

ONLINE ADVERTISEMENT AND PATRONAGE OF SANITARY PADS AMONGST WOMEN IN ABUJA AND KADUNA STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the correlation between online advertising and the preference for Virony sanitary pads amongst women. The research utilized survey method with a population size of 3,850,000 and a sample size of 385 using cluster sampling method to elicit response from the population. The study discovered a significant level of exposure to online advertisements for Virony sanitary pads among women in FCT and Kaduna State, with respondents acknowledging this exposure at a cumulative mean of 3.3. Additionally, the findings indicated that online advertising for Virony sanitary pads positively influences the product's patronage among women in the specified regions, with respondents expressing agreement to this influence in the analysis. One of the challenges identified in accessing online Virony ads among women in FCT and Kaduna State was the poor network of advertising messages. In light of these findings, the study concluded that online advertising has contributed to an increased patronage of sanitary pads and improved hygiene practices among women in FCT and Kaduna State. It is advised that the Virony Company enhances and sustains customer loyalty by establishing an active online customer service platform. This recommendation stems from the significant exposure to their online diaper advertisements among women in FCT and Kaduna State. Moreover, the study suggests that Virony should capitalize on the heightened online visibility by promoting various products beyond sanitary pads, considering the substantial awareness of their online diaper adverts among women in the specified regions.

Keywords: Advertisement, women, online, communication, patronage

Introduction

Advertising typically entails drawing one's attention to a product or services with the intention of selling. All over the world, individuals and organizations employ the skill of advertising to draw traffic to their brand, product, goods or services. According to Kotler & Keller (2006), the word advertising entails, bringing a product or service to the attention of the audience. Advertising is typically a paid service that is intended to help boost sales in Frank Jefkin's definition cited in Murad (2018). The above thought process is similar to the definition of advertising by Nwosu, (1996), in his study; he posits that advertising is meant to be persuasive in nature and typically paid for and can be channeled through various media.

Advertising has traditionally focused on promoting products through various communication platforms such as radio, television, cinema, newspapers, magazines, billboards, posters, and more recently, the internet. This communication process aims to persuade and

convince the target audience to take specific actions (Russell & Lane, 2000). Advertisements serve to create brand awareness and convey messages about products. With the commercialization of the internet, both large and small businesses have recognized its potential to enhance business visibility and boost sales.

With regards to consumer behaviour, one can link it to the AIDA model which offers a comprehensive depiction of how promotional efforts influences consumer behaviour and purchasing choices. This acronym represents attention, interest, desire and action which are key elements in understanding the interplay between consumer behaviour and advertising which is a focal point of this study. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) suggest that the AIDA model simplifies the mechanics of personal selling and delineates the sequential stages through which a prospective customer progresses toward making a purchase of products or services.

The initial component attention; signifies the phase during which a brand captures the consumer's focus through encountered advertisements. This attention may manifest as positive, negative, or, in unfavorable instances, be nonexistent. For advertisers, the preferred scenario is when consumers respond positively to the advertisement and subsequently to the brand (Kotler, 2007). Sanitary pad manufacturers aim to generate attention, interest, desire, and appeal for their products in the market by utilizing suitable communication channels to reach the broader audience, thereby stimulating demand for both existing and new offerings in the market.

Consequently, firms embracing this theory witness significant expansion in their sanitary pad businesses concerning both customer outreach and financial gains (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000). Although the sub-stages' quantity or titles may vary, they generally share three overarching stages. These stages include the cognitive stage (pertaining to the receiver's knowledge or perception), the affective stage (related to the receiver's emotions or affective state), and the behavioral stage (reflecting the consumer's actions) (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

Every advert campaign is tailored towards a specific demography through prior research by the team of creators who are saddled with the responsibility of formulating the campaign. The use of various strategies and medium is used while understanding the needs and wants of the group. Typically, it can be argued that advertising as a communication form or means of passing information according to (Ogidiolu, 2019) is as old as advent of the newspaper in the seventeenth century. *Virony Smart Lady Sanitary Pads* are crafted to seamlessly conform to various types of underwear, including regular, string, and tanga styles. This adaptability allows you to choose the style that suits any occasion. The sanitary pads feature flexible and cotton-soft, pre-folded sides for enhanced comfort. They are flat, possess a refreshing laundry scent, and undergo dermatological testing.

In countries with increased usage of Internet and Social media for advertising, companies employing new methods of marketing and sales to drive home their products, (Anusa, 2016). But before online media can be effectively utilized to communicate with the students in Nigeria, it needs to ensure that research is carried out in line with industry best standards (APCON,

2008). Therefore, there is need for research to be conducted on people's exposure and perception on social media advertisement and also to know if Internet advertisement influences consumers' purchasing habits in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and Kaduna State.

Statement of the Problem

Advertising has been a long time human activity and has been a major factor in consumer behaviour that helps drive one's purchasing ability. Over the year's online campaigns has become a major aspect of advertising which focuses on showing internet users on the use of products and the need to patronize such products after being exposed to the ads. These advertisements are made most of the time to interrupt the audience views on the internet thereby catching the attention of the user through informative and persuasive contents.

One of the products advertised online is *Virony* sanitary pad, used basically by women during menstruation. This product is advertised online by the companies thereby eliciting patronage from women. Against this backdrop, this study is geared towards assessing the extent of patronage of *Virony* sanitary pads after being exposed to the online advert of the product by women in Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and Kaduna State. In view of the foregoing, a question arises as to how companies can effectively utilize online platforms to promote and increase sales while also building a retainership.

Research Questions

1. What are the online advertising platforms used by *virony* sanitary pads?
2. What is the level of exposure of Abuja and Kaduna families to online advertisements of *virony* sanitary pads?
3. What are the challenges in accessing online advertisements of *virony* sanitary pads and patronage among women in FCT and Kaduna State?

Literature Review/Review of Concepts Advertising

This is a marketing tool where manufactures of a product or companies and individuals employ to sell or make known their services to the consumer(s) (Arens, 2004). According to the work of Dogudje (2009), just like in ancient time,

advertising is a strategy adopted by organizations to realize their marketing objectives of sales. Advertising by its own nature is not only concerned with motivating people, but also with influencing their behaviour. With the passage of time, advertising has evolved to also include agents who help scouts and do research. This has the market size as well as any budget intended for a particular campaign. To convey information and ideas to a group of people with the aim of influencing or reinforcing attitudes, advertising plays a crucial role. For advertising to achieve effectiveness, it must gain recognition, and its adaptability should be clearly conveyed to prospective buyers. This communication is facilitated by advertising agents. Initially, these agents served as intermediaries for securing space in newspapers and magazines. Advertisement space was bargained for at wholesale costs with publishers, and it was subsequently sold again at greater costs (Arens, 2004). As advertising has evolved and become more sophisticated, the market has expanded, advertising budgets have grown, and additional services have been incorporated. These days, advertising is regarded as the vital component of marketing for products and services and as a necessary tactic (Ehikwe, 2006).

The American Marketing Association provides the following definition of advertising: "Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, and services by an identifiable sponsor" (Arowomol0, 2002). Acknowledging that not all advertising is paid for, as in the case of public service announcements, Arowomol0 (2002) offers an alternative definition: "Advertising is controlled, identifiable information and persuasion by means of mass communication media." According to the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON), advertising is defined as "a form of communication through media about products, services, or ideas, paid for by an identified sponsor" (Asemah, 2011). Advertising is carefully designed to fit within a predetermined space and time, often controlled by the sponsor, and it serves as a crucial tool in garnering the patronage of consumers and customers.

Online Advertising

Online advertising has come a long way from the traditional media. It has become a global source of sales and promotion because; the web or internet

has a far reaching capacity as opposed to the traditional media. One does not need electricity to access an advertising campaign message but rather, internet data (Oshodi, Ashikia&Ashikia, 2007). This however, comes with its own challenges.

The process of promotion of products or services on the internet through various channels such as websites, social media, and search engines is considered as online advertising and it can relate with consumer behaviour in so many ways:

1. Targeted advertising: online platforms use data on user behaviour, demographics and preferences to create specific information to get to a target consumer segment based on their online activities.
2. User engagement and interactions: online advertising encourages user engagement through click bates ads, surveys or social interactions.
3. Social influence: companies can leverage on instant feedbacks of online advertising where consumers often share their opinions about a product.
4. Data driven insights: this approach helps in shaping advertising strategies to align with purchasing patterns of the consumer by gaining insights to trends and preferences.

Therefore, having a good understanding of how consumers navigate the online space is crucial to any organization for creating an effective online advertising campaign on any product or service. With online marketing strategy or advertising comes with it a more direct and personalized form of engagement with the target consumer.

Review of Empirical Studies

According to a study by Onewo, Morakinyo & Akintan (2020) on the effects of online advertising on consumer buying behaviour in Lagos state, they suggest that the era of globalization requires a change in the advertising paradigm. As a result, the development of the internet has enabled this change and profoundly changed the advertising landscape, with many businesses now choosing to utilize the internet to advertise their goods and services. The study's main goal was to find out how internet users in Lagos State's Ikeja metropolitan

are affected by online advertising when making purchases. The particular goals were determining the influence of online advertising credibility on purchase decisions as well as assessing the relationship between corporate website advertising and purchase decisions. A questionnaire with structured questions was formulated to gather primary data from internet users in the Ikeja metropolis of Lagos State. The identified sample size for the study was 384 individuals. The study findings indicate that corporate website advertising significantly influences customers' purchase decisions, and the credibility of online advertising also plays a role in shaping purchase decisions. The primary recommendation from the study is that organizations should enhance their utilization of online advertising to positively impact consumer purchase decisions. Additionally, organizations are advised to increase their promotional efforts on corporate websites, ensuring these websites are functional, attractive, user-friendly, and regularly updated with promotional messages and comprehensive information about all the organization's products and services.

In a similar research presented by Oludare, Olusola, and Kunle (2017) in a *Communication and Media Research* journal, the influence of social media on the purchasing choices of students across three universities was highlighted. The researchers emphasized the significant impact of advertising through social media, particularly targeting younger users on various platforms. Nevertheless, there is limited knowledge specifically concerning how social media advertisements shape purchasing decisions within this demographic. Consequently, the study focused on evaluating the exposure, viewership, and impact of social media advertisements on the purchasing decisions of young individuals utilizing the internet in three Nigerian universities. The major objectives of the study was to investigate the extent to which young people are you exposed to advertisement on social media, examine the factors that are likely to influence young people's exposure to advertisement on social media platforms, identify the social media platforms on which young people mostly view advertisements and investigate the extent to which social media adverts could influence purchasing decisions among young people.

Also, in Phil's (2015) investigation, which delved into the influence of internet advertising on

consumer purchasing behavior for ICT devices, the research report primarily aims to measure the impact of internet advertising on consumers' intentions and buying behavior toward ICT devices. The study highlights the significant influence of the product's image, crafted by advertisers, on purchasing behavior. The study's objectives encompass assessing the efficacy of internet advertising on consumer purchasing behavior and exploring the connection between celebrity endorsements and purchase decisions. Data for this study were gathered using questionnaires as the primary source of information, while secondary data were obtained from the internet, journals, and business magazines.

Similarly, Oguiche and Emmanuel (2018) conducted a study titled "Knowledge and Perception of Social Media Advertising among Students of Kogi State University," exploring the impact of the evolution and acceptance of internet-based social media on various aspects of human life, including advertising. Advertisers have adapted to this development by showcasing their products on social media platforms to reach their potential target audience. The research specifically focused on the knowledge and perception of social media advertisements among undergraduate students at Kogi State University. The study's objectives include assessing the level of awareness regarding social media advertising, investigating the influence of social media advertisements on purchasing decisions, and examining the challenges associated with creating and accessing social media advertising among students at Kogi State University in Anyigba.

The study was conducted with a population derived from the two departments under examination, totaling 1575, and a sample size of 158. Data collection utilized a structured questionnaire, and descriptive data analysis techniques were employed to present, analyze, and interpret the data. The findings revealed that a significant number of students have access to social media, yet not many make purchases based on social media advertisements. The study also identified challenges related to poor data and unreliable networks, impacting the effectiveness of social media advertisements. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that manufacturers should actively seek feedback from their audience to strategize and meet their targets effectively.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the following theory:

Consumer Choice Behaviour Theory

The concept of consumer choice is founded on the notion that individuals will make logical decisions to fulfill their desires. They seek to select options that align with their financial constraints, personal preferences, and maximize the satisfaction derived from their selections.

Consumer choice theory aids in comprehending how a consumer's actions arise from the interplay of their income and preferences. Grasping this behavior is essential for constructing the demand curve accurately and determining the optimal pricing of a product.

A consumer won't simply purchase something solely because it's affordable; such a decision likely wouldn't lead to satisfaction. Instead, they'll opt for something that aligns with their preferences. These preferences dictate how individuals allocate their time and money when given options. Consumer choice is determined by both their financial constraints and their personal inclinations. Occasionally, consumers may have equal preference for different options, resulting in indifference. Similar to a budget constraint, the indifference curve illustrates various combinations of goods that offer equal satisfaction for the consumer.

The significance of consumer choice theory as a model of consumer decision-making lies in its capacity to forecast consumption patterns within the economy. Grasping the factors influencing consumer choices is crucial for elucidating the overall economic landscape. Consumer demand serves as a pivotal driver of economic activity, facilitating the circulation of money within the economy. The demand curve illustrates the inverse correlation between a product's price and the quantity consumer's desire at that price.

In the context of this study, the theory supports the idea that consumers in contemporary industrialized nations, exhibit a significantly heightened interest in the production methods of the items they purchase compared to half a century ago.

In the past century, industrialized nations have grappled with challenges stemming from consumer behavior, particularly concerning purchasing power, prompting a focus on key drivers of sales (Lusk, 2016; Meneses et al., 2014).

Nevertheless, everyday consumer perceptions often prioritize factors beyond these advancements. In modern societies, the increasingly globalized markets and enhanced processing along the product chain have widened the perceived gap in knowledge and proximity between consumers and manufacturers (Princen, 1997; Weis, 2007).

As a result, utilizing consumer choice theory to understand consumer demand provides businesses with the means to develop strategies for maximizing profits and efficiently managing resources. This understanding of consumer demand and its correlation with individual budgets also assists businesses in devising the most advantageous pricing strategies for their products.

Therefore, understanding customer behavior is crucial for discerning both purchasing decisions and the diverse options concerning product promotion (Hawkins et al., 2000). Consumer behavior serves several purposes. Firstly, it aids in refining marketing strategies. Secondly, it contributes to the formulation of public policies. Thirdly, it plays a role in social marketing, which involves conveying ideas to consumers rather than selling a product. Another benefit of focusing on consumer behavior is its enhancement of consumers themselves, as consumer mindset encompasses beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions toward products within the marketing context. These beliefs may be either positive or negative.

Research Methodology

Baran and Davies (2006) express the view that "surveys enable researchers in mass communication to assess characteristics, opinions, or behaviors of a population by examining a small sample from that group and subsequently extrapolating findings to the broader population being investigated." Nwosu and Nkamnebe (2006) further suggest that "surveys provide a means to engage with respondents," fostering communication that facilitates the extraction of data essential for the swift interpretation, synthesis, and integration of the accumulated data. In this study, the survey research method was employed. The population comprised women of reproductive age for the period under study in the two locations. According to the figures from the National Council of Women Society (2020), the number of women of reproductive age in FCT and Kaduna State are estimated to be more than one

million in each location. A combination of these figures was Three Million, Eight Hundred and Fifty Thousand (3,850,000). Therefore, the population of the study is 3,850,000 women. A sample size of 385 respondents was drawn from the population using the Taro Yamane formula.

Note that three factors influenced the appropriate sample size: (i) the characteristics of the population, (ii) the chosen sample design, and (iii) the desired level of precision. Cluster sampling technique was adopted. This involved application of different sampling techniques for each stage. One locality was selected from three local government areas selected for the study across FCT and Kaduna State. The LGAs are Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) from FCT, while Kaduna North and Kaduna South LGAs will be selected in Kaduna State. This was done using purposive sampling technique. From AMAC,

Garki, Wuse Zone XI, and Central Area were selected from. In Kaduna State, Ungwa Rimi was selected from Kaduna North LGA while Barnawa was selected from Kaduna South.

Cluster sampling technique was applied to select adult women from the three localities. To this end, $385/3 = 96.26$. This means 96 adult women was accidentally selected from each location by meeting them in public places such as schools, markets, government offices among others. The presentation of the collected data involved a blend of qualitative and quantitative methods, utilizing tables, charts, and graphs as deemed appropriate. The quantitative representation of data from the questionnaire encompassed tools such as frequency distribution and measures of central tendency.

Data Presentation and Interpretation

Table 1: What are the online advertising platforms used by *Virony* sanitary pads

ITEMS	FREQUENCY					N	X (Mean)	SD	DECISION
	SA	A	N	D	SD				
Facebook	193	116	14	45	17	385	3.51	1.212	ACCEPTED
Twitter	165	108	16	74	22	385	3.81	1.310	ACCEPTED
Instagram	198	119	20	35	16	385	3.76	1.257	ACCEPTED
YouTube	175	124	21	45	20	385	3.34	1.311	ACCEPTED
Radio/TV Websites	105	96	12	114	58	385	3.77	1.181	ACCEPTED
All of the above	228	87	10	28	32	385	3.64	1.215	ACCEPTED
Cumulative Mean							3.64		

Source: Field survey 2023

The implication of this result is that *Virony* sanitary pads used Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube channels, radio/TV websites for its adverts. The

cumulative responses were calculated at above +3.0 confirming the choice of the respondents.

Table 2: What is the level of exposure of Abuja and Kaduna families to online advertisements of *Virony* sanitary pads

ITEMS	FREQUENCY					N	X (Mean)	SD	DECISION
	SA	A	N	D	SD				
I use social media regularly	121	156	13	58	37	385	3.69	1.313	ACCEPTED
I use Facebook, Twitter and Instagram regularly	106	150	16	74	39	385	3.55	1.340	ACCEPTED
I watch ads on social media	98	189	20	35	43	385	3.69	1.257	ACCEPTED
I watch ads <i>Virony</i> ads on social media regularly	105	132	17	95	36	385	3.45	1.361	ACCEPTED
I watch <i>Virony</i> ads twice a month	64	96	12	114	99	385	2.77	1.481	REJECTED
I watch <i>Virony</i> ads once in a while	60	85	09	117	114	385	2.64	1.485	REJECTED
Cumulative Mean							3.33		

Source: Field survey 2023

The implication of the study is that respondents watch/read *Virony* advert on social media regularly, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

regularly. This implies that the respondents are exposed significantly to *Virony* adverts on social media.

Table 3: What are the challenges in accessing online advertisements of *Virony* sanitary pads and patronage among women in FCT and Kaduna State

ITEMS	FREQUENCY					N	X (Mean)	SD	DECISION
	SA	A	N	D	SD				
I find it difficult to access the <i>Virony</i> online ads because of poor networks on my phone	117	132	05	89	42	385	3.50	1.407	ACCEPTED
I cannot use <i>Virony</i> sanitary pads because it is against my culture.	24	45	15	163	138	385	2.10	1.191	REJECTED
I cannot access the messages on the <i>Virony</i> online ads clearly since it is too ambiguous	38	97	13	132	105	385	2.56	1.376	REJECTED
The language used for online <i>Virony</i> ads is not understood by me	58	71	16	141	99	385	2.61	1.425	REJECTED
<i>Virony</i> ads is boring to me, I do not like the way the message is packaged	103	147	10	84	41	385	3.49	1.366	ACCEPTED
Cumulative Mean							2.62		

Source: Field survey 2023

The implication of this result is poor network, ambiguity of messages in *Virony* online adverts and language barrier, boring packaging of *Virony* online advert messages as challenges is a factor militating against access to online advertisement of *Virony* sanitary pads. This means that respondents considered poor network and boring packaging as challenges affecting their use of online *Virony* sanitary pads adverts.

Discussion of Findings

The study investigated online advertisement and patronage of sanitary pads amongst women in Abuja and Kaduna state. Findings from the analysis are revealed thus:

Table 1: examined advertising platforms used by *virony* sanitary pads? The implication of this result is that *Virony* sanitary pads used Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube channels, radio/TV websites for its adverts. The cumulative responses were calculated at above +3.0 confirming the choice of the respondents. The results corroborate Oguche and Emmanuel (2018) it was discovered that a significant number of students have access to social media. Likewise, Udende and Azeez (2010)

conducted a research project involving students and determined that all respondents used the internet. Regarding usage frequency, the study revealed that 26% of students use the internet daily, while 46.2% use it on a weekly basis.

Table 2: examined the level of exposure of Abuja and Kaduna families to online advertisements of *Virony* sanitary pads? It showed that women in FCT and Kaduna State were to a significant extent, exposed to online advertisement of *Virony* sanitary pads. The analysis showed that the women use social media regularly, use Facebook, Twitter and Instagram regularly, watch ads on social media and that they watch *Virony* ads in particular regularly. The significant exposure to

online *Virony* ads among the women is further shown in the fact that they disagreed that the frequency of exposure was twice a month or once in a while. Hence, the women use the online medium if they feel it is easy to use and if they feel it caters to some of their needs, making it useful to them. This in turn affects their attitude toward the medium positively.

Table 3: examined the challenges in accessing online advertisements of *Virony* sanitary pads and patronage among women in FCT and Kaduna State? The data shows that the challenges in accessing online advertisement of *Virony* sanitary pads among Women in FCT and Kaduna State are poor network and boring packaging of the ad messages. The women pointed out that culture, ambiguity of the ad messages and language of the adverts were not challenges. These recognized challenges resonate with the discoveries made by Oguche and Emmanuel (2018), who revealed that social media advertisements face setbacks due to challenges related to poor data and unreliable networks. Additionally, one of the suggestions made by George (2013) highlights that uninteresting packaging of online ads can present a challenge. The researcher recommended that proprietors of online platforms should focus on making their websites dynamic and user-friendly to attract customers. Thus, online advertising is more likely to grow in strength and influence if needs such as improved network access and more interesting ads packaging are catered to.

Conclusion

Based on the findings the study concluded that online advertisement has led to increased patronage of sanitary pads and hygiene among women in FCT and Kaduna State. The growth of internet in recent decades has been nothing short of bewildering. The technology has taken the media space by storm and has to a great extent, relegated the traditional media of television, radio,

newspaper and magazine. The development of social media platforms and websites with interactive features has also made it a success. On the basis of the findings, it is reasonable to conclude that online advertisement of *Virony* sanitary pads has largely been effective in persuading women to patronize the product. This is because the women are exposed to the adverts to a great extent due to their frequent use of the online medium. However, online advertisement of *Virony* sanitary pads can be even more effective in the future if challenges such as poor network and boring packaging of the messages are taken care of. Generally, online advertising is expected to grow in adoption and influence in the future.

Recommendations

In light of the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations have been provided by the researcher:

1. The *Virony* Company should secure and maintain customer loyalty by establishing an active online customer service, since it was found that there is a significant level of exposure to their online advertisement of diapers among women in FCT and Kaduna State.
2. *Virony* should capitalize on enhanced online visibility by promoting a range of products beyond sanitary pads through the platform. This recommendation is based on the finding that there is a notable awareness of their online diaper advertisements among women in FCT and Kaduna State.
3. The *Virony* firm should give priority to online advertising by increasing the budget allocated to it annually, since it was discovered that there is a high level of message adoption for their online ads towards patronage of the product among women in FCT and Kaduna State.

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