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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews

World Journal Series INDIA

(RESEARCH ARTICLE)

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The impact of online advertisements on the purchasing habits of Nigerian University Students: A Case Study of Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko, Ondo State

David Opeyemi Adebayo [1, *], Gideon Kwame Asumadu-Boateng [2], Chijioke Onuchukwu [3] and Nweze Gift Ifeyinwa [4]

[1] Adekunle Ajasin University, English Department, Faculty of Arts, Akungba Akoko, Ondo state, Nigeria.
[2] University of Ghana, Department of Psychology, Institute of Psychology, Greater Accra Region, Ghana.
[3] University of Benin, Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Arts, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.
[4] Ebonyi State University, Department of Economics, Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of online advertisements on the purchasing habits of students at Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko (AAUA) in Ondo State, Nigeria. In the digital age, online advertising has become a pivotal tool for marketers, significantly influencing consumer behavior, especially among university students who are avid internet users. This research aims to understand the extent to which online advertisements affect students' purchasing decisions, preferences, and overall consumer behavior. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive data from AAUA students. The findings reveal that a substantial proportion of students frequently encounter online advertisements, with social media platforms and search engines being the most common channels. The study highlights that online advertisements significantly influence students' awareness, interest, and desire for products and services, ultimately affecting their purchasing decisions. Factors such as the credibility, relevance, and creativity of advertisements play crucial roles in shaping students' perceptions and behaviors. Moreover, the study identifies the prevalence of impulse buying triggered by attractive online ads among the student population. The research underscores the importance for marketers to craft targeted and engaging online advertising strategies to effectively capture the attention and influence the purchasing habits of this demographic. The implications of these findings suggest that online advertising is a powerful tool for shaping consumer behavior among university students, providing valuable insights for businesses aiming to tap into this market segment. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on digital marketing and consumer behavior in the context of Nigerian universities.

Keywords: Online advertisements; Purchasing habits; University students; Digital marketing; Consumer behavior; Social media advertising; Search engine marketing; Impulse buying; Targeted advertising; Adekunle Ajasin University; Nigerian universities; Student consumer behavior; Internet marketing; Brand awareness; Digital influence

1. Introduction

I agree with Grey, J. P. to define online advertising as a form of marketing that entails using the internet to find new customers, send marketing messages. The first internet advertising was published on October 27, 1994. It was the first banner advertising on the internet and the website that posted it was the forerunner of today's tech sites and wired (1).

* Corresponding author: David Opeyemi Adebayo

Advertising on the internet has been one of the most exciting events in the second half of the 20th century. The reason why the internet seems all-powerful is because it has two characteristics beyond the reach of other mechanisms. The internet contains the biggest resources of information in the entire world; it enables people to obtain an interactive mechanism to instantly communicate with one another.

The numbers of internet users are increasing day by day. The users initially used internet for emails, news and knowledge. But now there is a vast change in the users' mind. The World Wide Web become as an emerging tool to connect each other (2). The internet advertising is one of the modern methods for the companies to advertise their products. It is a major communication method in the world (3). The internet gives wide scope for the advertising firms. The advertisers face cyber risk, competition and consumer behaviour change during their promotion (4).

Once connected within the internet, everyone can enjoy the unparalleled richness of global information resources including but not harmful to textual, audio and graphic information. The internet is a vast and rapidly expanding resource, offering an unparalleled wealth of information that covers a wide spectrum, including scientific research, education, public policy, legal regulations, commerce, arts, and entertainment. The continuous growth of internet information resources makes it difficult to fully comprehend the scope of what is available. With unlimited access, users can connect with anyone, anywhere, turning the world into a global village. The internet's extensive information is complemented by its interactive features, facilitating net-to-net, net-to-people, and people-to-people communications. This enables the internet to serve various functions such as entertainment, interpersonal exchange, education, healthcare, information gathering, investment, commercial transactions, and even online voting, tasks that seemed unimaginable just a short time ago (5,6). The exchange and sharing of information among all people has unshared in an omnipotent status in internet application. As long as people develop certain desires, the information to satisfy such desires will quickly and continuously appear on the internet. Such information will gradually fulfil people's material and spiritual needs.

With the knowledge economy gradually attaining to a dominant status and the gradual formation of an information society and that of the characterization of the internet as seemingly "omnipotent" may not be an overstatement. However due to its innate transactional, decentralized, open and unregulated nature, the internet as a free and open device has brought various countries to great risks as well as opportunities. While it provides enormous convenience that stimulates economy growth, the internet also brought negative effect that cannot be ignored.

With knowledge gotten from Abati's work, I belief that we live in a global village where information now travels in a moment. The barriers of time and spaces have been effectively eradicated through the interplay of science and technology. New communication technology (NCTS) has ultimately revolutionized the ways of doing things. The emergence of new communication technologies, particularly the internet, is rapidly transforming the landscape of mass communication, journalism, and advertising. The term "Information Superhighway" has been coined to describe this communication revolution, characterized by the speed and sophistication with which information travels globally. This metaphor highlights the creation of a vast international network of computers, turning the world into a global village. Increasingly, consumers are seeking information through social media platforms to inform their purchasing decisions. Electronic Word-of-Mouth (EWOM) on these popular social media platforms, especially among younger consumers, significantly influences perceptions and buying intentions (7,8).

The internet, with its extensive resources, has provided advertisers with opportunities to present their products to targeted audiences year-round. Its use has proven to be not only cost-effective but also highly successful as the world becomes more digitally connected. It is estimated that over 160 million people use the internet daily, with more than 100 million engaging in shopping and other commercial activities. This study delves into the contemporary significance of internet advertising, also known as electronic advertising, cyber space advertising, or online advertising.

The internet originated in the early 1960s as a project by the U.S. Department of Defense to facilitate communication between supercomputers for researchers and military facilities. Until its commercial expansion in the 1990s, the internet was a relatively obscure network primarily used by academics, military researchers, and scientists to send and receive emails, transfer files, and retrieve information from databases. The economic benefits of this information superhighway are particularly significant for technology-starved regions like Africa. It is seen as a tool that can create wealth, reduce military coup plotting, alleviate famine, and decrease poverty levels. Moreover, the internet has improved effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity in the workplace. Today, there are two main forms of online computing for business transactions (7).

The traditional electronic commerce (basic website) and social computing (social networks) as a result of blending social computing with service oriented computing. Social computing is the computational facilitation of human social

dynamics as well as the use of ICT that considers social context (9). Social computing is also about collective actions, content sharing, and information dissemination in general. On the other hand, service oriented computing (traditional website) builds applications on the principles of service offer and request, loose coupling and cross-organisation flow (9). According to the afore mention authors, when enterprises engage web services for business needs they are included in service compositions based on both the functionality they offer and the quality of service (QoS) they can guarantee, which implies the need for contracts.

When consumers engage and compose services, it is much more informal and dynamic. Web services are intended to be composed, and their functionality and quality of services (QoS) are interdependent with other services. Moreover, they execute remotely and with some degree of autonomy. Social networks epitomise the tremendous popularity of web 2.0 applications (9,10) making users to be able to become proactive, colloquial, engage vendors in conversation to build trust before deciding to buy and continue buying.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

In recent years (11), the surge of online advertising has revolutionized the marketing landscape, becoming an integral part of how businesses engage with their target audience. Adekunle Ajasin University Akoko, like many academic institutions, hosts a sizable student population exposed to a plethora of online advertisements daily. This ubiquity raises a fundamental concern: how do these online advertisements affect the purchasing habits of the students?

The advent of online advertising brings forth questions regarding its impact on the decision-making processes of students, their brand preferences, and the extent to which these advertisements influence their purchases. Additionally, the varying nature of online advertisements, ranging from visually engaging content on social media to informative displays on search engines, raises questions about the types of ads that resonate most with the student body. Understanding these dynamics is essential for both marketers aiming to tailor their strategies and educators seeking to enhance students' digital literacy and critical consumption (12).

This study aims to delve into the nuances of online advertising and its influence on the purchasing habits of students at Adekunle Ajasin University Akoko. By addressing these concerns, we seek to provide valuable insights that contribute to a deeper comprehension of the interplay between digital advertising and consumer behaviour within the academic realm.

Objectives of the Study

The overall objectives of this study are to vigorously examine the influence of online advertisements on the purchasing habits of student. This study is designed to attempt achieving the following objectives:

- To determine to effectiveness or otherwise of online advertisement.
- To access the influence of online advertising among students in Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko, Ondo State.
- To determine the attitude of students towards online advertising.

1.2. Research Questions

The research will address the following questions:

- What is the effectiveness of online advertisements in Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko, Ondo State?
- What is the attitude of students in Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko, Ondo State towards online advertising?
- What is the gratification derived by students in Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko, Ondo State from online advertising?

2. Review of related literature

2.1. General perspective on online advertisement

In today's digital age, online advertising has emerged as a dominant marketing tool, captivating a vast audience. For students, a demographic deeply entrenched in the digital realm, online advertisements hold significant sway. Understanding students' expectations regarding online advertising is paramount for marketers seeking to optimize their strategies and resonate with this influential consumer base. Online advertising, also referred to as online

marketing, Internet advertising, digital advertising, or web advertising, leverages the Internet to promote products and services to audiences and platform users (14). This form of advertising encompasses various strategies such as email marketing, search engine marketing (SEM), social media marketing, various types of display advertising including web banner ads, and mobile advertising. Increasingly, advertisements are delivered through automated software systems operating across multiple websites, media services, and platforms, a method known as programmatic advertising (15,16).

Like other advertising media, online advertising frequently involves a publisher, who integrates advertisements into its online content, and an advertiser, who provides the advertisements to be displayed on the publisher's content. Other potential participants in online advertising include advertising agencies that create and place ad copy, ad servers that technologically deliver ads and track statistics, and advertising affiliates who independently promote the advertiser's content. Online advertising, a form of mass communication, builds on traditional advertising methods while developing unique communication strategies to meet new technical and medium-based requirements. Broadly, it involves delivering advertisements to Internet users via websites, email, ad-supported software, and Internet-enabled smartphones. Examples of online advertising include contextual ads on search engine results pages, banner ads, rich media ads, social network advertising, interstitial ads, online classified advertising, advertising networks, and email marketing, including email spam (17,18).

In addition to these forms, programmatic advertising has revolutionized the online advertising landscape. Programmatic advertising uses automated software to purchase digital advertising space, allowing for highly targeted and efficient ad placements across multiple websites and platforms. This method leverages real-time data and algorithms to optimize ad delivery, ensuring that advertisements reach the most relevant audiences at the optimal times (15).

Moreover, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning in online advertising has further enhanced the precision and effectiveness of ad campaigns. These technologies analyze vast amounts of user data to predict behavior, preferences, and trends, enabling advertisers to create personalized and engaging ad experiences. As a result, online advertising not only captures the attention of users but also drives higher conversion rates and return on investment (ROI) (14). Overall, the dynamic nature of online advertising, supported by advanced technologies and innovative strategies, continues to evolve, offering endless opportunities for businesses to connect with their target audiences in meaningful and impactful ways.

Online advertising is escalating rapidly to its peak (17) due to additional assistant devices to internet like mobiles and televisions and changes in rapid technological move. Since June 1836, when French newspaper *La Presse* launched its first paid advertising, many advertisers have shown character in its quick adoption. Just in about 1840, Volney B. Palmer founded modern day advertising agency in Philadelphia. Late in 19th century N.W. Ayer & Son ad agency was launched. By 1900 the ad agency had become vital in ad planning. Wireless Internet (19) is creating trend setting in the modern Internet advertising era. It has enabled the Internet to act as a digital handbill in the hands of customers through their mobile devices. Internet collaboration (20) with other mediums such as television, mobile etc., has risen the future of online advertising. The use of internet by customers has grown for many purposes like product search, price search, order placement, payments and delivery information etc. (21). Internet (22) has become an important medium that is available 24 hours. AIMC, 2005 study (Hung) revealed that 37.8% of Internet users have laptops and 95% of laptop owners have mobile phones, 45.6% of them have webcam and 16% have PDAs. Men usually are independent in making decisions and women are more socially relationship builders (23).

Internet advertising (24,13,5) is turning more aggressive like television advertising and even better than that. The term "online advertising" comprising all sorts of banner, email, in game, and keyword advertising, on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, or MySpace has received increased relevance. According to (25), the estimated value of online ads is about Rs. 100 crore. But still clients are used to this type of advertising. According to Fayu Zheng (2006), products advertised online have the potential to influence and alter consumer behavior (26). Internet helps consumers to search for their products in the form of images, sound and text (27). Internet shopping provides convenience to the customers (28). It helps in searching for good qualitative products (29).

According to UCLA Centre for Communication (30), Internet shopping has become the third most popular Internet activities, immediately following email using and web surfing (31). Online customers are different from offline customer because online customer focuses on purchasing process and buying factors (32). Bellmann and his colleagues in 1999 who studied the predictors of online behaviour, found that there are two main reasons of Internet buyer behaviour. First, customers normally use the Internet as a part of their lifestyles. Second, customers do not have much time to spend for the traditional ways of shopping (33).

Without a doubt, technology has fundamentally altered customer buying habits, making it vital for certain companies to adjust to their new actions to sell their goods effectively (34). Online advertising delivers advertisements to internet users through various channels such as websites, emails, supported software, and internet-enabled smartphones. It is a form of mass communication that adapts traditional advertising methods to the capabilities of new technology and media. The internet facilitates a diverse range of advertising formats, allowing consumers to learn more about products or services with ease. The popularity of online advertising has surged due to its unique advantages for both consumers and retailers, including the convenience of 24-hour shopping, reduced need for store visits, and lower travel costs (17).

Strauss and Frost defined social media as webpages generated by internet users. These webpages are an open opportunity for social networking and discussions (35). A wide variety of social media platforms are being created online and attract much more users than companies' websites and other traditional media sites. Today, online social networks have tremendously facilitated the spreading and sharing of data and feedback over the Internet. This explains why consumers rely to a great extent on SM in their search for information about products/services they intend to buy.

2.2. Tools Used in Online Advertising

To connect, interact with, persuade, and reach consumers, online advertising employs a range of techniques. These strategies influence customers in such a way that they often lead to purchases and play a significant role in their decision-making process.

2.2.1. Email Marketing

Email marketing involves sending electronic messages to a database containing promotional offers designed to entice consumers to click on the advertisement and visit the company's landing page. According to a study by Hampsey (2013), 66% of customers have made purchases as a result of email marketing campaigns. Email marketing is highly effective, as 91% of customers regularly check their emails (36,19). Email marketing is a common and profitable communication medium that is 40 times more effective at attracting new customers than Facebook and Twitter combined, and its annual growth rate is expected to be 10% by 2016 afterwards (37).

Paid Social Media

Paid social media involves displaying advertisements or sponsored marketing messages on popular social media platforms, such as pay-per-click ads, branded content, and influencer-generated content. This strategy is effective in driving sales. Coleman discusses the options of paid, controlled, and received social media (38). The convergence of these elements within the social media space makes it a powerful marketing tool (39).

Search Engine Marketing: This internet marketing method aims to increase the visibility of websites in search engine results pages. As searches become increasingly important, search engines serve as essential links between businesses developing their online brand and their target audience. Search engines play a dominant role in the online world; over half of all website visitors now arrive via a search engine rather than direct links from other websites (40).

Mobile Advertising: This multi-channel online marketing approach targets specific customers on their smartphones, feature phones, tablets, or mobile applications. Deshwal reveals that in mobile marketing, advertisement messages are sent to customers regardless of whether they are interested, receptive, or relevant to the product or service but with intentions of influencing customers purchasing (41).

Mbiti explored the influence of internet advertising on the purchase of mobile phones and the study revealed that internet advertising influences customers in purchasing these phones to a low extent although internet advertising plays a major role in terms of reaching customers (42). Online advertising plays a crucial role in shaping customer purchasing behavior, as brands and businesses cannot afford to ignore such an influential channel. Ho et al. explored how brand image, online word of mouth, and price discounts are techniques used in online advertising to influence customer purchasing intentions (43). Online advertising appeals to customers through various methods such as websites, social media, and pop-up ads. It leverages factors like credibility, informativeness, pleasure, and materialism to attract and influence customers. Importantly, online advertising motivates customers to engage in online shopping, with research showing its effectiveness in increasing reach and creating brand awareness.

Given the fast-paced nature of the world, people value their time and prefer not to waste it. Online advertising keeps customers engaged, allowing them to quickly seek out and consume information. It provides a convenient way for customers to access relevant content that aids in their decision-making, such as updates in a business or industry. Customers can visit business websites at their convenience and easily order products online, making it a more efficient

alternative to visiting physical stores. Internet marketing offers numerous options and helps reduce the carbon footprint (44).

Fuller highlighted that online purchases allow customers to easily compare prices, unlike traditional shopping methods (45). Internet advertising fosters competition, which benefits consumers (44). By providing customers with up-to-date information, internet marketing empowers them to make informed purchase decisions. Many businesses offer online chats or email services, enabling customers to seek help when needed. This flexibility allows customers to contact businesses at their convenience.

According to Storm, online advertising gives businesses significant control, allowing them to access platforms like Facebook and Google to target potential customers based on profiles and search history. It enables businesses to deliver key messages to specific audiences. Online advertising also helps businesses maintain contact with their customers through various channels, such as responding to comments on a business page, tweeting about products, and providing excellent customer service, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction (46,47). Through internet marketing businesses can analyze customer data and can further make required changes by customers, internet marketing makes things easier for businesses in tracking conversations and measure the effectiveness of its campaign and also enables businesses to identify areas for improvement in their advertising strategy (48).

Rastogi and Khan agree that businesses that use online advertising platforms to advertise have the dual benefit of being generally more efficient and effective compared to other media channels (49). In traditional advertising business has to pay the full amount of money to the advertising agency, no matter the results, however in the online advertising business has to pay only for the qualified click, leads, or impressions (41).

In this respect, the research done by Gunawan and Huarng (2015) realized that the individual's purchase intentions to buy virally marketed products are positively influenced by their subjective norms (50).

2.3. Online Advertisements vs. Traditional Advertisements

Advertising, an ever-evolving discipline, has witnessed a profound transformation with the advent of the internet and digital technologies. Traditional advertising, once the cornerstone of marketing strategies, now contends with its digital counterpart online advertising. This comparative analysis elucidates the differences, advantages, and unique characteristics of these two advertising realms.

2.3.1. Reach and Targeting

Traditional Advertising: Traditional advertising mediums such as television, radio, print, and billboards have a broad reach but lack precise targeting capabilities (51). They often communicate to a mass audience without specific segmentation.

Online Advertising: Online advertising, utilizing platforms like social media, search engines, display ads, and email campaigns, offers precise targeting options (52). Advertisers can reach specific demographics, behaviours, and interests, improving audience engagement.

2.3.2. Cost Efficiency

Traditional Advertising: Traditional advertising, especially on popular TV networks or in print, can be expensive, limiting access for smaller businesses (53).

Online Advertising: Online advertising provides various budget options, including pay-per-click (PPC), making it cost-effective and accessible for businesses of all sizes (54).

2.3.3. Interactivity and Engagement

Traditional Advertising: Traditional ads are static and lack interactivity, limiting engagement and direct interaction with the audience (55).

Online Advertising: Online ads are interactive, allowing users to click, comment, share, or make purchases directly, enhancing engagement and interaction (52).

2.3.4. Measurability and Analytics

Traditional Advertising: Measuring the success of traditional advertising can be challenging, with difficulties in accurately quantifying the impact and calculating ROI (56).

Online Advertising: Online ads provide precise metrics, including impressions, clicks, conversions, and demographics, allowing for accurate measurement of ROI and campaign effectiveness (52).

2.3.5. Flexibility and Customization

Traditional Advertising: Traditional ads have limited flexibility once aired or published, making post-production modifications cumbersome and costly (57).

Online Advertising: Online ads offer real-time adjustments, allowing for quick modifications to content, targeting, and budget allocation for optimal results (52).

2.3.6. Global vs. Local Impact

Traditional Advertising: Traditional advertising is conducive for creating a global brand presence due to its broad reach and extensive audience (58).

Online Advertising: Online advertising excels in localized targeting, effectively reaching specific geographical areas and demographics (52).

2.3.7. Permanence and Longevity

Traditional Advertising: Traditional ads have a limited lifespan once aired, printed, or broadcasted, resulting in a short-term impact (55).

Online Advertising: Online ads, especially on websites or social media, can have a longer digital presence, providing a more sustained impact and potential for virality (52).

Advertising on television, radio, newspapers, billboards or direct mail is based on large exposure and a particularly wide audience. Internet advertising, on the other hand, is based on relatively few channels that coalesce to bring forth a maximized target customer. Internet is the world's most powerful media advertising for two main reasons: First, almost every home has continuous access to the Internet. Second, the Internet has a daily audience that is greater than the sum of the entire historical audience of traditional media. The possibility of reaching a predefined target audience leverages the brand, induces the effectiveness of the website's sales, and conduces the transfer of information to consumers. Internet advertising helps to market products and services through interactive and colourful catalogues and provides audience with current and available information. It also allows them to make both local and international purchases. Today, there are numerous websites designed to promote sales and to maintain relationships with customers. As opposed to other media tools, a company website can provide more comprehensive information on the product line and can turn directly to the target audience. With this information, the target audience can make the purchasing decision more efficiently (59).

In conclusion, while traditional advertising has its merits and a long-standing history, online advertising has emerged as a more versatile, cost-effective, and measurable alternative. The shift towards online advertising is evident, given its ability to precisely target audiences, foster engagement, and adapt swiftly to changing market dynamics. However, a balanced and integrated approach that utilizes the strengths of both forms can often yield the most comprehensive marketing strategy.

Advantages of Online Advertising

Online advertising is more attractive to consumers because advertisers focus them to match the former's interests. In addition, online advertisement can appear simultaneously in a number of variations including a video, sound clip, text and a combination thereof. Another advantage is that some online advertising is less annoying than usual advertising. Television and radio commercials may interfere with the consumer and come in a non-controlled and unexpected way. Online advertising is somewhat more acceptable because surfers have the ability to control the time when, the place where and the amount of information that can be derived from the site Zheng and Yeqing (60,5). From the advertiser's point of view, everything is dynamic. The content and the details can be changed immediately and no waiting for a new edition, for instance, is required. Internet advertising is also cheaper than other media and marketers can achieve an

exposure to a targeted audience at a low-cost and to locate groups of consumers who share the same interests. Interactivity of the Internet is another significant factor, in that it allows users to express their reaction to the ad by a mere click (61).

Disadvantages of Online Advertising

On the other hand, the Internet has several disadvantages. The most prominent is likely the lack of user privacy. Many marketers track online activities and send targeted marketing messages, often without users' consent. Another disadvantage is the prevalence of various types of online advertisements, such as pop-up ads, which are generally perceived as annoying. These ads can disrupt users' original activities, forcing them to watch unwanted advertisements and potentially leading to negative attitudes towards the ads and the companies behind them. Additionally, the complexity of online advertisements, which often include long texts, photos, music, and videos, can cause confusion. Despite these drawbacks, internet users still view the Internet as a tool to achieve goals, tasks, and information, leading them to broadly ignore online advertisements (52).

- The Influence of Online Advertising among Students: Exploring Consumer Behavior in the Digital Age

Online advertising has witnessed an unprecedented surge in recent years, rapidly becoming an integral part of the digital landscape. Its influence on consumer behaviour, particularly among students, is profound and continuously evolving. In this discourse, we delve into the multifaceted aspects of how online advertising impacts the decision-making processes, preferences, and behaviours of students (62).

- Understanding the Reach and Ubiquity of Online Advertising

The reach of online advertising is unparalleled. In the age of the internet, nearly every individual, especially students, is connected to some form of digital platform, be it social media, search engines, or websites. Online advertisements infiltrate their virtual environment, making exposure to marketing messages inevitable. The omnipresence of these ads cultivates a pervasive influence on students' psyche and decision-making processes.

- Tailored Messaging and Personalization

One of the strengths of online advertising lies in its ability to deliver tailored messages based on user behaviour, demographics, and preferences. Platforms utilize complex algorithms to analyse user data and present advertisements that align with individual interests. For students, this means being exposed to products or services that are more likely to resonate with their needs and aspirations.

Personalization creates a sense of relevance, catching the attention of students amidst the barrage of information they encounter daily. When an ad speaks directly to their desires or challenges, it piques their interest and leads to further engagement.

- The Psychology of Persuasion in Online Advertising

Online advertisers employ various psychological principles to influence consumer behaviour. Understanding these principles helps shed light on the efficacy of online advertising among students.

Social Proof: Social proof leverages the power of peer influence. When students see others endorsing or engaging with a product/service through online platforms, it validates the offering and fosters a perception of popularity, leading them to consider the product favourably (63).

Scarcity and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO): Limited-time offers or products in high demand trigger a fear of missing out among students, compelling them to take prompt action to secure the product before it's no longer available (Scarcity Principle).

Reciprocity: Online advertising often employs strategies that invoke a sense of obligation to reciprocate. For instance, offering free resources or discounts can prompt students to reciprocate by engaging with the brand or making a purchase (63).

Emotional Appeal: Emotional marketing appeals resonate strongly with students. Advertisements that evoke emotions like happiness, nostalgia, or empathy have a lasting impact and often lead to increased brand affinity (64).

Online Advertising Platforms and Their Influence

The platforms through which online advertising is delivered play a significant role in its influence on students.

Social Media Advertising: Social media platforms, being an integral part of students' lives, hold immense influence. Advertisements on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (now called X) can shape students' perceptions of trends, lifestyles, and brand choices (65).

Influencer Marketing: Collaborations with influencers allow brands to access the trust and credibility influencers have built with their audience. Students often look up to influencers for recommendations, making this form of advertising highly influential (66).

Video Advertising: Videos are captivating and hold students' attention. Platforms like YouTube present an opportunity for advertisers to showcase their products or services through engaging video content, leaving a lasting impression (67).

2.4. The Impact on Purchase Decisions and Brand Loyalty

Online advertising significantly influences students' purchase decisions. The continuous exposure to advertisements creates brand awareness and familiarity. Subsequently, when students are in the decision-making phase, the brands they've been consistently exposed to are more likely to be considered.

Moreover, online advertising fosters a feedback loop. Reviews, ratings, and comments from fellow consumers contribute to the decision-making process. Positive feedback reinforces the perceived value of a product or service, while negative feedback may deter a purchase (68).

2.5. The Ethical Dimension and Responsible Advertising

While online advertising is a potent tool, its influence raises ethical concerns. Advertisers must ensure that their strategies are responsible and don't exploit the vulnerability of students. Transparent disclosure of sponsored content, truthful representation of products, and protecting user privacy are imperative ethical considerations (8).

2.5.1. Conclusion

The influence of online advertising among students is a complex interplay of psychology, technology, and marketing strategies. Understanding the dynamics of this influence is vital for both advertisers and consumers. Striking a balance between the efficacy of online advertising and ethical responsibility is the key to fostering a healthy digital advertising ecosystem that caters to the needs and well-being of students and consumers alike. Investigating the influence of online advertising among students requires examining various aspects of advertisement design and content. The Information Processing Model (69) can help elucidate how students perceive and process online advertisements. According to this model, consumers move through stages of exposure, attention, comprehension, yielding, retention, and behaviour. Analyzing how students traverse these stages in response to online ads can provide valuable insights into the influence of these advertisements.

Additionally, the Dual Process Model of Persuasion (70) is relevant in understanding how online advertisements persuade students. It distinguishes between central and peripheral routes to persuasion. The central route involves cognitive elaboration and critical evaluation, while the peripheral route relies on cues such as source attractiveness or message length. Exploring which route students predominantly adopt in response to online advertisements can deepen our understanding of their influence.

2.6. Attitude of Students towards Online Advertising

Investigating the attitudes of students towards online advertising is essential in determining the receptiveness and engagement levels. Attitudes can be shaped by various factors, including ad credibility, trustworthiness, and perceived relevance (71). Understanding these attitudes will shed light on how students interact with online advertisements and whether their attitudes influence their purchasing preferences.

By exploring these key aspects related to online advertising and its impact on the purchasing habits of students, this study aims to contribute valuable insights to both academic discourse and practical marketing strategies targeted at the student demographic.

In the rapidly evolving digital era, online advertising has emerged as a dominant means for brands to reach their target audiences. Students, being a significant consumer segment, play a crucial role in this digital landscape. Their attitudes towards online advertising shape their interactions, preferences, and ultimately influence their purchasing decisions. This discussion delves into the multifaceted aspects of students' attitudes towards online advertising, aiming to comprehend the factors that drive these attitudes and their impact on the advertising ecosystem.

2.7. The Evolution of Online Advertising and Its Penetration

Online advertising has undergone a remarkable evolution, mirroring the growth of the internet and digital technologies. From basic banner ads to sophisticated, personalized ad experiences, the landscape has transformed drastically. Today, online advertising encompasses various forms, including display ads, search engine ads, social media ads, video ads, and influencer collaborations.

The penetration of online advertising is extensive among students, who are highly connected and engaged with digital platforms. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat are popular mediums for online advertisements, allowing advertisers to target specific demographics, behaviours, and interests (52).

2.8. Understanding Attitudes Towards Online Advertising

Attitude towards online advertising is a complex interplay of cognitive, affective, and behavioural components. It encompasses an individual's beliefs, feelings, and predispositions towards online advertisements. To comprehend the dynamics of attitudes towards online advertising among students, we delve into key factors that influence these attitudes.

Relevance and Personalization: Students appreciate online ads that are relevant to their interests and needs. Personalization enhances the overall experience, aligning advertisements with their preferences (72). When an ad resonates with their current circumstances or desires, it positively influences their attitude.

Intrusiveness and Ad Avoidance: The degree of intrusiveness in online advertising affects how students perceive ads. Overly intrusive ads, such as pop-ups or autoplay videos, can lead to ad avoidance (73). Negative experiences with intrusive ads can shape unfavourable attitudes, making students more prone to ad-blocking.

Trust and Credibility: Students value trust and credibility in online advertising (74). Ads from trusted sources or recognizable brands are more likely to be perceived positively. Conversely, misleading or deceptive ads erode trust and form negative attitudes (75). Trust and credibility are fundamental factors that significantly impact how students perceive online advertisements. Establishing trust is crucial for advertisers to gain the attention and interest of the student demographic.

Transparency and Authenticity: Trust is built when online ads are transparent about their purpose and origin. Students are more likely to engage with advertisements that are authentic and clearly state their intentions (76). Brands that maintain honesty in their advertising foster a sense of trust among students.

Perceived Value and Utility: The perceived value and utility of the advertised products or services influence attitudes (77). If students perceive the offering as valuable and beneficial, their attitude towards the ad and the brand tends to be positive. The perceived value and utility of the advertised products or services are critical in shaping students' attitudes towards online advertising.

Peer Influence and Social Endorsement: Recommendations or endorsements from peers and social circles influence students' attitudes towards online advertising (66). Positive feedback or endorsements from friends or influencers can enhance the perceived value and credibility of the advertised product or service. Peer influence and social endorsement significantly shape how students perceive online advertisements. Recommendations and opinions from friends, acquaintances, or social media connections play a vital role in their decision-making process.

2.9. Influencer Marketing: Shaping Student Perceptions

Influencer marketing involves collaborating with individuals, often on social media, who have a significant following and impact on their audience. These influencers endorse products or services to their followers, effectively acting as a bridge between the brand and the target audience.

Trust and Relatability: Influencers often have a personal connection with their followers. Students, as a part of this audience, perceive influencers as relatable and trustworthy figures. The recommendations made by influencers are often seen as genuine and based on personal experience (78). As a result, students are more inclined to trust the products or services endorsed by influencers.

Authenticity and Genuine Engagement: Influencers are valued for their authenticity. They are seen as individuals who genuinely engage with the products or services they promote (79). Their honest and sincere endorsements resonate with students, fostering a positive attitude towards the advertisements.

Peer-like Recommendations: Influencers are perceived by students as peers rather than traditional advertisers (66). The informal and friendly approach of influencers in promoting a product or service makes the advertisement feel like a recommendation from a friend, further influencing students' attitudes positively.

Diverse Content Formats: Influencers use various content formats like images, videos, and stories to present the advertised products or services. This diversity in content keeps students engaged and entertained while being exposed to the advertisement (80). It also allows for better alignment with the preferences of the student audience.

2.9.1. Conclusion

Understanding students' attitudes towards online advertising is crucial for marketers aiming to create effective and impactful campaigns. Factors like relevance, intrusiveness, trust, perceived value, and peer influence significantly shape these attitudes. Positive attitudes can drive engagement and loyalty, while negative attitudes can lead to ad avoidance and erosion of trust. By aligning online advertising with students' preferences and upholding ethical standards, marketers can cultivate a positive perception of online ads among this influential consumer segment.

2.10. The Relevant Theories that can be applied to the Topic

The Influence of Online Advertisements on the Purchasing Habits of Students of Adekunle Ajasin University Akoko, considering the key variables of online advertisements, influence of online advertisements, and purchasing habits of students in Nigeria.

Expectancy-Value Theory: This psychological theory suggests that individuals' attitudes and behaviours are determined by the combination of their expectations (or beliefs) about an outcome and the value they place on that outcome. In the context of online advertisements, students may form attitudes towards advertised products based on their expectations of what those products offer and the value they attribute to those offerings. The Expectancy-Value Theory is a psychological theory that explains how individuals form attitudes and make choices based on the perceived expectations and values associated with a particular outcome. In the context of students' attitudes towards online advertising, we can utilize this theory to understand how their expectations and perceived values influence their attitude towards the advertisements they encounter.

Expectancy (E): Expectancy refers to an individual's belief about the likelihood of a particular outcome resulting from a specific behaviour (81). In the context of online advertising, this could be the expectation that engaging with an ad will lead to a desirable outcome, such as finding relevant information or a good deal.

Value (V): Value refers to the perceived desirability or importance an individual places on the expected outcome (82). In the context of online advertising, this could be the perceived value of the product or service being advertised, the credibility of the source, or the perceived relevance of the ad.

The attitude (A) towards online advertising can be expressed using the equation:

The analysis presented describes a model for understanding how attitudes towards online advertising are formed based on expectancy-value theory. This theory suggests that attitudes (A) are the result of the sum of individual beliefs (expectancies) about specific outcomes, each weighted by the value assigned to those outcomes. Here's a step-by-step explanation (83):

Equation Breakdown

$A = \sum(E_i \times V_i)$

A: Overall attitude towards online advertising.

E_i: Expectancy (belief) associated with a specific outcome of engaging with online advertising.

V_i: Value assigned to that specific outcome.

Steps Explained

- Expectancies (E_i):

These are the beliefs or expectations that individuals have regarding the consequences or outcomes of engaging with online advertising. For example:

E1 might represent the belief that online ads provide useful product information.
E2 might represent the expectation that engaging with online ads can lead to finding good deals.
E3 might represent the belief that online ads are entertaining.

- Values (V_i):

These are the values or importance that individuals assign to each of these outcomes. For example:

V1 might represent the importance of obtaining useful product information.
V2 might represent the value placed on finding good deals.
V3 might represent the enjoyment of being entertained.

- Calculating Attitude (A)

To determine the overall attitude (A) towards online advertising, each expectancy (E_i) is multiplied by its corresponding value (V_i). This product represents the contribution of each specific outcome to the overall attitude. The sum of these products gives the overall attitude:

$$A=(E1×V1)+(E2×V2)+(E3×V3)$$

- Simplified Example

Imagine we have three expectancies (E1, E2, E3) and their respective values (V1, V2, V3):

E1: Belief that online ads provide useful product information.

 V1: Importance of useful product information.

 Let's assume E1 = 0.8 and V1 = 0.9.

E2: Expectation that engaging with online ads can lead to finding good deals.

 V2: Value placed on finding good deals.

 Let's assume E2 = 0.7 and V2 = 0.8.

E3: Belief that online ads are entertaining.

 V3: Enjoyment of being entertained.

 Let's assume E3 = 0.6 and V3 = 0.7.

Using the equation:

$$A=(0.8×0.9)+(0.7×0.8)+(0.6×0.7)$$

$$A=0.72+0.56+0.42$$

A=1.70

This value of 1.70 represents the overall attitude towards online advertising, with higher values indicating a more positive attitude.

- Interpretation

The overall attitude towards online advertising (A) is a cumulative effect of individual expectancies and the value assigned to each. This model highlights that:

Positive attitudes towards online advertising are formed when individuals have positive expectancies about the outcomes and value these outcomes highly.

Negative attitudes can arise if expectancies are negative or if the outcomes are not valued.

Applying the Theory to Online Advertising

In the context of online advertising, each expectancy (E1, E2, E3) could represent students' expectations of what will happen if they engage with an ad perhaps expecting to find relevant information, discover a good deal, or gain knowledge about a product. The associated values (V1, V2, V3) would represent how much importance or desirability the students attribute to each of these outcomes (83).

By understanding and influencing these expectations and values, advertisers can shape students' attitudes towards online advertising and optimize their advertising strategies accordingly.

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM): ELM by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) is particularly relevant when examining the influence of online advertisements. It describes two routes of information processing: the central route (cognitive evaluation of ad content) and the peripheral route (reliance on superficial cues like visuals or endorsements). Understanding which route students predominantly use when exposed to online ads can shed light on their persuasive impact. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) by Petty and Cacioppo is a dual-process theory of persuasion that explains how individuals process information and form attitudes in response to persuasive messages (84). It delineates two routes to persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route. Let's elaborate on this model and create a diagram to visualize it.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model proposes that the persuasiveness of a message depends on the individual's motivation and ability to process information. The two routes are:
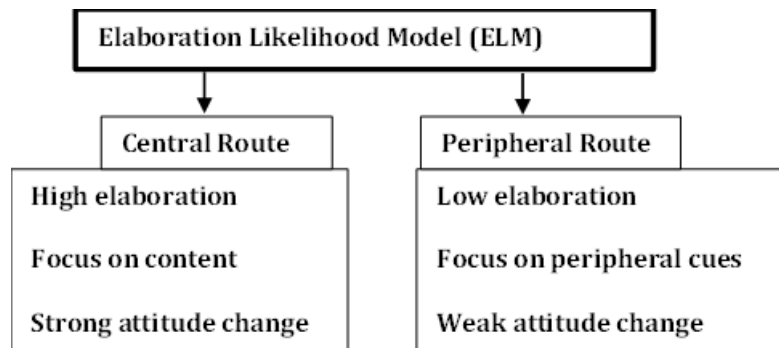
Central Route

High elaboration: The central route is taken when the individual is motivated to process the message deeply and critically.

Focus on content: The individual carefully evaluates the arguments, facts, and logic presented in the message.

Strong attitude change: Persuasion occurs through the strength and quality of the arguments.

Peripheral Route

Low elaboration: The peripheral route is taken when the individual lacks motivation or ability to process the message deeply.

Focus on peripheral cues: The individual relies on heuristics, superficial aspects, or cues such as attractiveness of the source or the aesthetics of the message.

Weak attitude change: Persuasion occurs through surface-level features, not the strength of the arguments.

The route chosen depends on various factors, including individual differences, message characteristics, and the context of the persuasion attempt.

The central route involves deep processing and careful evaluation of message content, leading to a strong attitude change. On the other hand, the peripheral route involves shallow processing, focusing on superficial cues, and results in a weaker attitude change.

Understanding which route is taken is crucial for advertisers to tailor their messages effectively, ensuring they are impactful based on the individual's processing route.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB): TPB is instrumental in understanding how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influence purchasing habits. This theory suggests that individuals are more likely to engage in behaviour (e.g., making a purchase) if they have a positive attitude towards it, perceive social pressure to do it, and believe they have control over the action (85).

The Theory of Planned Behaviour posits that an individual's behavioural intention is the key determinant of their actual behaviour. This intention is influenced by three main factors:

Attitude toward the Behaviour (A): A person's positive or negative evaluation of performing behaviour Influenced by beliefs about the outcomes of the behaviour and the subjective value attached to these outcomes.

Subjective Norms (SN): Perceived social pressure or influence to perform or not perform the behaviour Influenced by beliefs about whether specific individuals or groups approve or disapprove of the behaviour and the individual's motivation to comply with these referents.

Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC): A person's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour Influenced by beliefs about factors that may facilitate or hinder the behaviour and the perceived power of these factors.

Together, these factors shape the individual's intention to perform a particular behaviour. Additionally, perceived behavioural control directly influences the behaviour itself.

Understanding this model can aid advertisers in crafting persuasive messages that effectively influence behavioural intentions, ultimately driving desired actions.

Information Processing Theory: Information Processing Theory focuses on how individuals receive, interpret, and respond to information. In the context of online advertisements, this theory helps understand how students process the information presented in ads and how it influences their subsequent actions, such as making purchasing decisions.

Dual Process Model of Persuasion: This model (Chaiken, 1980) posits that there are two routes to persuasion: central and peripheral. In the central route, individuals carefully evaluate information, while in the peripheral route, they are influenced by peripheral cues (70). In the context of online advertisements, students might be persuaded by either carefully analysing the content (central route) or being influenced by visual elements or endorsements (peripheral route).

These theories provide a theoretical foundation to study how online advertisements influence the purchasing habits of students at Adekunle Ajasin University Akoko, considering the key variables in focus. Each theory offers unique insights into the cognitive processes and behavioural mechanisms at play when students engage with online advertisements and make purchasing decisions.

3. Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to investigate the influence of online advertisements on the purchasing habits of students at Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko (AAUA). This approach integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between online advertising and students' purchasing behavior. The target population for this study is undergraduate students at AAUA, with a sample size of 100 students selected using a stratified random sampling technique. This technique categorizes students based on their academic levels, ensuring representation across different segments of the student body.

Quantitative data is collected through structured questionnaires distributed to the 100 selected students. These questionnaires examine students' exposure to online advertisements, preferences for specific ad types, and the influence of these advertisements on their purchasing habits. To explore the qualitative aspects of the study, a subset of the sampled students is chosen for in-depth interviews. These interviews provide deeper insights into the psychological and behavioral effects of online advertisements on students' purchasing decisions.

Quantitative data is analyzed using statistical methods to identify patterns, correlations, and trends in students' responses. The qualitative data from interviews is transcribed and analyzed thematically to uncover recurring themes and patterns in the participants' narratives. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, outlining the study's purpose, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of responses. Anonymity is maintained by using unique identifiers instead of personal information in the analysis and reporting.

However, the study has certain limitations. The sample size of 100 students may limit the generalizability of the findings to the entire student population at AAUA. Additionally, participants' responses may be influenced by recall bias as they remember their interactions with online advertisements. Despite these limitations, the mixed-methods approach provides valuable insights into the impact of online advertisements on the purchasing habits of university students.

4. Results

The sourced research data via questionnaires were analysed, presented and interpreted within this section. Frequency count and percentage summary were used to analyse the respondents' social demographic characteristics. Similarly, Frequency count and percentages summary was used to analyse the raised research questions. All analyses were summarized and presented in tables below.
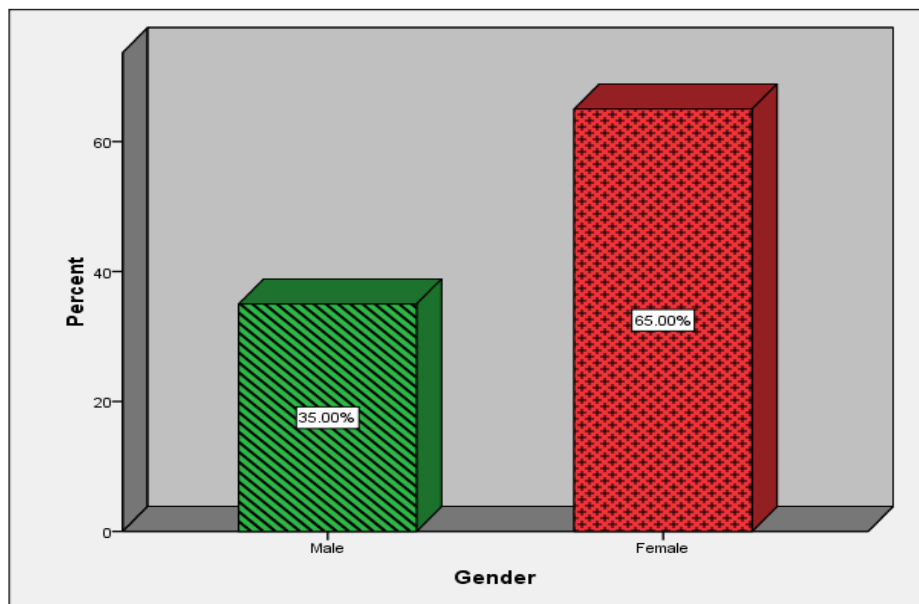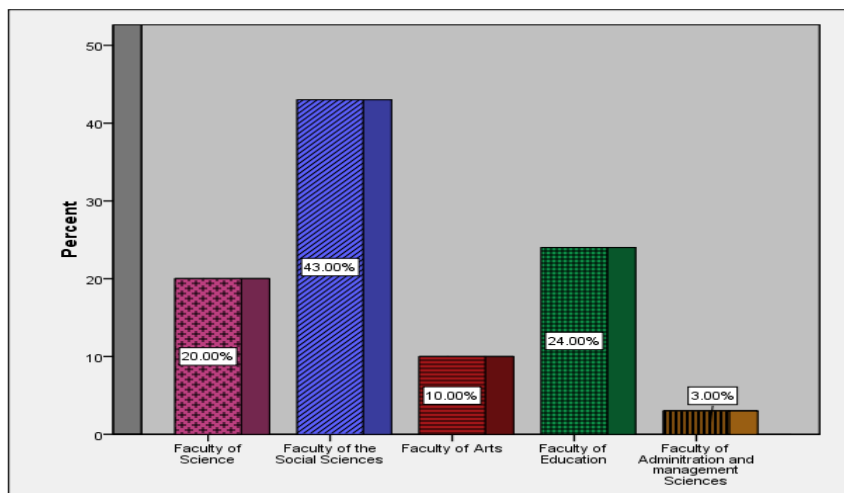

Figure 1 Bar Chart Showing Respondents' Gender

The result in figure 1 presents the gender distribution of the respondents, and it was indicated that 35% of them were male, while a reasonable percentage of them (65%) were females. This means that both forms of gender were duly considered in this study.
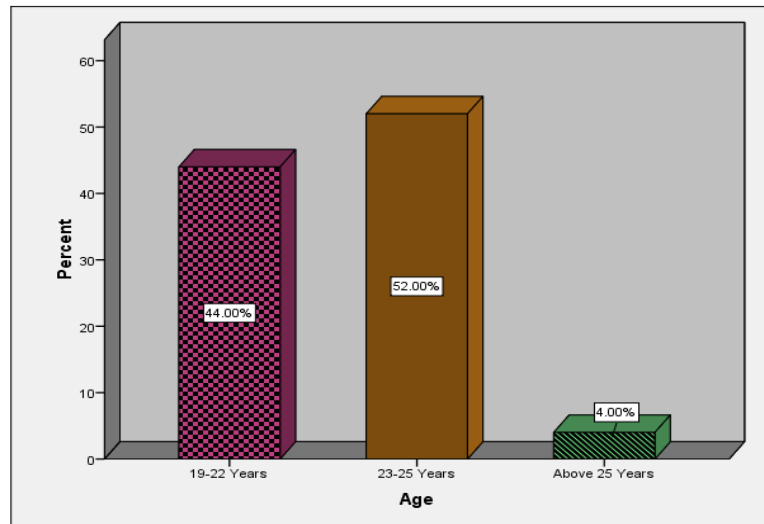
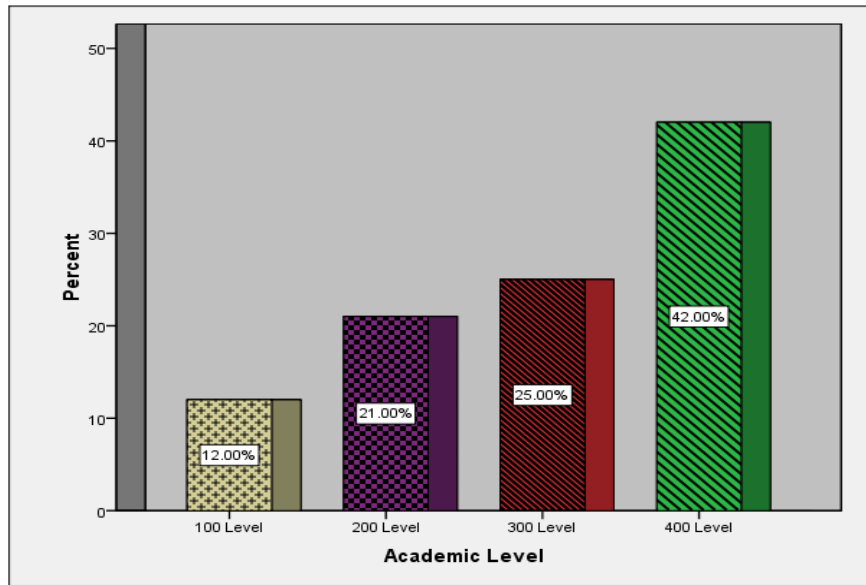**Figure 2** Bar Chart Showing Respondents' Age

The age distribution of the respondents' as presented in figure 2 revealed that 44% of them were within the age range of 19 and 22 years, and a good number of them (52%) were aged between 23 and 25 years, while a limited number of them (4%) were aged above 25 years.

Figure 3 Bar Chart Showing Respondents' Faculty

The distribution of the respondents' Faculty as presented in figure 3 had indication that 20% of them were from the Faculty of Science, 43% of them were from the Faculty of Social Sciences, 10% of them were from the Faculty of Arts, and 24% of them were from the Faculty of Education, while 3% of them were from the Faculty of Administration and Management sciences.

Figure 4 Bar Chart Showing Respondents' Academic Level

The distribution of the respondents' academic level as presented in figure 4 had revealed that 12% of them were 100 level students, 21% of them were in 200 level, and a similar percentage of them (25%) were 300 level students, while 42% of them were in 400 level.

4.1. Analysis on Research Questions

Research Questions 1: What is the effectiveness of online advertisement in Adekunle Ajasin University?

Table 1 Frequency Distribution showing statements relating to the effectiveness of online advertisement in Adekunle Ajasin University

Factors	Options	Frequency	%
How do you think online advertisement influence the purchasing habits of students in Adekunle Ajasin University?	Increased Awareness	45	45.0
	Influencer Marketing	16	16.0
	Impulse Buying	17	17.0
	Convenience and Accessibility	22	22.0
	Total	100	100.0
Rate your consent with this statement; Online advertisement has influenced my purchasing decisions	Strongly Disagree	3	3.0
	Disagree	6	6.0
	Neutral	24	24.0
	Agree	48	48.0
	Strongly Agree	19	19.0
	Total	100	100.0
What type of online advertisement do you find most appealing or engaging?	Email Marketing	3	3.0
	Paid Social Media	45	45.0
	Search Engine	9	9.0
	Mobile Advertising	43	43.0
	Total	100	100.0

The findings on statements relating to the effectiveness of online advertisement in Adekunle Ajasin University was presented in Table 1. Online advertisement has been perceived as a factor that influences the purchasing habits of students. This was such that 45% of the respondents had thought that it increased purchasing awareness, 16% of them believed it's a factors in influencer marketing, a similar percentage of them (17%) were of the view that it induces impulse buying in the process of influencing the students purchasing habits, while 22% of them opined that online advertisement creates convenience and accessibility to goods and services while influencing students purchasing habits. It was revealed that reasonable percentage of the respondents (67%) had personally certified that online advertisement had influenced their purchasing decisions, 24% of them were indecisive, however 9% of them report contrarily.

The respondents in their choice of online advertisement that they had preference in measure of effectiveness was such that 3% of them had affirmed that email marketing had been most appealing to them, 45% of them had perceived the paid social media to be most engaging online advertisement, and 9% of them had consented that the search engine had been the most engaging online advertisement, while 43% of them ascertained that mobile advertisement is the most appealing online advertisement.

In summary, it is clarified that online advertisement was highly effective in Adekunle Ajasin University most especially as it influences the purchasing habits of the students majorly through increased awareness, similarly the paid social media and mobile advertising were the most engaging online advertisement. Considering the justifications in this result, it is therefore ascertained that online advertisement is highly effective among students of Adekunle Ajasin University.

Research Questions 2: What is the attitude of AAUA students towards online advertising?

Table 2 Frequency and percentage summary relating to the attitude of AAUA students towards online advertising

Factors	Options	Frequency	%
How frequently do you click on online advertisement?	Never	10	10.0
	Rarely	28	28.0
	Sometimes	42	42.0
	Often	14	14.0
	Always	6	6.0
	Total	100	100.0
How often do you research a product or service after seeing an online advertisement?	Never	3	3.0
	Rarely	24	24.0
	Sometimes	39	39.0
	Often	17	17.0
	Always	17	17.0
	Total	100	100.0
How do you feel about the credibility and trustworthiness of online advertisement?	Very Trustworthy	22	22.0
	Somewhat Trustworthy	46	46.0
	Not Very Trustworthy	32	32.0
	Total	100	100.0
On the average, how many online advertisement do you see per day?	0-7	18	18.0
	8-14	37	37.0
	15-21	35	35.0
	Above 21	10	10.0
	Total	100	100.0

The result in Table 2 presents statements relating to the attitudinal disposition of AAUA students towards online advertising. It was observed that 6% of the respondents consent they always click on online advertisement, 14% of them report they do so often, 42% of them said they sometimes engage in such act, and 28% of them opined they rarely click on online advertisement, meanwhile 10% of them affirmed they had never engaged in such action at any point in time.

It was also indicated in this result that 17% of the respondents complied that they always research about a product or service after seeing an online advertisement, similar percentage of them (17%) report they do so often, 39% of them said they sometimes engage in such act, and 24% of them were of the view they rarely research about a product or service after seeing an online advertisement, meanwhile 3% of them affirmed they had never engaged in such act at any point in time.

In respect to the respondents feeling of credibility and trustworthiness of online advertisement. It was observed that 22% of them felt online advertisement is very trustworthy, and 46% of them had thought online advertisement is somewhat trustworthy, although 32% of them were of the opinion that online advertisement are not worthy to be trusted at all.

Lastly, 18% of the respondents agreed they had view of at least 1-7 online advertisements on daily bases, 37% of them opined that they had view of about 8-14 views of online advertisements per day, a similar percentage of them (35%) thought that they had views of 15-21 online advertisements on daily bases, while 10% of them had views of online advertisements that are above 21 on daily bases.

In summary, the respondents in their reasonable number (68%) with the perception that online advertisement is trustworthy, and also with insinuation that they've click or research products via online advertisement gives a positive attitudinal disposition from the students in Adekunle Ajasin University towards the platform. Therefore it is clarified that there is a positive attitudinal disposition from students of Adekunle Ajasin University towards online advertisement.

Research Question 3: What is the gratification derived by AAUA students from online advertising?

Table 3 Frequency and percentage summary relating the gratification derived by AAUA students from online advertising

Factors	Options	Frequency	%
Online advertisement brings out the best of features of any product that ordinarily the customer may not had thought about in the quest to buy any product	Sometimes	13	13.0
	Often	42	42.0
	Always	45	45.0
	Total	100	100.0
I can access quality varieties of products at my convenience through online advertisement	Yes	84	84.0
	No	16	16.0
	Total	100	100.0
What makes you most committed to online advertisement in making purchase?	Service Feature	32	32.0
	Reviews and Ratings	53	53.0
	Limited time offers and Discounts	15	15.0
	Total	100	100.0

The result on the gratification derived by AAUA students from online advertising was presented in Table 3. It was the impression of 45% of the respondents were of the opinion that online advertisement always brings out the best of features of any product that ordinarily the customer may not had thought about in the quest to buy any product, a similar percentage of them affirmed it does oftentimes, although 13% of them report it does sometimes. It was reported

by majority of the respondents (84%) that they can access quality varieties of products at their convenience through online advertisement, however 16% of them refuted.

Lastly, 32% of the respondents were of the view that the service features of online advertisement made them most committed to it to guide their choice of purchase, a good number of them (53%) were of the impression that the reviews and ratings done through online advertisement makes them committed to it so that it guides their choice of purchase, while 15% of them were of the idea that the limited time offer and discount offered on online advertisement made them acquitted to it so as it guides their choice of purchase.

In summary, it was revealed that majority of the respondents (87%) with positive report that online advertisement always brings out the best features of products certify their assurance to access quality varieties of products without stress, this had made them committed to visiting the online advertisement so as to guide their purchase choices. Considering the variation in frequencies from this result, it is therefore ascertained that the students of Adekunle Ajasin University had this positive assurance and are gratified that online advertisement will at all-time bring out the best of features in any products for a review, which guarantee customers that they have access to quality varieties of products at any time while making choice of purchase.

5. Discussion

The findings of the research project reveal several insights into the effectiveness, attitude, and gratification derived by Adekunle Ajasin University (AAUA) students from online advertising. Effectiveness of Online Advertisement: The research suggests that online advertisement plays a significant role in influencing the purchasing habits of AAUA students. A considerable percentage of respondents (67%) claimed that online advertisement had personally influenced their purchasing decisions. The most perceived effects include increased purchasing awareness (45%), engagement in influencer marketing (16%), inducing impulse buying (17%), and creating convenience and accessibility to goods and services (22%). The preference for paid social media (45%) and mobile advertising (43%) indicates the channels perceived as most engaging.

Attitude towards Online Advertising: The attitude of AAUA students towards online advertising appears positive. A majority of respondents (68%) expressed trustworthiness in online advertisements, with 6% always clicking on them and 17% researching products after seeing an online advertisement. The data also reveals varying levels of engagement, with 42% sometimes clicking on ads and 39% occasionally researching products. The positive attitudinal disposition is further emphasized by the respondents' reported daily views of online advertisements, indicating active interaction with the platform.

Gratification Derived from Online Advertising: The research delves into the gratification experienced by AAUA students from online advertising. A significant proportion (87%) believes that online advertisement consistently brings out the best features of products, influencing their assurance and commitment to accessing quality varieties of products conveniently. Factors such as service features (32%), reviews and ratings (53%), and limited-time offers and discounts (15%) contribute to the overall gratification, guiding their choices of purchase.

The positive findings across these three dimensions suggest that online advertising is effective, well-received, and gratifying among AAUA students. The influence of online advertising on purchasing decisions and the trust expressed by the students indicate a successful integration of online advertising into their consumer behaviour. The preferences for specific advertising channels and the reported engagement levels further support the platform's effectiveness.

Moreover, the positive attitudinal disposition towards online advertising, as revealed in the research, implies a willingness among AAUA students to interact with and trust online advertisements. This positive perception is crucial for advertisers and marketers seeking to target this demographic. The gratification derived from online advertising, particularly in terms of showcasing product features and providing access to quality products, emphasizes the platform's value in meeting consumer expectations.

In conclusion, the project's findings suggest that online advertising is not only effective but also well-received and gratifying among AAUA students. Advertisers and marketers can leverage these insights to tailor their strategies to the preferences and expectations of the student demographic, potentially enhancing the impact and success of online advertising campaigns within the university community.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research has provided valuable insights into the effectiveness, attitude, and gratification derived by students of Adekunle Ajasin University (AAUA) from online advertising. The findings suggest that online advertising plays a pivotal role in influencing the purchasing habits of AAUA students, with a majority acknowledging its impact on their decisions. The positive attitude towards online advertising and the gratification derived from its features highlight the platform's significance in the consumer landscape of AAUA.

The study reveals that students perceive online advertising as a trustworthy and engaging medium, particularly through paid social media and mobile advertising. The positive attitudinal disposition towards online advertising is further exemplified by the reported actions of clicking on advertisements and researching products after exposure. Additionally, the gratification derived from online advertising, such as bringing out the best features of products and offering convenient access to quality varieties, solidifies the platform's role in guiding students' purchase choices.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are offered for stakeholders in online advertising, marketing, and the academic community:

- Tailored Advertising Strategies

Advertisers should tailor their strategies to focus on platforms that resonate most with AAUA students, such as paid social media and mobile advertising. Understanding the preferred channels enhances the effectiveness of online advertising campaigns.

- Enhanced Credibility Building

To further improve trust in online advertising, efforts should be made to enhance credibility-building measures. This could involve transparent communication, authentic testimonials, and collaboration with influencers to strengthen the reliability of online advertisements.

- Educational Initiatives

Considering the positive attitude towards online advertising, educational initiatives within the university can be developed to empower students with digital literacy skills. This will enable them to critically engage with online content and advertisements, fostering a more informed consumer base.

- Continuous Research and Monitoring

Regular monitoring and research efforts should be maintained to keep abreast of changing preferences, attitudes, and behaviours of AAUA students towards online advertising. This dynamic landscape requires continuous adaptation to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of advertising strategies.

- Collaboration with University Platforms

Advertisers could explore partnerships with university platforms, such as official websites or student portals, to enhance the visibility and reach of online advertisements. This collaborative approach can contribute to a more integrated and seamless advertising experience for students.

Limitations and Future Research

While this study provides valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The research focused specifically on AAUA students, and findings may not be generalizable to other demographics or institutions. Future research could expand the scope to include a more diverse sample and explore regional or cultural variations in attitudes towards online advertising.

In conclusion, the positive findings of this research underscore the importance of online advertising in the lives of AAUA students. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, understanding and adapting to the preferences of this

demographic will be crucial for advertisers seeking to connect with and influence consumer behaviour within the university community.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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