



Influence of Social Media Advertising on the Buying behavior of Edo State Consumers (A Study of Dettol Soap)

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates “Influence of Social Media Advertising on the Buying Behavior of Edo State Consumers (A Case Study of Dettol Soap)”. The case study investigates the influence of social media advertising on the buying behavior of consumers in Edo State, focusing on Dettol Soap as a specific product. Data was collected from 350 respondents through a survey to understand consumers' exposure to social media ads, their attitudes towards the product, brand awareness, and the impact on purchase intentions. The study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of social media advertising in driving consumer behavior in the region. The study findings reveals that a substantial number of respondents in Edo State are actively exposed to and engaged with social media advertising. Approximately 40% of the respondents reported a high level of exposure and engagement, suggesting that a significant portion of consumers in the region actively interact with advertisements on social media platforms. This reflects the widespread influence and reach of social media advertising in Edo State. The study recommended that given their prominence as primary platforms for ad engagement, the marketing team should invest in targeted and engaging social media campaignsta on Facebook and Instagram to capitalize on their potential to reach a wider audience.

Keywords: Social Media, Advertising, Buying Behavior, Consumers, Dettol Soap

1. Introduction

Advertising is a method of spreading information through various media channels, typically supported by a sponsor. This form of communication is fundamentally persuasive, aiming to sway the audience towards the sponsor's perspective and encourage actions in favor of the advertised product (Eluwa, 2005).

In a competitive, free-market economy, manufacturers face the daunting challenge of survival. Their primary concern is how to sell their products and increase awareness among consumers. Advertising emerges as a vital tactic that aligns with their goals. The drive to prosper in business and boost profits has firmly established advertising as an indispensable tool (Eluwa, 2005).

Management doesn't employ advertising for mere entertainment or product maintenance. It utilizes paid media to reach a broad audience, transparently acknowledging the sponsors' identity, primarily for persuasion or advocacy, even when it may seem like conveying information. Advertising serves a dual purpose: promoting the advertiser's products and aiding consumers in making informed purchase decisions (Okoro, 1995).

Social media, a relatively recent phenomenon, has had a profound impact on society. The number of social media users continues to grow, demonstrating the immense influence of this trend (Voramontri and Klieb, 2018). Today, social media is a ubiquitous term, known even in remote corners of the world, with platforms like Facebook and Twitter becoming part of daily life (Edosomwan et al., 2011).

Despite its rapid ascent, social media is a relatively new concept. A mere decade ago, the idea of living without it seemed unimaginable (Wasserman and Faust, 1994; Ahuja and Galvin, 2003). The evolution of social media has created a new landscape, offering unprecedented opportunities for personal connections and reaching vast audiences. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram, along with collaborative projects like blogs and Wikipedia, have reshaped communication (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

However, advertising is a persuasive form of communication essential for businesses, while social media has transformed the way we connect and communicate in a relatively short span of time. These two phenomena are integral parts of our contemporary world, shaping the way information is disseminated and personal connections are made.

Numerous studies confirm that social media is widely embraced as a valuable source of information due to its perceived convenience and credibility. E-marketers estimated that in 2016, approximately 16.1 billion individuals were actively engaging with networking sites via electronic devices on a monthly basis. This growth was projected to double by 2017, with the number of social network users expected to surpass 2.33 billion by the close of 2018 (MCMC, 2017). These projections materialized, as the number of social media users exceeded 2.3 billion in 2019 (Statista Surveys, 2019).

For decades, traditional advertising held a monopoly as the primary channel for marketers. However, social media has evolved into a substantial platform for companies to promote their products (Gilbert and Karahalios, 2009). The question that arises is whether social media is a more effective means of reaching consumers than traditional advertising. While the significance of social media for businesses has grown, the question of its true effectiveness lingers without concrete evidence.

Therefore, there is a pressing need to assess the impact of social media advertising on consumer purchasing behaviors and decisions. The central query is: how does social media advertising influence consumers' choices to buy? Although numerous existing studies explore the reasons why businesses should embrace social media and strategies to help them establish a stronger presence in this realm (Ashman et al., 2015; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010), there is a notable dearth of research from the consumer's perspective. Moreover, consumer sentiments might differ from what marketers anticipate, potentially leading to variations in brand engagement through social media. Despite the surge in social media as a marketing avenue, it remains challenging to obtain concrete data on return on investment within this context.

Social media advertising has become an essential part of Nigeria's advertising landscape, impacting various sectors, including politics and brand promotion. One brand that has effectively harnessed advertising strategies is Dettol Soap, known for its refreshing and nourishing products. The 20th century marked a significant turning point for advertising, driven by technological advancements and industrial growth, which led to its widespread influence.

In the modern era, advertising has evolved into a sophisticated and highly organized practice. This research aims to investigate the extent to which the media relies on advertising for its sustainability, focusing on the exposure of individuals in Edo state to social media advertisements and their subsequent purchasing behavior. Dettol Soap serves as a case study due to its enduring popularity in the market and its status as a privately-owned brand. The study seeks to uncover the depth of the media's dependence on advertising in today's context.

In today's rapidly changing environment, advertising has transformed, emphasizing increased professionalism and higher standards. This research dives into the critical question of whether the media's survival is intricately tied to advertising. Specifically, it explores the impact of social media advertisements on the consumer behavior of both young and older individuals living in Edo state, with Dettol Soap as a focal point. The enduring popularity of Dettol Soap and its status as a privately owned brand motivate this study to delve deeper into the interdependent relationship between the media and advertising for their respective sustainability.

2. Statement of the Study

Social media advertisements are widely recognized for their use of persuasive techniques to engage consumers and encourage them to make purchases. Additionally, it's evident that these ads hold significant sway over human behavior, with their influence ranging from positive to negative, depending on the specific content of the ad. Often, consumers reject ad messaging for reasons such as insufficient information or a failure to adequately convey the product's essence.

The primary objective of this study is to explore consumer attitudes towards Dettol Soap advertisements on social media platforms and ascertain whether these ads impact the purchasing habits of Edo State residents. While numerous research efforts have delved into the influence of social media advertising on consumer behavior, there is a noticeable gap in understanding how Dettol Soap ads, in particular, affect the buying decisions of individuals in Edo State. This research aims to address this specific aspect of advertising's impact on consumer behavior in the region, highlighting its significance.

3. Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To assess the extent of exposure to social media advertising among consumers in Edo state.
2. To find out social media platforms impact on consumers' perceptions of Dettol Soap through advertising.
3. To find out consumers perception of social media advert on Dettol.

4. Research Questions

The following are the research questions:

1. What is the level of exposure and engagement with social media advertising among consumers in Edo State?
2. How do social media platforms impact on consumers' perceptions of Dettol Soap through advertising?
3. What are the specific perceptions of consumers regarding social media advertisement for Dettol soap?

5. Review of Relevant Literature

Social Media Advertising and Consumer Behavior

Social media advertising plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior, as it leverages the vast reach and interactive nature of social media platforms to engage consumers and influence their attitudes, preferences, and purchase decisions. Studies have shown that social media advertising significantly impacts consumer attitudes and perceptions toward brands and products. Lee and Koo (2015) found that consumers exposed to social media advertising were more likely to develop positive attitudes and higher levels of brand awareness. This positive brand perception can lead to increased purchase intentions and brand loyalty (Smith & Johnson, 2017). Social media advertising provides a personalized and targeted approach, allowing brands to deliver relevant content to specific consumer segments, which enhances its effectiveness in driving consumer behavior. Furthermore, the interactive nature of social media platforms fosters two-way communication between brands and consumers, enabling businesses to gather feedback, address queries, and build stronger relationships. The direct engagement with consumers through social media advertising enhances consumer trust, brand credibility, and overall brand-consumer interactions, ultimately influencing their purchasing decisions. Therefore, businesses today recognize the significance of social media advertising as an essential tool in understanding and influencing consumer behavior effectively.

Social Media

Social media refers to online platforms and websites that facilitate interactive communication, content sharing, and networking among individuals and communities. It allows users to create, share, and exchange user-generated content, such as text, images, videos, and links. Social media platforms have become essential channels for digital communication, providing opportunities for businesses to connect with their target audiences, engage users, and promote products or services.

Types of Social Media in Relation to Marketing Behavior:

1. **Social Networking Sites:** These platforms, like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, focus on connecting users with friends, colleagues, or people with similar interests. Businesses leverage these sites to build brand awareness, engage with consumers, and foster relationships with their target audience.
2. **Visual Content Sharing Platforms:** Platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, and Snapchat emphasize visual content sharing, making them ideal for businesses with visually appealing products or services. Marketers use these platforms to showcase products, create visual storytelling, and inspire consumer engagement.
3. **Video Sharing Platforms:** YouTube is a prominent example of a video-sharing platform, where businesses can create and share video content to promote their products, demonstrate features, and engage consumers through visual storytelling.
4. **Microblogging Platforms:** Twitter is a leading microblogging platform that allows businesses to share concise messages, updates, and links to their content, facilitating real-time interactions with consumers and enhancing brand visibility.
5. **Blogging and Content Sharing Platforms:** Websites like WordPress and Medium enable businesses to host blogs and share valuable content with their target audience. Blogs are used for content marketing, thought leadership, and building expertise in a particular industry.
6. **Professional Networking Sites:** LinkedIn is a professional networking platform, ideal for B2B marketing, recruitment, and establishing business partnerships. It enables businesses to engage with industry professionals and share relevant content with a more professional focus.

Platforms of Social media

Social media encompasses a diverse range of platforms that facilitate communication and content sharing among users. Here are some of the major social media platforms as of my last update in September 2021:

- **Facebook:** A leading social networking site with billions of active users worldwide. It allows users to connect with friends, share updates, photos, videos, and links, and interact with content through likes, comments, and shares.
- **Instagram:** A visual content-sharing platform focused on photos and short videos. Users can follow accounts, like, comment, and share posts, making it popular for businesses to showcase products and engage with consumers.

- **Twitter:** A microblogging platform known for its short text messages called "tweets." Users can follow accounts, retweet, and use hashtags to engage in real-time conversations and trending topics.
- **LinkedIn:** A professional networking site that caters to businesses and professionals. It facilitates connections for B2B networking, job search, and industry-related content sharing.
- **YouTube:** A video-sharing platform where users can upload and watch videos. Businesses utilize YouTube for video marketing, tutorials, brand storytelling, and engaging with subscribers.
- **Pinterest:** A visual discovery platform where users can "pin" images and videos to virtual boards. It is popular for lifestyle, fashion, and design-related content.
- **Snapchat:** A platform known for its disappearing photo and video messages. It is widely used for real-time, short-lived content and creative marketing campaigns.
- **TikTok:** A short-form video platform that gained popularity for its viral challenges and user-generated content. It is popular among younger audiences.
- **Reddit:** An online community-based platform where users can share links, text, and media content and engage in discussions on various topics.
- **WhatsApp:** A messaging app that allows users to send text messages, voice messages, images, and videos. It is popular for private messaging and group chats.
- **Tumblr:** A microblogging platform that allows users to share text, images, videos, and multimedia content. It has a strong creative and artistic community.
- **WeChat:** A multifunctional messaging app widely used in China, combining social networking, messaging, and mobile payments.

Importance of Consumer Behavior in Marketing

Consumer behavior plays a critical role in marketing as it provides valuable insights into understanding and predicting how consumers make purchasing decisions and interact with products, services, and brands. Recognizing and analyzing consumer behavior helps marketers create more effective marketing strategies, tailor products to meet consumer needs, and build long-term relationships with customers. Here are some key reasons why consumer behavior is crucial in marketing:

1. **Understanding Consumer Needs and Wants:** Consumer behavior research helps marketers understand the needs, wants, and preferences of their target audience. By identifying consumers' motivations, desires, and pain points, businesses can develop products and services that address specific consumer demands, leading to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty.
2. **Market Segmentation and Targeting:** Consumer behavior data aids in segmenting the market based on various factors like demographics, psychographics, and buying behavior. Marketers can then target specific segments with customized marketing messages, promotions, and offerings that resonate with their interests and preferences, maximizing the effectiveness of marketing campaigns.
3. **Product and Service Development:** Consumer behavior research provides valuable insights into product and service design and improvements. By analyzing consumer feedback and behavior, businesses can refine existing offerings or create new products that better meet consumer expectations and preferences.
4. **Brand Positioning and Messaging:** Understanding consumer behavior helps marketers position their brands effectively in the minds of consumers. By aligning brand messaging with consumer values and aspirations, businesses can build stronger brand identities and emotional connections with their target audience.
5. **Influencing Purchase Decisions:** Consumer behavior research aids in understanding the factors that influence purchase decisions. Marketers can leverage this knowledge to develop persuasive marketing strategies, such as using social proof, endorsements, or limited-time offers, to encourage consumers to make purchasing decisions.
6. **Customer Relationship Management:** Consumer behavior data assists in building and maintaining strong customer relationships. By understanding consumer preferences, communication styles, and purchase patterns, businesses can personalize interactions, provide relevant recommendations, and offer exceptional customer experiences.
7. **Assessing Marketing Effectiveness:** Monitoring and analyzing consumer behavior allows marketers to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing initiatives. By tracking consumer responses, engagement metrics, and sales data, businesses can measure the impact of marketing efforts and make data-driven decisions for future campaigns.

Growth of Social Media Advertising in the Region

The growth of social media advertising in the region, specifically in Edo State, Nigeria, has witnessed a remarkable surge over the past few years. As one of Nigeria's prominent states, Edo has embraced the digital age, resulting in increased internet penetration and smartphone usage. This digital

transformation has provided businesses with a vast pool of potential consumers and paved the way for social media advertising to thrive. Major social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp are widely used by Edo State's population to connect, share content, and engage with brands and businesses. The adoption of social media by both businesses and consumers has led to a significant shift in advertising strategies, with more companies investing in social media marketing to reach their target audience effectively.

In a report by Statista, Nigeria's social media penetration rate was estimated to be around 21.6% in 2021, indicating a substantial growth potential for the region (Statista, 2021). This upward trend in social media usage has been leveraged by businesses operating in Edo State to promote products, services, and brand messages through engaging and interactive content. Moreover, the ability of social media advertising to offer precise audience targeting based on demographics and interests has further fueled its growth in the region. Businesses can tailor their advertising efforts to reach specific consumer segments in Edo State, ensuring their messages resonate with the right audience.

As social media platforms continue to evolve, the growth of social media advertising in Edo State is likely to persist, creating opportunities for businesses to tap into the expanding digital market. However, as the competition intensifies, marketers need to stay updated with the latest trends and best practices to make the most of this dynamic advertising landscape.

Factors Influencing Consumer Behavior in Edo State

Consumer behavior in Edo State, Nigeria, is influenced by a combination of cultural, social, economic, and technological factors. These factors shape the attitudes, perceptions, and decision-making processes of consumers in the region. Here are some key factors influencing consumer behavior in Edo State:

1. **Cultural Factors:** Edo State is known for its rich cultural heritage and diverse ethnic groups. Cultural norms, values, and traditions influence consumer preferences and buying behavior. For instance, certain products or services may be more appealing to specific ethnic groups, and marketing messages need to be sensitive to cultural beliefs and practices.
2. **Social Factors:** The social environment plays a significant role in shaping consumer behavior. Peer influence, family preferences, and social norms impact consumers' brand choices and purchase decisions. Social media, as a powerful communication channel, also influences consumer opinions and perceptions of products and brands.
3. **Economic Factors:** Edo State's economic conditions, such as income levels, employment opportunities, and purchasing power, impact consumer spending patterns. Economic fluctuations can influence consumer confidence and willingness to spend on certain products or services.
4. **Technological Factors:** The increasing access to smartphones, internet connectivity, and social media platforms has transformed consumer behavior in Edo State. Consumers now use digital channels for product research, price comparison, and online shopping, influencing their purchase decisions.
5. **Lifestyle and Demographic Factors:** Consumers' lifestyles, age, gender, and educational backgrounds influence their preferences and priorities. For instance, younger consumers may be more tech-savvy and open to trying new products, while older consumers might be more traditional and price-sensitive.
6. **Marketing and Advertising:** The effectiveness of marketing and advertising campaigns impacts consumer perceptions and brand choices. Engaging and persuasive advertising strategies can influence consumer preferences and lead to brand loyalty.
7. **Product Quality and Reputation:** Consumers in Edo State value product quality and the reputation of brands. Positive word-of-mouth and customer reviews influence consumer trust and purchase decisions.
8. **Environmental Consciousness:** Edo State consumers' increasing awareness of environmental issues may influence their preference for eco-friendly products and socially responsible brands.

Technological Advancements and Digital Engagement

Technological advancements and digital engagement have revolutionized consumer behavior in Edo State, Nigeria, and globally. With the increasing penetration of smartphones, internet connectivity, and social media platforms, consumers now have greater access to information and more opportunities to engage with brands and businesses. These advancements have transformed the way consumers interact with products, make purchase decisions, and seek customer support. Edo State's consumers are now more digitally engaged than ever before, using social media for product research, reviews, and recommendations from peers (Oni & Ajala, 2015). Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp have become essential channels for businesses to communicate directly with their target audience, enabling real-time engagement and personalized interactions (Ajibola & Olatunji, 2019).

The convenience of online shopping and the availability of various digital payment options have further accelerated the adoption of e-commerce in Edo State. Consumers can now make purchases from the comfort of their homes, leading to a shift in buying behavior (Oyewole & Ifeanyichukwu, 2020). Moreover, digital marketing and advertising have become indispensable tools for businesses to reach their target audience effectively (Adeyanju et al., 2021). Brands can now deliver targeted messages based on consumer preferences and behavior, creating more relevant and engaging campaigns.

Overall, technological advancements and digital engagement have reshaped consumer behavior in Edo State, offering businesses unprecedented opportunities to connect with their customers, drive brand loyalty, and stay ahead in a competitive market.

Impact of Social Media Advertising on Consumer Attitudes

Social media advertising exerts a significant impact on consumer attitudes, shaping their perceptions and opinions towards brands and products. By leveraging interactive and visually appealing content, social media platforms enable businesses to engage consumers in a more personalized and immersive way. Several studies have highlighted the positive influence of social media advertising on consumer attitudes. Lee and Koo (2015) found that exposure to social media advertising led to more favorable consumer attitudes towards brands. Social media advertising enhances brand awareness, as consumers are repeatedly exposed to brand messages, resulting in improved brand recognition and recall (Smith & Johnson, 2017). Additionally, social media provides opportunities for consumers to interact with brands directly, leading to a sense of connectedness and emotional attachment to the brand (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Furthermore, targeted advertising ensures that consumers receive content relevant to their interests, increasing the likelihood of a positive reception. All these factors contribute to shaping consumer attitudes positively, fostering a more favorable perception of brands and influencing their decision-making process.

Social media advertising's impact on consumer attitudes goes beyond mere exposure and brand awareness. The interactive nature of social media platforms allows for two-way communication between brands and consumers, providing an avenue for direct engagement and feedback (Stephen & Galak, 2012). Consumers feel empowered to share their experiences, opinions, and concerns, and brands can respond promptly, fostering a sense of trust and responsiveness. Positive interactions with brands through social media can lead to a favorable change in consumer attitudes, as they perceive the brand as attentive, approachable, and customer-centric (Chung & Austria, 2015).

Moreover, social media advertising allows brands to create emotional connections with consumers through compelling storytelling and impactful visuals. Emotionally resonant content enhances consumer-brand relationships, leading to more favorable attitudes and increased brand loyalty (Hollebeek, 2011). Social media platforms also enable the sharing of user-generated content and customer testimonials, reinforcing positive brand associations and strengthening consumer confidence in the brand (Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016).

Furthermore, social media advertising can influence consumers' attitudes by promoting social proof and peer recommendations. When consumers observe their friends or peers engaging positively with a brand or product on social media, it can generate a "bandwagon effect," influencing their own attitudes and perceptions towards the brand (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

In conclusion, the impact of social media advertising on consumer attitudes is multifaceted, encompassing factors such as brand engagement, emotional resonance, peer influence, and responsive communication. By understanding and leveraging these dynamics, businesses can strategically use social media to create positive consumer attitudes, resulting in increased brand favorability, loyalty, and advocacy.

Brand Awareness and Recognition through Social Media Advertising

Brand awareness and recognition are vital outcomes of social media advertising, as it enables businesses to establish a strong presence in consumers' minds and distinguish themselves from competitors. Social media platforms offer an effective channel for creating and reinforcing brand awareness, given their extensive reach and ability to target specific audience segments (Hajli et al., 2017). Through engaging content, eye-catching visuals, and consistent brand messaging, businesses can effectively capture consumers' attention and leave a lasting impression. Social media's interactive nature facilitates the sharing of brand content, further amplifying brand visibility and recognition (Smith & Fischer, 2019).

Studies have shown that social media advertising plays a significant role in enhancing brand awareness. Consumers exposed to social media ads are more likely to recall and recognize the advertised brands compared to traditional advertising (Smith & Johnson, 2017). Additionally, social media platforms enable businesses to engage with consumers directly, fostering brand-consumer interactions and building stronger connections (Kumar et al., 2016). Consumers who have positive interactions with brands on social media are more likely to remember the brand and consider it in their purchasing decisions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

By leveraging social media analytics and metrics, businesses can gauge the effectiveness of their brand awareness campaigns and make data-driven decisions to optimize their strategies (Wamba & Carter, 2015). Tracking metrics like impressions, reach, and engagement allows marketers to assess the impact of social media advertising on brand recognition and make necessary adjustments to improve performance.

In conclusion, social media advertising is a powerful tool for building brand awareness and recognition. With its extensive reach, interactive capabilities, and ability to engage directly with consumers, social media enables businesses to create a lasting impact on their target audience and enhance brand recognition in the competitive market landscape.

Social Media Engagement and Consumer Perception of Dettol Soap

Social media engagement plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perception of Dettol Soap. By actively interacting with consumers through social media platforms, the brand can establish a more personalized and relatable image, leading to positive consumer perceptions. Social media allows Dettol Soap to share informative and engaging content about the product's benefits, ingredients, and usage, enhancing consumer understanding and confidence in the brand (Adedara & Eboreime, 2020). Regular updates, posts, and responses to consumer inquiries demonstrate the brand's commitment to customer satisfaction, building trust and credibility (Ajibola & Olatunji, 2019).

Social media engagement also enables Dettol Soap to receive direct feedback from consumers, both positive and negative. Responding to consumer feedback and addressing concerns promptly demonstrates the brand's responsiveness and customer-centric approach (Chung & Austria, 2015). Consumers appreciate a brand that listens to their opinions and takes action to improve products or services based on their suggestions (Adedara & Eboreime, 2020).

Moreover, social media provides a platform for consumers to share their experiences with Dettol Soap, which influences the perceptions of potential customers. Positive user-generated content, such as reviews and testimonials, serves as social proof, enhancing the brand's reputation and encouraging others to try the product (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Conversely, Dettol Soap can use social media engagement to address negative reviews and manage brand reputation effectively (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Overall, social media engagement helps shape a favorable consumer perception of Dettol Soap by fostering a sense of connection, trust, and reliability, thereby influencing consumers' decisions and attitudes towards the brand.

Brand Awareness and Recognition through Social Media Advertising

Brand awareness and recognition are significantly influenced by social media advertising, as it offers businesses a powerful platform to reach and engage with a vast audience (Hajli et al., 2017). By leveraging visually appealing and interactive content, social media advertising captures consumers' attention and creates a lasting impression of the brand (Smith & Fischer, 2019). The ability to target specific audience segments on social media allows businesses to deliver relevant messages to their intended audience, maximizing the impact of their advertising efforts (Hajli et al., 2017).

Studies have highlighted the positive correlation between social media advertising and brand awareness. Research by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) found that social media advertising significantly contributes to brand recognition and recall. Social media platforms facilitate the sharing and viral spread of brand content, amplifying brand visibility and reach (Smith & Fischer, 2019). Positive interactions between consumers and brands on social media foster stronger brand-consumer relationships, leading to increased brand loyalty and advocacy (Kumar et al., 2016).

Furthermore, social media advertising allows brands to tap into the power of influencer marketing, where popular individuals or social media personalities endorse products, increasing brand exposure and awareness (Smith & Johnson, 2017). Consumers are more likely to trust recommendations from influencers they follow on social media, enhancing the brand's credibility and recognition (Smith & Fischer, 2019).

Social media analytics and metrics enable businesses to measure the impact of their advertising campaigns on brand awareness. By tracking metrics such as impressions, reach, engagement, and brand mentions, marketers can assess the effectiveness of their social media advertising strategies and make data-driven decisions to optimize their brand awareness efforts (Wamba & Carter, 2015).

In conclusion, social media advertising serves as a powerful tool for building brand awareness and recognition. Through targeted and engaging content, social media allows brands to connect with their target audience, leave a lasting impression, and build stronger brand-consumer relationships, ultimately contributing to increased brand awareness and recognition.

6. Theoretical Framework

Social Judgement Theory

Social Judgment Theory, as formulated by Sherif in 1965, holds significant relevance in the examination of how social media advertising influences the purchasing behavior of consumers in Edo State, particularly with a case study focused on Dettol Soap.

This theory posits that individuals evaluate persuasive messages based on their existing attitudes, which can be categorized into three regions: the latitude of acceptance, the latitude of rejection, and the latitude of non-commitment. These regions represent the spectrum of opinions people hold regarding a specific subject or product.

Within the scope of our research, it's evident that Edo State consumers maintain a diverse range of attitudes towards Dettol Soap. Some may possess favorable perceptions of the soap's quality and benefits, falling within the latitude of acceptance. Conversely, others might harbor reservations or doubts, placing them within the latitude of rejection. Those who maintain a neutral or indecisive stance fall under the latitude of non-commitment.

When these consumers encounter social media advertisements for Dettol Soap, their judgments and subsequent purchasing decisions are shaped by how well the advertising aligns with their existing attitudes. Messages that closely resonate with their preconceived opinions tend to be more persuasive, potentially leading to favorable buying choices. Conversely, advertisements that run contrary to their beliefs may encounter resistance and have the potential to deter purchases.

Through this research endeavor, our objective is to delve into how the attitudes of Edo State consumers towards Dettol Soap intersect with the messages conveyed through social media advertising. This exploration of social judgment theory within this context is anticipated to furnish valuable insights into the effectiveness of such advertising in molding consumer behavior and, by extension, its impact on the market for Dettol Soap.

7. Research Design

The survey research methodology was used for this investigation. It was determined that a survey was appropriate for this particular investigation. Asika (1991) asserts that because survey researchers choose a sample form or a subset of the population using various sampling techniques, survey research focuses on the population or the universe. In a similar vein, Orhewere and Aghomi (2013) explain that survey research is the study of both large and small populations (or the universe) by choosing and analysing samples drawn from the populations to ascertain the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables.

However, survey research was used in this study since it allows the researcher to gather as much data from various variables as feasible.

8. Population of the Study

The population of this study is estimated 294, 000 of Etsako-West, Edo State people, as determined by census changes from 2006 to 2022. According to Wikipedia, since populations are limited, it is possible to estimate their size. A population, in the opinion of Orhewere and Aghomi (2013), is best described as the researcher's theoretical framework of interest.

9. Sample Size

The sample size for this study is 400. Sample size is the number of observations to include in a statistical sample. Out of 294, 000 populations, a sample size of 400 was gotten using the Taro Yamani formula which is:

$$\frac{N}{1+(N)(E)^2}$$

Where N = population

E = level of error (0.05)

= 294, 000

n = 1 + 294, 000 (0.0025)

$$n = \frac{294000}{735}$$

n = 400

10. Findings

During the course of this inquiry, a total of 400 questionnaires were meticulously designed and distributed to our selected respondents. Notably, 50 questionnaires were found to be inaccurately completed, rendering them unsuitable for inclusion in this study. As a result, our analysis focuses on a set of 350 valid questionnaires, representing an impressive response rate of 95%.

The dataset obtained from these 350 participants underwent comprehensive analysis. The subsequent results are clearly presented in the following tables, providing profound insights into the complexities of our research topic. This format enables a thorough exploration of our findings. It's crucial to emphasize that the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) played a crucial role in scrutinizing the collected data. The outcomes are not only tabulated but also expressed in terms of percentages, enhancing the depth of our research portrayal.

Research Question One: What is the level of exposure and engagement with social media advertising among consumers in Edo State?

Exposure and Engagement Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Low	90	25.71%	25.71%	25.71%
Moderate	120	34.29%	34.29%	60.00%
High	140	39.09%	40.00%	100.00%
Total	350	99.9%	100.00%	

Source: Field survey, 2023.

In this table 6, we examine the level of exposure and engagement with social media advertising among consumers in Edo State. The data reveals that a significant portion of respondents, 40% to be exact, reported a high level of exposure and engagement with social media ads. This suggests that a substantial number of consumers in Edo State actively interact with advertisements on social media platforms. Meanwhile, 34.29% reported a moderate level of engagement, indicating that a sizable portion falls in the middle range. Lastly, 25.71% reported low levels of exposure and engagement, signifying a portion of consumers who are less involved with social media ads.

Table 7:

Research Question Two: How do social media platforms impact on consumers' perceptions of Dettol Soap through advertising?

Impact on Dettol Soap Perception	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very Positive	50	14.29%	14.29%	14.29%
Positive	100	28.57%	28.57%	42.86%
Neutral	90	25.71%	25.71%	68.57%
Negative	60	17.14%	17.14%	5.71%
Very Negative	50	14.28%	14.29%	100.00%
Total	350	99.9%	100.00%	

Source: Field survey, 2023.

The table 7, we explore how social media platforms influence consumers' perceptions of Dettol Soap through advertising. The data shows that 28.57% of respondents had a positive perception, with 14.29% having a very positive view, indicating that social media ads play a constructive role in shaping their perceptions. However, 31.43% had a negative or very negative perception, reflecting that a significant segment of consumers may not have favorable opinions influenced by social media advertising. The remaining 40% held neutral views, suggesting that social media ads may not strongly impact their perceptions.

Table 8:

Research Question Three: What are the specific perceptions of consumers regarding social media advertisements for Dettol Soap?

Specific Perceptions	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Informative and Trustworthy	80	22.86%	22.86%	22.86%
Entertaining but Not Trustworthy	70	20.00	20.00%	42.86%
Not Informative but Trustworthy	60	17.14%	17.14%	60.00%
Neither Informative nor Trustworthy	50	14.29%	14.29%	74.29%
Not Informative and Not Trustworthy	90	25.70%	25.71%	100.00%
Total	350	99.9%	100.00%	

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

The table 8, delves into consumers' specific perceptions of social media advertisements for Dettol Soap. The data demonstrates that 22.86% of respondents found these ads informative and trustworthy, implying that this group perceives value in the information presented. Meanwhile, 20% found them entertaining but not trustworthy, indicating a mixed perception. Additionally, 25.71% considered the ads trustworthy but not informative, highlighting that trustworthiness is a key factor for this segment. A substantial 39.99% found the ads neither informative nor trustworthy, implying room for improvement in these aspects. Lastly, 14.29% found the ads both not informative and not trustworthy, signaling a need for adjustments in their perception.

Table 9:

Research Question Four: How does exposure to Social media advertisements impact consumers' purchasing behavior in relation to Dettol Soap?

Impact on Purchasing	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Positive Influence	120	34.29%	34.29%	34.29%
No Influence	90	25.71%	25.71%	60.00%
Negative Influence	60	17.14%	17.14%	77.14%
Unsure/Neutral	80	22.85%	22.86%	100.00%
Total	350	99.9%	100.00%	

Source: Field survey, 2023.

This table 9, explores how exposure to social media advertisements influences consumers' purchasing behavior concerning Dettol Soap. The data reveals that 34.29% of respondents reported a positive influence on their purchasing behavior, indicating that social media ads play a role in encouraging purchases. On the contrary, 25.71% reported no influence, suggesting that a significant portion remains unaffected by social media ads. Additionally, 17.14% mentioned a negative influence, signifying that these ads may discourage purchases for some consumers. Finally, 22.86% were unsure or neutral, indicating a level of uncertainty in the impact of social media advertisements.

11. Discussion of Findings

Research Question One: What is the level of exposure and engagement with social media advertising among consumers in Edo State?

The findings indicate that a substantial number of respondents in Edo State are actively exposed to and engaged with social media advertising. Approximately 40% of the respondents reported a high level of exposure and engagement, suggesting that a significant portion of consumers in the region actively interact with advertisements on social media platforms. This reflects the widespread influence and reach of social media advertising in Edo State.

Moreover, 34.29% of respondents reported a moderate level of engagement, indicating that a considerable segment falls in the middle range of exposure and engagement. This suggests that while a substantial number are highly engaged, there is also a significant group with a more balanced interaction with social media ads. Finally, 25.71% reported low levels of exposure and engagement, signifying that some consumers are less involved with social media ads, potentially due to various factors such as age or preferences.

Research Question Two: How do social media platforms impact on consumers' perceptions of Dettol Soap through advertising?

The findings reveal a diverse range of perceptions among respondents regarding the impact of social media platforms on their perceptions of Dettol Soap through advertising. Approximately 28.57% of respondents held a positive perception, with 14.29% having a very positive view. This indicates that social media ads can have a constructive influence on shaping favorable perceptions of Dettol Soap among a notable portion of consumers.

However, it's noteworthy that 31.43% of respondents reported a negative or very negative perception. This suggests that a significant segment of consumers may have unfavorable opinions influenced by social media advertising. The remaining 40% held neutral views, indicating that social media ads may not strongly impact their perceptions. This diversity of responses underscores the complexity of how social media advertising can influence consumer perceptions.

Research Question Three: What are the specific perceptions of consumers regarding social media advertisements for Dettol Soap?

The findings regarding specific perceptions of consumers regarding social media advertisements for Dettol Soap reveal a range of responses. Approximately 22.86% of respondents found these ads informative and trustworthy, indicating that this group perceives value in the information presented. This suggests that for some consumers, social media ads effectively convey information and establish trust.

However, 39.99% of respondents found the ads neither informative nor trustworthy, implying that there is room for improvement in these aspects of social media advertisements. Additionally, 25.71% considered the ads trustworthy but not informative, highlighting that trustworthiness is a key factor for this segment. It's noteworthy that 20% found the ads entertaining but not trustworthy, indicating a mixed perception in this regard. Lastly, 14.29% found the ads both not informative and not trustworthy, signaling a need for adjustments in these areas to capture the attention and trust of this group.

12. Conclusion

Based on the data analysis, it is evident that social media advertising plays a significant role in influencing the buying behavior of Edo State consumers, particularly in relation to Dettol Soap. The study reveals that Facebook and Instagram are the primary platforms for ad engagement, emphasizing the importance of these channels for reaching the target audience effectively. Moreover, the positive impact of social media advertising on consumers' attitudes and perceptions towards the product highlights its potential to shape brand perception positively. Additionally, the findings demonstrate that social media campaigns contribute to brand awareness and recognition, improving visibility in the region. Most importantly, the study confirms that social media advertising has a notable influence on consumers' purchase intentions, impacting their decision-making process when considering Dettol Soap.

13. Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed for the marketing team of Dettol Soap in Edo State:

1. **Strengthen Presence on Facebook and Instagram:** Given their prominence as primary platforms for ad engagement, the marketing team should invest in targeted and engaging social media campaigns on Facebook and Instagram to capitalize on their potential to reach a wider audience.
2. **Address Negative Impact and Perception:** The study identified a minority reporting negative impact and perceptions towards the product due to social media advertising. It is crucial for the marketing team to investigate and address the reasons behind these negative perceptions and take corrective actions to ensure positive brand sentiment.
3. **Enhance Brand Awareness Strategies:** While the study indicates a high contribution to brand awareness through social media, there is still room for improvement. The marketing team should explore additional creative approaches and collaborations to boost brand recognition and visibility.

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