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A Study on the Effect of Internet Advertising on Somali Business

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The Internet is becoming an important advertising tool in Somali business. While the number of internet users in Somalia has increased in the last ten years, some businesses in Somalia have also focused on internet advertising to increase their customers and have increased their spending on internet advertising to attract Customers. Businesses always focus on young people with an understanding of profit and a desire to turn them into loyal customers. In a way, they want to turn them into “unchanging” customers. Businesses reflect the change in their marketing understanding. Businesses are digitising their understanding of marketing and trying to catch young people in their pockets with the Internet they carry in their pockets. The most effective weapon that can do this is advertising. The change experienced also affects the advertising medium, leaving the traditional understanding of advertising and shifting itself to the digital platform. There is almost no research on internet advertising in Somalia business. For this reason, the aim of this study is to explain the changing marketing and trade understanding of businesses in Somalia and focus on understanding Somali people’s attitudes and behaviours towards internet advertising and online shopping. To facilitate this, 250 participants who are assumed to be more interested in the Internet were selected as a sample and fieldwork were conducted. In the conclusion part of the study, it was seen that Businesses had increased their interest in the Internet in the last ten years and they have found internet advertising effective. As a result, although e-commerce is not very developed in Somalia, it can be said that people have increased their desire to shop online.

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INTRODUCTION

In the early 1990s, the world entered an unprecedented period of technological innovation. The communication industry has entered a major transformation process leading to a total convergence between the information, communication, and media sectors and the concept of new media emerged. The new media, which today's businesses use as a strategic weapon to reach their new customers, is a media that enables the communication process between businesses and the masses as well as the communication process between the masses. The interaction that occurs during the realisation of both processes constitutes the most important advantage of this media (Tolunguc, 1999). In this new media age, where the concept of interaction gains importance, with the emergence of the Internet, a gradually shrinking world has emerged where distances and localities are interconnected and social relations around the world are consolidated (Çalığışu, 2009). These processes of change and transformation have changed the nature of advertisements that shape social life, upsetting the traditional structure, and with the development of technology, interactive advertisements have had an impact that can compete with traditional media advertisements in a short time. The rate of new media usage has a great effect on the decrease in the effectiveness of traditional media advertisements. In parallel with the increase in the use of new media, interactive advertisements are also developing and investments in this field are increasing gradually (Ducoffe, 1996). With the increase in the number of internet users in Somalia in the last ten years, many businesses have increased

their interest in internet advertising in order to carry out marketing activities on the Internet.

THE TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL MEDIA TO SOCIAL MEDIA

When the worldwide network was first introduced, it was often used to convey information to passive readers, as it was popular with newspapers and magazines. The content of each website was written, edited, and published by a selected group (Bircan,2019).

Ownership concepts of websites were strong, and website owners were responsible for website content. Users who accessed such websites could not participate in creating the content of the site and were not very active as it was generally used for reading purposes. In the early days of the web, the technical skill was required to publish information online. Because by reading, there were effective limiters for users who could write, such as HTML.

With the development of Web 2.0 technology, these difficulties have been resolved. Web 2.0 is the continuation of Web 1.0. Web 2.0, regardless of which operating system, they are using a network platform that can connect with all devices used. The transition from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, which symbolises the one-sided content sharing era, is compared to the transition from black and white television to coloured television. Internet users who are inactive, just watching or reading what is shown to them, have now become content producers. Web 2.0 has a feature that allows people to download and upload content from the web. People have moved from the web they enter as participants to a creative

position of their own content. This new web coined the term ‘participatory web’ and enabled web users to transition from individual consumers to information producers (Kotler et al., 1999).

MARKETING ACTIVITIES THROUGH INTERNET ADVERTISING

The concept of social media emerged in a discussion platform called ‘Usenet’ by Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis of Duke University in 1979. Usenet is a system that allows you to send messages to internet users around the world. The use of the concept of social media with its current meaning began 20 years ago with Bruce and Susan Abelson establishing the first social network communication site (website) called ‘Open Diary’ (Kozinets, 2002).

Open Diary brings together people who write online journalists to build communities. Later, with the rapid progress of the Internet, the increase of its accessibility and the effect of popular understanding, social network sites with different names and features were formed and the popular term that is defined as today’s social media emerged.

Social media; are online communities where members create their personal profiles to share their opinions and thoughts, create a social and professional network, and maintain and maintain social bonds (Köksal & Özdemir, 2013). Social media can best be understood as the new type of group that follows most or all of the characters of online media (Hassan et al., 2015). The following basic aspects should be included in the definition of social media:

Advertising Concept

The origin of word “advertisement” comes from the Latin verb “advertere”, which means “to turn to a field” (Steel, 2014). The main purpose of advertising is to create and persuade consumers to create persuasive messages for the advertised product/service. The success or failure of the

advertisement depends on whether it creates the expected attitude and behaviour changes in the right people to convey the desired information at the right time and at the right price (Weilbacher, 2001).

Advertising is the best way to connect with customers. Advertising provides customers with information about existing brands in the market and helps with product diversity. Ads, which are part of our daily life, are very important for businesses (Erdogan & Ozcan, 2020). Advertising not only changes the consumption of products by customers, but it also changes the way customers view and attitude toward the product. Advertisements have a great impact on purchasing decisions (Schlosser et al., 1999). It increases the price awareness of consumers and provides the opportunity to compare products. Nowadays, consumers are communities that seek active knowledge and they prefer the most logical option that suits them best (Tosun, 2004).

In terms of marketing, in this highly competitive environment, advertising is an inevitable tool for businesses. Advertising effects are divided into two; mental processing and impressive. The mental processing effects are determined by memory, emotional reactions, awareness of the advertisement (awareness), awareness of the content of the advertisement or campaign, awareness of an advertisement or campaign, and advertisement interest (Kaye & Medoff, 2001).

Advertising On Social Media

With the development of Web 2.0 technology, the widespread use of social media has affected every aspect of life as well as the marketing field. In addition to traditional media channels, social media channels are now seen as a marketing area. Among the marketing tools, advertising provides efficiency as the most used tool. Advertising in social media has been a new platform for marketers to raise awareness and increase brand perception (Faber et al., 2004).

The effect of ads on social media can spread in a short time. The reason for this is not only that the ad is seen on the page but also that people can see that their friends use the advertised product or like the page and they can refer to the advertised topic from a reliable source. This can increase the click-through rate of the advertised product or page and shorten the time to reach the target.

Advertising on Facebook

Marketing methods used on Facebook consist of Facebook ads, pages, groups, and applications. Facebook has turned into an area that the advertising industry cannot ignore, with the opportunity to create fan pages for brands and companies within site, to publish advertisements on the page according to the profile information of users, and to be a very suitable medium for viral campaigns. Facebook's sharing of users' information with advertisers through the Facebook ads service enables companies to effectively advertise to their target audience (Yang, 2004)

The low cost of advertising compared to traditional media tools allows small-budget businesses to reach their target audience on Facebook. Facebook ads enabled in a study conducted to measure efficiency, it was concluded that Facebook ads could reach large audiences with small budgets and with their targeting feature. They allow many kinds of campaign options to be created according to the target audience. It has been determined that it provides a very advantageous situation against traditional advertising campaigns that require large costs to reach large audiences. The profile page, which we can describe as the user's home on Facebook, is the user-owned area where everyone who has a Facebook membership has information that they want to share with their friends. Pages are areas that enable individuals or organisations to interact with their fans or customers on Facebook. If the user likes these pages, he/she becomes a "follower" and can follow the shares of the page in

his/her news source as a time clip (Hoffman & Novak, 1996).

The main difference between groups and pages; groups are generally set up by their fans to reach brands/individuals, and pages are set up by individuals/organisations to reach consumers. Facebook ads are under the control of the advertiser; they can choose either the cost-per-click (CPC) method or the charging-per-view (CPM) method.

Advertising on Twitter

Facebook, where users can transfer all kinds of content, is more useful and participatory than Twitter. Twitter, which has politicians, journalists, and celebrities among its users, cannot make a great contribution to sales beyond gaining prestige in terms of digital marketing. Twitter is seen as a medium where many brands can promote through promoted advertising applications. Sponsored advertisements appear in the Tweet stream and in the "who should be followed" list. Twitter, which has weaker marketing methods than Facebook advertisements, continues to work on diversifying advertising channels.

Internet Advertising Advantages and Disadvantages for Somali Businesses

The factors that make Internet advertising stronger are its low cost, fast dissemination and up-to-date information, realisation in an environment where sincerity is essential, providing the opportunity to know the target audience, making measurement and evaluation, providing interpersonal closeness through direct communication, and the reliability of the information received through reference. Internet advertising also enables companies to notice their new content and shows how much companies are followed by consumers. Firms that try to provide feedback to their own pages increase their loyalty with their consumers and the communication between them becomes stronger. This increases the

consumer's loyalty to the company (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Although internet advertising is the most popular topic, studies on internet advertising or social media, in general, are still in their infancy (Ozen & Sari, 2008). Many people are not aware of the inherited risks of social media platforms. Social media content is generally not under control.

Everything is under discussion on social media. In social media, the brand name can be tainted without a link, and negative comments can damage the brand (Rodgers and Thorson, 2000). Social media customers to be more aware of the different ways of researching, selecting and better service wait for them, has given the assessment. Recent studies have revealed that customers want to actively participate in the process during the production of the product and demand production according to customer demand. This requires businesses to follow a more careful process and act in this direction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Şenkayas (2018) in his study examined the effect of internet ads on consumers. The increasing use of the Internet today has pushed the advertising industry to the internet environment. The internet environment acts as a more accessible tool between the product and the consumer. In this respect, the Internet has become the shining medium in the advertising industry. When the statistical analysis results are evaluated, it has been concluded that advertisements on the Internet are good tactical methods in terms of marketing and competitive ability.

Lütfiye (2016) in their study, examined the effect of social media ads on attitude toward the brand. Since Facebook is the most used social media tool, the study was applied to Facebook users. As a result of their regression analysis, it was revealed that the relationships between the informativeness of social media ads, the visual design of the ads, the

perceived herd behaviour, and the effect of awareness of the close environment, and the attitude to explain the empathy towards social media ads were significant. They found a significant relationship between the attitude towards explaining empathy and the attitude towards the brand. Whether the attitude towards brand differs according to demographic characteristics was examined and found that there was no significant difference.

Altindal (2013) in his study titled *Brand Management and Social Media Effects in Digital Marketing*, focused on the effects of social media, which can be used as the fastest and closest interaction tool with the customer of the new economy, where the consumer profile is awaiting the fulfilment of their requests from the consumer profile that has to buy the products offered to him. As a result of his study, social media can be considered successful in terms of reaching people. However, it has come to the conclusion that it cannot be evaluated sufficiently in terms of converting to sales, which is the purpose of marketing.

Celik (2014) in his article, Facebook, Twitter, blogs etc., which are called social media. He put forward theoretically the relations between social media and marketing communication elements such as advertising and public relations. As a result of the study, the rapid growth of online people communities and the online participation of community members give businesses many opportunities for marketing communication. Social media also referred to as "new media", brings new marketing communication tactics. Today, businesses are entering online chat environments to enhance and solidify their strategic insight. They create a page on Facebook and get in touch with millions of fans, sell virtual products by purchasing virtual places in virtual worlds, have their customers shoot new commercials as amateurs, and the chairmen of the companies write comments on the

blogger’s pages and answer the questions asked about them in the forums.

DATA AND METHOD

This study reveals internet advertising has become an important advertising tool in the Somali business and world. Internet advertising has opportunities provided by developing internet technologies. In this study, 250 participants, who are assumed to be more interested in internet use, were selected as a sample; for this reason, survey questions were created on the Internet via Google Form and survey questions were analysed with the Likert scale method.

The most important reason for creating an electronic survey is that the survey is requested to be distributed via social media. Because the sample to be included in the research is social media users, and

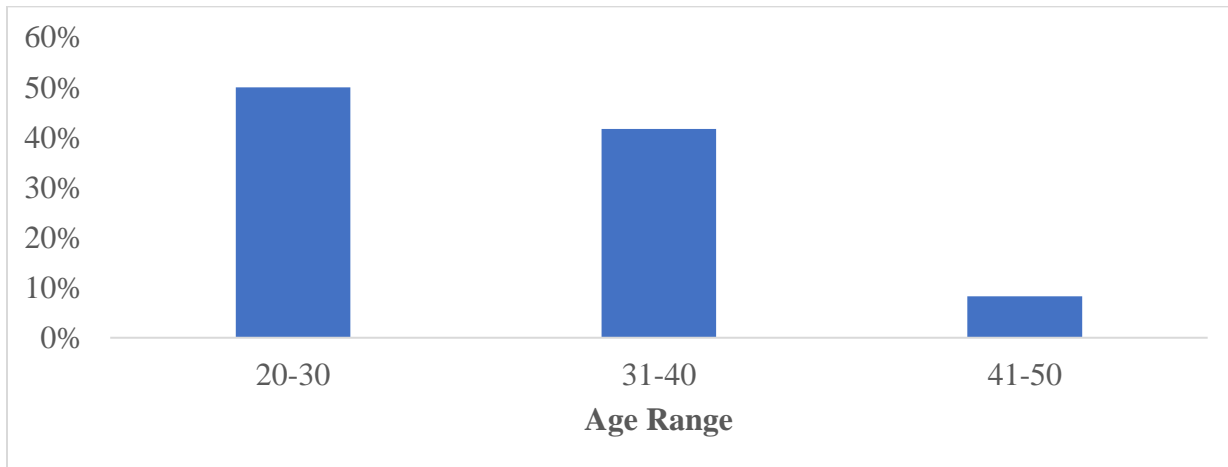
people who have seen a social media advertisement wanted to be selected.

ANALYSIS RESULTS

Demographic Status of Participants

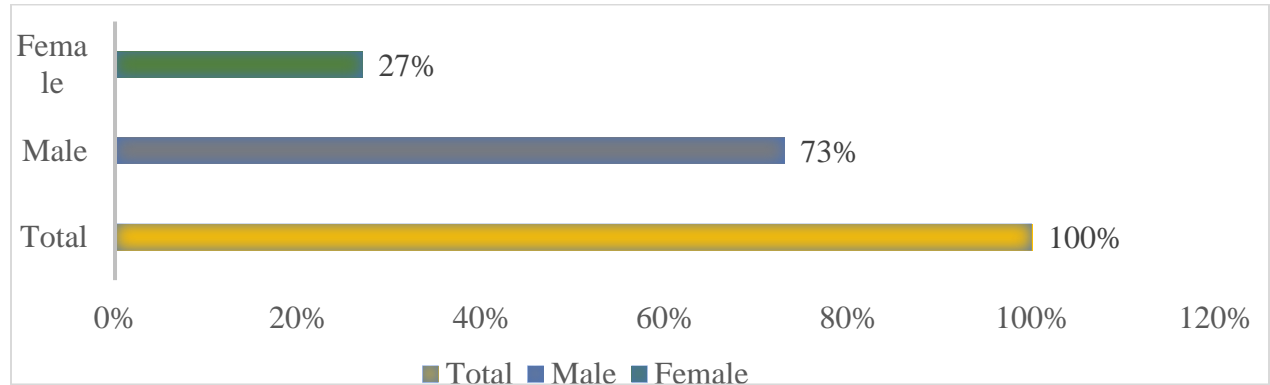
Considering the average age of the participants who contributed to the research, 50% of them are between the ages of 20-30 and 41.7% of those between the ages of 31-40, which shows that young people spend more time on social media. This was an expected result because it was not difficult to keep up with this system for the Y generation, who started using technology while growing. Most Somali youths follow technology closely, learn and start using new devices immediately. It is a bit more difficult for those in the X generation. Many find it difficult to understand new technology. Therefore, their participation rates in this research are lower (8.3%).

Figure 1: Age Distribution



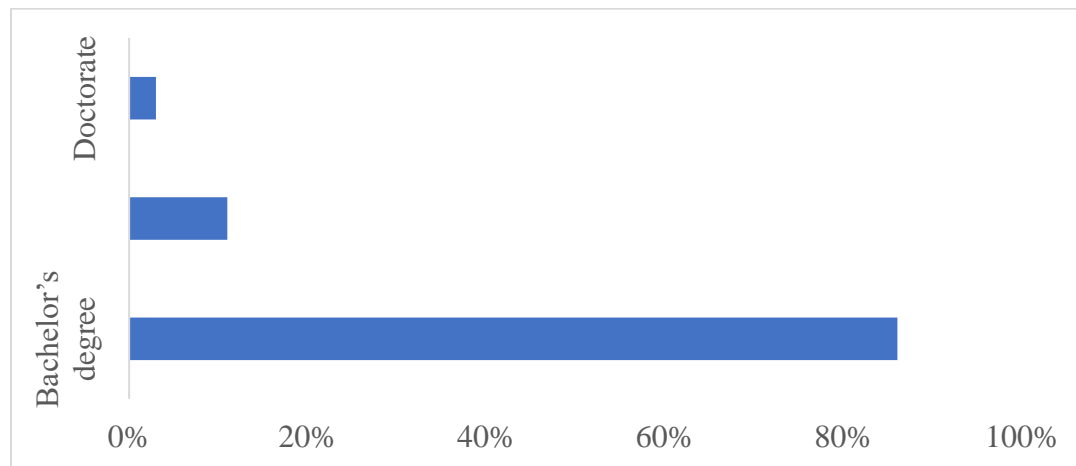
As can see in this study, both men and women participated. In this study, 73% were male and 27% were female.

Figure 2: Gender Distribution



The fact that they are all graduates of universities, as seen in the table above, demonstrates the value placed on the study.

Figure 3: Education Level Distribution



Internet Advertising

The interest of Somali businesses in online advertising has expanded as a result of the quickly evolving interactive communication processes. The emergence of new technology has led to changes in consumer consumption patterns as well as marketing and advertising methods employed by businesses. Because it can reach more individuals, internet advertising is different from traditional advertising. When asked if they believed in online advertising, the study's participants responded positively at an intriguingly high rate (91.7%). This high rate has been a successful and inspiring

response for Somali businesses that are already active in the market and using technology to boost their revenues, as well as for businesses looking to enter the market with a fresh business concept.

When research respondents were asked how important they thought internet advertising was, 92% of them responded that it was extremely significant for Somali businesses. Even if there aren't many new e-commerce businesses operating in Somalia yet, most regular businesses there have chosen to offer their products online in addition to using the traditional methods of marketing.

On the other hand, some young people lack the resources to invest in e-commerce, so they typically reach agreements with large corporations and sell the corporations' products and services on the Facebook pages they open while receiving a commission for each transaction.

Somalis have used the Internet extensively during the past 15 years, with a focus on social networking. Somali businesspeople shifted their advertising to the Internet, particularly social media, after realising that the majority of their clients were beginning to utilise it. When asked about the importance of online advertising in this study, 75% of the participants agreed that it is now required because the majority of people in society use the Internet and social media.

CONCLUSION

In today's markets, where there are growing and strong competitors day by day, the way to have a profitable business is to be visible. The truth is that; No matter how much you have invested, designed useful and stylish e-commerce, or have great products and services, you cannot sell if you are not recognised by the consumer. The only way to stand out among thousands of e-commerce sites on the Internet is to increase your awareness and advertise for it. Due to the increasing importance of internet advertising, this study was conducted on the effect of internet advertising on Somali businesses. As a result of the analyses made, the following conclusions were reached: Despite the lack of many new e-commerce businesses operating in Somalia yet, most regular businesses there have chosen to offer their products online in addition to using the traditional methods of marketing. The positive responses from the participants to internet advertising were a happy and motivating response for companies looking to enter the market with a fresh business concept as well as for Somali companies already operating in the market and starting internet advertising with technology to increase their profits. With digitalisation, Somali

consumers have started to use e-commerce sites more frequently for shopping both in Somalia and in the world. It is obvious that this habit will become more widespread and the e-commerce market will grow day by day. Many Somali entrepreneurs who see the development in this area direct their investments to the e-commerce sector, while famous brands that we have known for years prefer to close some of their physical stores and spend their capital and energies on e-commerce sites. In This Study, as internet advertising is one of the best advertising platforms in today's world, it is recommended that old and new businesses operating in Somalia should not neglect to use online advertising if they want to strengthen their marketing.

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