choice of E-commerce platforms Abuja women patronize. Specific objectives are:

- a. To find out if online advertising persuades Abuja women in selecting the online commercial platform they use for shopping.
- b. To determine the extent adverts on such online commercial platforms influence their purchase of the brands of products they buy.

Research questions

From the objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised:

1. Do online advertising persuade Abuja women in the choice of online commercial platforms they use?
2. To what extent do adverts on these online commercial platforms influence the women to buy the brands of products they buy?

Statement of the Problem

The Internet created room for different kinds of virtual activities as far as man can conceive it. It has become a communication technology which is used for virtually all kinds of activities and these impacts on different communities which are found on the 'Net. Moreover, as a result of its pervasive nature, the Internet is used at the convenience of the user. From the comfort of the home, a user can engage in different kinds of activities, including shopping which is delivered at his or her doorstep. As a result of these possibilities, marketers took the advantage to push their products or services to the user at all times. Sometimes, some of these persuasive actions are done through unsolicited adverts which intrude as users surf the Internet. Such adverts which come up as pop-ups, banner ads, display ads and others may not be solicited for by the user of the platform. Given the intrusive nature of these ads, it becomes pertinent to examine how much influence they wield on visitors to websites. Further, it becomes necessary to examine if visitors are pushed to buy different brands advertised using these platforms, as they come in contact with thousands of such adverts in the course of surfing the Net, or browsing different websites or social media.

At other times, marketers host websites which they use to advertise their products and services to users on the Net. Using such platforms they also advertise brands of products which are marketed under their platforms as done by Amazon, eBay, Jumia, Konga, other brands which they hold a franchise over. Through such websites, adverts of products are sent. As Dominick (2011) observed, “advertisers spent more than \$23 billion in 2008 for online exposure” (p. 292). The implication is that online advertising is seen as an important part of marketing which endears products to potential users. However, given that the Internet is user centred, and such users are sophisticated and knowledgeable of what they want, the need to measure how much online adverts influence them to buy the products they want to buy, and from what platform given that even the e-commerce platforms do not only engage in advertising the brands of products they sell, but they also carry out advertising to lure users to buy their products from their platforms. As Hasan (2013) noted, “a new IBM online survey of consumer digital media and entertainment habits shows audiences are more in control than ever and increasingly savvy about filtering marketing messages” (p. 773). The importance of this is that to be able to engage the attention of buyers and users of products advertised online, or to use such websites more needs to be done. This study aims to find out how much advertising activities online have impacted on women who mainly buy products online from notable e-commerce platforms.

Conceptual clarifications

The following concepts which were used in this study were examined with the view to provide fuller understanding of their applications in the work.

Online marketing:

Online marketing is a concept which is made up of two words: online and marketing. Taken literally, it means those activities which are carried out with the intention of reaching a potential prospect to buy a product to make profit. However, these set of activities are carried out virtually, or online. That is acts of identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably. As Okiyi and Akpoveta (2018) observed, “for any business to survive there is the need for marketing to adequately reach its customers. There is the need therefore for the producer of the goods and services to plan its marketing strategies in such a way that potential prospects become users of the product” (p. 38). Online marketing therefore can be defined as those commercial promotional activities which are carried out online by companies and marketers to ensure that potential customers interface with their products in interesting and pleasant manner. It is carried out through, “a wide range of online, word-of-mouth forums including blogs, company sponsored discussion boards and chat rooms, consumer-to-consumer e-mail, consumer product or service ratings websites and forums, Internet discussion boards and forums, moblogs (sites containing digital audio, images, movies, or photographs) and social networking sites” (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 358).

Advertising

Advertising activities are those groups of functions and processes through which an organization makes known its products and services to a targeted audience with the intention of persuading them to make purchase decisions. According to APCON (1997), “advertising is a form of communication through the media about products, services and ideas, paid for by an identified sponsor”. Online advertising is carried out to provide products and services to customers online through the Internet. These adverts are digital and interactive in nature. They also afford the buyer an opportunity to interact virtually with the product. According to AbdulRaifu (2015), “online advertising can attract customers to a website and prompt them to interact with the video documentaries of or entertainment related to their product on YouTube, Ustream and similar vlogging sites, where people upload, view and comment on other videos” (p. 216). According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), “major forms of online advertising include display ads, search-related ads, and online classifieds” (p. 535). Advertising in this context is seen as taking advantage of the nature and features of the Internet to post multi-mediated adverts either on dedicated websites, social media types or other applications with the view to bring such to the attention of the potential user with the view to begin conversations that may lead to a sale, or building up a relationship with him or her.

Preferences

This is defined as having a greater liking for one alternative over another or others. According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, “it is a feeling of liking or wanting one person or thing more than another person or thing: an advantage that is given to some people or things and not to others.: something that is liked or wanted more than another thing: something that is preferred. Within the context of this work, preference can be akin to brand preference which determines the strength of a brand in the minds and hearts of consumers. It represents which brands are preferred within the assumption that prices and availability are equal among the competing brands. In this instance, given the popularity of Konga and Jumia as e-commerce platforms we intend to know how much advertising has gone to instill preference for one brand over the other. Measures of brand preference come as a result of the impact marketing activities which include advertising have in the hearts and minds of customers and potential customers. Higher brand preferences usually are measured through more revenues, sales and profits which are indicators of financial performance. According to an article from <https://www.mbaskool.com/business> (accessed 18/10/2019), brand preference can be considered an indicator of the effectiveness of the company’s marketing strategies, customer loyalty, and heterogeneity of consumer choices. Brand preference can be further seen as a consumer’s predisposition towards a brand that varies according to the cognitive, affective and conative effects that the brand has had on the consumer.

Positioning strategies

Positioning strategies are derived from ways and activities which are carried out to put a product, service, idea or an organization in the minds of the customer. It comes through the way a product is ranked in the consumer's mind as a result of the benefits it offers; by the way it is classified and differentiated from those of the competition. It could also arise from the relationship it shares with target markets to which it is targeted. It deals with the overall strategy which aims to make a brand occupy a distinct position, relative to competing brands, in the mind of the customer. According to Arens, Weigold & Arens (2013), a positioning strategy is "an effective way to separate a particular brand from its competitors by associating that brand with a particular set of customer needs" (p. 671). To Lombardo, however, "a positioning strategy is when a company chooses one or two important key areas to concentrate on and excels in those areas." It continues by stressing that an effective positioning strategy considers the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, the needs of the customers and market and the position of competitors. The purpose of a positioning strategy is that it allows a company to spotlight specific areas where they can outshine and beat their competition. Relating the definitions to our study, it is observed that users of e-commerce platforms relate to their preferred platforms for various reasons. Conversely, these platforms are using different strategies to pull customers to themselves and occupy the unique positions in their minds.

Theoretical Framework

To support this study, two theories were considered pertinent as they provide assumptions which are applicable to what we intend to find out. These are: technological determinism and the AIDA Formula.

Technological determinism theory is premised on the term 'technological determinism' which was coined by Thorstein Veblen (1857 – 1929) an American sociologist and economist. However, it was Karl Marx who argued that changes in technology and specifically productive technology do have basic influence on human social relations and organizational structure. Ultimately social relations and cultural practices are built around the technological and economic base of a given society. Karl Marx in Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkam-Uwaoma (2017) believed that technological progress leads to newer ways of production in a society and this ultimately influences the cultural, political and economic aspects of a society, thereby inevitably changing society itself (p. 295). This theory complements this work, as it deals with implications of e-Commerce platforms which are digital marketing online transactions that are founded on the Internet and are used to ensure economic growth and profitability of businesses in societies. Technology is perceived as the plank upon which societies and their cultures evolve. It also creates newer ways of production and impacts political, cultural and economic aspects of society.

According to Asemah, et al (2017), "as a technology is stabilized, its design tends to

dictate users' behaviours, consequently diminishing human agency" (p. 298). New technologies affect the way people conduct their businesses and their impact on others. As Hasan (2013) noted, "advertising and commercial interests have taken over the Internet, and e-Commerce is on the upswing...the Internet has already been turned into the latest medium for advertising, marketing and public relations.

Another principle used for the study is the AIDA Formula which is a process embodied in all components of an advertisement which includes the copy, artwork, film, tape and other elements used in the production of the advertisement (Bel-Molokwu, 2000). AIDA means – Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. The process is such that in the production of advertisement messages, every component used in the clip should attract the attention of the online surfer as the advert pops up. It should further elicit interest in the target prospect to listen or watch the ad to the end give that there are a lot of materials that seek the attention of the user. This will also attract interest in the product or service being advertised. As Bel-Molokwu (2000) observed, "each successful brand in advertisement has to attract attention by positioning itself in the eyes of its target market through drawing attention to its most saleable quality" (p. 74). Though there is no timeline attached to these stages, however, with the interest got, desire will be created in the mind of the target prospect, and when the need arises or s/he is faced with which product to buy, that product/service which elicited interest and desire will be bought or used by the prospect.

METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out on women who work and live in Abuja Municipal Council. The mixed research methods which comprise of quantitative and qualitative approaches were used for the study. The population is defined, as urban, literate, working/business women who own smart phones and use them regularly. They work and reside in Wuse, Garki 1 and 2, and Gwarimpa. Out of an estimated population of 3, 095, 118 residents, in 2019, the number of women who are estimated to live in Abuja Municipal is 1, 750, 000 (worldpopulationreview.com, 2009). Females within the ages of 22 – 65 ages who live in the city were considered as members of the population of the study. Using the Dusick online sample size calculator (Accessed, September 30, 2019) with a Confidence level of 95% at an interval of 5%, the sample size OF 384 respondents was drawn.

A multi-stage sampling approach was adopted, whereby middle class women who live in high brow areas of AMAC were considered for the study. The sample population which consists of working class, business owners, educated and married women was reached in purposively selected areas of AMAC and was thereafter systematically selected for effective reach and interaction. Subsequently, they were randomly selected and the Questionnaire administered to them. Out of the 384 copies of the Questionnaire administered, 320 were returned, and represented the overall sample population used for the study.

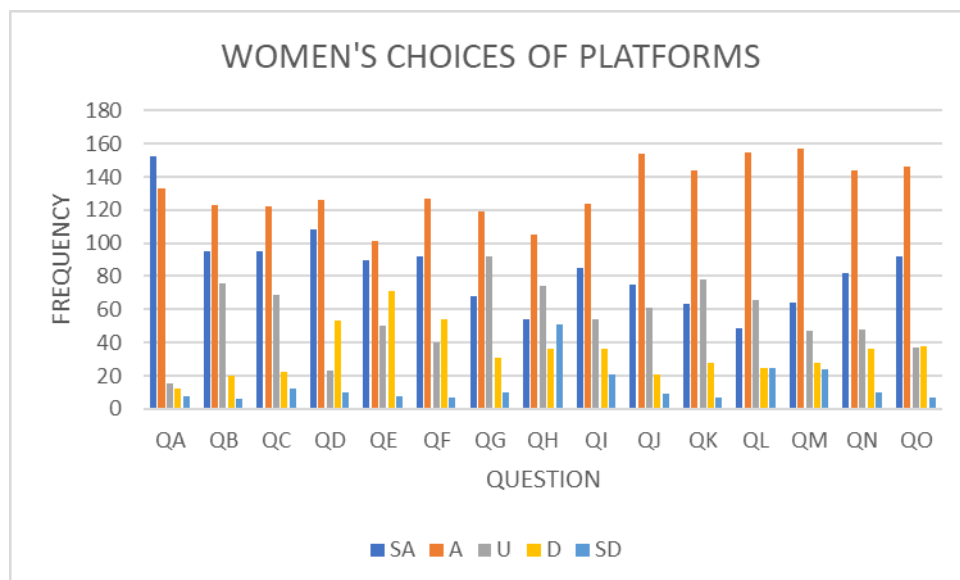
Further, focus group discussions (FGDs) were carried out in two clusters in Garki and Gwarimpa respectively. Each group was made up of 10 women who own smart phones, are literate and use e-Commerce platforms to make purchases. They were made up of married and single women, who work and also do business. Some of these are professional secretaries, medical doctors and lawyers. And they understood what digital commercial platforms were all about.

A five-point Likert scaled structured Questionnaire with 15 items was constructed with the purpose of eliciting data needed for the study. Data were derived through frequency and percentages and further subjected to ANOVA statistical measures to seek significant differences while answering the research questions. Also, conclusions were arrived at from the focus group discussions held.

S/ N	QUESTIONS	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
QA	I buy goods through online shopping malls.	152 (47%)	133 (41%)	15 (5%)	12 (4%)	8 (3%)	320 (100%)
QB	I trust the services provided by the online shopping mall I use.	95 (30%)	123 (38%)	76 (24%)	20 (6%)	6 (2%)	320 (100%)
QC	I buy goods which are advertise on my preferred online shopping mall.	95 (30%)	122 (38%)	69 (21%)	22 (7%)	12 (4%)	320 (320%)
QD	I discovered the online shopping mall through advertisement.	108 (34%)	126 (39%)	23 (7%)	53 (17%)	10 (3%)	320 (100%)
QE	My preferred online shopping mall advertises themselves through conventional media like radio, TV, newspapers.	90 (28%)	101 (32%)	50 (16%)	71 (22%)	8 (2%)	320 (100%)
QF	My preferred online shopping mall advertises products it sells through its app.	92 (29%)	127 (40%)	40 (12%)	54 (17%)	7 (2%)	320 (100%)
QG	Online adverts of such make me buy them.	68 (21%)	119 (37%)	92 (29%)	31 (10%)	10 (3%)	320 (100%)
QH	Online adverts of such products make me want to buy from physical markets.	54 (17%)	105 (33%)	74 (23%)	36 (11%)	51 (16%)	320 (100%)
QI	Online adverts of these products provide a wide range of choices of products I can pick from.	85 (27%)	124 (39%)	54 (17%)	36 (11%)	21 (6%)	320 (320%)
QJ	I am attracted to these online	75	154	61	21	9	320

	products because they appear attractive and appealing on online adverts.	(23%)	(48%)	(19%)	(7%)	(3%)	(100%)
QK	I agree that other factors besides advertising makes me buy them from the online shopping mall I prefer.	63 (20%)	144 (45%)	78 (24%)	28 (9%)	7 (2%)	320 (100%)
QL	I prefer the online shopping mall I use because its advertising is more attractive.	49 (15%)	155 (48%)	66 (21%)	25 (8%)	25 (8%)	320 (100%)
QM	Through the online adverts, I can decide on specifications I want about the product.	64 (20%)	157 (49%)	47 (15%)	28 (9%)	24 (7%)	320 (100%)
QN	Features of the product advertised online looks better that they do in conventional media channels.	82 (26%)	144 (45%)	48 (15%)	36 (11%)	10 (3%)	320 (100%)
QO	Online advertising is more interactive as feedback is quicker than in conventional media.	92 (29%)	146 (46%)	37 (11%)	38 (12%)	7 (2%)	320 (100%)

A graph was obtained as seen below:



The ANOVA result conducted is given below

Null Hypotheses:

$$H_{Q0} : \mu_{Q1} = \mu_{Q2} = \mu_{Q3} = \mu_{Q4} = \mu_{Q5} = \mu_{Q6} = \mu_{Q7} = \mu_{Q8} = \mu_{Q9} = \mu_{Q10} = \mu_{Q11} = \mu_{Q12} = \mu_{Q13} = \mu_{Q14} = \mu_{Q15}$$

$H_{R0} : \mu_{SA} = \mu_A = \mu_U = \mu_D = \mu_{SD}$ (i.e. There is no significant different between the mean responses)

Alternative Hypotheses:

H_{QA} : At least, any two of the mean question response is significantly different

H_{RA} : At least, any two of the mean responses is significantly different

	Df	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	F value	Pr(>F)						
QUESTION	14	0	0	0.00	1						
RESPONSE	4	127089	31772	71.53	<2e-16 ***						
Residuals	56	24875	444								

Signif. codes:	0	'****'	0.001	'***'	0.01	'**'	0.05	'.'	0.1	' '	1

The ANOVA result indicates that at 5% level of significance, the data does not provide enough evidence against the null hypotheses H_{Q0} , as such, we retain H_{Q0} . But we see that the data provides enough evidence against the null hypotheses H_{R0} , hence we reject H_{R0} .

The responses are significantly different across the questions but the frequency of the respondents is not significantly different as expected. To be sure of the particular responses that are different, a post-hoc analysis was carried out and the result below was obtained.

Tukey HSD test is given below:

\$RESPONSE				
	diff	lwr	upr	p adj
D-A	-97.93333	-119.6249687	-76.241698	0.0000000
SA-A	-47.73333	-69.4249687	-26.041698	0.0000007
SD-A	-117.66667	-139.3583020	-95.975031	0.0000000
U-A	-76.66667	-98.3583020	-54.975031	0.0000000
SA-D	50.20000	28.5083646	71.891635	0.0000002
SD-D	-19.73333	-41.4249687	1.958302	0.0911930
U-D	21.26667	-0.4249687	42.958302	0.0572259
SD-SA	-69.93333	-91.6249687	-48.241698	0.0000000
U-SA	-28.93333	-50.6249687	-7.241698	0.0036067
U-SD	41.00000	19.3083646	62.691635	0.0000177

Again, the ANOVA result reveals that the responses are significantly different while the questions are not, at 5% level of significance. The only two response pairings that are not significantly different are SD – D and U – D.

Frequently preferred online shopping malls

S/N	JUMIA	Jiji	KONGA	OTHERS	TOTAL
NO	127	86	71	36	320
%	(40%)	(27%)	(22%)	(11%)	(100%)

DATA ANALYSIS

From respondents' responses to the Questionnaire, the following deductions were made, and attempts made to answer research questions asked. It was discovered that most respondents buy goods from E-Commerce platforms with 47% and 41% respectively. This agrees with results provided by ANOVA which states that there are no significant differences seen in the findings got. Most respondents were moderate in the trust they hold for the online platforms, this becomes disturbing as 24% were undecided on the measure of trust they hold for online platforms, against 30% for SA and 38% for those who agree.

It was further discovered that most respondents got introduced to the e-commerce platforms they use through advertising. This is important to know as most of these platforms adopted the business model which ensured that advertising; conventional and online are used to ensure familiarity and growth of their platforms. Online advertising was also found to be appealing to the respondents given the specific features they exhibited. This finding confirms the research question which sought to know if advertising persuades Abuja women to use the online e-commerce platform that they use. It also confirms findings made by other scholars. As Arens, et al (2013) observed advertisers consider advertising through the Internet important because while customers/consumers get more comfortable interacting and seeking out rich content such as video they will become more likely to supplement their other media usage with the Internet" (p. 489). It is significant to note that whereas advertising made them to adopt the e-commerce platforms they use and want to buy from the platforms it also makes them want to buy those products from conventional physical markets. Many factors could be adduced for this, including cultural affinity, and is a theme that needs further exploration and research.

Issues of interactivity, information and feedback resonated among respondents as most of them agree that they can order goods to the specification they want. Most of them also prefer adverts seen online as they are able to examine such products critically before they make up their minds. 58% of respondents agree that online adverts make them buy the products they buy. Further 50% of respondents agree that through such adverts they want to buy products they see. Online advertising

also communicate better with the respondents and as a result of its interactive abilities, respondents are able to talk back to producers of products they want and use. This was confirmed by 71% of respondents who strongly agreed and agreed with the question asked. So, on the issue of feedback, online adverts of e-commerce platforms serve a great purpose as they explain features of the products to potential users, and at the same they direct them to the e-commerce platforms to conduct their business, or make purchase. This also answered the 2nd research question which sought to know the extent these adverts on the e-commerce platform they use influence the women's decisions to buy the brands of products they buy.

Findings further confirmed the theses of the theory and principle which provided support for the study. The interactive and appealing nature of these online adverts, while calling the attention of the respondents (according to AIDA formula), also alluded to technological determinism which suggested that users of a technology soon have their behaviours and actions determined by that technology.

Finally, most of the respondents use Jumia with 40%, followed by Jiji with 27% and Konga (22%).

Analysis of Focus Group Discussions held in Garki and Gwarimpa

Focus group discussions were also held in two clusters at Garki and Gwarimpa respectively, and the researchers sought to find out discussants' perceptions of the influence advertising has on their preference e-Commerce platforms. The FGDs had the same objectives as the Questionnaire, which are to determine how much advertisements, online and conventional, influence their purchase of what they buy, and if they buy adverts of the products they find online on the e-commerce platform they use. The FGDs were carried out in areas where the study was carried out; and discussants who were working class and business women were purposively selected for the discussions. Each cluster was made up of 10 discussants, which made a total of 20 discussants.

The two FGDs were conducted over a two week period (14 days), and discussants were women between the ages of 22 – 58 years. Information got from the FGDs were used as part of findings, and provided different perspectives for the study.

Discussants' perception of e-Commerce platforms

Most of the discussants agree that they patronize e-Commerce platforms. The most popular ones are Jumia, Konga, Jiji, Amazon, AliExpress and e-Bay. A few however observed that they were duped, and do no longer have an interest in them. Products they buy mostly include: electronics, cosmetics, household items, children and adult wears, and kitchen appliances.

Discussants' perception of advertisements on the e-Commerce platforms

The adverts are regular and are significant to their purchase of the goods they buy. However, they are just pop-ups which do not provide enough information on what is to be bought. Some discussants noted that the adverts could be annoying, and get

them upset as they pop-up indiscriminately. Some of the adverts were also not considered to be relevant in some cases. On the influence the adverts exert on their purchase decisions, they observed that it depends on the products which can stir up the interest of potential buyers. It also depends on if one wants to buy a particular product that is advertised.

They further observed that some of these online shopping malls do advertise using conventional media, and these are heard on radio, TV and read in newspapers. They also see them on billboards. However, these conventional adverts only reinforce their convictions on which online shopping mall to use.

Influences on discussants choice of e-Commerce platforms

They were influenced mainly by word-of-mouth in their decisions on what online shopping mall to use. They also observed that their choices for the platforms they use include time factor, reliability, payment on delivery and confidence that they will receive what they ordered. Other factors include: prices, unavailability of products in conventional markets and so on.

On the other platform they could use, where their preferred choices were not available, most preferred Konga, followed by Jumia, Jiji or go to the conventional physical markets.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the findings made, attempts are hereby made to answer the research questions asked. To the first question which sought to know if respondents were influenced by adverts which are carried out in conventional and online media types in their decisions on what e-commerce platform they intend to use. It was discovered that a significant number of the respondents were influenced by the adverts to use the e-commerce platforms that they use. But other factors were also found to be important that influenced them to use the e-commerce platform they patronize.

To the second research question which sought to know if online adverts influence them to buy from the e-commerce platform they buy from, most of the respondents believed that though they get adequate information on products they intend to buy, they do not necessarily buy them from the e-commerce platforms. Some prefer to get the information and thereafter make purchase from physical markets. But to a large extent, online adverts provide them with a lot of options of what they can buy, but they do not influence the final decisions they make concerning such purchases.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We hereby conclude that given the availability of many channels through which target consumers can be reached, and given the high level of media literacy exhibited by most of the respondents reached either through the Questionnaire and FGDs,

efforts should be made by marketers and owners of businesses should be more systematic and creative in planning their campaigns. Such will ensure an adequate reach, and their products can develop desired personalities. As much as it is possible, besides adopting digital technologies to sell their brands of products, they should also use every tool of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) to compete favourably, and maintain their positions in the marketplace.

From findings and analyses done, we hereby make the following recommendations:

1. Advertisers and marketers of brands of products should adopt a holistic approach while designing their advertising campaigns. Online and conventional media types should be used in their campaigns.
2. Adequate research efforts should be carried out by advertisers and owners of brands of products to determine appropriate media types to use, and online websites which they can use to expose their brands of products to their potential users.
3. In planning their online media campaigns, efforts should be made to make them as interactive and informational as it can be, given availability of competing sites which are fighting for the potential user of the product.
4. Besides advertising through their own websites, advertisers can also carry out campaigns on popular blogs and online publications for adequate exposure and reach to the diverse users of the Internet.

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