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## EVALUATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AWARENESS ON SMEs SPONSORED ADVERTISEMENT AMONGST UMUAHIA RESIDENTS

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### Abstract

*Social media sponsored advertisement and online marketing are wonderful opportunities in the contemporary business world made possible through Information and Communication Technology (ICT). However, because of these concepts are still novel and involve a lot of process before a transaction is completed and with the traditional means of advertising and marketing well mastered by folks from this part of the globe, it has to ascertain if Umuahia residents are tapping in social media awareness on SMEs sponsored advertisement opportunities and online marketing. The study was anchored on the theoretical framework of technological Acceptance model and diffusion of innovating theory. Survey research design was adopted with questionnaire as Instrument for data collection. A sample size of 380 was arrived at using Australian calculator while multi-stage sampling technique was deployed to determine the available respondents that were chosen or selected at different level. The study concluded among other things that the level of awareness of online advertisements among Umuahia Residents is relatively high and as well as the exposure to online advertisements which results to online shopping, the study therefore recommended that Small Medium Enterprises and businesses should be consistent on sponsored advertisements and delivery of products as ordered by the clients.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising is one of the oldest forms of communication and its history is as dated as humankind's earliest successes in settled communal life and sharing persuasive symbolic messages. Although it is widely accepted to have had its origin in ancient times, its modern practice came about as a result of at least four major factors which are the rise of capitalism, the industrial

Revolution, the need for branding, and the rise of modern mass media (O'Quinn, Allen, and Semenik 2012). The spoken word and visual signs have been the essence of advertising. As Olatunji (2018,p.4) concludes, in virtually all known civilizations, traditional forms of advertising were through visual or oral channels. Associated with goods, services, branding, product

marketing, and profits, advertising has been changing to find applications beyond the world of commerce and consumer marketing. Today, both the clients and the media can produce ads, bypassing the agencies whose roles in creative production and media placement have now been eroded by advances in computer-assisted designs (CAD) and the use of algorithms for optimal media buying. New developments in social media advertising combine message dissemination and consumer behaviours through new customer engagement and customer engagement marketing approaches that portend serious challenge to traditional advertising, thereby heightening the feeling that advertising as we knew it is dead or dying.

Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Organization now have excellent opportunities in the sponsored ads on the social media. Due to social media's global reach and appeal, business of this modern period uses it to market their goods and services (Maina, 2016). In order to inform, convince, and remind clients about the products and services, Priyanka and Srinivasan (2015) suggest that social media has a broad potential to reach customers in the form of interactive and viral social networking advertising. As enterprises can post promotional materials on social media to reach its target audience and collect feedback of its goods or services (Ngai et al, Moon, Lam, Chin & Tao. 2015). The pursuit of ad on social media platforms is particularly intriguing. And this is made possible through the new media. The development of technology, especially the use of the internet, has given people and businesses numerous modern benefits when it comes to advertising. With the aid of the internet, social media, for instance, is having a big impact on different aspects of people's lives. From a business standpoint, engaging with customers on social media through sponsored ads may increase the number of potential customers and the likelihood that those potential customers will become actual customers. Social media encourages customers to promote and share their purchasing experiences with their friends by sharing their favorable or negative comments about a purchased product, in addition to converting current potential customers into purchasers (Parsons, 2017). Pookulangara and Koesler (2011) found that 25% of consumers could upload product information on their retail-websites and sponsored platforms using social media to enlighten other users.

According to Ganguly (2015), social media advertising has advanced significantly in a short amount of time and the income from social media advertising was expected to have reached \$82.4 million by 2026 from the first introduction of Facebook's advertising options in May 2005. Now, in 2024 data from statistical indicates that income from social media ads has reached \$70.4 (Statistical, 2024). Nowadays, modern enterprises frequently use internet advertising. Social networking advertising assists companies in attracting new clients by identifying interests utilizing the users' supplied information. Online advertising targets the correct individuals before they even start their search, as opposed to reactively targeting users who search for a certain phrase. This is largely due to the prevalence of mobile devices, which also provide sophisticated targeting options and precise conversion tracking devices, which also provide sophisticated targeting options and precise conversion tracking. According to Turan (2011), online marketing and advertising have a big part to play in getting people to make online purchases, and Nigeria is familiar with social media activities, particularly those involving information collecting, sharing and other interpersonal interactions including product advertising.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The marketing dynamics and paradigm shift from traditional ways of marketing goods and services to technologically based advertising is traced to the varying opportunities that have been provided by the new media. Also, the increasing rate of access to internet-enabled phones and other devices that can connect to the internet have sporadically increased access to internet and by extension access to online stores. In fact, with the button, someone in the comfort of his room with internet connected gadget can access a whole lot of information about any product or service from any part of the globe. According to (Silk et al, 2001), the ground-breaking change brought about by information technology has massive effect on people's everyday lives. On the commercial front, the internet has altered the manner in which we do business worldwide at any time. The internet has emerged as a medium for advertising.

However, the manner and the level which social media deployed to advertise SMEs' products is uncertain. So, with the very many opportunities that accompany social media sponsored ads, there remain a gap as to know the extent to which these opportunities are being leveraged upon by Umuahia residents.

### 1.2 Objective of the Study

The objective were to:

1. Examine the level of exposure of social media sponsored advertisements among Umuahia residents.
2. Determine the level of knowledge of social media sponsored advertisements among Umuahia Residents.
3. Determine the extent to which exposure to online advertisements has resulted to online shopping among residents of Umuahia.

### 1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions are created in order to provide responses that satisfy the study's goals:

1. What is the level of social media exposure on sponsored advertisement among Umuahia residents?
2. What is the level of knowledge or awareness of online shopping among residents of Umuahia?
3. To what extent has exposure to social media sponsored advertisements resulted to online shopping among Umuahia residents?

## 2. LITERATURE

### Advertisement

The term "advertisements" describe the general public's means of conveying specific information about goods or services. Important details on the availability, features, usage, and cost of the service/product are included in these messages. Advertisement is to inform consumers about services and products and persuade them to use those promoted goods and services (Adams and Stanton, in Katz, 2016). The primary goal of advertising is to raise awareness of a certain service or items in order to influence consumers to use or buy it (Katz, 2016). The term "advertisements" or "ad" refers to the information or message made available to the general public (De Cenzo et al, 2011).

Kotler claims in (Katz, 2016) that the type of goods and potential customers will determine the medium and forms that advertising

will take, print media audio, video, or a combination of any or all of these may be used for advertising. Advertising, however, does not advocate for certain opinions or ideas. Newspapers, hoardings, billboard, magazines, outdoor advertising, posters, evens, radio, television, and the internet are just a few examples of the various media that can be used for advertising (De Cenzo et al, 2011). This depends on the advertising goals and budget.

### **Features of Social Media Advertising Platforms**

Online advertising platforms are Digital, interactive, hyper textual, globally networked, virtual and sometimes based on simulation. Some of these features includes:

#### **1. Digital**

Binary code has taken over as the dominant standard for information translation, storage, and transmission since the advent of digital technology in the 1990s (a series of 1s and 0s.). Qualitative data is now available digitally. Due to digitalization, large amounts of data may be stored on compact hard drives or micro memory cards and sent through cable satellite almost instantly. Another effect of digitalization has been technology convergence, or the blending of several informative mediums (text, audio, and visual). The majorities of website currently contain both text and watch videos or listen to music- we can also use them to send messages, purchase, use GPS, and perform informational searches. Digital's opposite is analog. Examples of its being saved in physical form include printed newspapers, recording, and tapes containing old movies and television shows.

#### **3. Interactivity**

With audience on the receiving end of broadcasts and being limited to passively consuming media contents, old media ended to be very much a one-way affair. However, new media allows users and customers to engage more actively and is much more of a two-way conversation. Compared to traditional media, it is a lot more two type of communication. Simply actions like liking a Facebook post or leaving a remark on a news tactile or blog post demonstrate increased involvement. However, some people become much more active and actively post their own contents as prosumers while also starting their own blogs and films. More individuals seem to be participating in online media, and the lines between who produces and consumes media information are blurring more and more.

#### **4. Hyper Textual**

Hypertext, sometimes known as "links," is a common element of new media that provides users more freedom over how they navigate the numerous information sources at their disposal. Link on websites, in a technical sense, offer non-sequential linkages between various kind of computer-facilitated material. Typically, optimists see this feature as opening up more tailored lifestyle alternatives, giving customers more flexibility to make more independent choices, and allowing them to benefit from the opportunities offered by new media marketplaces.

#### **5. Global Networks**

Thanks to digital media, we now engage much more widely and through virtual networks of people than access a wider variety of knowledge sources (depending on our needs), which boosts collective intelligence.

#### **6. Virtual Worlds**

This suggests to most of us a very rapid flow of information with many things and people competing for our attention. Through "lived reality," new media provides us as whole new universe from

face-to-face interaction. It is important to keep in mind that new media reality is virtual reality and that this condition has only been since the middle of the 2000s. This is especially true of social networking sites where users can present themselves anyway they like. Even while more users don't go all Cat Fish, most users decide to highlight only one aspect of who they are:

### **Social Network Advertising and Advantages**

A corporate organization may benefit from the rapidly expanding usage and popularity of social media in advertising and marketing. If done properly, social network marketing may assist with brand exposure, customer acquisition, brand intelligence, and market research. The two primary methods of advertising on social networks are tell-a-friend tools and wish list capabilities, social networking interactions encourage customers to converse with one another, assess product and service ratings, and share personal and product expertise. It is clear that social media marketing is essential for business growth, and many markers are aware of the opportunities presented by the platform. However, some of the experts are doubtful of the best strategies to use of if they would work. According to Sumanta and Balaji, (2019), the following are advantages of social media advertising and marketing:

### **Social Media Advertising**

Since the introduction of the internet, traditional media has taken a step back and is becoming increasingly rare. The availability of the internet increased the popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook and YouTube, Netizens worldwide increasingly rely on social media. When social media originally became popular, it was mostly used for socializing and communicating with individuals from all over the world, but as its user base developed, businesses began to see its financial potential (Alalwan, 2018).

The element of communication that has recently received the greatest attention is influenced by the social media trend. Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Linkeedln, and Youtube are examples of subscriber multimedia platform that are thriving (Bond et al. 2010).

According to (Martinez, 2010), around 70% of businesses nowadays have Facebook pages and more than half utilize Twitter to advertise their products. Given that social media allows the student population to know about items, it is a favourable development for marketers hoping to convince or persuade a shopper (FERGUSON, 2008). The emergence of social media has drawn the attention of both firms and customers, and organizations now face new problems in the new century as a result of this evolving communications environment (Bond et al., 2010). In addition, social media advertising looked to be more flexible and cost-effective than conventional media advertising.

### **Social Media Platforms**

Text messaging blogging, video sharing, wikis, and social networks are all examples of social media. The three foundational elements on which social media are constructed are profiles, and comments. Social media platforms are uncharted area with the ability to spread information primarily to young people. A series of internet-based applications collectively referred to as "social media" are described as "building on the philosophical and technological underpinning of web 2.0 and enabling the production and exchange of User Generated Content" (Boconcelli et al., 2017).

Social media, according to Mangold and Faulds (2009), encompass a range of online chats. Company-sponsored chat rooms and

discussion boards consumer-to-consumer email, consumer product or service ratings websites, forums, and internet discussion boards. The development of social media may have reduced the uninterrupted readership and viewing of traditional media, as well as their effectiveness as advertising outlets. Social media is characterized as a very accessible and scalable method of communication. It is frequently referred to as user-generated or consumer-generated material (Lin & Xu, 2017) & (Mbanaso, Dandaura, Ezech, & Iwuchukwu, 2015).

#### • **INSTAGRAM**

Established by Kelvin Systrom and Mike Krieger, Instagram is a picture and film distributing social media platform that is American origin. The software enables end user to transfer contents able to modified using cancel and arranged by hash sings (hashtag) and terrestrial designing. Materials can be distributed in the open or with permitted admirers (Social Media Today 2019). Instagram opened a latest feature in March 2021, in which four persons can go live immediately (Carman 2021). Facebook Inc., on April, 2012, bought over Instagram for \$1 Billion in cash (Upbin 2012).

#### • **WHATSAPP**

Brain Action and Jan Koum, both ex-Yahoo employees, launched WhatsApp Inc. in Mountain view, California, in 2009. (Mbanaso, Dandaura, Ezech & Iwuchukwu, 2015). Users of smart phones running iOS, Android, Windows Phone, BlackBerry, and Nokia can send and receive free text photo, video, and audio messages using Whatsapp, a cross-platform, internet-based instant messaging service. Those end customers who do not have limitless text messaging are particularly fond of WhatsApp. WhatsApp offers location sharing and group chat feature in addition to standard texting. The program uses a subscription-based businesses model to function. After installation, a users account is created using the user's phone number as the username. All phone number from the device's phonebook is automatically compared with the central database of WhatsApp users in order to add phonebook contacts who already use WhatsApp to the user's contact list. WhatsApp launched a voice calling function for its Android iOS, and windows apps in January 2015. This innovation allowed Whatsapp to draw in a brand new user base.

Although the user's mobile phone must be linked to the internet for the program to work, it was also made available on web browsers. On February 19, 2014, Facebook purchased WhatsApp and it became the most widely used messaging service worldwide. WhatsApp attracted over 3 billion active users in April 2025. (Albergotti, Douglas & Rusi in Mbanaso, Dandaura, Ezech & Iwuchukwu, 2015 & Google Search, 2015).

#### **Types of Social Media Shoppers on Sponsored Platforms**

A study on online shopping behaviours adopted globally reveals a pattern of behaviour based on individual perception of online shopping. According to Cuthbeert in Ani, Nyekwere & Chiaha (2017) these different behaviour characteristics led to the classification of different types of online shopper as follows:

##### **1. The Reluctant Shopper:**

They are concerned about difficulties with privacy and security. Because of these worries, individuals initially choose to just investigate purchases online rather than make them. According to E.M. Rogers cited in Boston University School of Public Health (2022), In the description of the five recognized groups of adopters

in the diffusion of innovation theory, this group of consumers is compared to "Laggards".

For this demographic to feel secure using the internet, security and privacy policies are necessary. Additionally, they require rapid online assistance to allay their worries.

##### **2. The Bargain Shopper:**

They use comparison tolls extensively. They do not have a particular brand loyalty, but they are just looking for the lowest price. Retailers must convince these shoppers that they are getting the best price and do not need to continue searching online for a better deal. Sale-priced items-price items listed are needful for these shoppers. They are similar to the "Late Majority" in the classification of adopters in the Diffusion of Innovation theory.

##### **3. The Surgical Shopper:**

Before getting on the internet, they are very certain of what they want and only buy that. Typically, they are aware of the criteria on which their choice will be based, seek information to compare against those criteria, and make a purchase after they are certain they have located the ideal item. To convince them that what they find is what they require, they need product configurations and achieved opinions. The Early Adopters in the five identified types of adopters in the diffusion of innovation theory are comparable to this group of consumer.

##### **4. The Enthusiast Shopper:**

They enjoy themselves by going shopping. They are the most daring buyers and make frequent purchases. Online stores provide this group of customers with fun tools for browsing the merchandise, tailored product suggestions, and community features like message boards and pages for customer reviews. They resemble the "Innovators" in DOT theory (those who want to be the first to learn about new products in online purchasing).

##### **5. The Power Shopper:**

Instead of doing it for fun, they buy out of need. To avoid wasting time searching around and to discover what they want, people create complex purchasing tactics. They require websites with outstanding navigational features and a wealth of product information, including reviews from customers, professional advice and customer support. They also demand highly relevant product recommendations that meet their requirements as well as immediate access to information and assistance. In the classification of adopters in DOT theory in the idea of the disseminations, they are comparable to the "Early majority."

#### **Theoretical Framework**

The "Technology Acceptance Model" and the "Diffusion of Innovation Theory" serves as the foundation for this study and serve to further explain the phenomena being studied.

#### **The Technology Acceptance Model**

Fred Davis (1989) created the Technology acceptance Model (TAM) to analyze and forecast computer usage patterns. The assumptions of the model are that the acceptance a new technology by users depends on the following.

- i. Perceived usefulness (PU) – This was defined by Fred Davis as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance their job performance". It means whether or not someone perceives that technology to be useful for what they want to do.

ii. Perceived ease-of-use (PEOU) – Davis defined this as “the degree to which a person believe that using a particular system would be free from effort” (Davis 1989). If the technology is easy to use, then the barriers conquered. If it’s not easy to use and the interface is complicated, no one has a positive attitude towards it.

However, the foundations of the model are in Martin Fishbein and Lcek Akzen (1975) Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which explains how beliefs affect attitudes, which in turn impact intentions, which in turn drive behaviors.

The subjective norms and attitude toward behavior are two separate variables that were brought out clearly by the theory of reasoned action. The former speaks to the extent to which an individual reacts favorable or unfavorable to a certain behavior, whereas the latter examines the likelihood that significant individuals or groups will approve or disapprove of not engaging in a particular behavior.

According to Ajzen (1991) cited in Hosseini et al (2015), the strength of a person’s aim in an activity is determined by two factors: (a) the disposition toward the behavior, and (b) subject norm derived from social influence. These characteristics are mostly influenced by a person’s views. That is, the attitude is shaped by the belief about the outcome of an activity and the appraisal of outcome.

Drawing from the above explanation, residents’ behaviour toward online shopping is a function of what they know about online shopping and their belief about what they know. Belief is a key influencing factor on knowledge. Every knowledge is believed to be subjected to ones which are guided by one’s belief. An individual’s acceptance or rejection of a particular behaviour is determined from what that individual knows about that behaviour.

This discusses residents’ attitudes on online purchasing as well as how they see online retailers as being trustworthy (reliable) as well as dangerous. If what individuals learn about internet buying makes them more skeptical and contradicts what they believe, they are more likely to have a negative attitude about it. On the other hand, individuals tend to be more open to online purchasing if what they know allays their fears and confirms what they believe.

**Diffusion of Innovation Theory**

In 1962, E.M. Rogers developed this concept, one of the earliest in social science. It was initially used in communication to explain how an idea or product gradually gains traction and diffuses (or spreads) among a given population or social system.

According to Rogers, people eventually adopt a novel idea, habit, or product as a component of a social system. When someone adopts a virgin idea they take a different action from what they did in the past (i.e buy or apply a novel product, get and practice a new behaviour, etc. for a thought, behaviour, or product to be embraced, the person must consider it to be new or innovative. As pointed out in Boston University School of Public Health (2022).

**Innovator:** There are the folk that went to try the innovation first. They are bold and curious about novel concepts. These

demographic groups are eager to take chances and frequently come up with innovative ideas early.

1. **Early Adopters:** These folks stand for opinion leaders. They rely on leadership responsibilities and embracing change. They are quiet at ease implementing new concepts since they are already conscious of the need for change.
2. **Early Majority:** They don’t accept new concepts before the general public does. Usually, before they are prepared to accept an idea, they need to see proof that it actually works.
3. **Late Majority:** They are resistant to change and won’t embrace a new idea until the majority has given it a go. They must understand how the novel concept functions for them and how many individuals have utilized it.
4. **Laggards:** These folk are exceedingly conservative and are bound by tradition. They are resistant to change and take their time implementing new ideas. They desire information that will induce their anxiety, as well as data of people who attempted it and succeeded. They also require pressure from other adopter groups.

In relating this theory to the study, there has been a paradigm shift from traditional advertising to online advertisement which has in turn influenced the buying habits of residents of Umuahia in our study. To this end, every active online shopper today, at some point, has some reservations about it initially, but as time went by and as information about how to use the new idea continues to spread among the social system (i.e internet users), some “early adopters” provided “early majority” and “late majority” with guided information on the operations and safety of online shopping which over time resolved the doubts of the hitherto of the active online shoppers about online shopping today.

**Methodology**

This study adopted the survey design. This research design was used to evaluate the social media awareness on SMEs sponsored advertisement on Umuahia residents. Thus, the questionnaire was used to generate quantitative data, which interview was adopted to generated qualitative data. The population was made up of the responsible adults from the age of 18 years old, which according to statistics by Metro Statistics and Review stood at 433,000 as at December, 2025. To determine a sample size, Australian calculator was used, which stood at 380 with 95% reliability (r = 95%) and with error margin of 5% (e = 5%).

For this study, the multi-stage sampling procedure was used. At the first stage, the study adopted a purposive sampling technique to pick all the residents of Umuahia metropolis within the age of 18 and above, while a random sampling was used at the second stage to choose the major streets within the city centre. Finally, at the third stage, available sampling technique was used to select identified adults along the streets that was earlier selected under study.

**STREETS & SMEs**

**Table 1. Distribution of Respondents**

Cooperative Bank Road (Street 1)	SMEs Type Occupation	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
	Food prink eateries and vendors	57	15

	Fashion vendors and others	86	22.6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>143</b>	<b>37.6</b>
<b>Isigate and Aba road (Street 2)</b>	Electrical/Electronic Wares	67	17.7
	Kiddies and other groceries		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>125</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Iko Ekpene BCA Roads (Street 3)</b>			
	Hospitality Tourism and Entertainment	61	16
		51	13.4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>112</b>	<b>29.4</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>380</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 indicates that 14 or 37.6 percent of the respondents were within the two SMEs type Bank road Umuahia. Then, 125 or 33 percent of the respondents were within the two SM type in Isigate and Aba road while 112 or 29.4 percent of the respondents were in the two Ikot Ekpene and BCA Umuahia. From the result of the table, the majority of the respondents were from the cooperative and Bank road in Umuahia.

This section provided the respondents' psychographic data. This was used to answer each research question in line with the questions contained in the questionnaire.

What is the level of awareness of social media sponsored advertisement on SMEs Adults in Umuahia?

SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

**Table 2 Responses on the level of awareness of social media sponsored advertisement on SMEs**

S/N	ITEMS STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	RATING
1	I have an online/internet enabled gadget (Phone, Laptop, Tabs, Etc.)	358	22	-	-	3.9	Accepted
2	I am on an social media platform	345	31	4	-	3.8	Accepted
3	I an active on social media	322	34	24	-	3.8	Accepted
4	To what extent are Umuahia resident in Abia State aware of social media advertisement?						
	a. Fully Aware	222	113	24	21	3.4	Accepted
	b. Aware	81	134	41	24	3.0	Accepted
	c. Undecided/Unsure	54	76	140	110	3.4	Accepted
	d. Unaware	6	10	83	281	1.3	Rejected
	e. Largely Unaware	8	12	158	202	1.5	Rejected
5	How often do you see social media sponsored advertisement on SMEs?						
	a. Very often	301	53	26	-	3.7	Accepted
	b. Often	199	83	65	33	3.1	Accepted
	c. Rarely	42	52	175	111	2.1	Rejected
	d. Never	12	32	148	188	1.7	Accepted
6	Do you click and view the social media advertisement on SMEs or ignore the advertisements?						
	a. Click and view the advertisement?						
7	Which social platform do you see more advertisement on?						
	a. Face Book	155	123	69	33	3.1	Accepted

b. Instagram	168	102	81	29	3.1	Accepted
c. Online news outlets/WhatsApp	162	125	62	31	3.1	Accepted
d. Blogs and others	65	91	182	42	2.5	Accepted

Table 2 analyzed the level of awareness of online advertisement among residents of Umuahia in Abia State. The responses of the respondents indicated that item 1 with the item statement “I have an online/internet enabled gadget (Phone, Laptop, Tabs, Etc.)” was fully high with a total mean score of 3.9. Following was items 2 with the statement, “I am on an online platform” with the mean rating of 3.8 meeting the benchmark.

Item 3 indicated that the respondents were active online with the mean score of 3.8 which was quite high. Item 4 revealed that the respondents were fully aware of online advertisements with both options of “Fully aware” and “Aware” showing positive with mean score of 3.4 and 3.0 respectively. However, the options of “Unaware” and largely unaware”, returned negative with mean ratings of 1.3 and 1.5 respectively. Number 5 item statements on how often the respondents see advertisements online saw the options of “very” and “often” with 3.7 and 3.1, as the rating. Whereas, “Rarely” and “Never”, had how rating of 2.1 and 1.7,

respectively indicating that the respondents were indeed abreast with online advertisements. Item 6 revealed that the respondents do click and view advertisements online as there was a high score of 3.0 to that effect. However, 2.3 rating on ignoring online advertisement by the respondents was low, proving the fact that the students indeed, do click and view advertisement online.

The last item on this table which was number 7, revealed that the respondents do see more advertisements on the facebook, instagram, online outlets/WhatsApp and blogs as these items returned high mean rating of 3.1 for the first three and then, 2.5 for the last one.

**What is the level of knowledge of Social Media sponsored advertisement on SMEs among Umuahia residents in Abia State?**

**SA = Strongly Agree; A= Agree; Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree**

**Table 3: Mean responses to the level of knowledge of social media sponsored ads Umuahia Adult residents**

S/N	ITEMS STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	RATING
1	I know about online shops	321	40	19	-	3.8	Accepted
2	Which of these online shops do you know?						
	a. Jiji	348	18	14	-	3.9	Accepted
	b. Jumia	185	152	42	1	3.4	Accepted
	c. Konga	213	91	71	5	3.4	Accepted
	d. Temu	185	114	17	64	3.1	Accepted
	e. Unclassified and others	180	93	63	44	3.0	Accepted
3	I know how to place order online	141	173	52	14	3.1	Accepted
4	I know how to place order online	146	110	83	41	3.0	Accepted
5	I know how to make online payment	162	145	57	16	3.3	Accepted
6	I know how to take delivery	276	104	-	-	3.7	Accepted

Table 3 analyzed the level of knowledge of online shopping among residents of Umuahia in Abia State. The response from the number 1 item showed that the respondents knew about online shops as that scored 3.8 in the mean rating. Item number 2 unveiled the online shops that the respondents knew scored 3.8 in the mean rating. Item number 2 unveiled the online shops that the respondents knew about which include. Jiji with mean score of 3.9, Jumia- 3.4 Konga-3.4, Temu – 3.1, and then “others” with 3.0. items number 3,4,5 & 6, which read, “I know how to place order; I know how to track order; I know how to make online payments; I

know how to take delivery, all returned high with the mean rating of 3.1, 3.0, 3.3, and 3.7 in the order.

**To what extent has exposure to social media sponsored to advertisement resulted to online marketing among Umuahia residents**

**TABLE 4 Responses on the extent to which online advertisement has resulted to online shopping among residents of Umuahia in Umuahia State**

**SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; D=Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree**

S/N	ITEMS STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	RATING
1	I used to shop online	258	104	16	2	3.6	Accepted
2	I shop online						
	a. Daily	173	201	6	-	3.4	Accepted
	b. Weekly	217	141	9	13	3.4	Accepted

	c. Two times a month	16	4	186	174	1.6	Rejected
	d. Once in six months	3	12	154	211	1.4	Rejected
3	I purchase this kind of item online						
	a. Phones	311	64	5	-	3.9	Accepted
	b. Laptops	305	61	14	-	3.7	Accepted
	c. Books	9	14	175	182	1.6	Rejected
	d. Make up	116	208	45	11	3.1	Accepted
	e. Air/Bus tickets	3		149	228	1.4	Rejected
	f. Clothes	273	128	56	33	3.1	Accepted
	g. Bags	163	128	5	-	3.7	Accepted
	h. Shoes	291	84	5	-	3.7	Accepted

Table 4 analyzed the extent to which exposure to online advertisements had resulted to online shopping among residents of Umuahia in Abia State. The number 1 item with mean score of 3.6 revealed that the respondents used to shop online. As to the frequency with which they shopped online, item 2 with mean score of 3.4, for “Daily” and 3.4 still for “Weekly”, were very high. On the other hand, the other options of “Two times a month” and “Once in six months”, couldn’t meet the benchmark as they had low mean ratings of 1.6, and 1.4, respectively. Item number 3 revealed the kinds of products that the respondents purchased online. They included: phones, with high mean rating of 3.9, Laptops- 3.7, Make up – 3.1, Clothes – 3.6, Bags – 3.6, and Shoes – 3.7. However, Books and Air/Bus tickets had low mean scores of 1.6 and 1.4, respectively and therefore, were not part of the products that the respondents purchase online.

## Discussion of Findings

On the investigation of the influence of online advertisement shopping among residents of Umuahia, the study examined the level of awareness of online advertisements among residents of Umuahia, the level of knowledge of online shopping among residents of Umuahia, the extent to which exposure to online advertisement has resulted to online shopping among residents of Umuahia in Abia State.

### Research Question 1: What is the level of awareness of online advertisement among residents of Umuahia in Abia State?

The results of this study showed that residents of Umuahia in Abia were quite aware of the impact that online advertisement have on the online purchasing behaviour (as indicated by the responses of respondents). Turan (2011), who claimed that social marketing has had a big influence on getting customers to make online purchase, supports this. The survey also found that 60% of customers to share their product knowledge online, and that 70% of consumers utilize social media to obtain helpful information, 49% of whom had already made a purchase choice. Similar to this, Miller and Lammas (2010) assert that Nigerian is aware of sharing, and other social activities related to product purchase.

### Research question 2: What is the level of knowledge of online shopping among Umuahia Residents in Abia State?

The findings of this study from the results in table 2 revealed that, residents of Umuahia were knowledgeable about online shopping (as indicated by the respondents). They knew about the online shops that were available in Nigeria. The table also showed that,

residents of Umuahia knew how to place order, track order, make payments online and take delivery. This is corroborated by Ventatesh et al. (2022) in which they asserted that previous online shopping knowledge used to have a strong indirect influence on online purchasing intent and conduct by lowering perceived risks and rising comfort, shopping enjoyment, and cohesion. Adding their voice to this, Suntha & Gnnadhas (2014) showed that Greater knowledge about technology increases the likelihood of establishing a positive opinion toward latest shopping channels. Still on this, Valentine & Powers (2013), stated that the present generation of university undergraduates are known as digital natives because they are overall digital proficient an depend heavily on the World Wide Web for a variety of activities, such as internet purchases.

### Research Question 3. To What extent has exposure to online advertisements resulted to online hopping residents of Umuahia in Abia State?

Also, from the results in table 3 which was the extent to which exposure to online advertisements has resulted to online shopping among the students, the finding revealed that residents of Umuahia do shop online on daily and weekly basis. This was given credence by the research carried out by Udende and Azeez (2010) in which they discovered that 100% of the respondents use internet every day. 46.2% of them use internet weekly. Similarly, Otunla (2013), opined that university students are a particularly appealing market for online advertisements because they are an idea target market for digital-based enterprises since over 50% of students are contented making use of the internet and go online at least once a week, if not daily for various intentions. The table also showed that phones, clothes, make up, clothes, make up, clothes, bags, and shows were some of the products that residents of Umuahia purchase online. This is supported by Barnes (2018), who revealed that consumers searching online for information about a product, or brands, not only gains access to corporate marketing materials, they now also have access to product reviews, opinions and commentary from other consumers. Also, in the same line, Bampo et al (2018) descried building product awareness as the way of ensuring probable customer in the certain categories. Product awareness is the information about the particular products a company officers, especially compared to those offered by its competitors. It is measured through tracking studies and surveys and create familiarity among consumers about the product which includes both brand recall as well as brand reorganization.

#### Research Question 4: what are other factors that influence online shopping decisions among residents of Umuahia?

The findings of this study from the results in table 4 revealed the factors that influenced online shopping decisions among residents of Umuahia, the findings recorded several factors which increased risk of identity theft, Vendors' fraud, Fear of losing money, and products are expensive. Lack of access to the internet, Trust in online vendors Quality of product and online stores' reliability. To this end, Adeshina and Ayo (2010) insisted that because of privacy, security, and network dependability concerns, individuals feel uncomfortable doing e-commerce activities and this has a detrimental impact on the nation's online purchasing trends. Additionally, Ajayi (2018) stated that it was noted that the small number of online merchant "provided little support in helping customers identify acceptable items" and do not have an "organized means of displaying information (product categories) to users." This makes it difficult for clients to utilize their websites for online purchasing, which may be why the majority of Nigerian businesses having an online presence only conducted a limited amount of businesses, Ayo (2018). On his own, Ahmed (2013), upheld this finding by stating that students have a favorable, moral and civil affects of advertising. They call for higher supervision to regulate advertisements. Still on this, Anderson and Srinivasan (2013), asserted that seeming risk is related to customers' anxiety of losing a few online transactions. People also connect risk with the possibility of losing something when they buy, or use the item or service. Furthermore, Hsin & Wen (2008) discovered that a solid reputation shields companies from some of the detrimental repercussions of failure. In his opinion, a company' reputation weakens the relationship between the seriousness of a service failure and customer satisfaction, reduce ratings for controllability and stability, and raise repurchases intentions after a failure.

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