

# Conceptual Review of the Effects of Advertising on Consumer Buying Behaviour

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### Abstract

*Over the years, advertising has become a regular strategy for positioning products, services and ideas in the market place. Yet an over dependence on advertising could be counter-productive and disdainful for the targeted audience who often regard excessive advertising as information overload. In spite of the growing criticisms about the effectiveness or otherwise of advertising, its relevance in contemporary marketing management is not in doubt. This exploratory study was structured to critically to examine the usefulness of advertising in persuading consumers to adopt a new or an existing product, with a special focus on Nigeria as a developing economy. The aim primarily was to examine the effect of advertising on consumer buying behaviour within the Nigerian context. The study focused on revealing the relationship either positively or negatively, between advertising and consumer buying behaviour. It equally postulates what effect continuous advertisement of product has on consumer buying behaviour. The findings indicate that advertisements that are properly packaged will surely persuade consumers to experiment the particular product, and that such advertisement should be executed long enough to generate such curiosity that will motivate consumers to buy. The study recommends a proper understanding of various segments of customers and their buying behaviours. And the organisation as well as others, must endeavour to understand the buying behaviour of its customers in order to identify the - what, why, where, when and how - they buy; otherwise, an unstructured advertising campaign will not yield positive results.*

**Key Word:** Consumers, Behavior, Advertisement, Products, Attitude, Buying.

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### Introduction

In recent years, a bevy of marketing techniques have fought for global domination, with many boasting a lucrative combination of well packaged advertising tools, communications features, websites, and ever

presence in the print and electronic media. Unfortunately, many consumers do not seem to have any definable views on advertising. They enjoy entertaining commercials, especially if they do not interrupt their favorite programmes. Once in a while, they acclaim the creativity evident in some print advertisement (Kotler and Armstrong 2010). Advertising makes mass marketing possible by making prospective customer aware of the availability and unique quality of specific goods and services. However, Marketing Managers in production companies today faces a more complex and challenging environment than their predecessors. They are saddled with Value Added Tax (VAT), unrealistic exchange rates, decreasing consumer purchasing power, rationalization of consumer purchases and ever increasing gap between the haves and have-nots this quickening pace of change, the rise in diversity and the increase in complexity are creating new challenges in marketing particularly in the advertising field (Ogechie 1997; Kenneth and Donald 2010).

Getting tired of all adverting is very easy because we are so media saturated every day (Agwu 2012); this is because we all have and listen to televisions, radios, read various magazines, newspapers, outdoor signages, direct mails and now new innovation by websites and text messages. Some of these have to filter out to function because it serves a purpose for both the consumers and the providers. Without advertising the world would probably narrow or very different. A good advertisement persuades the customer to the final purchase and keeps them motivated to do a certain action (Kenneth and Donald 2010). So advertising has an important role in today's businesses. The advertising not only persuades the customer to buy only but also gives them the options that can be considered when they go to purchase to distinguish the products among many. So when the customer goes to purchase any thing he will once think about it that there is a certain product with certain features (Agwu 2013; Ikpefan, et al., 2014).

Advertising has been such a persuasive and intrusive socio-economic force in Nigeria, as in other countries, that neither manufacturer nor consumers can ignore it (Bardi 2010; Agwu 2012). As a communication medium, advertising invades our streets, offices, villages and homes, pushing in messages about various products and services, ideas, persons (dead or alive) and institutions through various media outlet (Ozoh 1998). It does this intensively and persistently that it is only our natural abilities to selectively perceive and recall information that saves us from the thralldom of what communication experts have described as "information overload" (Nwosu, 1990).

Terence (2007), defined advertising as a paid mediated form of communication from an identifiable source, designed to persuade the receiver to take some action, now or in the future. The basic purpose of advertising is to communicate the news to the user or the customer that there is something new in the market. But when we go into the depth; advertising serves the source to persuade or attract customer about the product to do a certain action which is usually to purchase a product (Kenneth and Donald 2010). Advertising serves a good purpose for business nowadays (Onunkwo 1997) because of numbers of goods and services produced every day. Advertising helps in telling the consumer about any new product or service or any new promotion on the existing product and service. Advertising helps to describe the features and characteristics of product or service in the visual form so that the customer can understand it easily. So advertising has become important for business nowadays (Bardi 2010).

It is in the light of the above discussion that this study intends to critically examine the usefulness of advertising in persuading consumers to adopt new or existing products. This study intends further to investigate the important role advertising plays towards increasing sales volume with a view to drawing the attention of others manufacturers to immense contribution of advertising to the realization of sales objectives.

## **Review of Related Literature**

Kenneth and Donald (2010) stressed that advertising is an important component of marketing strategy. The aim is to promote business and communicate information they intend to send to the intended audience,

especially with the aim of increasing sales or making the audience aware of the products or services produced by the organization. Advertising helps to form the customers' first impressions on ones business; it can only attract new customers if only it's done properly Ogbodoh 1990). The history of advertising, as cited in Baker (1996) observed that it is often assumed that advertising functions are of recent origin. It is generally held that the assumption has no ground for existence, as nothing exists of which we are ignorant, and that advertisements are of comparatively modern origin. According to Okigbo (1997), advertising is so much a part of our life that it is usually taken for granted. It is an inevitable complement to modern mass media even when we take it for granted. Duckworth (1995) cited in Tony (2006) stated that advertising, and how it works has become something of a holy grail for advertising analysts. Making it known that in order to make it work effectively, advertising has to impact on people's attitudes towards the brand in order to create the desired behavior. In order to differentiate brands from their competitors, the role of advertising is to give added value and secure consumer commitment towards the brand. This is the strongly persuasive view of advertising. Barnard and Ehrenberg (1998) argues that many advertisements do not embody overtly differentiating messages or values and those that do still do not have a significant impact on the way people think or feel about the brand. They further argue that there is a change in attitudes in the process of trying various brands. Equally, they argue that the attitudes held by customers to a brand are in fact somewhat similar to those held about a competitive brand by its customers (Tony, 2006). While Abernethy and Franke (1996), argues that the evidence on consumer attitudes towards advertising shows that consumer prefer advertising that helps in decision making, providing information that differentiates a brand from its competitor tends to increase commercial recall, comprehension and persuasion (Abernethy and Frank, (1996). Most advertising seeks to promote the sale of particular goods and services. In order to achieve these objectives, the advertising provides the potential or existing customer base with information about the product or services. In the majority of instances, such advertising seeks to reinforce existing attitudes by explaining how the product is appropriate to potential users' existing needs or lifestyle (Tony, 2006). According to Li et al. (2002), public perceptions of advertising have been a subject of study for decades, and findings shows that consumers' attitudes towards advertising as an institution are usually more favorable. Many consumers recognize not only the negative societal effects of advertising, but also the positive economic impact of the advertising industry (Osugwu and Eniola, 1998; Li et al., 2002; Agwu 2012).

## **Definitions of Advertising**

Advertising has been defined by various scholars in different forms. The Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) writing in ' *The Nigeria Code of Advertising Practice*, (2005) defines advertising as a form of communication through media about products, services, or ideas, paid for by an identified sponsor. The above definition exposes the following that advertisement must be paid for by an identified sponsor and that the aim of advertising is to disseminate information and ideas about goods or services and to persuade people to take action by patronizing the goods and services advertised. Daramola (2003), suggest that the objective of advertising is to induce immediate action, to create liking and preference for a product or organization, and to create awareness about a product or service. Some advertisements also seek to build a respected corporate identity for a company, product, and brand name or make all familiar to the public Agwu, 2102). According to Ogbechie (1997), advertising is the act of conveying the most persuasive product or service message at the right time, in the right place, to the right person, at the lower cost. Its aim is to foster favorable attitudes to a product or service by presenting the advantages defined by product positioning consumer benefits. Furthermore, Terence, (2007), define advertising as a paid, mediated form of communication from an identifiable source, designed to persuade the receiver to take some action, now or in the future. The word "paid" in these definitions distinguished advertising from public relations that secures unpaid space or time in media due to the news value of the public relations content. The expression "mediated communication" is designed to distinguish advertising, which typically is conveyed via print and electronic media, from person-to-person forms of communication including personal selling and word of mouth. Finally the definition emphasizes that advertising's purpose is to influence action, either presently or in the future (Terence, 2007). Many business firms as well as not-for-profit organizations have faith in

advertising (Kenneth and Donald, 2010). In general, advertising is valued because it is recognized as performing critical communication functions such as: informing; influencing, reminding and increasing salience, adding value and assisting other company efforts. Kotler (1997) in their submission defined advertising as any paid form of non personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor. While Ferrel (1991) saw advertising as a paid form of non-personal communication that is transmitted through mass media such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines, direct mail, public transport vehicles, bill boards, and outdoor displays. Summarily, advertising is paid for, it is a commercial transaction and it is that which distinguishes it from publicity. It is non-personal in the sense that advertising messages, visual, spoken, or written are directed at a mass audience, and not directly at the individual as in the case in personal selling. Advertising are identifiable with their sponsor or originator which is not always the case with publicity or propaganda.

### **Objectives of Advertising**

Ferrel, (1991) stressed that setting advertising objectives is the first step in developing an advertising program. These objectives are usually based on past decisions about the target market, positioning, and marketing mix, which defines the job that advertising must do in the total marketing program (Kenneth and Donald, 2010). Nwosu, (1997) pointed out that some companies are reserved when it comes to investing in advertising mostly because of their expectations and incorrectly set objectives. They seek through advertising solutions as problems that can only be solved by adjusting the marketing plan or sometimes the entire strategy of the company. Besides advertising, the marketing mix is made by other 3 components Price, Product and Placement (Ozoh, 1994). When these elements are not aligned with the specific of the target market, advertising cannot help and an investment in communication activities wouldn't be justified. According to the marketing plan, the manager decides what problems of the company must advertising solve, what opportunities and strengths can be emphasized, what weaknesses and threats can be addressed (Williams, 1997)

Zsai, et al., (2007) stressed that an advertising objective is a specific communication task to be accomplished with a specific target audience during a specific period of time. Advertising objectives, according to the authors can be classified by primary purpose as:

- a. *Informative advertising*: This is used to inform consumers about a new product or feature or to build primary demand.
- b. *Persuasive advertising*: This is used to build selective demand for a brand by persuading consumers that it offers the best quality for their money.
- c. *Comparison advertising*: This advertising compares one brand directly or indirectly to one or more other brands.
- d. *Reminder advertising*: This is used to keep consumers thinking about a product. This form of advertising is more important for mature products.

Before creating an advertising campaign to determine consumers to buy, they have to be informed and convinced by the benefits of the product. Before setting advertising objectives we should remember the tagline "Marketing sells, advertising tells!" in order to set them correctly (Backhaus and van Doorn 2007).

### **Achieving Advertising Objectives**

One continuing issue facing advertising is deciding how many times a person must be exposed to advertising before it has an impact (Kotler and Armstrong 2010). Most agree that a single exposure is not enough. Discovering the actual number has inspired a great deal of debate. Some argue it takes three exposures, others say as many as ten. The basic rule developed by Herbert Krugman 1965, states that it takes a minimum of three exposures for an advertising to be effective. Now many advertisers think three exposures are not enough to create an impression in the consumer's mind, primarily because of the amount

of clutter that exists. Churchill (1995) stressed that seeking to discover the minimum number of exposures needed to be effective which is based on two concepts:

- a) Effective frequency: These refer to the number of times a target audience must be exposed to a message to achieve a particular objective.
- b) Effective reach: This is the specific objective.

Few exposures means that the advertiser will fail to attain its intended objectives on the other hand, too many exposures waste resources (Kenneth and Donald, 2010).

### **Goals of advertising**

Advertising planning is to establish and clarify advertising goals which are derived from the firm's overall communication objectives. The following are advertising goals according to Kenneth and Donald (2010):

**Building Brand Image:** One of the most important advertising goals is building brand and corporate images. A strong brand creates brand equity. Brand equity is said to be a set of characteristics that makes a brand different and better to both customers and businesses. These benefits can be enhanced when they combine effective for advertising with quality products. Higher levels of brand equity are distinct advantage as customers make purchase decision. Advertising is a critical component of building brand equity. Successful brand processes two characteristics that is the top of the mind and the customers' top choice.

When customers are asked to identify brand that quickly comes to mind from a product category, one or two brands are nearly always mentioned. These names are always top of the mind brands. The term top choice suggests exactly what the term implies. This is the first on second pick when a customer reviews his or her evoked set of possible purchasing alternatives.

**Providing Information:** Apart from building brand recognition and equity, advertising serves other goals. Advertising is often used to provide information to both customers and business buyers. Information can help in purchasing process appears to be simple, which can entice customers to finalize the purchasing decision and travel to the store. For business-to-business situations, information from some advertising leads various members of the buying center to consider a particular company as they examine their options.

**Persuasion:** Advertising can convince customers that a particular brand is superior. Advertising can show customers the negative consequences of failing to use a particular brand. Chasing consumer attitudes and persuading them to consider a new purchasing choice is a challenging task. Persuasion techniques are used more frequently in broadcasting media such as television and radio rather than in print.

**Supporting Marketing Effort:** Advertising can be used to support other marketing functions. Manufacturers use advertising to support trade and consumer promotions such as theme pack aging or combination offers.

**Encouraging Action:** Many firms set behavioral goals for advertising programs. A television commercial that encourage viewers to take action by dialing a toll-free number to make a quick purchase is an example. Infomercials and home shopping network programmed heavily rely on immediate purchasing responds. Action-oriented advertising is likely to be used in the business-to-business sector. When it is often the goal is to generate sales leads. Many business advertisements provide web addresses or telephone numbers that buyers can use to request more information or more easily make a purchase.

The 5 advertising goals of building image, providing information, being persuasive, supporting other marketing effects and encouraging action are not separate ideas. They work together in key ways. Image and information are part of persuasion. The key advertising management objective is to emphasize one goal without forgetting the others.



### **Development of Advertising in Nigeria**

Advertising is as old as man. The word comes from the Latin word “advertere”, meaning to draw attention (Bel-Molokwu, 2000). In Nigeria, the earliest recorded activities that could be described as advertising include the town criers early morning gong signals that alerted the village dweller of an impending announcement. To buttress the above assertion, Ogbodoh (1990), stated that advertising in Nigeria is said to have begun naturally with one of the earliest forms of mass communication town crying. This traditional African medium performed the universal communication function of disseminating information about available goods, services, and ideas to the people. He further stated that hawking and displays were the other known methods of advertising in Nigeria in the earliest times and still practiced till this day (Agwu 2012). It has also been observed that in various villages, products, especially meat and games not meant for the markets but which because of necessity must be advertised to draw attention to them, were often times fixed on sticks and raised high to the notice of passers-by to inform them of the availability of such items in the location. These types of display advertising were equally used by palm wine tappers, palm oil and garri sellers as well as other sellers of various types of consumer goods.

Ogbodoh (1990) stressed that the advent of the printing press in 1450 affected advertising a great deal. In Nigeria, the first printing press was established in Calabar by the Presbyterian Church in 1846. The establishment of the first Nigerian newspaper by a Reverend Henry Townsend, a Christian Missionary Society (C.M.S.) Reverend in Abeokuta in December 1859 changed the face of advertising in Nigeria. Osunbiyi (1999) pointed out that the newspaper was titled: “*Iwe Irohin Fun Awon Ara Egba Ati Yoruba*”, meaning “*Newspaper for the Egba speaking people and Yorubas*”. Bel-Molokwu further propounds that: the first formal media advertisement ever carried in Nigeria was in Iwe Irohin and was in the form of information on shipping movement and cargo; it was a classified category advertising (Bal-Molokwu, 2000). From then on, other sorts of advertisements began to appear in the newspapers, while growth of printing saw the emergence of well-printed black-and-white posters which led to the birth of organized outdoor advertising as we know it today (APCON, 2000).

According to Osunbiyi (1999), the year 1863 saw yet another birth of a newspaper in the country called Anglo African. It was founded by Robert Campbell and regarded as Nigeria's first English newspaper. The latter part of the 19th century witnessed the establishment of many more newspapers; this included the Lagos Times, the Gold Coast, Advertiser established in 1880, and the Lagos Observer with Bogan Benjamin as its publisher. In 1882, the Eagle was established followed by Owen Macaulay's Lagos Critic in 1883. Most of these early newspapers were short-lived because they did not develop the flair for attracting advertising support. The early part of the twentieth century, business activities in Nigeria was improved. The Royal Niger Company came into existence. It later metamorphosed into the conglomerate called UAC (United Africa Company). One of the businesses the UAC ventured into was advertising. They established the West African Publicity Ltd. (WAP), the first ever advertising agency in Nigeria. In August 13, 1928, the company was incorporated in London (Bal-Molokwu, 2000). West African Publicity Ltd later changed its name to Lintas West Africa Ltd, in 1965. As a result of the expansion of advertising businesses in the country, there was the need to establish an outdoor arm. This led to the establishment of “Afromedia” in 1959. The advent of radio and television broadcasting added flair to advertising. Radio was established in 1932 in Nigeria through the advent of the British Empire Service. The first Radio Distribution Service (Rediffusion) was established in Lagos in 1936 (Osunbiyi, 1999). However, radio advertisement started in Nigeria in 1955, with the birth of Western Nigerian Broadcasting Service (WNBS). Television broadcasting started in Nigeria in 1959, with Western Nigerian Television (WNTV). The first Television advertisement in Nigeria was for Star Beer and Krola Soft Drink (Bardi, 2010).

### **The Structure of Advertising**

According to the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (2005) four groups make up the advertising industry: advertisers, agencies, media and collateral services. The advertiser who is the owner of the product is involved in all the activities of marketing, looking for buyers, merchandising or the act of fitting

the goods to marketing requirements, propaganda to expose buyers favorably to the products or services. Media are used as outlets to play advertisements to consumers', and collateral services on the other hand are limited risks rendered by specialized buyers merchandising and media services, and the functions of advertising as stated by the AIDA formula. Bel-Molokwu (2000), states that the reason for every advertisement is to create awareness about products and services; which in turn elicits the interest of potential customers. Consequently, a desire to acquire the product is aroused. This finally leads to action. Action implies acquiring the product or services by potential customers.

### **Advertising and Its Role in Marketing**

According to Ozoh (1998) marketing function recognizes the strategic value of advertising as an element of the promotional mix that most firms use in selling their goods and services, which is the bridge between the advertiser and the target market. Moreover, Onunkwo (1997) observed that advertising as an element in marketing, involves advertising strategy and operation of advertisement, planning media, schedules, monitoring and controlling expenditure in line with the budget. Also, Okigbo (1997) added that the relationship between advertising and marketing is simultaneously obvious and nebulous. If by advertising we mean "the announcement through appropriate media that certain goods and services are not only available but are the best in meeting the needs our target market" then it is obvious that advertising must be a hand maiden of marketing especially when it is dealing with a mass marketing. Bakers (1996) pointed out that advertising is just but one variable in marketing mix, and because of its importance, it is difficult to separate its contribution from that of other mix elements. Osuagwu and Achumba, (1994) stressed that there are several relevant concepts that merge the role of advertising to other concepts in order to appreciate the role of advertising in marketing. Such concepts include the following:

- a) Marketing: A market is a set of all actual and potential buyers of products (Kotler, 1997). People must be involved and advertising employs social and psychological factors to influence people. The people must have purchasing power to constitute a market. So advertising uses research and marketing intelligence to identify the target market. Advertising will accordingly position products adequately in order to satisfy the needs and wants of market prospects.
- b) The marketing concept: According to Ferrel (1991), an organization should try to provide products that satisfy customers' needs through coordinated set of activities that also allow the organizations to achieve its goals. Consumer satisfaction is the major aim of the marketing concept.
- c) Marketing segmentation: Baker (1996) mentioned that marketing segmentation is a means of guiding company's marketing strategy by distinguishing buyer group needs and wants. Another marketing activity has identified sizeable segments. Advertising is used to reach the segments that special media may exist, such as specialized journals; marketing is possible to reach particular market. In other situations, a market segment may be large enough to justify the use of general media.
- d) Marketing communication: Osuagwu and Eniola (1998) made it known that communication is the transmission of message from the sender to receiver. Therefore, marketing communications are those messages that deal with buyers and sellers relationship.

Onunkwo (1997) added that marketing communication encompasses all the marketing activities that are visible to the consumer and are intended to have effect on his buying behavior. Kotler (1997) was of the same view with Onunkwo by stating that communication is the management of consumer buying process over time during the pre-selling, selling, consuming and post-consuming stages. Advertising Practitioners' Council of Nigeria (APCON) also stated that consumers' make decisions whether to buy a product or not on the basis of brand image, the picture or likeness of the brand that exists in the consumers mind. The advertiser has six ways through which they can shape the image of their product to try and get the consumer to prefer their brands to competing brands (APCON, 1997). These six ways are:

- a) The product itself having preferred physical and performance characteristics.
- b) The product package having physical attributes (size, shape, convenience) and psychological overtones (label, design, color).
- c) The brand name with its psychological significance.
- d) The brand price with psychological and pocket book implications.
- e) The appropriateness of the method of distribution is important as outlets through which a product is distributed normally reflect its quality and dependability and value.
- f) Advertising and sales promotion which carry the burden of spreading news and features of the brand and trying to make image of the brand appealing to consumer.

### **Marketing and Advertising in the Nigerian Economy**

Williams (1998) postulated that uncertainties which have plagued the economy for the better part of the last decade have continued unabated into 1990s. Public spending continues to increase significantly. To fund the growing budget deficit, domestic credit has expanded rapidly. This in turn has fuelled the rate of inflation. These have led to an unprecedented level of uncertainty and unpredictability in Nigeria economic environment.

### **Implications to Marketing and Advertising Practitioners**

According to William (1997):

- a) During independent decades of 1960s and 1970s, the Nigerian economy was largely agrarian at independence, with agriculture providing employment for majority of labour force. Because the level of industrialization was low and much of what existed was controlled by government, there was little scope for the appreciation of marketing and advertising practice. Most consumer goods were imported in manageable proportions that did not pose any appreciable threat to the 1960s as they did subsequently. Marketing and advertising were then practiced by few multinationals such as UAC group and its affiliates.
- b) With the oil boom of the 1970s, the Nigerian economy changed dramatically with the beginning of oil production coupled with OPEC'S success in link oil prices in 1970's. Since then, oil has taken the center stage as the main driving force behind the growth of the economy. Marketing and communication in the oil boom era were largely and restrained as government ownership of enterprises and monopoly continued to be the order of the day. Nevertheless, the broad-base concept of marketing and advertising as we know it today commenced in 1970's with the orientation of some big multinationals towards brand marketing company such as Nigeria Breweries plc, Lever Brothers, Guinness, Cadbury and Nestle Foods plc all commenced the recruitment of brand or product managers and signed up the few established advertising agencies to handle their marketing communication.
- c) The recessions of the 1980's: By the early 1980's the economy which had been under great strain, began to experience serious crises which worsened throughout the decade. This was due to the collapse in the world oil market and neglect ion of agriculture.

Furthermore, Bardi (2010) stated that structural adjustment programme (SAP) was introduced in 1986 with the aim of obtaining a realistic exchange rate for naira, the liberalization of both external and internal trade, the reduction of subsidies and general rationalization of the public sector to free the economy from persuasive state of control and the deregulation of financial and product market through in the removal of interest rates and price control

These had a far-reaching effect on marketing and advertising which include:



- a) Commercialization and privatization which opened new challenge for markets has affected enterprises strive to sustain profitability and survival in the new competitive environment.
- b) The prevailing political environment with its fiercely competitive nature, has also opened up fresh opportunities for create communication.
- c) The whole issue of fake or adulterated products highlighted an external responsibility for consumer protection or consumerism.
- d) The advertising communication profession is undergoing segmentation in a way that has never been experienced before, the inevitable more towards specialization of services, product etc and even further specialization in such area as banking, detergent, and pharmaceuticals etc.
- e) Finally, 1990's and beyond is characterized by continuous improvement in mass production technology, communication and transportation system which move mass production and agricultural products quickly and easily across markets in various corners of the globe. All these phenomena are fast developing and globalizing a new marketing and economic order.

Marketing and effective communication is the only answer to this growing mass production and highly competitive world economy of the 1990's.

### **Consumer Behavior**

Achumba (1996) defined consumer behavior as the activities of people engaged in actual or potentials use of market items whether products, services, information or ideas. Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (2000) noted that without consumers there will be no marketing process. It is the consumer who ultimately makes the final decision on the products and brands to be purchased and it is the consumer's behavior that determines the success or failure of the marketing company. Engle et al (1995) also defined consumer behavior as the act of individuals who make decisions to spend their available resources (money, time, effort) on consumption of related items. It includes the study of what consumers buy, why they buy it, where they buy it and how often they buy it.

Furthermore, Osuagwu and Eniola (1998) pointed out that consumer behavior is the behavior customers or consumers display in searching for, buying, using evaluation and disposing of products, services and ideas which they expect will satisfy their needs and wants. Based on the above statement, this makes consumer behavior a study of how individuals make decisions to spend their resources on consumption related items and their evaluation of such purchases decision. Furthermore, Kolter (1997) postulated that the aim of marketing is to meet and satisfy target customers' needs and wants. Thus the field of consumer behavior studies how individuals, groups and organizations select, buy, use and dispose goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires.

Apparently, it is worthy to note that there is not one best definition that can be postulated to really describe what consumer behaviour is all about, thus different scholars will always have different views of the definition of consumer behaviour. However, it is pertinent to appreciate that consumer behaviour and knowing customers are never simple (Agwu and Murray 2014). This is because customers may state their needs and wants but act otherwise. They may not be in touch with their deeper motivations. They may respond to influence that change their mind at the last minute.

### **The Consumer Buying Decision Process**

Backhaus and van Doorn (2007) suggest that customers go through a five-stage decision-making process in any purchase. This is summarized in the diagram below:



Source: Backhaus and van Doorn (2007)

This model is an important aspect for anyone making marketing decisions. The marketer is forced to consider the whole buying process rather than just the purchase decision. This model is of use when put into consideration by understanding any purchase that requires some thought and deliberation. The model suggests that customers pass through all stages in every purchase. However, in more routine purchases, customers often skip or reverse some of the stages. For example, a student buying a favorites hamburger would recognize the need (hunger) and go right to the purchase decision, skipping information search and evaluation (Chironga, et al, 2011).

1. *Need recognition and problem awareness:* Engle-Kollat, (1995) stated that buying process starts with need recognition. At this stage, the buyer recognizes a problem or need (e.g. I am hungry, we need a new sofa, I have a headache) or responds to a marketing stimulus (e.g. you pass Starbucks and are attracted by the aroma of coffee and chocolate muffins). An “aroused” customer then needs to decide how much information is required. If the need is strong and there is a product or service that meets the need close to hand, then a purchase decision is likely to be made there and then. If not, then the process of information search begins.
2. *Information search:* A customer can obtain information from several sources:
  - ❖ Personal sources: family, friends, neighbors etc
  - ❖ Commercial sources: advertising; salespeople; retailers; dealers; packaging; point-of-sale displays.
  - ❖ Public sources: newspapers, radio, television, consumer organizations; specialist magazines.
  - ❖ Experiential sources: handling, examining, using the product (Ferrel, 1991).

The usefulness and influence of these sources of information will vary by product and by customer. Agwu (2012) suggest that customers’ value and respect personal sources more than commercial sources (the influence of “word of mouth”). The challenge for the marketing team is to identify which information sources are most influential in their target markets.

3. *The evaluation stage:* The customer must choose between the alternative brands, products and services. An important determinant of the extent of evaluation is whether the customer feels “involved” in the product. By involvement, it means the degree of perceived relevance and personal importance that accompanies the choice, (Francesco, 1976).
4. *Purchase:* Bakers (1996) argued that where a purchase is “highly involving”, the customer is likely to carry out extensive evaluation. High-involvement purchases include those involving high expenditure or personal risk – for example buying a house, a car or making investments. Low involvement

purchases (e.g. buying a soft drink, choosing some breakfast cereals in the supermarket) have very simple evaluation processes. Why should a marketer need to understand the customer evaluation process? The answer lies in the kind of information that the marketing team needs to provide customers in different buying situations.

In high-involvement decisions, the marketer needs to provide a good deal of information about the positive consequences of buying. The sales force may need to stress the important attributes of the product, the advantages compared with the competition; and maybe even encourage “trial” or “sampling” of the product in the hope of securing the sale.

5. *Post-purchase evaluation (Cognitive Dissonance)*: The final stage is the post-purchase evaluation of the decision. It is common for customers to experience concerns after making a purchase decision. This arises from a concept that is known as “cognitive dissonance”. The customer, having bought a product, may feel that an alternative would have been preferable. In these circumstances that customer will not repurchase immediately, but is likely to switch brands next time.

To manage the post-purchase stage, it is the job of the marketing team to persuade potential customers that the product will satisfy their needs. Then after having made a purchase, the customer should be encouraged that he or she has made the right decision (Bezjian, et al., 2008)

### **The Impact of International Advertising on Corporate Body**

The advertising business has become such an important factor in the economy of many countries, especially in Nigeria, that it also changes the economy itself, society, culture, and the political system (Agwu 2012). An advertisement’s layout, text, language, image and overall message can significantly alter how the audience comprehends the advertisement (Backhaus and Doorn, 2007).

The essence of achieving a successful business is the understanding of the customers’ needs and providing products to be enough for them (Agwu 2012). The way these products are marketed and advertised determines the success or failure to the marketer. “Cultural differences can be understood by comparing the value systems of different cultures because each culture has its own unique set of priorities, rules and principles” (Kalliny and Gentry 2007). The stimulation for the demand of products and services helps the economy grow stronger and stronger. New inventions become known much faster and can establish their spot in the sales figures of the economy (Kenneth and Donald 2010). If there are more people buying these products the overall costs will drop and the product will become cheaper for the customer which raises his willingness to buy even more. On the other hand advertisements are very expensive and some economists believe that these costs are put on top of the actual price paid by the customer. Advertisements and products should reflect the values of the consumer, but on a global level, firms are faced with the task of projecting a consistent message. A single slogan or phrase may be interpreted differently based on the culture or language it is promoted. Firms must take these communication barriers into consideration when developing slogans to market products (Lauren, 2009; Agwu and Murray 2014).

Advertising has a serious impact on the culture of a country. The globalized economy uses the same commercials in a lot of different countries, which leads to a break down in the differences of these societies (Kenneth and Donald 2010). Children will grow up not knowing how their culture has been before in their country (Kalliny and Gentry, 2007). It can also lead to a lot of discussion about moral values if we just think about the very controversial advertisement. Advertisers need to consider the marketability of their product when choosing the actual medium of the advertising, whether it is print media such as a layout in a magazine or a billboard, or audio media such as a radio commercial or visual media such as a television commercial (Goldsmith and Lafferty 2002; Zinkhan 2011). Selecting the incorrect medium could inaccurately yield failed responses for a product when it is really a negative response to the advertisement that the audience is illustrating. Each of these types of media has positive and negative aspects to its ability to be standardized, hence its importance. For instance, radio commercials would primarily need to be heard

in the native language of the country. If the audience was unable to understand the product being marketed, it would appear to be unsuccessful due to lack of sales (Vitez, 2011).

Critics argue that advertising can also have a huge influence on society. It tells the consumers that only purchasing products makes you happy and therefore people compare each other on their belongings (Kalliny and Gentry, 2007). Women also compare themselves with the beautiful and very skinny models they see on commercials and advertisement. This sometimes results in eating disorders and a low self-esteem of women who don't look like these models. Another bad effect is, that minority groups, especially in the United States are portrait in a subordinate position, which settles in the minds of people (Lauren 2009; de Mooij, 2011). Commercials are also an important part of the income of a TV station which leads to the suspicion that a news channel might not report on an incident about a company they depend on. A lot of TV shows are also based on these commercials, and if the ratings aren't good enough the show will be stopped. Only those shows which attract a lot of viewers will be shown, which is not differentiated and put minorities like older people at a disadvantage (Lauren, 2009).

Finally advertising can also have an impact in politics. Millions are spent on advertisements and TV commercials in any elections taking place in various countries. It gives the opponents the chance to respond to charges very quickly reaching a few million viewers. But since this is very expensive and only very rich people have the chance to run for a political position or at least depend on the donations of wealthier people who could have a huge impact on democracy and in turn ask for payback (Agwu 2012).

### **The Operation and Level Of Development of Advertising in Nigeria**

The operation and level of development of advertising in Nigeria can be demonstrated through the difficulty of ascertaining the role of the mass media including advertising on a nation's social, economic and national development and modernization. Advertising holds both promises and problems for Nigerian economic and social development (Agwu 2012). Its promises deal with its ability to relay useful information on social issues and on the availability of goods and services to the masses. On the other hand, the problems deal with its ability to promote unfair competition, consumerism, lack of interest in social matters, and immoral attitudes, which could distort the economy or undermine traditional values and national economy. It could be monitored by practitioners and government officials in order to make the medium an effective vehicle for promoting goods and services as well as values that would assist the social economic development of Nigeria (Ozoh, 1994). Advertising remains an important vehicle for the various tiers of Nigerian government to use for promoting their services and for explaining national issues in order to promote national integration and the social welfare of the masses (Osugwu and Achumba, 1994).

### **Method**

This paper being descriptive and historical relied heavily on secondary sources of information. The descriptive and historical method has been resulted to because Hopf (1944) (cited in Gill and Johnson 1991; Ranjit (2011) observe that descriptive and historical methods were beneficial because the historical point of view which is the point of view of change will enhance the understanding and extend the horizon. It will be difficult to find a more confident and clearer statement in support of descriptive and historical methodology than this. This is because Hopf's (1944) statement was based on the belief that the changing events and developments of the past provided understanding of the dynamics of ordered human enterprise (Zikmund (1994).

This type of research methodology was regarded as one that does not fit into either quantitative or qualitative research method (Yin (2003). It utilizes elements of both within the same study. This type of research methodology can also employ multiple variables for analysis (if needed); on the other hand it is unlike other methodology in that it requires only one variable, and in the present study the variable is consumer behaviour (Churchill 1995, Agwu 2012). The four main purposes of secondary sources

methodology are: to describe, to explain, to validate findings and to infer from all the findings having been validated to be true (Yin 2003; Kothari 2004; Ranjit 2011)

## Discussion and Conclusion

The advent of advertisement has proven to be a veritable factor in the sales and merchandising of products and services in the consumer industries. Advertisement, as found out in this study, has contributed a great deal to increasing the sales of products and services in various organizations in Nigeria and indeed globally. The use of advertisement has given organizations ways of increasing their profit bases and also attracting customers to their brand. It serves to make customer aware of brands that are available in the market and also assist customers in choosing the ones that will benefit and also appeal to them most. As stated earlier, customer's curiosity and appetite are wetted when they see product with good adverts and this ultimately increased their buying capabilities.

This study discovered that customers are more interested in the quality of products and also the price must be affordable. Putting into consideration both the low level income and high level income to achieve from their products. This study have assisted in the understand that only the urban area dwellers are really enjoying the benefits of advertising because of their ability to read and write by understanding whatever message an advert convey to them. The urban dwellers have easy access to TV, radio and print media advert, giving them opportunities to choose among multitudes of products. In the rural areas, most of the dwellers are used to their local lives; therefore, it would be very difficult to persuade them to buy a product they have never seen or heard about before. However, in order to draw their attention, the message an advert will carry in this kind of community must be short and simple in the language that they will understand. For example, the Hausa who are used to cattle rearing would rather prefer drinking the cow milk (directly from the cow) or *kunnu or fura* than taking Milo, Nescafe or cereal. But with the help of good advertisement conveyed in the Hausa language, they could be persuaded to try a new product. This author avers that advertising is the presentation of information about goods and services which must complement marketing which is the anticipation of demand for goods and services with provisions for matching the demand structure with adequate supply structures. The net result is an integrated promotional strategy, epitomized by advertising planning which is a subset of the overarching marketing plan. The objective is to present a company and its products or services to prospective customers by carefully packaging the needs satisfying attribute of these product and services and presenting same as the best solution to consumers' problem. According to Agwu (2012), advertising may often be the most powerful tool, it is used only to achieved a pre-determined objective or objectives within the context of a co-ordinate marketing campaign.

Some of the conclusions drawn from the exploration are summarized as follows:

The Nigerian government as well as native-owned enterprises and public corporations do not use advertising adequately to promote their goods and services. Though, the Nigerian advertisers use both Western or traditional African cultural values, neither of them dominate the other. Developmental themes were found in Nigerian mass media advertisements, but they tend to concentrate on individual instead of group goals as traditional African value system dictates. The nature and target(s) of advertisements in Nigerian mass media demonstrated that the Nigerian economy is distorted and underdeveloped. The underdeveloped nature is clearly demonstrated because the majority of consumer products and services advertised in Nigeria are of foreign origin and mostly non-essential. The products advertised often targeted the rich and elites because the Nigerian masses could not afford them. Finally, the financial advertisements were the most dominant products and services of Nigerian origin because they promoted more products and services that the average Nigerian could afford.

The use of advertising to promote socio-economic development could be achieved by adopting "developmental advertising". The idea calls for the incorporation of relevant cultural values and



developmental themes in product and service advertisements by the private and public sectors. The goal is to help public corporations and businesses in marketing their products and services, thus enabling Nigeria's economic and social growth. It could assist Nigerians to adopt useful modernization habits.

The models of consumer behavior make us to understand the way consumers react to advertising, their relationships between firms and how it influence consumer decision making. This leads us to how consumers adopt advertising in purchasing products. When advertising is conveyed clearly to the consumers in a language they understand, it arouse their curiosity to purchase a product. In Nigeria, advertising has helped so many companies to increase their sales volume by promoting their products and services. Consumers appreciate products that are advertised than those ones that they do not have much information on. Globally, advertising play and active impact on consumer buying behavior. The study revealed that advertisements that are properly packed will persuade consumer to try that particular products. More so, the advertisements must equally be run continuously in order to elicit such curiosity that will motivate consumers to try the product. The review showed that consumers learn about a product newly launched into the market through television, radio or print media. This presupposes that without advertising they might not be aware of the availability of such products. This study further found that when an advertisement suggests that the product is relevant to consumer's need, such advert is more likely to attract consumer's curiosity to know more about the products and a subsequent purchase of the product. The study found that not all advert messages are always believed by the consumers, consequently some of them considered advertisements as being deceptive. However, adverts that are run continuously are not a waste of resources that is only if the advert is directed to a particular market segment that needs such a product. Virtually all Nigerian organizations does not have a yard-stick to measure the effectiveness of various advertising media, thus they does not have an articulated and succinct record of the amount of profit a particular advertisement contribute to their company. Consumers are more interested in the quality of products on offer. Again, the price must be affordable when faced with two competing products. What normally concerns the consumers are the benefits in term of value based on individual preference. Given the above situations, group influence and advertising do not form the basis for final decisions by the consumer. Advertisements must be properly timed, since consumers watch television and listen to radio occasionally especially in the evenings. The review shows that the undergoing reasons why consumers buy a product that are facing keen competition in quality.

## **Recommendations**

Nigerian organizations must ensure that they understand the buying behavior of consumers in order to discover when they buy and how they buy. This will acts as a guild towards formulating an advertisement message that will arouse the curiosity of consumers and eventually persuades them to buy. This review shows that is will be unwise for any organization to embark on advertising alone at the expense of other promotional mix elements which include sales promotion, personal selling, publicity and public relation. Furthermore, organizations of all shapes and sizes should try as much as possible to differentiate the marginal contribution of each promotional mix in order to determine the effectiveness of advertising. With this done, firms can really appreciate the impact of advertising on revenue generation for the company. It is also recommended for advertisements to be run along enough for consumers to gain awareness of products and services. Finally, timing is another important issue; the various organizations must take in to consideration. This is because consumers have a particular time they watch television and listen to radio. Considering the target audience, firms should consider and be aware of appropriate time the advert is on air in order to elicit desired response.

## **Future Research**

The study has raised some more salient questions than it has answered. There are several lines of research arising from this work which should be pursued. The effect of advertising on consumer buying behavior was explored with specific emphasis on the Nigerian organizations and the aim was the understanding of

how consumers in Nigeria preferred products that are advertised through television, radio and print media especially when faced with two or more competing products. In contrast with previous work that has used consumer behavior, various models of consumers' behavior were presented in order to understand the consumer's reaction on a product and how their instinct convinced them to buy the product. Therefore, future research directions for related works could dwell on the explorative understanding of the rural dwellers and right type of adverts to be placed for their consumption and action and case study of one or two organizations and the impact of advertising on their bases.

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