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**Knowledge and Patronage of Online Advertised Products among Social Media Users in South- East, Nigeria****Hygeinus Nwokwu Aligwe, Nwankwo Simon Ugochukwu and Kenneth Adibe Nwafor,****Department of Mass Communication, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria.**

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**ABSTRACT**

With the arrival of the Internet and Internet powered computer devices in Nigeria, advertisers and marketers in the country are rapidly taking advantage of the technology to reach potential users of their products and services online especially through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Whatsapp. Not many studies have been done to determine whether the users of social media actually patronize the products and services advertised through the platforms. The available ones are still scanty and largely undocumented. It was this gap in empirical knowledge that this study sought to fill. Survey method was adopted. 385 copies of structured questionnaire were administered on respondents systematically drawn from selected cities and towns across the five states of South-East, Nigeria. Using mean computation for the test of hypotheses, the study among others found that knowledge of online advertising and purchases among social media users in South-East, Nigeria is related to their social media use and that their level of knowledge about online advertising is not significantly related to their actual patronage of the advertised products and services. The study recommends that online shops and advertisers such as Jumia, Konga and OXL, should explore the possibilities of liaising with service providers such as MTN, Glo, and Airtel to enable patronisers shop online on free or subsidized data charges. Government should establish an intermediate agency whose responsibility shall be the registration of expensive products bought online like cars. This will help tackle the cases where some online buyers have been accused and arrested by the Nigeria Police for receiving stolen property.

**Key Words:** Knowledge, Patronage, online advertised products, social media users

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**INTRODUCTION**

There is no doubt that the emergence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the phenomenon of internet technology have profoundly revolutionized the entire process of communication and information exchange worldwide. One of the areas in which ICTs is paying off in today's world is in the advertising industry. In Nigeria, advertising agencies and advertisers are already harnessing the emerging potentials of online advertising to market some products and services to the teeming Nigerian consumers.

In the Nigerian advertising landscape, agencies and their clients are becoming aware of the need and underlying effect of online advertising; the trend has started to build where agencies now

advise client on how to use banner and display ads for companies on Facebook, Yahoo, Twitter and MySpace sites, [1].

Online advertising is increasingly becoming indispensable for modern firms, particularly, those that transact business with customers outside their local communities. In Nigeria, such business organizations as: OXL, Jumia, Deal Dey, Konga, Kaymu, Jiji etc are already leveraging on internet/ online advertising to increase the volume of patronage of their various products and services. Majority of these online marketing firms are currently involved in sales of such products as: cars, computers, toys, wears, books, home appliances and general women and men's fashion materials.

Some years back in Nigeria, online advertisers and marketers taught that their major problems were only limited to such issues as low internet penetration, high cost of internet data, lack of access cum high cost of internet oriented digital devices and the challenge of potential buyers not trusting the workability of internet selling and buying in lieu of their old experience and knowledge of advances fee fraud notoriously called 419 in the country, Tarragon (2013)[2]. To solve the problem of lack of trust in the online payments system, advertisers and marketers came up with the idea of "payment on delivery" method. Also, internet penetration, though, still low has increased from 28% in 2013 to 32.9% in 2014, (Tarragon 2014)[3]. On the issue of lack of access /high cost of internet compliant digital devices, the same [3] statistics reveals that access to mobile digital devices among Nigerians has at 2014 increased to 60%.

However, it becomes an issue of serious concern when contrary to the expectations of online advertisers and marketers in Nigeria, the above positive developments are yet to produce significant increase in the volume of patronage of online advertised product across the country. Tarragon (2014)[3], notes that the patronage of online advertised product and services in Nigeria is still very minimal. Perhaps this is because majority of Nigerians are habited to off line shopping or buying and selling, and as such, have remained skeptical about online shopping. This implies that not so many of the potential consumers of products and services advertised online in the country may be very much interested and willing to opt for online transaction in terms of the desired patronage.

Perhaps, in the effort to break this jinx, online advertiser resorted to placing their advertisement on the pages of social medial platforms like, Facebook, Twitter, 2go, YouTube, among others. This development has raised a number of questions that are demanding empirical answer. For instances, scholars are asking: is there a correlation between social media use and awareness about online advertised products and services? Is advertising through social media platforms actually leading to increase in knowledge

about online advertised products and services among the users in Nigeria? Does advertising on the page of social media platforms make the users to patronize the advertised products and thereby occasion an increase in volumes of patronage? How do social media users in South- East, Nigeria generally perceive online advertisement through the pages of the social media platform? It is the need for empirical evidence on the linkage between online advertisement through social media and the users' actual patronage of the advertised goods that ignited the zeal for this study.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Online advertising in Nigeria is facing lingering challenges which among others include general apathy resulting from misconceptions among many Nigerians on issues concerning patronage of online advertised products. For instance, many believe that it exposes potential consumers to Internet frauds. Besides, many Nigerians lack the interest and the motivation of specifically surfing online advertisements for the purpose of patronizing the advertised products.

However, the advent of social media and affordable internet compliant mobile devices appear to be increasing people's access and the motivation to hook onto internet. Consequently, advertisers in Nigeria have started leveraging on the potentials of these developments for the promotion and marketing of goods and services. Yet, this emerging trend of advertising through the social media has raised a number of issues: could it be that social media use is helping to dispel misconceptions surrounding online advertising and marketing? Is social media use leading to increase in knowledge of internet surfing, particularly, about online business transactions, and, do social media users patronize the goods and services pushed to their platform by advertisers?

This study therefore aims at finding out if advertising on the social media is actually leading to significant increase in the knowledge and patronage of online advertised products among users in South-East, Nigeria.

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study set out to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) Determine the influence of social media on users' knowledge of online advertising in South-East, Nigeria.
- (2) Ascertain the extent to which knowledge of online advertising among social media users in South East influence their patronage of the online advertised product and services.

- (3) Discover the extent to which social media use is related to the patronage of online advertised products.
- (4) Find out how social media users in South-East Nigeria perceive online advertisements on social media platforms.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- (1) What is the influence of social media on users' knowledge of online advertising in South-East, Nigeria?
- (2) To what extent does the knowledge of online advertising among social media users in South East influence their patronage of online advertised product and services?
- (3) To what extent does social media use among residents of South East, Nigeria relate to their patronage of online advertised products?
- (4) What is the perception of social media users in South-East Nigeria towards online advertisements on social media platforms?

### RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

#### HYPOTHESIS ONE

H<sub>0</sub>: Knowledge of online advertising among social media users in South- East, Nigeria is not related to their use of the social networking platforms.

#### HYPOTHESIS TWO

H<sub>1</sub>: The level of knowledge of online advertising among social media users in South-East, Nigeria is related to their level of patronage of the advertised products.

#### HYPOTHESIS THREE

H<sub>0</sub>: the level of Social media use among residents of South- East, Nigeria, is not significantly related to their level of patronage of online advertised products.

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Scholars have variously defined advertising. Okoro, (1998)[4] cites Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) as saying that, "it is a form of communication through the media about products by an identified sponsor." Since advertising can hardly take place without the mass media, it then follows that scholars have naturally

classified its various types in line with the broad classifications of the mass media: the print and electronic media advertisement. For this reason, [5], opines that though Omanufeme (2016)[6], classifies internet as new media, he tends to agree with kotler (1976), that internet itself is an electronic medium. According to Nwosu and Nkamnebe (2006)[7], internet or websites advertising became possible with the advent of important software called World Wide Web (WWW). In their explanation, the World Wide Web is not by itself the internet but remains a designed electronic software programme like internet networking systems and its basic function is the facilitation of multi-media view of graphics, sound audio, video animation, pictures, photographic, artworks and other graphics in the internet services. In their words:

of all options available for internet advertisers, and as practitioners, the WWW holds the greatest potentials. This is because it allows for detailed and full colour graphics audio transmission, the delivery of in-depth messages, 24 hours availability and two-way information exchange between advertisers and the customers [8].

However, a new twist was added to internet advertising with the introduction of social media in the early 1990s. It ushered the evolving era of social media advertising. Social media advertising could simply be seen as doing the business of advertising and marketing through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, whatsapp, 2go, Twitter, Blogs etc. These platforms are increasingly and dramatically changing the way advertisers communicate, interact and relate with their various customers. Arens, Weigold and Arens (2011)[9], posit that never before in history have advertisers been able to really hear direct and live what their customers are saying about their goods and services as currently made possible by the social media. According to them, certain big brands have all taken to setting up online shops inside social media platforms as customer service tools. For instances, Comcast has Comcast Twitter and Virgin America also has a Twitter customer service tool.

Advertisers in the contemporary world are chasing potential and existing customers online through the walls of the social media for the purpose of relating with them on a more mutually beneficial basis. This paves way for more productive interpersonal relationships and interactions between the advertisers and the consumers of their respective products and services. Gummerson (1999)[10], Akpoghiran and Okoro (2014), and Aminu, S.A. (2013)[11],[12], were all of the same opinion that through social media practices, customer's interaction, loyalty and sustained customer relations are successfully built and nurtured. They note that Social media advertisements work through the nexus of mediating factors. Explaining this, Moriarty, Mitchell and Wells (2009)[13], say that one's friend does affect how one responds to social media

advertisement which is recommended by such a friend. But, [14], regrets that inspite the magnifying impact that consumer- to consumer conversations have in the marketing and advertising processes, it is yet to be accorded priority in Nigeria. In their work, Basil, Sunday,[15], note that customer's "satisfaction is associated with patronage, loyalty, improved firm's corporate image, positive words of mouth and increased profitability". It therefore, suffices to agree with Nwosu (2003)[16], that social media advertising works with the principles of social marketing concepts which believes that business organizations must be more customer- oriented and driven in all that is to be done, such as, discussion, planning and execution for the purpose of attaining higher level of customer satisfaction.

However, Daykin (2015)[17], raises a fundamental question: Are people actually interested in building a relationship with brands? Citing Byron's work titled "How Brands Grow, he says that evidences have emerged which are finding holes in many of the assumptions about consumer loyalty and consideration that early efforts had depended on. According to him:

Although direct engagement can have positive effects on small few, it remains niche behaviour and is far outweighed by the broader reach these platforms offer. People ultimately have more important priorities than engaging with brands and so in reality rarely do. (www. the guardian. Com /media- net)

Explaining further, he notes that by the early 2012, Facebook had discovered through a study that being able to instantly reach the full Facebook audience was more productive than the laborious task of building up a subscribed brand audience. According to him by 2013, the same Facebook published a research report which revealed no correlation between high visible engagement on platform and resulting sales. However, the study showed a strong correlation between reach and sales. This implies that it is more profiting to reach many millions of passive potential consumers than to dissipate much effort in building relationships. The foregoing emphasises the imperativeness of this study which aims at probing the actual point of linkage between social media and online advertising.

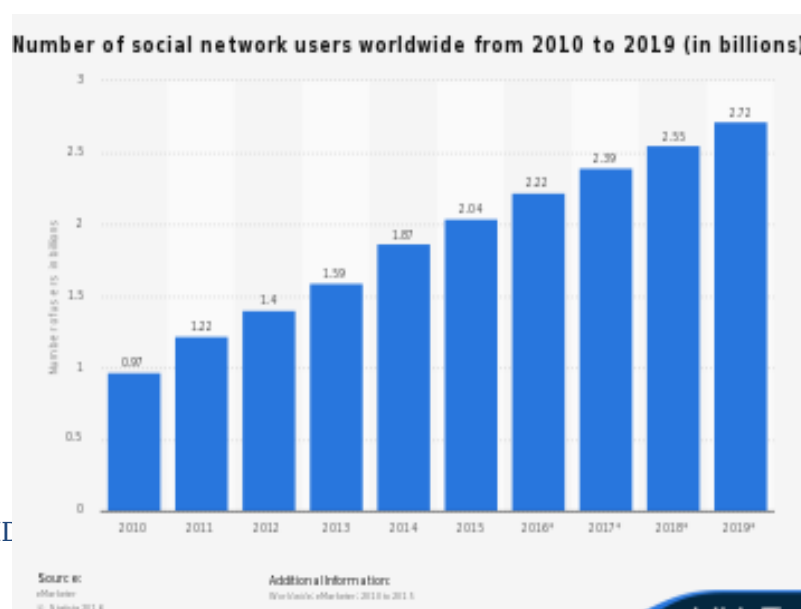
#### REVIEW OF RELATED EMPIRICAL STUDIES

A number of empirical studies on internet web and social media advertising have been undertaken by scholars within and outside Nigeria. Nyekwere, Okoro and Azubuike (2015)[18], undertook a study titled "an assessment of the use of social media as advertising vehicles in Nigeria: a study of Facebook and Twitter." They sought to verify if social media sites like Facebook and Twitter are used as advertising vehicles in Nigeria, and to determine whether the use of social media sites as advertising tools has been successful and to what extent.

To do the study, they adopted survey research approach and copies of structured questionnaire were used to generate data. Their findings among others, are that social media sites (Facebook and Twitter) are actually used as advertising vehicles in Nigeria, and that companies use the sites mostly to post company news and events. However, when the respondent were asked if the use of social media as advertising vehicles has been successful in merchandising the products of their organizations, only 35% representing 140 out of 400 respondents answered in affirmation while the majority 65% (260 respondents) were not sure. This brings to the fore intellectual lacuna which this study, aims to fill. This implies that there is a gap between creating awareness about goods and services among social media users and the needed conviction to win them to patronize the advertised commodities.

In their own work Mathew, Ogedebe and Ogedebe (2013)[19], surveyed the residents of Maiduguri Metropolis on the influence of web advertising on consumer behaviour. They reported that majority of the respondents admitted that their disposition toward web advertising was informative and that they were influenced to patronized the advertised product. However, based on their other findings, they recommended as follows: that regulatory agency should be established by Nigerian government to register and regulate the activities of online marketing companies. This was to tackle the problem of online marketing fraud as prevalent in Nigeria. They also recommended that Nigeria should expand her internet base by launching functional and effective communication satellite into space. The above finding tends to contradict many other findings which reveal insignificant relationship between online advertisement and actual patronage among those who are exposed to such advertisements.

Meanwhile, a global research body *Statista* has projected that the year 2016, will see the world recording about 2.22 billion social network users, and that by 2018, it will increase to 2.55 billion users. The bar chart below contains more details of the projection:



Back home

in Africa and



Nigeria, in particular, *Premium Times* of Sept 11, 2015 presents the data snapshot of Facebook users in three African countries as at February, 2016:

**TABLE 1: DATA SNAPSHOT OF FACE BOOK USERS IN THREE AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Total daily</b>	<b>Total mobile</b>	<b>Total monthly</b>
	Active users	Daily active users	Active users
<b>Nigeria</b>	7.1 million	6.9 million	15 million
<b>South Africa</b>	7.3 million	7 million	12 million
<b>Kenya</b>	2. 2 million	2. 1million	4.5 million

**Source: www premium timesng. com> business**

However, African digital statistics arising from the 2014 social media week held in Lagos, Nigeria provides that Nigeria as that date had 55,930,391 internet users and her internet penetration stood at 32%. The same source posits that active Facebook users stood at 111, 200,00 as against 9,800,000 for South Africa. Though, Nigeria has a higher number of active Facebook users, it was estimated that it has 6% Facebook penetration as against South African's 20% penetration. On a general note, Philips Consulting (2014), presents the Nigerian population of users of selected social media platforms thus: Facebook- 15 million, 2go- 10.2 million, Eskimo- 8 million, LinkedIn- 1.6 million, Naira- Land- 1.2 million and Yook+ -.3.6 million.

Demographically, Adesugba (2015)[14], relying on figures from the CIA World Fact Book report posits that 43% of Nigerian are between the ages of 0- 14 years, 19.3% are between the ages of 15- 24 years, 30.5% are between the ages of 25- 54 years, 3.9% - 64 years and only about 3% are over 65 years old. The implications of these statistical figures above, among others are: Nigeria is yet to arrive when it comes to online buying and selling, though it has a great potential for the industry, and that, internet penetration of just 32% is a far cry to the make any significant impact in boosting internet oriented marketing in Nigeria.

The above situation reflects in a study on online shopping in Nigeria carried out by Philips Consulting in 2015 which announced that it was only 28% of the population studied admitted to have adopted online shopping with 3% shopping online on daily basis. According to mobile- mediainfotech (2014)[20], e- commerce in Nigeria is driven by the middle class who constitutes 28% of the country's population with average income ranging from 75,000- N100,000. According to the same source, in 2014, Nigeria recorded over and \$2 million worth of online transactions per month. Adeugba (2015)[14], adds that Nigeria's e-commerce market potentials has a value of over \$10 billion creating more than 15 million jobs in recent years. *This day* newspaper of Saturday, 14 November, 2015 corroborates this notion when it announced that online shopping in Nigeria had risen to 786n. However, these figures in a country- Nigeria whose population is currently estimated



at over 180 million people is an indication that more systematic investigations are required to unravel the challenges and the master key to accelerated online marketing in Nigeria. Several studies investigated the use of one or two social media platforms in online/ internet marketing in the country as noted earlier, but these studies however, could not present a holistic view that social media users likely patronize more of the social media advertised products and service. This gap formed the basis of our investigation.

### THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The study is anchored on diffusion of innovation theory propounded by *Daily Independent* (2015)[21]. The theory discusses how new ideas, products, services and even social practices get spread and adopted throughout a society or from one society to another. In its postulations, the theory identifies five sets of people with regard to their characteristic and readiness to accept and adopt new innovations, ideas, products and practices. These five categories are: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards, Okoro, Nwachukwu and Ajaero (2015)[22]. In their explanation, Baran and Davis (2006)[23], opine that when new technological innovations are introduced, for instance to farmers, they pass through series of stages before being widely adopted. First, awareness about the innovation will be created through the mass media, second, a small group of people called early adopters will adopt the new innovation, third, opinion leaders will learn from the early adopters and key into the programmes themselves, fourth, opinion leaders influence many others to adopt the innovations and lastly, a group of laggards called late adopters will accept the innovations.

In reality, this categorization corroborates the fact that individuals differ in their level of resistance to adopt new innovations. There is no doubt that some people accept new innovation earlier than others. This implies that diffusion of innovation theory emphasizes the fact that change occurs in procedural stages, namely: awareness, knowledge and interest, decision, trial implementation, confirmation or rejection of the new innovations[22].

The major assumptions of the theory according to Baran and Davis (2006)[23] as cited by the authors above (p.78) are as follows:

1. Diffusion of innovation theory predicts that media, as well as, interpersonal contacts provide information and influence opinion and judgment.

2. Opinion leaders exert influence on audience behaviour via their personal contact, but additional intermediaries (called change agents and gatekeepers) are also included in the process of diffusion.
3. The information flows through networks. The nature of networks and the roles opinion leader play in them determine the likelihood that the innovation will be adopted.

The theory is fitting to this study because it explains how social interactions help in the formation of opinion. And social interaction is the hallmark of social media practices which now serve as channels for online marketing globally. Advertisement /Marketing of goods and services through the social media is a new innovation in Nigeria as a developing nation. This therefore, implies that it requires the afore mentioned stages of diffusion of innovation for social media users to key into patronage of online advertised products and services in the country. In essence, advertising through the social media ordinarily serves to generate awareness and stimulate further discussions about the products so advertised among the social media users. This is why the study is interested in verifying social media users' knowledge and patronage of the products and services advertised through the pages of their platforms.

### METHODOLOGY

The research design considered apt for this study was survey. Structured questionnaire was used to generate quantitative data which were analysed to arrive at the findings of the investigation. Survey research design was adopted because the nature of the study requires the researcher to elicit audiences' (social media users) responses in order to determine their level of knowledge and patronage of products and services advertised through the social media. The questionnaire contained a breakdown of the major research questions, which in turn, generated data computed to test the research hypotheses.

### POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of the study comprised the residents of South- East, Nigeria who use social media. South- East, Nigeria is made up of five states: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo states. However, the nature of the study "knowledge and patronage of online advertised products among social media users in South- East, Nigeria" limits the population of the study to only social media users in the area. This being so, the researcher's predicament became the non-availability of statistical documentation of

either the population of users of each social media platform or the total number of social media users in the zone at the time of the study. In this type of situation, [24], advises thus:

There could be a situation where the population cannot be determined like in a market or stadium. It may take a wide guess for the population to be estimated. In such a circumstance, the researcher must state the difficulty in ascertaining the accurate population and should state what has been done to assume any population, if necessary.

According to 2006 National Population Census, the total population of the five states of South- East, Nigeria is 16, 395, 555 people. The breakdown is as follows: Abia- 2, 845,380, Anambra-4, 177,828, Ebonyi- 2, 176,563, Enugu-3,267, 837, and Imo-3, 927, 563. Meanwhile, a flash back on Adesugba (2015)[14], as cited earlier, shows that a total of 49.8% of the Nigerian population is between the ages of 15-64years. And research evidence shows that those within the ages of 15-45years are the active social media users in Nigeria, (Phillips Consulting 2014). Since it is those below 15 and others who are above 64 years are not very active in social media use (implication of Phillips Consulting study), and for the fact that not all those who are within the ages of 15 -64 years are social media users, it is then considered safe to assume that about 1/3 of the total population of South-East, Nigeria is involved in social media use.

However, for the facts that the 2006 census figure is becoming statistically outdated, the population was increased 2.28% annual growth rate in according NPC population growth estimate in Nigeria. The formula is as follows:

$$PP = GP \times P1 \times T$$

Where PP = Projected population

GP= Given population as at last Census

P1 = Population Increase Index (2.28)

T = Period between the last Census and the year of study

To compute the PP=

$$GP = 16, 395,555$$

$$P1 = 2.28\% (0.0228 (0.023))$$

$$T = 2016 -2006 = 10$$

$$pp = 16, 395, 555 \times 0.023 \times 10 = 37,709,78$$

Therefore, the projected population of residents of South- East, Nigeria as at 2016 is 37,709, 78 people. And 1/3 of the above projected population is about 12. 5 million people which is adopted as the population size of the study.

### SAMPLE SIZE

The researcher adopted Godden (2004) sample size formula for infinite population that is above 50,000 people to work out the sample size for the study. The formula is as follows:

$$SS = \frac{Z^2 \times P \times (1-P)}{M^2} \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{Z^2 \times (P) \times (1-P)}{C^2}$$

Where

SS= sample size for infinite population (more than 50,000)

Z = Z -value eg 1.96 for 95% confidence level

p = population proportion (expressed as decimal) assumed to be 0.5 (50%) since this would provide the maximum sample size

M = margin of error at 5% (0.05)

$$SS = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1-0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$\frac{3.8146 \times 0.5 \times (0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$= \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.05^2} = \frac{0.9604}{0.0025} = 384.16$$

$$SS = 384$$

When the estimated population size of 12, 56992 million people (social media users) in South- East, Nigeria was fed to Australian online calculator as provide by National Statistical Services (NSS) using a confidence level and interval of 95% and 5% respectively, it calculated 385. This confirmed that 384 as computed is adequate sample size for the study.

### SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The probabilistic sampling approach was adopted in selecting respondents for the study. The multi-sage sampling procedure was used to sample states, cities/towns, area of cities/towns and streets where respondents were finally drawn for the study. The simple probabilistic sampling technique of lucky deep was used in drawing out the state, cities/towns and streets where respondents were finally administered with copies

of questionnaire. However, because only social media users were needed for the study, the researcher used purposive sampling approach in the selection of the respondents.

**TABLE 2: THE FIVE-SAGE SAMPLING PROCEDURES WHICH WERE USED IN THE STUDY ARE AS PRESENTED IN THE TABLE BELOW:**

Stage one	Stage two	Stage three	Stage four	Stage five
<b>Selection of 3 out of five states in South- East, Nigeria State Anambra</b>	Selection of one city or town in each state	Clustering of residents into three major areas or zones of the city or town	Selection of one street from each zone of the city/town	Administration of questionnaire to respondents
	City/town Onitsha	Major area of city/town 1. Nkpo 2. Onitsha Central Area 3. Inland Town (Elu-Onitsha)	Street Umuoji Rd Old Market Rd Awka Rd.	No of Resp. 43 43 42
<b>Ebonyi</b>	Afikpo	1. Ndibe 2. Uwana 3. Afikpo Central Area	Ndibe Rd Amamgbala Eke market Rd	42 43 43
<b>Imo</b>	Owerri	1. Egbu Area 2. World Bank Area 3. Owerri Central Area	Egbu Rd Road 2 Douglas Rd	42 43 43
<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>384</b>

Source: Field work (2016)

In administering the copies of questionnaire, some streets were allotted 43 copies while one street from each zone of the towns got 42 copies. This was because the sample size for the study was 384 and when this number was divided, each of the three states used for study got 128 copies. When 128 was further divided for the three zones of each town, the result showed 42.7 copies.

### RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

A pre-test of 50 copies of the questionnaire were designed and administered to sampled 50 respondents in Abakaliki metropolis of Ebonyi State. After four weeks interval, a re-test of the same copies of the questionnaire was carried out on the same respondents, where three errors or inconsistencies were noted. The Guttman scale of coefficient of reproducibility was used to test the reliability of the instrument. According to Akpoghiran and Okoro (2014 p.960), and Asika (1991, p.65)[11],[25], the formula is as follows:

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$C \text{ of } R = \frac{\text{Total Error}}{\text{Total Responses}} = 1 - \frac{3}{50} = 1 - (1 \div 50)$$

$$= 1 - 0.05 = 0.94 \text{ (94\%)}$$

The computation above shows that the instrument yielded reliability co-efficient value of 94%, which is an indication that the instrument is reliable.

### VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

The researcher took a number of measures to ensure the validity of the measuring instrument. First, the instrument was given to two Professors of Mass communication, one each, from Ebonyi State University and Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT) and later it was also given two statisticians who are lecturers in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki.

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The researcher distributed a total of 384 copies of questionnaire, but lost 2 copies in the course of administering them on the respondents. This amounted to 9.5% return. All the retrieved copies were properly filled. The questionnaire contains 5-point linkert scaled questions which response code values ranged from 5 to 1 in descending order for items whose questions were posed as positive statements and 1 to 5 for items whose questions are in negative statements.

The statistical tool of mean computation was used to test the research hypotheses. This decision was informed by the fact that the mean can be used to interpret the performance, agreement or behaviours of a group of respondents (Uzoagulu 2011, p. 30)[26]. The formula is as follows:

$$\text{Mean} = \bar{X} = \frac{\sum fX}{N} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

The decision point (dp) for accepting or rejecting the research hypotheses was determined using a coding template that encompassed the five levels of responses as follows:

$$\text{DP} = \frac{SA + A + U + D + SD}{\text{Number of Responses (NR)}} \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{VT + T + CS + N + NA}{NR}$$

Where SA = Strongly Agree - 5 or VT = Very True - 5; A= Agree - 4 or T = True - 4; U= Undecided - 3 or CS = Can't Say - 3; D= Disagree - 2 or N = No - 2; or SD = Strongly

Disagrees - 1 or NA = Not at All- 1. (However, as mentioned earlier, the scoring can be in the reverse order depending on the nature of the question item.

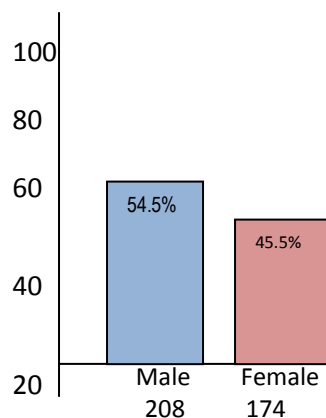
The decision point value used in this study, therefore was calculated thus:

$$DP = \frac{5+4+3+2+1}{5} = 3 \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{1+2+3+4+5}{5} = \frac{15}{5} = 3$$

This means that 3 served as the decision point (dp) for the study. Where calculated mean value is less than the decision point value of 3, the null hypothesis is accepted, but where it is higher than 3, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted.

Data on all other question items not used for test of hypotheses, but were relevant in the analysis of the research results were presented in bar-charts and percentage tables.

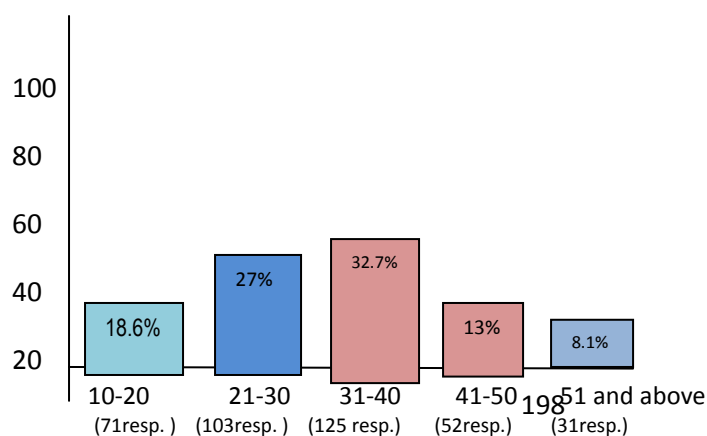
**FIGURE 1: SEX OF RESPONDENTS**



**Source:** field work (2016)

The chart shows that out of 382 respondents sampled, 208 representing 54.5% were males, while 174 (45.5%) were females.

**FIGURES 2: AGE OF RESPONDENTS**





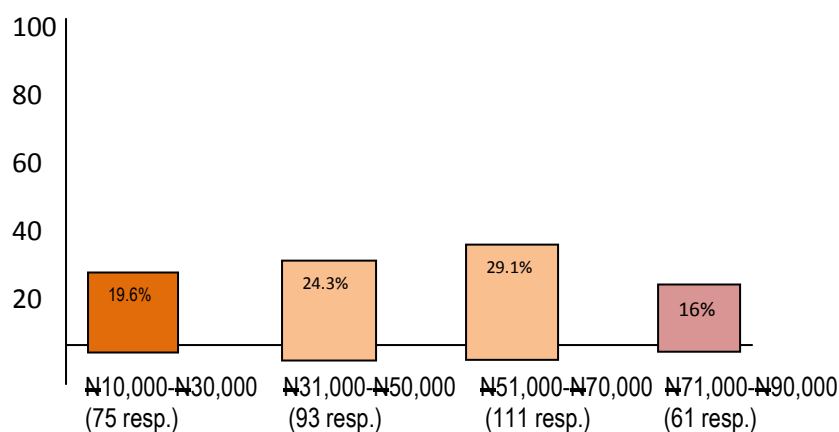
The chart shows that those within the ages of 10 to 20 years constituted 18.6% of the 382 respondents; those within 21-30 years constituted 27%, while 125 of them accounting for 32.7% were within the ages of 31 to 40 years. And 52 of them, representing 13% were between 41 and 50 years, while 8.1% of them aged above 50 years.

**Table 3: OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS**

S/N	Options	Freq.	%
1.	Student	45	11.8
2	Civil/public servant	107	28
3	Private sector employ	50	13.1
4	Trading	86	22.5
5	Farming	16	4.2
6	Artisan /other self employments	78	20.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows that 107 representing 28% of 382 respondents are engaged in civil/public services, the second largest group are the traders who were 86 (22.5%), and artisans cum those involved in other forms of self employments were 78 (20.4%) of the respondents. Students constituted only 11.8% of the respondents. Those in private sector employ accounted for 13.1% of them and 16 (4.2%) were farmers.

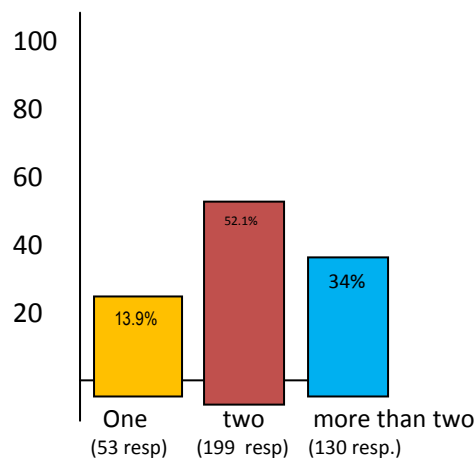
**FIGURE 3: AVERAGE INCOME PER MONTH OF RESPONDENTS**



**Source:** Field work (2016)

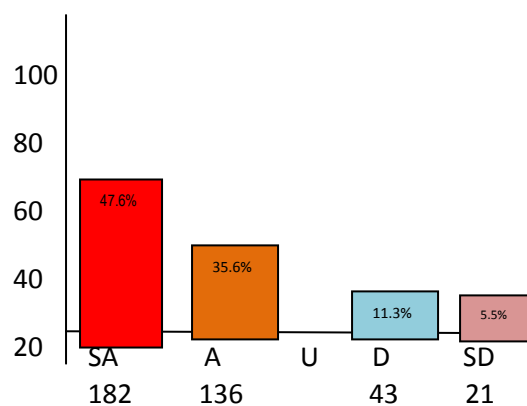
The chart shows that those who earn N51,000 to N70,000 per month constitute 29.1% of the 382 respondents drawn for the study. 93 of them accounting for 24.3% of

the respondents earn between N31,000 to N50,000 per month. 16% (61 respondents) earn between N71,000 to N90,000, while 11% (42) of them earn between N91,000 and above per month. However, 19.6% (75) of the respondents earn the meager sum of N10,000 to N30,000 per month.

**FIGURE 4: NUMBER OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS OWNED BY RESPONDENTS**

**Source:** Field work (2016)

The table reveals that 199 out of the 382 respondents (52.1%) admitted having only two social media accounts, 130 (34%) of them said that they have more than two accounts, while 13.9% (53 of them) said they have only one account.

**FIGURE 5: SOCIAL MEDIA AS MAJOR SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ON LINE ADVERTISING AND PURCHASES**

**Source:** Field work (2016)

The table shows that 182 out of 382 respondents representing 47.6% of them strongly agreed that social media is the major source of their knowledge about online advertising and purchases. Another 35.6% ie, 136 of them just agreed with the statement. However, 11.3% (43) of then disagreed, while 21 representing 5.5% strongly disagreed that social media is the major source of their knowledge about online advertising and marketing.

## TEST OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

**TABLE 4: TEST OF HYPOTHESIS ONE: KNOWLEDGE OF ONLINE ADVERTISING AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS IN SOUTH -EAST, NIGERIA IS NOT RELATED TO THEIR USE OF THE SOCIAL NETWORKING PLATFORMS**

Questionnaire item	Response							Total	Mean Value = $\bar{X}$
Your knowledge of online advertising and purchases is not a product of your use of the social media	Code	SA=1	A=2	U=3	D=4	SD=5	15	1595	
	Frequency	27	18	9	135	193	382	382	
	Code value result	27	36	27	540	965	1595		$\bar{X} = 4.2 >$
	Percentage	7.1	4.7	2.4	35.3	50.5	100	3.0	

The computation above shows the determined mean value,  $\bar{X}$  of 4.2 is more or greater than the decision point value of 3. Thus,  $\bar{X} = 4.2 > 3.0$  by a difference of 1.2, thus, rejecting the null hypothesis that knowledge of online advertising and purchases among social media users in South - East, Nigeria is not related to their use of the social networking platforms. This means that Social media use is related to the expanding knowledge of online advertising among those who engage in online social networking practices.

**TABLE 5: TEST OF HYPOTHESIS TWO: THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ONLINE ADVERTISING AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS IN SOUTH-EAST, NIGERIA IS SIGNIFICANTLY RELATED TO THEIR PATRONAGE OF THE ADVERTISED PRODUCTS.**

Questionnaire item	Response							Total	Mean Value = $\bar{X}$
Your increasing knowledge of online advertising has made you to be patronizing online advertised products.	Code	SA=5	A=4	V=3	D=4	SD=1	15	672	
	Frequency	10	26	7	152	187	382	382	
	Code value result	50	104	21	304	187	672		$\bar{X} = 1.8 <$
	Percentage	2.6	6.8	1.8	39.8	49	100	3.0	

The test of hypothesis two above shows that the determined Mean value  $\bar{X}$  of 1.8 is less than the decision point value of 3. That is,  $X = 1.8 < 3.0$ , by a difference of 1.2. This shows a rejection of the alternate hypothesis that the level of knowledge about online advertising among social media users in South-East, Nigeria, is significantly related to their patronage of the advertised products. The rejection of alternate hypothesis 3 therefore, means the acceptance of the null hypothesis that the level of knowledge about online advertising among social media users in South-East, Nigeria, is not related to their patronage of the advertised products

**TABLE 6: TEST OF HYPOTHESIS THREE:**

**SOCIAL MEDIA USE AMONG RESIDENTS OF SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA IS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY RELATED TO THEIR PATRONAGE OF ONLINE ADVERTISED PRODUCTS.**

Questionnaire item	Response						Total	Mean Value = $\bar{X}$
<b>Social media use has not actually resulted to your patronage of online advertised products.</b>	Code	SA=1	A=2	U=3	D=4	SD=5	15	$\frac{811}{382}$
	Frequency	129	160	32	39	22	382	$\bar{X} = 2.1 < 3.0$
	Code value result	129	320	96	156	110	811	
	Percentage	33.8	41.9	8.4	10.2	5.8	100	

The computed mean value of 2.1 is less than the decision point value of 3.0. This shows that the test of hypothesis three accepted the null hypothesis that social media use among residents of South-East, Nigeria is not significantly related to their patronage of online advertised products.

### FINDINGS / DISCUSSION

The three major findings of the study are that: knowledge of online advertising and purchases among social media users in South-East, Nigeria, is related to their use of social networking platforms, secondly, the level of knowledge about online advertising among social media users in South-East, Nigeria, is not significantly related to their patronage of the advertised products, and thirdly, social media use among residents of South-East, Nigeria, is not significantly related to their patronage of online advertised products.

The results summarily means that at the present time within the area of study, the social media are succeeding in creating awareness and the needed knowledge

about the realities of the evolving business of online advertising and marketing in Nigeria. However, there is still a gap between knowledge of online advertisement/selling and the actual patronage of the advertised products among the social media users. Perhaps, this is why [9], as cited earlier declare that with interactive media, one is not always building sales volume but one is rather interested in building relationship. Mathew, Ogedebe and Ogedebe (2013)[19], also found that respondents' disposition towards Web advertising was informative.

These findings further highlight more the workings of the postulations of the diffusion of innovation theory. According to the theory, as earlier noted, the eventual adoption of new innovation begins with awareness creation and education of users on how the new innovation works, the development of interest and its acceptance by earlier adopters, adoption by opinion leaders and their significant influences on others, and lastly, the adoption by late adopters. Therefore, the revelation by the study that there is no significant relationship between social media use and patronage of online advertised product is not quite alarming. This is because many other similar studies on the subject- matter had made the same revelation. Terragon (2013)[2], reported that only about 15% of Nigerian netizens engage in online shopping. Philips Consulting (2014)[27] concludes that many Nigerians are yet to embrace the culture of online shopping as they still prefer shopping through traditional retail channels. *Daily Independent*, February 22, 2015 corroborates all these reports with its business story entitled "online shopping is still a long way to go in Nigeria."

According to Basil, Sunday, Anyadighibe and Edward (2014)[15], one of the reasons for the above situation is that consumers in Nigeria perceive higher financial risk in internet shopping than in-store purchases. Other reasons are: low internet penetration, supply of inferior goods, misuse of personal information supplied in the course of online transaction, high cost of internet data, risk associated with payment on delivery, and economic poverty among majority of Nigerians.

The fact that 56% of 382 respondents sampled for this study are those who earn between N50,000 to above N91,000, (see figure 4), and yet majority of them do not engage in online purchases is an indication that something else is wrong somewhere. For instance, when the respondents were asked to mention some of the factors that restrain them from patronizing online advertised products they responses ranged from cost of internet data, issue of internet fraud, need to go to in- store where if need be, faulty products can easily be returned to, waste of time, in terms of waiting for the arrival of the products ordered from the online shops.

The implications of these findings therefore, are that respondents' admittance that social media use is helping them gain awareness and knowledge of online advertising and marketing holds great potentials for the online advertising industry in Nigeria which currently has a projected population of over 180 million people. This is because their knowledge will eventually translate to actual patronage if some of the existing hindering factors are tackled. Another implication of the study is that people's apathy, economic, social, technological poverty and dirt of some needed infrastructures such as good roads and electricity are militating against the massive adoption of online shopping in the country. Moreover, the study impliedly reveals that government and stakeholders' efforts in addressing some of these hindrances are yet to produce the desired results for the industry.

### CONCLUSION

Social media platforms are currently creating the needed awareness and knowledge about online advertising and marketing among users in South-East, Nigeria, but, this knowledge is yet to translate to substantial actual patronage of the advertised products among them.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the findings above, besides the need to realistically tackle some of the challenges impeding the success of online marketing in Nigeria, it is recommended that:

1. Online shops, marketers and advertisers like Jumia, OXL, Kaymu, Konga and Jiji should explore the possibility of liaising with service providers like MTN, Glo, Etisalat etc to enable potential buyers shop online on free data charges. This will remove the constraint posed by cost of internet data.
2. Government should come up with comprehensive laws to guide and regulate the business of online shopping in Nigeria. There should be law to cover supply of inferior commodities and return of faulty products back to the suppliers.
3. Government should establish an intermediate agency whose responsibility shall be the registration of expensive products bought online like cars. This will help tackle the cases where some online buyers have been accused and arrested by the Nigeria Police for receiving stolen property. A friend of ours who bought a fairly used car from OXL fell victim of the above situation.
4. Governments should intensify actions in the effort to construct more road networks and maintain existing ones across the country to facilitate delivery of



items purchased online to the buyers. Same measure should be taken to improve on the provision of electricity as power is required to run the digital devices used in online marketing.

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