Effect of Web Advertisement Measures on Consumers' Brand Awareness of Selected Food and Beverage Companies in Lagos State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The association between web advertisement measures and consumer brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria, was investigated in this research. In this study, a survey was used. A total of 125,393 students were found in the selected higher institutions in Lagos State and total sample size of 776 was calculated using Cochran formula. As a result, 776 under-graduate and post-graduate students of the chosen Universities in Lagos State were sent questionnaires. In this research, a proportionate stratified sampling technique was adopted, and only 627 copies (or 80.3 percent) of the questionnaire were properly completed and recovered. To determine the link between the variables, the data were examined using the multiple regression statistical technique. The investigation revealed that web advertisement measures (online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement) had effect on consumers' brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. As a result, it was concluded that online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement affected consumers' brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. It was suggested, among other things, that management of food and beverages companies should strive to adopt the measures of web advertisement as a marketing strategy.

KEYWORDS: Web advertisement measures, consumer brand awareness, Food and beverage companies, Lagos State.

1. INTRODUCTION

The food and beverages firms around the world play unique role in expanding economic opportunities, because it is universal to human life and health. The industry operates at multiple levels in the society; families, communities, local companies and international corporations that deliver the products of the sector's activities to the global communities for consumption and healthy living. Brand image is the main factor for judging quality of the company products and the consumer s'decision of whether to purchase or not. Brand image affects customers' satisfaction, increase consumers' trust and loyalty, as well as company's market share. However, food and beverages organisations are in a continuous dilemma of maintaining brand image. Most food and beverages business managers, find it difficult in constantly achieving targeted brand image performance such as brand value, customers' purchase intention and brand awareness due to open market competition that characterized food and beverages industry.

Among developed economies like United State of America (USA), Iyer (2020) views brand image of food and beverages companies as the key to a success and long-term competitiveness of customer base. Thus, the scholar further argued that in USA, one of the biggest challenges of food and beverages industry is for manufacturers to come up with healthy food and beverages products that provide ample nutrients; yet, at the same time, do not take away anything from the aesthetics of the brand image (Iyer, 2020). The rapid increase in market competition and the frequently changing consumer perceptions towards food and beverage products determine brand value and customer purchase intention. Kim (2019) pointed that in the food and beverages sector, some companies in developed economies failed to successfully achieve customer total brand value and customer purchase intention resulting from poor brand awareness and tense competition among competitors in the industry.

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In Europe, country like United Kingdom (UK), Grocer UK report (2020) ascribed that Food and Beverages (F&B) industry in the UK recorded speedy decline in sales turnover between 2017 and 2019 with 15% profits decline due to inability to successfully maintaining of high brand image among competitors from the F&B global market arena. Similarly, in France Timothy (2016) opined that brand image is vital to building credibility and loyalty among existing and potential customers in the food and beverages industry. Relatively in other European economies like Spain, Belgium and Italy, Audax (2018) pointed that most (F&B) multinational companies have recorded declined brand image, because of open market stiff competition, trade tension, dynamic customer demand and changing consumer tastes.

In Asian part of the world, Neo (2020) claimed that among Asian's biggest food and beverages brands such as China, South Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan and Singapore have successfully retained their top Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) rankings, which outpaced overall category growth throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with major players topping new lists from China to South East Asia.

Considering emerging economies, like African countries where in 2019, African consumers spent an estimated $1.4 trillion (£1.1tn) on imported brands of F&B products and it is expected that by 2025 consumers spending on F&B imported brand products may rise to $2tn (£1.5tn) with South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Egypt to make up more than half of the total amount on imported brands (McKinsey, 2020). Among these challenges is large-scale importation of food and beverages products, economic down, rising prices of local food and beverages products, and decline in consumers' demand (Food and Beverage Industry Global Report, 2019).

In Nigeria, brand image is a major issue in (F&B) products strategy, perhaps the most distinctive skill of professional marketers is their ability to create, maintain, produce and enhance brand image and this is what Nigerian (F&B) products lack compare with imported (F&B) products (Manufacturing Association of Nigeria [MAN] Report, 2020). Horsfall and Mac-Kingsley (2018) pointed that consumers in Nigeria directly face a meeting point where various brands of food and beverages products are displayed and majority of the consumer are faced with the challenges of making choice among the (F&B) products due to brand image and brand recognition.

In achieving the much-desired brand image, web advertising has become a major link to consumer awareness and understanding of the products (Bragg, Eby, Arshonsky, Bragg, & Ogedegbe, 2017). Web advertising according to Al Zoubi and Al Zoubi (2019) is a form of marketing and advertising, which uses the internet to deliver promotional marketing messages to consumers. Web advertising is a hot topic nowadays and the overall global investments in web advertising rose quickly to about 230 billion dollars in 2018 (Kasper, Weber, & Wilbers 2019). Also, Finmoov (2022) noted that total investment in digital advertising stood at $440 billion as at December, 2021, which represents about 62 percent of the market. The rapid growth of the internet, and the incredible flow of information that the internet has, made it possible to transformed the business of advertising. Today, it is difficult to surf the web without seeing online advertisement, often in the form of visual display ads on web sites (including pop-ups and pop-downs) and textual ads on search sites (Mishra & Mahalik, 2017).

In recent times, brand awareness has become an essential variable that creates strong impression on customers' perception of a brand. Krizanova and Stefanikova (2012) observed that brands perform an important role in customers' decision-making process. Success in brand management emanates from creating adequate brand image, which brings into existence vigorous attributes that influence consumers during decision making through web advertising. Egele, Ikechi, and Udu (2017) posited that web advertisement through online discussion, social media advertisements and online advertisement create brand awareness, sound brand image and brand equity. However, Horsfall and Ubaka (2018) argued that Nigeria food and beverage products suffer decline in brand trending and image due to slow adoption of web advertisement features and other online advertisements compared with international counterpart in the food and beverage products sector. Considering the background issues enumerated above, this study will investigate effect of web advertisement measures on brand image of the selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Several studies have been carried out and provided sufficient evidence that web advertising affect brand image (Aaker, 2016; Asaad & Serdar, 2015; Beal, 2017; Chinuru, 2016; Cetin, Kuscu, Oziam, & Erdem, 2016; Horsfall & Ubaka, 2018; Kilei, Iravo, & Omwenga, 2016; Hosseini & Behboudi, 2017). Linna (2018) and Shabbier and Khan (2017) posited that the increased speed and complexity of today's business environment calls for novel approaches that permit the anticipation and interpretation of trends and the use of web advertising to gain brand image. Web advertisement measures have been shown to be an important predictor for brand image (Malik, Ghafoor, Iqbal, Ali, Hunbal, Noman, & Ahmad 2017; Shabbier & Khan, 2017). Another issue of concern is that online advertising media seem to be under-utilized by consumers despite the advantages they provide in terms of reduction

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in cost and time. Buttressing this, Ayo, Schengen and Shola (2011) rightly asserted that in spite of the growth rate of internet marketing, consumers still assess business website only to source for information but yet make their purchases. But as to whether web advertisement measures (online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement); affect brand value is yet to be empirically proven by several related studies reviewed. By this implication, only few studies have been carried out to ascertain effect of Web Advertising on Brand Image of the Food and beverage industry in Nigeria. Hence, this study seeks to fill the gap in literature.

Research Hypothesis

H₀: Web advertising measures do not have significant combined effect on consumers' brand Awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Web Advertisement Measures

Web advertisement is part of a larger web site that provide additional functions like sustaining customer's distribution of information and social services to the consumer that visits the site by providing connection for the consumer and promotes closer buyer-seller relationship between them (customer and the site owner). Namunyak (2017) described the web advertisement as part of the internet that supports and retrieval system which format information and documents into the web pages. The internet is an advertising medium, which exits in variety of forms among which are banner advertisements, sponsorship advertisement, pop up advertisement, interstitials, push technologies or web casting and links. Baran (2010) explained that web advertising is the same as advertisement through the cyberspace.

Brodie, Winklhofer, Coviello, and Johnston (2007) defined web advertising as a process through which the firm uses internet and other reactive technologies in order to interact with its customers. While Strauss, Frost and Ansary (2011) defined web advertisement as the use of electronic data and applications for planning and executing the conception, distribution and pricing of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals. Likewise, Tanasic (2018) defined web advertisement or online advertising as a form of marketing method that relies on the Internet to deliver marketing messages to the targeted users. Based on these definitions, Web Advertisement includes any use of electronic data or electronic applications for conducting company's marketing activities. As a result, Web Advertisement includes Internet Marketing, E-Mail marketing, Intranet Marketing, Extranet Marketing, Mobile Marketing, Tele Marketing, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) for marketing activities, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and more. Web Advertisement provides opportunities for businesses to reach customers, both existing and new, more efficiently (Mang'unyi, Khabala, & Govender, 2017; Taiminen & Karjaluoto, 2015). Deshwal (2016) defined web advertisement as a type of mass communication, which is based on traditional form of advertising but develops its own communication strategies in correlation with the new technical and medium based requirements.

Consumer Brand Awareness

According to the work of Romaniuk, Wight, and Faulkner (2017) brand awareness is the capacity of a particular customer to recognize or recall that a given brand belongs to a particular category of products. Brand awareness is strongly related to the power with which the presence and traces of a brand in customers' minds results in their capacity to recognize (identify) the brand under various market conditions (Świtała, Gamrot, Reformat, & Bilińska-Reformat, 2018). Kahneman, Szymczak, and Tversky (2012) research proved that the appearance of a brand name in the surroundings of a customer causes an action in the mind of the customer whenever he comes across such brand again. Agumba, Kirui, and Gudda (2017) defined consumer brand awareness as the customer's ability to recall and recognize the brand under different conditions and link it to the brand name, logo or jingles among others and to ascertain associations in his memory or the extent to which the brand is recognized by the potential customers correctly by associating it with a particular product. On his part Kapai (2015), defined consumer brand awareness as the probability that consumers are familiar about the availability and accessibility of a company's product and service. The level of awareness can range from mere recognition to recall to top of mind and to dominance (Ojeleye, 2016).

Dhurup, Mafin, and Dumasi (2014), Yasin and Zahari (2011), while acknowledging that consumer brand awareness is the consumer knowledge involving at the least recognition of the brand's name when a consumer sees such brand among other brands gave different perspective to the definition. Dhurup et al. (2014) posited that consumer brand awareness is the strength of a brand's presence in the consumer's mind and how easily that knowledge can be retrieved from his/her memory. This probably means that brand awareness is the probability that a consumer will easily recognize the existence and availability of a company's product or service. Yasin and Zahari (2011) on the other hand, defined brand awareness as the ability of the potential buyer to recognize and

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recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category. Dhurup et al. (2014) concluded that brand awareness is essential for the communication process to occur, because it precedes all other steps in the product purchase process.

Theoretical Review

Hierarchy of effect theory is at the heart of this paper. Hierarchy of effect theory was propounded by Lavidge and Sterner (1961) and is the most common reference theory in advertising research. The theory explores the influence of on consumer decision making and basically explains the consumer thought process. Acting as a consumer model of advertising, the theory conceptualizes advertising as a long-term process countering the common opinion that all advertising should incite immediate action for the consumer to be successful. The hierarchy of effects theory sets the foundation for the exploration of consumer thought processes and is one of the main theories used to explain how advertising works and that hierarchy of effects theory explains the influence of advertisement on consumer decision-making (Kuhn & Burns, 2008). According to Lavidge and Sterner (1961), there are six assumption of hierarchy of effects theory, which included awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and purchase. The theory assumption recognized that individual consumer travels through the steps at differing speeds depending on the level of involvement with the product and individual motivation, among other factors. The theory further assumed that understanding the consumer's decision-making process allowed advertisers to construct messages that are more persuasive. This theory is selected to guide this study variable because the perspective is tied to the focus of the objectives of the study and the variables under investigation.

Empirical Review

Various studies reviewed have employed survey research design to obtain information from primary source, that is, primary data. The studies are: Ahmad (2015), Al-Azzam, Irtaimeh and Khaddam (2017), Alhaddad (2015), Anyanwu, Nelson, and Salawu (2018), Barroso and Llobet (2012), Hayan and Abdullah (2015), Land-Kazlauskas (2018), Lerman, Morais, and Luna (2018). Alhaddad (2015) researched the effect of advertising awareness on brand equity. The researcher employed survey research design with descriptive research method and the results indicated that advertising awareness has significant positive effects on brand awareness, brand image and brand equity and that brand awareness has significant positive effects on brand image. Furthermore, the scholar found that both brand awareness and brand image are found to have a significant positive effect on brand equity (Alhaddad, 2015). Keisidou, Sarigiannidis, & Maditinos. (2011) in their research on consumer characteristic and online shopping found that consumers that shop online seek convenience and variety and that it is more innovative and spontaneous than conventional purchases. This position was later corroborated in the study of Aminu, Olawore, & Odesanya (2019). However, this is not in tune with Pandey (2016), who in his analysis of consumer behaviour towards e-marketing found that consumers have doubtful approach towards authenticity of product and services from web portal. Onyinye, Terna, and Ogedi (2013), researched into consumer awareness and the use of social media for advertisement. The study established that there is a significant relationship between the use of social media for advertisement and consumer brand loyalty and awareness. On the other hand, Tavor (2011) focused on online advertising development and their economic effectiveness. While Tehreem and Rizwan (2016) studied the effects of online advertisement on consumer buying behaviour of university students in Pakistan. The studies employed survey method, descriptive statistics and t-test to analyse the responses and found that effectiveness of online advertising positively improves and affects consumer awareness and buying behaviour and that effectiveness of online advertising significantly enhances economic activities.

Lambert-Pandraud, Laurent, Mullet, and Yoon (2017), Lerman, Morais, and Luna (2018) and Vaughan, Beal, and Romaniuk (2016) examined the impact of online advertisement brand awareness. The studies employed cross sectional survey research method and the studies found that online advertisement positively affect brand awareness. Farjam and Hongyi (2015), Prentice and Loureiro (2018) empirically investigated the effect of brand equity on consumer-based brand equity and brand awareness. These studies established that brand equity significantly affect consumer-based brand equity and brand awareness. Prentice and Loureiro (2018) further revealed that social media advertisement significantly improves brand awareness and consumer products knowledge.

Omotayo and Adeyemi (2018), buttressed the challenge with online purchase intention by attributing various reasons such as perceived risk, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, convenience and social norms (information by peers, review, family and friends) having a huge influence on customers purchase intention either positively or negatively. Aka, Okorie, and Kehinde (2015) and Anyanwu and Salawu (2018) further emphasized that further study should investigate how web advertisement can affect consumer purchase intention among food and beverages quoted companies in Nigeria

The study of Mishra and Mahalik (2017) examined the effect of web advertisement measures on consumer awareness. The study found that web advertisement measures significantly affect consumer awareness. They further empirically revealed that various

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advertisements such as online applications and social sites significantly improve attractive awareness for customers thus creating tool of promotion of the business. Išoraitė (2016) empirically investigated the raising brand awareness through the internet marketing tools. The study found that effective online marketing tools positively developed and increased brand awareness.

3.0   METHODOLOGY

A survey of students in the higher institutions in Lagos State was conducted, in order to meet the earlier stated objective of the study. The study focused on four government owned higher institutions and one private higher institution in Lagos State. These institutions are: Lagos State University, Ojo, University of Lagos, Lagos State, Yaba College of Technology, Lagos State and Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu, Lagos State and Caleb University Imota, Lagos State. The survey found a total of 125,393 students in the selected higher institutions in Lagos State (Institution's Students Affairs offices, 2020). However, a total sample size of 776 was determined using the Cochran (1997) formula for sample size calculation. As a result, a total of 776 copies of questionnaire were administered to undergraduate and post-graduate students of selected higher institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria, who served as the study's respondents. The respondents were approached personally for participation in the study. In this investigation, the proportionate stratified sampling technique was applied. This method was chosen, because of its ease of use and it provides accurate representation of the larger population (Lynn, 2019). Online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement were used to assess the independent variable (web advertisement measures). Each component was assessed using five items from Naeem (2019), Nofala, Lesmana, Widodo, & Sunardi (2020) and Wang, Chen, Ou, & Ren (2019). The Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the research instrument's internal consistency. The instrument was found to be reliable in all three dimensions (Online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement) with Cronbach alpha values of 0.847, 0.726, and 0.787 respectively. Consumer brand awareness was used as the dependent variable. Five items were used to assess each component. The Cronbach values for the items for consumer brand awareness was 0.810. Items were assessed on a 6-point Likert scale. In order to determine the link between web advertisement measures and consumer brand awareness, the multiple regression analysis was employed with the support of SPSS version 26 to analyze the previously stated hypothesis.

4.0   RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study collected data on students from five higher institutions in Lagos State. The researchers distributed a total of 776 copies of questionnaire to the respondents, out of which 627 copies were rightly filled and returned to the researcher. The response rate of the participants to the questionnaire administered is 80.8%. The analysis was conducted by using the inferential statistics and the results of the analysis are presented in Table 1. The hypothesis test was conducted with a 95 percent confidence interval, assuming a significance level of 0.05. The decision rule is placed at a crucial area of $p > 0.05$ for null hypothesis acceptance and p 0.05 for null hypothesis rejection.

Table 1: Summary of multiple regression analysis for how web advertisement measures affect consumer brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Coefficients[a]						
Model Four $y_4 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + e_i$		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0.312	0.071		-4.389	.000
	Online Discussion Forum	0.343	0.038	0.310	8.902	.000
	Internet Advertisement Features	0.242	0.032	0.221	7.637	.000
	Social Media Advertisement	0.486	0.036	0.448	13.579	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Brand Awareness						
b. R = 0.941[a] Adj. R^2 = 0.884						
c. F (3 623) = 1591.358 (p<0.05)						

Source: *Authors' Computation 2024*

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Table 1 presents results of multiple regression analysis results for the effect of web advertisement measures (online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement) on consumer brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. The results of the multiple regression showed that Online discussion forum (β = 0.343, t = 8.902, p<0.05), Internet advertisement features (β = 0.242, t = 7.637, p<0.05), and Social Media Advertisement (β = 0.486, t = 13.579, p<0.05) all have positive and significant effect on consumer brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. The findings show that food and beverage companies in Lagos State should focus more on all the web advertisement measures, in order to increase consumer brand awareness. The adjusted. R^2 of 0.884 (F (3 623) = 1591.358, p<0.05) indicates that web advertisement measures explained almost 88.4% of the changes in consumer brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria, while the remaining 11.6% changes that occur are accounted for by other variables not captured in the model. The predictive and prescriptive multiple regression models are thus expressed:

CBA = -0.312 + 0.343ODF + 0.242IAF + 0.486SMA +U_i --------Eqn i (Predictive Model)

CBA = -0.312 + 0.343ODF + 0.242IAF + 0.486SMA +U_i---------Eqn i (Prescriptive Model)

Where:

CBA = Consumer Brand Awareness

ODF= Online Discussion Forum

IAF = Internet Advertisement Features

SMA = Social Media Advertisement

The regression model shows that holding web advertisement measures to a constant zero, consumer brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, was negative at -0.312, implying that without web advertisement measures, consumer brand awareness of the selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria, would be negative. The result suggests that consumers' brand awareness of food and beverage products are rather negative which requires greater awareness. The predictive model is the same as the prescriptive model, because all the sub-variables of web advertisement measures were all significant. This implies that selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, should pay a close attention to all the measures. The model further revealed that when all the variables of web advertisement measures (online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement) are improved by one unit, consumer brand awareness would also increase by 0.343, 0.242, and 0.486 respectively. This implies that an improvement in online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement would lead to an increase in the consumer brand awareness of the selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. Also, the F-statistics (df = 3, 623) = 1591.358 at p = 0.000 (p<0.05) indicates that the overall model is significant in predicting the effect of web advertisement measures on consumers' brand awareness, which implies that web advertisement measures are important predictors of the consumer brand awareness of the selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. The result suggests that food and beverage companies should pay more attention towards improving the measures of web advertisements to increase consumer brand awareness. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) which states that there is no significant effect of web advertisement measures (online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement) on consumer brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria was rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The study's hypothesis analysis revealed a substantial positive association between web advertisement measures (online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement) and consumer brand awareness. This link exists because the p-value (p=0.000<0.05) was lower than the threshold of significance. This demonstrates that online discussion forum, internet advertisement features, social media advertisement and consumer brand awareness have a significant beneficial link. As a result, implementing online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement would improve consumer brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. This conclusion is backed up by Keisidou et al. (2011) in their research on consumer characteristic and online shopping who found that consumers that shop online seek convenience and variety and that it is more innovative and spontaneous than conventional purchases. The results also support those of Lambert-Pandraud et al. (2017), Lerman et al. (2018) and Vaughan et al. (2016) who found that online advertisement positively affects brand awareness. Farjam and Hongyi (2015), Prentice and Loureiro (2018) investigated the effect of brand equity on consumer-based brand equity and brand awareness. Their studies established that brand equity significantly affect consumer-based brand equity and brand awareness. Prentice and Loureiro (2018) further revealed that social media advertisement significantly improves brand awareness and consumer products knowledge. The study of Mishra and Mahalik (2017) examined the effect of web advertisement measures on consumer awareness. The study found that web advertisement

measures significantly affect consumer awareness. Ayegba, Ochiba, Omale, and Onoja (2017), Okolo, Okafor, Obikeze, and Nduka (2018), all came to similar conclusions. They claimed that online advertising significantly influences customer brand awareness of products.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Web advertisement is part of a larger web site that provides additional functions like sustaining customer's distribution of information and social services to the consumer that visits the site by providing connection for the consumer and promote closer buyer-seller relationship between them (customer and the site owner). It creates awareness, as well as image for the brand, while it encourages the consumer to form positive association and positive behaviour towards such brand. Clearly, the study's results showed that Social Media Advertisement has the greatest impact on consumer brand awareness of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, when compared to other web advertisement measures. The following suggestions are made by the study: management of food and beverage firms should take issues of web advertising and measures as highlighted in this study seriously. The management of food and beverage companies should look into the enormous benefits of web advertising as it is suggested that combination of different measures of web advertisement enhances brand image. Therefore, management of food and beverages companies should strive to adopt the measures of web advertisement as a marketing strategy. Also food and beverage companies should introduce diverse online advertisement media in marketing their products considering their positive effect on consumers purchase intention

For purpose of generalization, future research should be carried out in other higher institutions in Nigeria and in other African countries using same target population to ascertain this finding. Also, researchers should extend study to other manufacturing companies beside those presently used in the study, as well as in other industries. This would give an insight to the effect of online discussion forum, internet advertisement features and social media advertisement on consumer brand awareness of these organizations.

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