

ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN OGUN STATE

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Abstract: Due to a shortage of sufficient jobs to provide for the teeming population of youths, youth unemployment remains one of Nigeria's most pressing challenges. In Ogun State, Nigeria, this study looked into the impact of digital marketing on young empowerment. The study was conducted using a descriptive survey research approach. The study's participants are youths from Sango Ota, Ogun State. Because of the enormous size of the population, convenience sampling was used to choose a sample size of 300 youths. The instrument used to collect data was a structured questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics while the hypotheses developed were tested using regression analysis. The results found that social media promotion has a significant impact on youth empowerment in the studied area ($t=1.887$; $p0.05$) and that social media skits have a substantial impact on youth empowerment in the study area ($t=6.129$; $p0.05$). The study indicated that online advertising has a considerable impact on youth empowerment in Sango-Ota, Ogun State, based on the results of the findings. The study recommended that since youths will be compensated for their efforts, government and private firms should partner with youths in the promotion of products and services via the internet in order to reduce the high level of unemployment in the country

Keywords: Advertisement, digital, internet, social media, youth empowerment.

1. Introduction

Digital marketing is a marketing approach that employs a variety of channels to reach the desired target market, such as social media, websites, multimedia ads, online advertising, E-marketing, and communication marketing techniques like as opinion surveys, game enhancement, and mobile marketing (Garg et al., 2021). More individuals throughout the world are able to surf the web for a variety of products because to the widespread availability of broadband internet connections and new generations of mobile connections (Aqsa & Kartini, 2015). Digital marketing is a broad term that refers to a variety of business models that employ digital technologies to cut costs and expand enterprises around the world (Rafiq & Malik, 2018). Furthermore, digital marketing is regarded as a novel marketing strategy that provides businesses with new opportunities.

Unemployment among Nigeria's youth is one of the most malignant issues impeding the country's long-term economic growth and development. Many societal vices have arisen as a result of youth unemployment. Internet and other frauds, kidnapping, armed robbery, destitution, prostitution, terrorism, and political thuggery are only a few of them (Okoye et al., 2014). The level of resourcefulness of a country's population, particularly its youths, determines its growth and development (Olajide & Akejenu, 2017).

It is not simple to empower and prepare Nigerian adolescents to flourish in the unstructured and uncertain nature of today's business climate. Nigerian youngsters encounter numerous obstacles that can only be overcome if they possess the spirit and curiosity to think in new ways, as well as the courage to meet and adapt to the challenges they face in all aspects of life (Aja & Adali, 2013). The Nigerian government's approach to youth empowerment is still not producing the desired results, thus there is a need to move in a different route. There are opportunities for the Nigerian youth to be empowered as traditional advertising methods give way to more digital and sophisticated methods.

The popularity of social media among this generation's youth should serve as a wake-up call to all to take use of its job potential. Popular social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, and Instagram are registered in advanced countries, providing residents with some empowering opportunities (Budiman, 2021). When you create a Youtube channel to upload your content, for example, the more clicks and subscriptions your channel receives, the more money you make. However, many unemployed youths in Nigeria are yet to recognize the potential of social media for self-empowerment, necessitating the current study.

In the same vein, there is an increasing trend in social media skits in the form of hilarious comedy videos which are often promoted by private firms. If one pay attention to the skits of the likes of Debo Macaroni, Isbaeu, Taooma, Cute Abiola, Broda Shaggi and Zicsaloma, one would deduce that their skits are being sponsored by private firms. However, there is a still a need for other youths to be empowered because the above individuals have been lifted out of poverty and have attained a level of self-dependence. There is a need for private firms and government agencies to invest in other youths who are also making efforts in creating social media skits which are gaining more popularity. If these efforts are encouraged, it is expected to motivate other youths to embrace this opportunity.

Furthermore, there have been many studies conducted on digital marketing, however, only few studies exists on the relationship between digital marketing and youth empowerment in Nigeria, which is the thrust of the present study.

It is against these backdrops that the current study is embarked upon to empirically investigate the impact of digital marketing on youth empowerment in Ogun State, Nigeria. Specific objectives however, are to:

- i. Investigate the effect of social media marketing on youth empowerment in Sango-Ota, Ogun State
- ii. Ascertain the relationship between social media skits on youth empowerment in Sango-Ota, Ogun State

2. Literature review

Concept of Digital Marketing

Many studies have shown that digital advertising works in tandem with conventional media such as television, print, and other forms of traditional media to boost marketing effectiveness (Koetsier, 2014). As digital platforms are increasingly incorporated into marketing strategy and daily life, digital marketing campaigns are becoming more prevalent and effective, and individuals are increasingly using digital gadgets instead of going to physical stores (Maha & Ranj, 2016). Many young people have blogs where they promote their own products (things they can do for money) and services that the general public can subscribe to (Mishra & Mahalik, 2017). Others, meantime, have taken advantage of the sponsored services of popular social networking sites like Youtube to sell their videos, with the networking sites paying them a set sum based on the number of visitors traffic they attract to their networks, websites, or Youtube.

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is described as the use of social media channels to promote a company and its products (Bansal et al., 2014). This sort of marketing can be thought of as a subset of online marketing activities that work in tandem with traditional Web-based promotional methods like email newsletters and online ad campaigns (Omar & Atteya, 2020).

Both as an industry that provides jobs and as a platform that allows employees (users) to access new types of work in new and more flexible ways, social media is influencing employment (Vein 2013). According to Vein (2013), developing ICT-enabled employment prospects are becoming more prevalent as countries throughout the world seek to create more decent jobs with favorable economic and social ramifications for employees and society. Social media, aided by various ICTs, is opening up new career opportunities that could help combat worldwide unemployment (Raja, 2013). For example, the growth of the mobile phone application market has opened up new business options for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs).

Social Media Skits

With the rise of social media, audiences now have access to additional or alternative forms of entertainment pleasure. Brown (2017) claims that audiences have discovered a larger benefit from using social media for pleasure rather than merely sharing and communicating information. Skits—short comic sketches—are one kind of entertainment that has made the transition from broadcast to social media. They are frequently distributed in video formats (Budiman, 2021).

The audience is entertained by the mass media through comedy. A comedy show's goal is to make the audience laugh and enjoy themselves by providing humorous stories, characters, and situations. Other goals could include serving as a platform for reflecting society, raising awareness of societal issues and providing solutions, persuading the audience, simplifying social and civic issues to encourage participation in society, encouraging the creative arts, and discovering and promoting talents (Chattoo, 2017).

Due to widespread belief among media producers that the audience, particularly teenagers, get tired rapidly, have a short attention span, and have access to alternative forms of entertainment, the use of comedy in delivering entertainment to the public has expanded (Eastman & Ferguson, 2013). Digital file formats that may be downloaded and shared are available for entertainment content. Audiences in remote regions may now get hilarious entertainment from around the world thanks to smart devices and the internet. On social media, a variety of comic entertainment content from the broadcast media is available, and when the public isn't interested in it, they become content generators and/or appreciate those posted by other content producers on their social networks.

Youth Empowerment

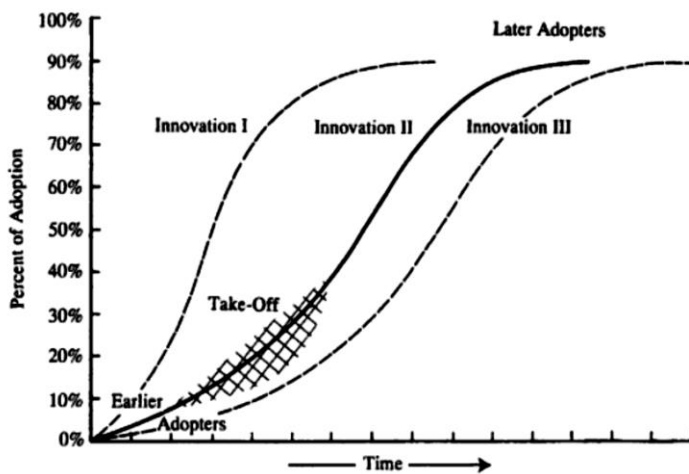
Empowerment is the process through which people who have previously been denied the ability to make strategic life decisions gain that ability (Rosdiana, 2015). Empowerment is described as both a process and a goal in the literature on social work. It refers to the process of assisting individuals, groups, and communities in regaining control over their own lives and affairs, as well as reducing feelings of helplessness (Chandra & Liang, 2017). Empowerment is the effect of gaining influence in political or personal matters as a goal. People are empowered as a result of power reallocation caused by changes in social institutions (Haugh & Talwar, 2016).

Theoretical framework

Rogers' (1995) Diffusion of Innovation hypothesis underpins the study. The DOI was created to illustrate the process of an innovation being propagated across individuals from a social framework through time and through specific passes.

Rogers (1995), according to earlier researchers, observed that people in a social situation do not all receive an invention at the same time. Rogers (1995) divides major qualities of innovations based on how humans perceive them. These are significant because they are presented in a form that allows future adopters to track development.

Fig. 1: Diffusion of Innovation



Source: Rogers (1995)

The characteristics of potential adopters are another important consideration in the acceptance of an innovation. These traits, according to Rogers (1995), include socioeconomic status, educational level, level of cosmopolitanism, and measure of creativity.

The justification for the selection of this theory lies in the fact that Nigerians are laggards when it comes to the adoption of innovation. Most of the innovations applauded as “latest inventions” in Nigeria are innovations that have been fully exploited in other countries which have yielded positive results. Thus, there is a need for stakeholders in Nigeria to understand the business environment to recognize opportunities presented by innovations which can be exploited at an advantage.

Empirical review

The impact of digital marketing on purchasing decisions was investigated by Al-Azzam and Al-Mizeed (2021). The study had two goals: to assess a variety of digital marketing channels in Jordan that potentially influence purchasing decisions and to identify product categories purchased by customers on digital media platforms. In addition, questionnaires were distributed using a basic sample method and purchased on the Jordanian market. Except for incomplete surveys, 300 questionnaires were issued, and 220 available samples were collected, resulting in a 73 percent response rate for all those who chose to participate. This study employed descriptive analysis, reliability testing, correlation testing, and multiple regressions. The findings of the study revealed that digital marketing, such as social media and mobile marketing, has a significant impact on customer purchase decisions. Hypothesis testing, on the other hand, revealed that Jordan has a plethora of popular digital media channels that influence student behavior. Jordanian students use digital media platforms to purchase a variety of products, and digital marketing influences their purchasing decisions. Finally, the study's findings imply that businesses should develop strategies to harness the digital

world and technology, as well as raise brand awareness through digital platforms, in order to remain competitive in today's market.

Ojomo and Sodeinde (2021) looked into social media skits as a way to reshape the broadcast audience's entertainment experience. The research was a descriptive and predictive examination of how social media skits are changing audience consumption, engagement, expectation, and entertainment production. In contrast to the broadcast experience, the audience interacts with social media skits, owns them, and in many cases produces them. They establish connections around them, demand fresh content, and influence the content providers' online viability by their reactions. The study found that online skit creators leverage this emerging field to either start or grow their comedy career, increase their followership, incorporate adverts and promote entertainment-education, initiate collaborations with public figures, and address societal and relatable issues in the bid to entertain the audience members who are receptive to entertainment.

Digital advertising was explored by Fuxman, Elifoglu, Chao, and Li (2014) as a more effective technique to advertise firms' products. The findings found that, while traditional media advertising is still effective in promoting companies' products, internet advertising is more effective. According to the findings, marketers should utilize more digital advertising to better target their clients, particularly young people.

3. Methodology

This study used a survey research design, which entails gathering data from a pre-selected population. The study's participants are youths from Sango-Ota, Ogun State. Because of the huge size of the population, a purposive sampling strategy was used to choose a total of 350 youths from the study region. The data was collected from the sample using a structured questionnaire. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis, whereas the acquired data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Version 23 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to conduct the analysis.

Model specification

$$Y = f(X)$$

Y = Dependent Variable

X = Independent Variable

Where

Y = Youth Empowerment (YE)

X = Digital Marketing (DM)

X = (x₁, x₂)

Where:

x₁ = Social Media Promotion (SMP)

x₂ = Social Media Skits (SMS)

This study is adopting a multiple regression model since the dependent variable is not decomposed; thus:

$$y = f(x_1, x_2)$$

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \varepsilon_i$$

$$YE = \beta_0 + \beta_1SMP + \beta_2SMS + \varepsilon_i \dots \dots \dots \text{Eqn 1}$$

Where:

YE = Youth Empowerment

SMP = Social Media Promotion

SMS = Social Media Skits

β = the constant of variables in the equation

β₁ – β₂ = the coefficient of variables in the equation

ε_i = the stochastic function that accounts for the errors that may arise in the equation

4. Results

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.983	20

Source: SPSS output, 2019

Table 1 shows the results of the research instrument's reliability test. According to the table, the instrument has an extremely high reliability rating of 0.983. According to the Cronbach alpha test, if the value is more than or equal to 70%, the research instrument is considered reliable.

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Table 2: Demographic Information of Respondents

Variable	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	240	68.6
	Female	110	31.4
	Total	350	100
Marital Status	Single	120	34.3
	Married	250	71.4
	Divorced	16	4.6
	Separated	4	1.1
	Total	350	100
Highest Level of Qualification	O'level/WAEC	56	16.0
	OND/NCE	100	28.6
	HND/BSc	120	34.3
	MBA/MSc./MPhil	25	7.1
	Others	49	14.0
	Total	350	100
Employment Status	Self-employed	240	68.6
	Civil Servant	50	14.3
	Unemployed	60	17.1
	Total	350	100

Source: SPSS Version 23

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the estimate	Durbin Watson
1	.993	.986	.985	.68068	2.255

Predictor: (Constant), SMM, SMS

Dependent Variables: YE

The dependent factors were combined with the independent variable to create a statistic of 0.99 based on the data in table 3. R-square 0.59 represents the independent variable's contribution to the dependent variables. This means that 99 percent of the variation in youth empowerment (YE) is caused by social media marketing (SMM) and social media skits (SMS), with the remaining 1% being affected by factors not captured in the model.

Table 4: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	8142.799	3	2714.266	58.299	.004 ^b
Residual	119.537	247	.463		
Total	8262.336	250			

a. Dependent Variable: Youth Empowerment

b. Predictors: (Constant); SMM, SMS

Table 4 shows the difference between the variables as a result of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the model used in this study. The significance of the model used in this study is summarized in the table below. The table shows a probability value of 0.004 and an F-statistic value of 58.299 in the table. Because the model's probability value is greater than the crucial value of 0.05, it is significant at the 5% level of significance, implying that social media marketing (SMM) and social media skits (SMS) have a significant impact on young empowerment in Sango-Ota, Ogun state.

Table 5: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	7.128	.255		5.030	.000
SMM	3.447	.135	.971	1.887	.001
SMS	8.531	.822	.774	6.129	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Youth Empowerment

The significance of the independent variable should be evaluated using the probability value of the t-test. According to the decision rule, if the t-statistics is less than 5% (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. If this is not the case, the inverse will occur. Table 5 clearly illustrates that online advertising is statistically significant because the level of significance is less than the permitted 5% (0.05). This finding implies that internet advertising, as opposed to social media marketing (SMM) and social media skits (SMS), has a major impact on youth empowerment in Sango-Ota, Ogun State.

Test of Hypotheses

Decision Criteria: Accept the Null hypothesis (H0) if $p > 0.05$ and reject the alternative (H1). However, if $p < 0.05$, reject the Null hypothesis (H0) and accept the alternative (H1).

Hypothesis One:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Social Media Marketing and Youth Empowerment

H₁: There is a significant relationship between Social Media Marketing and Youth Empowerment

Decision: Table 5 shows that the t-statistics value of social media marketing is 1.887, indicating that it has a positive impact on youth empowerment. Furthermore, the independent variable's p-value (SMM) is below than the permissible level of significance, i.e. 0.05. This shows that the variables have a statistically significant association. As a result, the study rejects the null hypothesis (H0) in favor of the alternative hypothesis, concluding that social media marketing (SMM) has a positive and significant influence on youth empowerment in Sango-Ota, Ogun State.

Hypothesis Two:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Social Media Skits and Youth Empowerment

H₁: There is a significant relationship between Social Media Skits and Youth Empowerment

Decision: The t-statistics value of Social Media Skits, which is 6.129, suggests a favorable impact on youth empowerment, as seen in table 5. Furthermore, the independent variable's p-value (SMS) is below than the allowed level of significance, i.e. 0.05. This shows that the variables have a statistically significant association. As a result, the study rejects the null hypothesis (H0) and accepts the alternative hypothesis, leading to the conclusion that SMS has a positive and significant influence on youth empowerment in Sango-Ota, Ogun State.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The internet is quickly becoming a valuable platform that stakeholders can use to empower Nigerian youngsters in the face of the country's soaring youth unemployment rate. The study found that both social media marketing (SMM) and social media skits (SMS) have a good and significant impact on youth empowerment (YE) in the study area. This means that youths can be empowered by reputable companies' social media marketing strategies and social media skits. This will create a win-win situation for the government, the youths and the sponsoring firms. Thus, the study concludes that internet advertisement has a significant and positive impact on youth empowerment in the study area.

Based on the findings, the study recommended the following:

- i. Private firms as well as government agencies should partner and empower the youths using the internet medium through the sponsorship of social media marketing campaigns to promote goods and services offered by the stakeholders (private firms and government agencies).
- ii. Furthermore, with the increasing trend in social media skits by youths who have made it a source of livelihood, the government should encourage private firms to invest in the youths by using the skit platform to promote their services and products. By doing so, the youths in part, will receive sponsorship incentives whilst the firms will also enjoy increased awareness about their products and services—which is a win-win situation for all the parties involved.
- iii. Youths are admonished to look into the opportunities presented by internet advertisement and partner with one another to take advantage of internet advertisement to empower themselves. The likes of Debo Macaroni, Isbaeu,

Taooma and the Cute Abiola amongst others have become influential and wealthy youths as a result of the social media skits they produce which are mostly sponsored by 1XBet amongst other private firms.

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