



The impact of electronic advertising media on consumer behaviour in South African Townships, with reference to Soweto.

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the research report **[The impact of electronic advertising media on consumer behaviour in South African Townships, with reference to Soweto.]** submitted for the **[Bachelor of Arts Honours in Strategic Brand Communication]** to The Independent Institute of Education (The IIE) is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for a postgraduate qualification.



Signature

Date

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1. ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to examine the impact of electronic media marketing on consumer behaviour. The data was collected using the stratified random sample and the survey procedure. Descriptive and inferential analysis techniques were used to examine the information. 54 questionnaires were distributed to and completed by consumers in the South West Townships (Soweto) of South Africa. Of the 54 responses received, 51 met the sampling frame and 32 were millennials between the ages of 26 and 41.

The results showed that advertising in digital media had a remarkable and positive effect on consumer behavioural stages such as awareness, and action (purchase), with millennials dubbing this brand medium (online advertising) as useful for saving time and providing reliable information when acquiring more information about the products and services they wanted to buy. Millennials also found visually appealing ads positive and tended to respond to such ads.

The current research was limited to consumers based in Soweto, so widespread generalization is limited due to geographically specific conditions.

2. INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Media advertising has become one of the communication channels most commonly used by businesses and marketers to entice customers to purchase products and services. Various types and means of advertising exist in South Africa, including television (TV), radio, newspapers, magazines and the internet. With the advent of 4IR and increasing internet usage accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the competition among advertising executives to become the market leader, capture the highest market share and capture consumer attention has shifted from traditional media to the digital space. Digital interactive media is a way of communicating with the target audience (consumers) in which they can actively and immediately participate (Koekemoer, 2014).

In South Africa, the trend towards using digital media platforms for advertising has increased (MediaUpdate, 2021) with 64% of the total population (38.2 million) using the internet

(Ornico, 2021). Digital advertising is considered one of the preferred ways in business to promote a business and engage customers using online marketing, sponsored content (articles and reviews) and social media platforms (Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn) inter alia being the best means of marketing communication, most trustworthy form of advertising and the most popular social networks, respectively (Business Tech, 2020).

With the aforementioned trend of using digital media to advertise, much information is readily available on the internet which enables consumers to research products and make more informed decisions. By accessing the information, consumers can also compare prices and find the best deals. Additionally, social media provides a platform for customers to share their experiences with a product or service, which can influence the decisions of others. In light of this, marketers must understand consumer preferences, online presence and comprehend the consumer's needs and desires so that the adverts are properly targeted to promote product awareness, stimulate interest, evoke emotion and influence the purchase decision. These can only be understood by studying consumer behaviour, to determine the attitude and lifestyle of prospective consumers and accordingly align marketing decisions. Consumer behaviour is thus the observation of purchasing patterns from the perspective of a consumer. Brijball, Parumasur and Roberts-Lombard (2014) define consumer behaviour as the culmination of activities and influences that occur pre, during and post the actual purchase.

Based on the above, this study examined the importance and impact of internet advertising (also known as digital or online advertising) on consumer behaviour levels such as awareness (attention), interest, desire, and purchase (action), as adopted from the AIDA model (Lewis, 1898) with a focus on consumers living in Soweto, a South African township. The study also provided an overview of some of the psychographic variables influencing purchasing behaviour in the country's largest black urban complex (South Africa) (Soweto).

To answer the research question, relevant concepts and theories about advertising and consumer buying behaviour were reviewed in accordance with the conceptual research model proposed below:

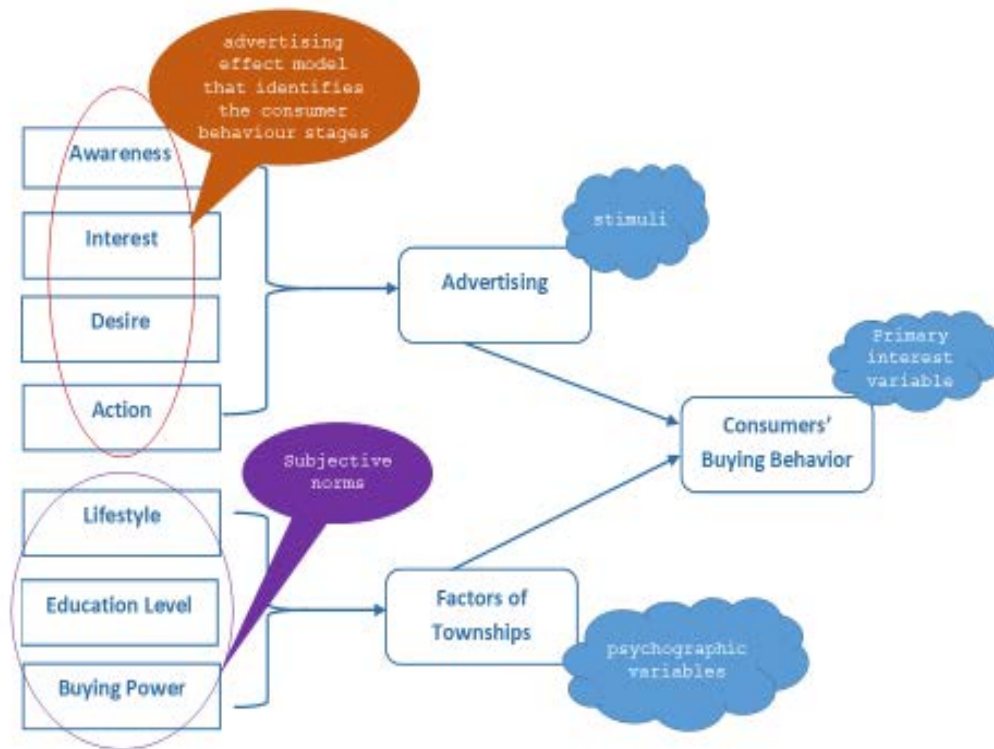


Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework*

Rationale

This study identified the themes, categories and variables related to digital media advertising affecting purchases in Soweto to assist marketers and potential businesses interested in investing in the lucrative township economy.

Problem statement

It is unclear to what extent electronic advertising media influence the purchasing behaviour of consumers in South African townships. This study, therefore, examined whether the amount of digital advertising directed to the consumer had the intended result i.e. influencing consumer purchasing behaviour and enhancing the consumer experience.

Research aim/purpose statement

The aim of this study was to observe, determine and analyse the effect of electronic/digital advertising in South African townships (particularly Soweto), in order to determine its impact on purchasing decisions.

Research question/s

What is the impact of internet advertising on the purchase decision of consumers' behaviour in South African townships?

Research objectives and/or hypotheses

The aim of this study was to identify the themes, categories and variables related to digital media advertising that influence consumer purchasing behaviour in South African townships.

The following hypotheses were formulated to support the study:

- Internet advertisements have a significant influence on the awareness, interest, and desire stages of consumer behaviour.
- There is a relationship between township factors such as level of education, lifestyle, and buying power and consumer purchase behaviour.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual review

Key Term	Definition	Operationalisation in the current study
Advertising	Advertising is a form of marketing communication (promotion) used to communicate the product's benefits to their target market (Brijball Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2014). Lappeman, Egan, Rightford and Ramogase (2021) suggest that the purpose of advertising is to communicate the value proposition of a brand, to raise awareness, or to impart information with a view to elicit an	The study examined the role and effectiveness of advertising in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour from awareness to final purchase.

Key Term	Definition	Operationalisation in the current study
	action (like a sale) or behaviour change (like recycling).	
Consumer behaviour	Consumer behaviour is the culmination of activities and influences that occur pre, during and post the actual purchase (Brijball Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2014).	Consumer behaviour was the primary variable of interest for the study (dependent variable).
Digital/ Internet advertising	Media Watch (2021) asserts that internet advertising plays an invaluable role in supporting efficient e-commerce. Kotler, Kartajaya and Setiawan (2017) assert that while traditional media plays a role in building awareness and interest in a brand during the early stages of marketing, digital media or digital marketing is then used to drive advocacy and action as the interaction between customers and brands progresses. Internet advertising can thus be considered as a brand medium and sales driver.	Internet advertising was the independent variable that was manipulated in the study to see its effect on the dependent variable i.e. the effectiveness of internet advertising as a variable affecting consumer behaviour (either positively or negatively) was observed and measured by the study.
Township	Potgieter, Berman, and Verity (2019) describe a township as an area characterised by underdevelopment as shaped by South Africa's turbulent history. The World Bank estimates that as much as half of South Africa's urban population lives in	The township of Soweto, as the geographic residential area for the study's target population, was examined for its specific influences and contribution to how

Key Term	Definition	Operationalisation in the current study
	townships and informal settlements - with Stats SA finding that Soweto alone accounts for over 1.2 million residents, making it South Africa's largest township by far (Business Tech, 2016).	consumers make their purchasing decisions.

Table 1: *Conceptualisation and operationalisation of key terms*

Theoretical review

Theory of reasonable action, the hierarchy of effects, and the theory of consumer behaviour were identified as relevant theories to consumer advertising and purchasing behaviour:

Theory of reasoned action

As formulated in 1980 (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is concerned with the explanation and prediction of human behaviour based on beliefs, attitudes, norms and intentions at a specific time and place. TRA considers rational decision-making to be important as it articulates how consumer behaviour is driven by intent. The theory found application in the current study as it was used to predict how township consumers act (make purchasing decisions) based on their past opinions about products or services advertised online and their behavioural intentions.

Hierarchy of effects

The hierarchy of effects theory was introduced by Robert J. Lavidge and Gary A. Steiner in 1961 as a predictive measurement of advertising effectiveness (International Journal of Market Research, 2021). According to the Corporate Finance Institute (2021), the hierarchy of effects is a theory that discusses the impact of advertising on customers' decision-making on purchasing certain products and brands. In this theory, the interaction between consumer and advertising is explained as a sequential process comprising three stages: cognitive (awareness and knowledge), affective (liking and preference) and conative (conviction and purchase) (Corporate Finance Institute, 2021).

The hierarchy of effects theory was applied in the current study to help the researcher evaluate the impact of online advertising on Soweto customers' decision-making when purchasing specific products and brands. Online advertising can have a significant impact on all four levels of the hierarchy of effects. For example, when a customer sees an ad for a new product that they have never heard of before, it can generate brand awareness and interest. If the ad is well designed and educates about the product, it can generate purchase intent. And if the customer can easily buy the product online, it can lead to actual buying behaviour.

The hierarchy of effects theory is depicted in figure 2 below:

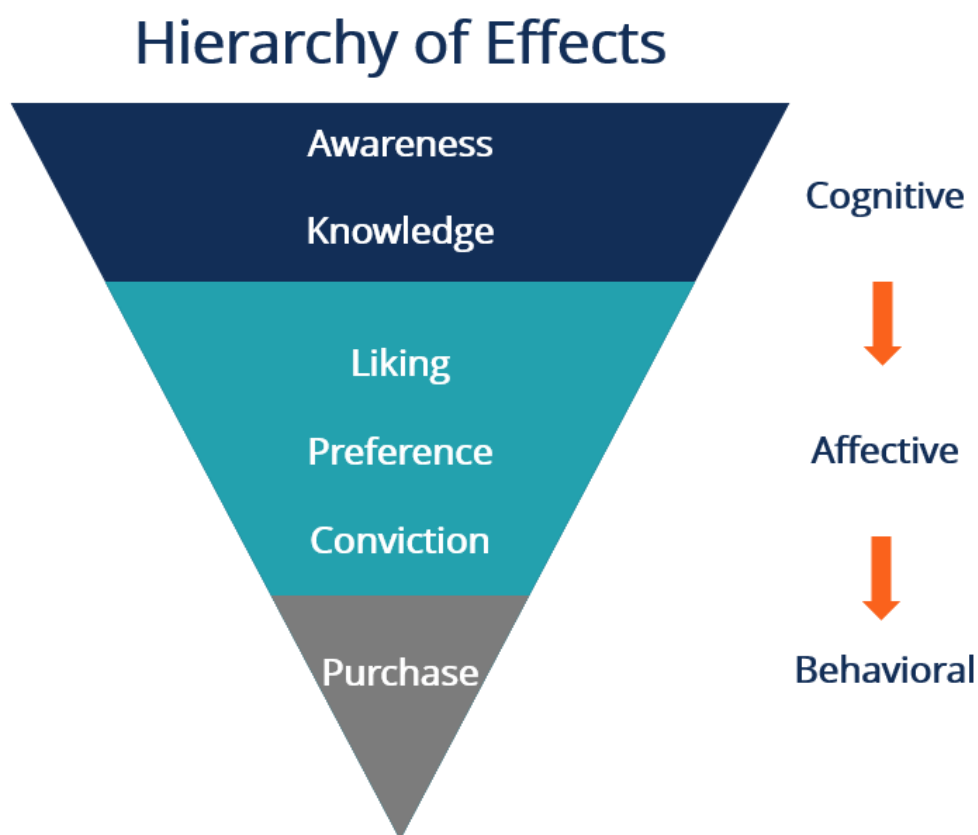


Figure 2: *Hierarchy of effects* (Corporate Finance Institute, 2021)

Consumer behaviour

According to Oluyemi (2021), consumer behaviour refers to the act (physical and mental) of choosing products and services in order to meet needs. Essentially, the theory of consumer behaviour considers the factors that embody the above choices, including, product appearance, benefits and quality.

Within the theoretical framework of consumer behaviour there are several traditional and contemporary models of consumer behaviour. The premise that consumers buy products to meet their needs (consistent with the definition above) can be related to the learning model (influenced by Maslow's hierarchy of needs) of customer behaviour, which suggests that buyer behaviour is driven by both basic needs such as food, and learned needs, such as fear or guilt, arising from lived experiences (Needle, 2021).

For the purposes of this study, the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) Model was also explored. According to the EKB model of consumer behaviour, consumers go through a sequential path/five stages (*awareness, information processing, evaluation, purchasing decision and outcome analysis*) of decision-making before making a purchase (Needle, 2021; Oluyemi, 2021). The suitability of this model in the present research was premised on the fact that the aforementioned stages consider the individualistic consumer characters such as motives, values, lifestyle, social status, culture, reference groups, family, belief, and economic conditions which have been recognized as some of the determinants influencing consumer behaviour in the researcher's conceptual framework.

Internet advertising

An advertiser's primary goal is to reach consumers and influence their awareness, attitudes and purchasing behaviour by maintaining individuals' interest in their product through advertising spending. Advertisers also need to determine what influences customer behaviour. A study by Aksu, Babun, Contiy, Tolomeiy, and Uluagac (2018) revealed that internet advertising is one of the fastest-growing online businesses and is worth hundreds of billions of dollars. In the South African context, online articles and reviews are the most popular marketing channel used by both decision-makers and consumers when they are looking for information about products and services that interest them (Business Tech, 2022). From a South African township perspective, residents see digital platforms as a natural extension of their offline social media behaviour, with WhatsApp taking center stage as a media consumption channel (GFK, 2017).

A study by Tretyakova (2021) argued that despite the rapid growth of internet advertising, interactive digital advertising is inefficient when used alone to achieve business goals, instead, the corporation of additional marketing tools is required to achieve the synergistic effect.

While the Veleva (2019) study agrees that internet advertising has a major impact on consumer purchasing decisions, it also finds that less is being bought online. A significant number of those who made online purchases also pointed out discrepancies between the online advertisement and the final product received, while others raised concerns about the security of the online platform/website in terms of personal data protection.

Previous studies suggest that the effectiveness of Internet advertising in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour depends on numerous factors, including the memorability of the ad and well-defined benefits of the advertised product. In order for internet advertising to be more effective in persuading consumers to purchase the product or service, marketers should consider timelines (currency) of information about the product, discount offers, warranties, and discounted shipping offers.

Consumer Behavioural Stages

For the purpose of this study, the consumer behavioural stages were reflected through the AIDA advertising effect model formulated by St. Elmo Lewis in 1898. The AIDA model shows the entire system of how advertising affects consumer behaviour and purchase decisions. AIDA is an acronym, which consists of the elements of attention, interest, desire and action, which are important to the correlation between consumer behaviour and advertising. Brands creating attention, interest, desire, and attraction of their products in the market utilising appropriate communication channels to reach the mass market, stimulate the demand of their products in the market.

Awareness (attention)

Attention, the first element of the AIDA model, describes the stage in which the brand gains the attention of the consumer through the advertisement that the consumer comes into contact with.

Keller and Swaminathan (2020) describe awareness as a component of brand knowledge. Awareness is the first stage of the consumer decision-making process as outlined in AIDA and Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) and cognitive stage of the hierarchy of effects models of consumer behaviour. This stage deals with what the receiver knows or perceive, in the search for information to fulfil an identified need. Internet advertising plays an important role

in making the consumer familiar with the product through the provision of product information that will meet the consumer needs and highlight the benefits that will create an everlasting memory in the consumer's mind. It's at this stage where the salience of the advert in the consumer's memory will be enhanced by the positive impression created by the advert.

Interest

This is the stage when the advertisement should arouse the consumer's interest in the product. At this stage, the consumer exhibits affective behaviours with the brand, bringing emotional comfort to consumers and consumers forming positive perspectives on the brand. Creativity in presenting the product's benefits and characteristics, as well as the attractiveness and informational content of the ad, play an important role in stimulating the consumer's interest in the product. According to the Corporate Finance Institute (2022), generating interest is the hardest part of a marketer, to capture consumer interest, the advertising information should be well organized and easy to read, with interesting subheadings and illustrations (Corporate Finance Institute, 2022).

Hawkins, Best and Coney (1998) surmise that a positive affect toward the ad may increase the liking of the brand through classical conditioning. Consistent with this observation, at this stage, the consumer will associate the mood, and illustrations in the ad with the brand represented by the ad and this will linger in the mind of the consumer. Advertising plays with the most intricate emotions of the consumer such as mood and captures consumer interest by showing how their mood can change just by consuming the product. An example of an online advert that evokes interest by showcasing the impact of the product on consumers' mood, is the Fanta 'It's A Thing' campaign (<https://www.coca-colacompany.com/news/fanta-immersive-fan-driven-campaign>).

Desire

This is the third stage of the AIDA model and represents an affective behaviour wherein the consumer's mindset is moved from "I like it" to "I want it" (Corporate Finance Institute, 2022). According to Hassan, Nadzim and Shiratuddin (2015), from a marketing standpoint, desire represents a consumer's aspiration to own the advertised product or service. This phase is mainly influenced by brand loyalty, which can be attributed to the effectiveness of advertising, the number of positive reviews associated with the brand, and satisfaction with

previous experiences with the brand. The imaginative schemes and offers such as prizes, loyalty programs and brand ambassadors are also influential in creating brand loyalty.

Action (Purchase)

According to the assertions made by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), consumer purchasing behaviour can be predicted by knowing the consumer's purchase intentions. Therefore, this is the final stage of both the AIDA and the hierarchy of effects models where consumers initiate action to purchase. The ultimate decision to purchase will be influenced by the call to action in the advertisement. Corporate International Finance (2021) believes that good advertising should elicit a sense of urgency, motivating consumers to act IMMEDIATELY. With this in mind, making limited-time offers such as free shipping and providing a positive purchasing experience to consumers, is essential. In this stage, the brand contact vehicles such as the point of sale, a guarantee of post-sales support and the ease and security of the e-commerce (checkout) influence the action decision of the consumer.

Impact of online advertising on purchases

The impact of online advertising on the customer's decision-making process is significant. It has been found that online advertising can influence which products and brands customers buy. This is due to the fact that online advertising provides customers with information that they would otherwise not have access to. This information can include product reviews, pricing comparisons, and even videos or photos of the product being used. This type of advertising allows customers to make more informed purchasing decisions, which may lead them to choose a different product or brand than they would without online advertising.

Township factors

Township residents value authenticity, memorabilia, and fun experiences (Potgieter, Berman, & Verity, 2019), so it's imperative that any brand looking to break into the township market understands their nuances, drives, triggers, language, and culture (Keys Communications, 2021).

Lifestyle

Hawkins *et al* (1998) define lifestyle as the sum of one's past decisions and future plans, and also assert that lifestyle is the manifestation of self-concept, the total image given to one's self as a result of the culture we live in and individual situations and experiences that comprise daily existence.

Lifestyle plays an important role in influencing purchasing behaviour in the township environment. In a South African township setting, lifestyle is part of self-expression, where consumers let others know who they are and what they are through their actions, including purchasing and displaying goods and certain brands. Because of the social interconnectedness of township consumers, the authenticity and associated sense of belonging, word-of-mouth including electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) are determinants of lifestyle.

To communicate the authenticity of internet advertising, creating exciting experiential benefits by integrating community leaders and indigenous influencers such as Skhothanes (township subcultural groups that boast head-to-toe expensive clothes) into online multimedia presentations can boost branding and create an environment for sharing emotional experiences that will ultimately drive buying behaviour.

Education Level

Township audience is characterised by lower levels of education (low literacy rates), therefore, for inclusivity, advertising targeted at townships should integrate voice-overs, visuals and most importantly, these should be in a township lingo for the target audience to apprehend the messaging.

Buying Power

The low household income in the South African township is one of the economic factors affecting consumer behaviour. Previous research has revealed that most consumers in townships belong to the lower range of the middle-income band. According to Statistics South Africa (2022), the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has gone up in the country. The impact of this increase is felt by households in the form of lower household disposable income,

therefore, consumers want value for money. With these dynamics in mind, sales and lucrative offers like couponing should be included in the advertising campaign for an internet ad to lead to a final purchase decision.

According to the available theory, the strongest influencing factors of consumer behaviour include individual factors such as consumer intention, lifestyle and external factors such as the economic environment (purchasing power). The effectiveness of Internet advertising can be determined by examining the behavioural patterns of consumers that are evoked by the ad, leading to ultimate purchases and hopefully repeat purchases. Through a survey conducted among consumers in the townships of Soweto, the relationship between internet advertising and the stages of consumer behaviour was explored from previous research but placed in the context of the South African consumer perspective. The current study is therefore relevant to improve the available theory.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research paradigm

The study followed the positivism paradigm, which is based on the premise that there is only one tangible reality (Park, Konge & Artino, 2020) and only objective, observable facts can serve as the basis of science (Jansen, 2016). The positivist paradigm sees logic, mathematics, and empirical observation as vehicles for valid knowledge. Ryan and Gemma (2018) proclaim that positivism advocates the use of scientific methods to study human behaviour and promotes society. This statement was in line with the aim of the current research study, which examined human behaviour in the form of consumer behaviour using scientific methods such as hypothesis formation, observation and questions. The present study used the above scientific methods to examine and factually evaluate the underlying laws of nature that shape society (Soweto Community).

While positivism is criticised for its overreliance on experience as a valid source of knowledge and lack of insight into in-depth issues, the researcher believes that objectivity which is the epistemological position associated with positivism; the ability to codify the results in a set of laws and predictions; and the vigorous process of setting and testing the hypotheses, limited the concerns raised by anti-positivists.

Research design/approach

The design chosen for this study was quantitative because of its naturistic process, its ability to measure real-world situations, and its ability to allow generalization and replication of the study's findings. The key terms of the study were operationalized to make them measurable. In addition, the quantitative approach was chosen because of its rapid and affordable aspect of data collection and typically large sample size.

The study engaged in descriptive research. This approach (descriptive), which helped define respondent characteristics through the use of closed-ended surveys to draw specific inferences about the responses and statistical capabilities of the descriptive research study, helped track data patterns and measure data trends. Measurable data for quantitative analysis were obtained from a Soweto population sample. In addition, the descriptive nature of the study supported the validation of existing conditions and theories based on the researcher's objective observations.

Using existing theories of Internet advertising and consumer behaviour, deductive arguments were used to formulate hypotheses to identify and assess the factors, trends, and variables related to digital media advertising that influence consumer purchasing behaviour. Consistent with the axiology of the positivism paradigm, the researcher maintained objectivity, did not interact with study respondents to minimize bias, and the researcher's perspective on the study did not influence the results, instead the researcher analysed the data collected in a structured manner and provided the results numerically whenever possible and used the results to prove or disprove the formulated hypotheses.

5. POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Population

The target population for the study was Soweto, which is South Africa's largest township. While most South African townships are characterised by underdevelopment as shaped by apartheid (Potgieter *et. al*, 2019), Soweto possesses the necessary infrastructure to enable the conclusion of the study. Soweto is also considered as a lucrative market.

The limitation is that the size of the population is unknown as only respondents who are active on digital media were targeted for the study.

Sampling

A probability sampling approach was utilised by carrying out a survey using databases. Using stratified random sampling, a sample of at least 50 women and men between 23 and 60 years of age from all social strata of Soweto was selected.

The sampling frame for the study comprised just those Soweto residents who meet all the following criteria:

- Everyone in the target demographic (Soweto and surroundings).
- Exclude everyone who isn't part of the target group (23-60)
- Owns a smartphone, laptop or any other internet-connected device.
- Ability to read (literacy).
- Has internet access (time of access not important)
- Willing to take part in a survey without expecting reimbursement.

6. DATA COLLECTION

In order to gather first-hand data, a cross-sectional research survey (questionnaire) focusing on the impact of advertisement on consumers buying behaviour was administered to the target population based on the reviewed literature applicable to the study. This data collection method was chosen because of its rapidness, affordability, and ease of accessibility of the sample population.

To recruit the respondents, the researcher contacted work colleagues that reside in Soweto, WhatsApp contacts who reside in Soweto, and contacts who know someone who meets the above sample frame were also contacted for referral purposes. Furthermore, two (2) Soweto Malls (Jabulani Mall and Maponya Mall) were respectively visited by the researcher, to further distribute the questionnaire.

The questionnaire comprised of closed questions for descriptive statistics such as demographics, a 5 point Likert scale of 1 - 5 where 1 showed high level of disagreement and 5 shows high level of agreement (respondents were instructed to mark the most suitable

answer). A copy of the questionnaire (research instrument) is attached herein as **Annexure A**.

The survey was also aligned with the quantitative research design chosen by the researcher. The survey's ability to provide statistical, mathematical, and computational techniques and objectivity in determining the relationship between advertising and consumer behaviour in Soweto was the most important factor in its selection as a research tool.

While accessing databases with Soweto residents was easy, the overall data collection process was difficult due to the following reasons:

- Some of the databases were not up-to-date e.g. some of the people listed as residing in Soweto had moved out of Soweto for the betterment of their livelihoods. One respondent replied “I no longer live in Soweto; I now live in the *burbs* (suburbs)”. Respondents who no longer resided in Soweto had to be removed as they were not part of the sample frame.
- The increase in cybercrime and fraud led to reluctance. This was reflected in the fact that some respondents initially did not want to open the Google Forms link even though they were given ethical clearance. Additionally, while the researcher brought her own devices for convenience during mall visits, respondents were reluctant to use the provided devices as some thought their information was being stolen to commit crimes. Most respondents preferred to leave their contact numbers and completed the questionnaire after completing their mini due diligence about the researcher.
- The shrinking economy: given the current economic conditions, some respondents were reluctant to use their data to participate in the study. As compensation, the researcher offered to purchase data for respondents, as such, most of the responses came at the last minute after data transfer and several reminders

During the conception, the researcher envisaged a hand-filled questionnaire, but this was not implemented. Most completed questionnaires were completed online. The link to the questionnaire and the ethical clearance documents were distributed via WhatsApp and respondents filled them out at their convenience.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH RESULTS

Data was analysed using Datatab and SPSS statistical software. Both descriptive (mean, median, and mode calculations, generation of frequency tables) and inferential (hypothesis testing and regression and correlation analysis) techniques were used to analyse the data, describe the characteristics of the sample, draw inferences, and make generalizations about larger populations.

Descriptive analysis

Kaur, Stoltzfus and Yellapu (2018) consider descriptive statistics as an important part of initial data analysis because they lay the groundwork for comparing variables using inferential statistical tests.

In the research conducted, the following table describes both the individual quantitative observations and the overall process of extracting insights from the studied relationship between the respondents' employment status and the effect of online advertising on their consumer awareness, interest, desire and purchasing levels.

Table 2: Descriptive analysis

		Employment status					
		Full time	Part time	Self-employed	Internship	Apprenticeship	Unemployed
	Frequency	32	7	8	1	1	2
Online/internet advertising positively affects the Awareness consumer behavioural stages	Mean	4	3.86	3.88	3	4	4
	Std. Deviation	0.88	0.69	0.83	NaN	NaN	1.41
	Minimum	1	3	3	3	4	3
	Maximum	5	5	5	3	4	5
Online/internet advertising positively affects the Interest consumer behavioural stage	Mean	3.34	3.43	3.38	4	3	3.5

		Employment status					
		Full time	Part time	Self-employed	Internship	Apprenticeship	Unemployed
	Frequency	32	7	8	1	1	2
	Std. Deviation	0.94	0.98	0.74	NaN	NaN	0.71
	Minimum	1	2	2	4	3	3
	Maximum	5	5	4	4	3	4
Online/internet advertising positively affects the Desire consumer behavioural stage	Mean	3.5	2.86	3.63	4	3	4.5
	Std. Deviation	0.92	0.9	1.06	NaN	NaN	0.71
	Minimum	1	1	2	4	3	4
	Maximum	5	4	5	4	3	5
Online/internet advertising positively affects the Purchase consumer behavioural stage.	Mean	3.69	3.43	3.38	5	4	4.5
	Std. Deviation	0.93	0.98	0.74	NaN	NaN	0.71
	Minimum	1	2	2	5	4	4
	Maximum	5	5	4	5	4	5

Inferential analysis

Inferential statistics uses information from a sample with a goal of drawing conclusions from a sample and generalizing them to a population.

In this current study, to draw the conclusions for generalization purposes, a two-factor repeated measures ANOVA was performed as follows:

Table 3: Inferential analysis

	Sum of squares	df	Mean Squares	F	p
Online/internet advertising positively affects the <i>Awareness</i> and <i>Interest</i> consumer behavioural stages	8.25	1	8.25	15.01	<.001

	Sum of squares	df	Mean Squares	F	p
Employment status	0.17	5	0.03	0.03	.999
A x B	1.54	5	0.31	0.56	.73
Between	46.49	50	0.93		
Within the sample	46.32	45	1.03		
Residuum	24.72	45	0.55		
Within	34.5	51	0.68		
Total	80.99	101	0.8		

As seen above, a two-factor repeated measures analysis of variance was performed to test whether there was:

- a significant difference between the groups of the first factor "Online/internet advertising positively affects the *Awareness* and *Interest* consumer behavioural stages" with respect to the dependent variable.
- a significant difference between the groups of the second factor "Employment status" in relation to the dependent variable.
- there is an interaction between the two factors "Online/internet advertising positively affects the *Awareness* and *Interest* consumer behavioural stages" and "Employment status" in relation to the dependent variable.

The two-factor analysis of variance with repeated measures showed that there is

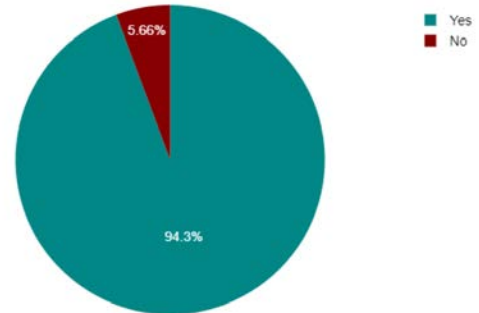
- no significant difference between the groups of the first factor "Online/internet advertising positively affects the *Awareness* and *Interest* consumer behavioural stages" in relation to the dependent variable, $p=.999$,
- no significant difference between the groups of the first factor Employment status in relation to the dependent variable, $p=.999$,
- no interaction between the two variables Employment status and "Online/internet advertising positively affects the *Awareness* and *Interest* consumer behavioural stages" in relation to the dependent variable, $p=.73$.

Respondents Profile

Table 4: Educational Qualifications

Highest Educational Qualification	Frequency
Bachelor	22
Diploma	15
Masters and above	12
Grade twelve and below	5
Total	54
Invalid	0
Total	54

Figure 3: Do you reside in Soweto and surroundings?

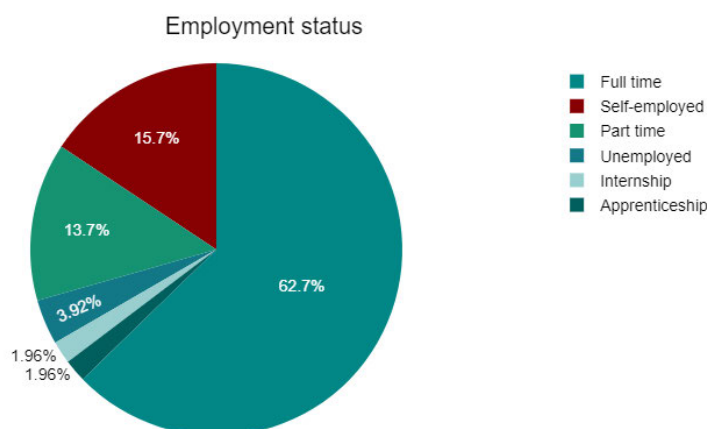


54 respondents were surveyed to draw conclusions from the study. Of the 54 respondents, 40.7% have a bachelor's degree, 27.8% have a diploma, 22.2% have a master's degree or above, and only 9.3% have a National Senior Certificate or below. This testifies that the interviewed respondents meet the literacy requirement of the sampling frame.

From the 54 respondents, 3 (5.66%) indicated that they were not residing in Soweto and were therefore eliminated from the analysis as they do not meet the requirements of the sample frame. Thus, only 51 respondents were considered for the analysis purposes.

Of the 51 respondents, only 15 were found from the two (2) Soweto Malls (Jabulani Mall and Maponya Mall) visited by the researcher.

Figure 4: Respondents' Employment Status

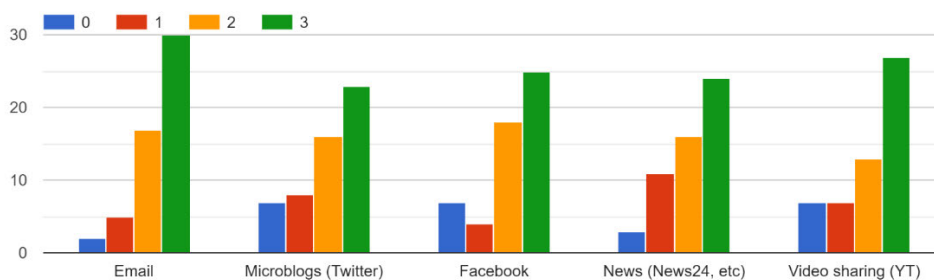


Of the 51 respondents that met the sampling frame criteria, only about 4% were unemployed. With the assumption that the economy participants (employed, self-employed, apprentices, interns) have buying power, the relationship between the buying power (one of the identified township factors) and consumer purchasing behaviour, could be measured.

Digital marketing channels

Figure 5: Preferred digital channels

Which of the digital marketing channels listed below do you use? (Rating scale: 0 - not at all; 1 - at least; 2 - sometimes; 3 - mostly)



The respondents mostly use email (30), YouTube (27), Facebook (25), Online news sites (24) and Twitter (23) to consume digital media. To positively influence the purchasing behaviours, online adverts should be adopted to the above channels.

Online Advertising Impact Assessment

Figure 6: Positive affects of online advertising on consumer behavioural stages

Online/internet advertising positively affects the following consumer behavioural stages (please select the most appropriate box in each row). Rating scale: (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5)

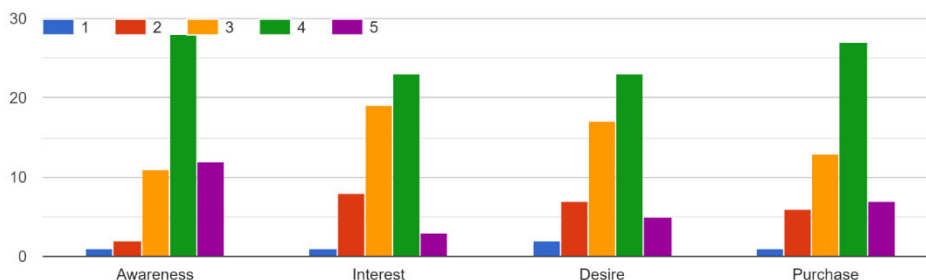


Figure 7: Preferred advertisement types

The advertisement is attention grabbing, as a result it influences me to buy the product (please select the most appropriate answer). Rating scale: ... (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5)

50 responses

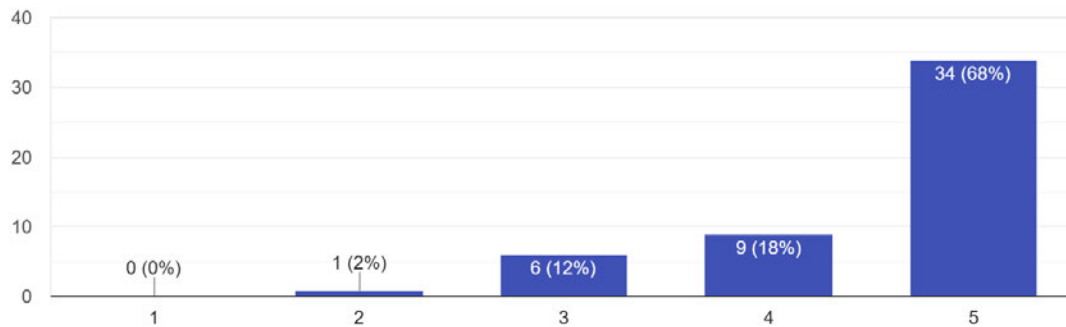
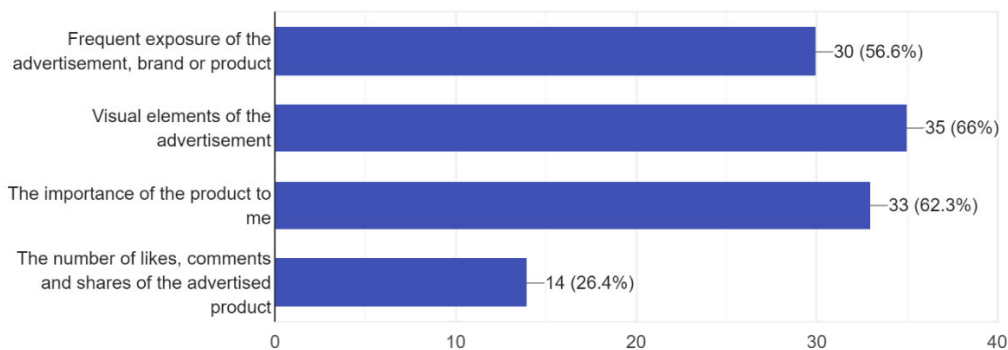


Figure 8: Characteristics of attention grabbing online adverts

Which of the following is true about online adverts that grab your attention?

53 responses



From the above descriptive analysis relating to online advertising impact assessment, the following can be deduced:

- Awareness and Purchase are the two behavioural stages that scored high on being positively affected by online advertisement with respondents agreeing that they score 28 and 27, respectively.
- 68% of the respondents strongly agreed that attention grabbing adverts influenced them to buy the product.
- Visual elements and the importance of the product were also rated as the endearing characteristics of adverts that grab the respondent's attention online with a 66% and 62.3% scoring, respectively.

Validity and reliability

The reliability of this study was measured using the Fleiss Kappa Calculator, which is used for interrater reliability and Cronbach's Alpha, which is a measure of internal consistency, that determines how closely related a set of items are as a group, as depicted below:

Table 5: Cronbach's Alpha reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.19	13

Table 6: Fleiss Kappa calculator

Fleiss Kappa	Standard Error	lower 95% CI	upper 95% CI	p
0.02	0.01	0	0.04	.036

From the above analysis, it can be deduced that the study met its objectives. While the developed hypotheses to identify and assess the factors, trends and variables related to advertising in digital media that influence consumer buying behaviours can be confirmed, generalisation of the study in other townships might not be a true reflection as the sample is location-specific and driven by specific factors.

8. KEY FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

A majority (59%) of respondents who met the sampling frame criteria were millennials between the ages of 26 and 41. The respondents believed that digital advertising enhances their shopping experience by providing convenience, efficiency (time), reliable information and an opportunity to better connect with other consumers through product reviews. Thus, digital advertising fulfilled their perceived value and brought them satisfaction. The above finding is consistent with Kuhns and Saksena (2016) claim that millennials value convenience and experiential attributes more.

Noting that the respondents are digicons who spent more than three hours a day on email, YouTube, Facebook, online news sites and Twitter; in order to enhance the effectiveness of digital advertising (stimuli) in influencing their purchase decisions, attention-grabbing and visually appealing ads should be tailored to the above channels, especially to millennials,

as they use these channels not only for information purposes but also for validation and social belonging (Kuhns & Saksena, 2016).

Regarding the existence of a relationship between the psychographic variables (educational level, lifestyle, and purchasing power) and consumer purchasing behaviour; this study confirmed that relationship, since most of the respondents who spent more than three hours online matched the above profile making them susceptible to digital marketing and the resulting impact on their spending patterns.

9. CONTRIBUTION, ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Anticipated Contribution

The most important contribution of this study will be to provide a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour in South African townships as influenced by online advertising and other psychological and individual factors such as lifestyle. This will be helpful for marketers to understand what triggers a township consumer's intention to purchase.

While studies have been conducted into the effect of advertising on consumer behaviour, they mainly focused on the marketer's perspective. Very little research has been done to understand digital marketing from the customers' perspective and in that research, township consumers have not been considered while the township market continues to grow and offers marketers an opportunity to expand their customer base.

This study will, therefore, also assist in determining which element in digital advertising is most effective and which has comparatively lower impact in the township market. This will further assist marketers to design a promotional mix and implement e-marketing strategies to improve consumer's behaviour.

Ethical Considerations

The data gathered in this study was used solely to understand the effect of online advertising on consumers' buying behaviour in Soweto. Furthermore, the researcher was solely responsible for conducting the whole research process in line with all the policies and IIE Ethical clearance requirements.

The confidentiality of the respondents was maintained and their consent to participate in the study was obtained in compliance with the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information Act, Act No. 4 of 2013. Furthermore, a copy of the IIE (007) consent form is attached herein as **Annexure B**.

The voluntary participation of the respondents and their freedom to withdraw anytime from the study were explained in the *blurb for self-administered questionnaire* attached herein as **Annexure C**.

Risks involved (if any) were outlined to ensure that their consent was obtained freely without coercion.

Limitations

The study has limitations in terms of geographic location and sample size and therefore limits widespread generalization.

These limitations were applied as follows:

- Township dwellers (only residents of Soweto townships will be allowed to partake in the study)
- Active digital media users (only respondents who have access to digital media such as internet and social media accounts will be allowed to participate in the study)
- Literacy (the chosen data collection method requires literate respondents as there will be no assistance provided by the researcher during the completion of the survey).

Time was also a major limitation. Furthermore, the commitment of respondents to carefully read and give their genuine responses to the questionnaires seriously limited the outcome

of the research. The researcher overcame the above-stated limitations through her strong commitment, devoting time, effort and simplifying the questionnaire.

Exclusions

The following exclusions were applied to the study:

- participants that are not active internet users
- Illiterate
- Suburban and urban dwellers

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Consistent with the formulated hypothesis that internet advertising has a significant impact on the stages of awareness, interest, and desire of consumer behaviour; the results indicated that digital marketing is beneficial and influences the above stages of consumer behaviour, with awareness and action (purchase) topping the chart.

The findings also revealed a significant positive relationship between the subjective norms (i.e. lifestyle, educational level and purchasing power) and the primary interest/dependent variable (i.e. consumer behaviour). However, it should be noted that digital advertising alone cannot stimulate action (purchase), marketers must consider other socio-economic factors such as the consumer purchasing power and develop means to entice them through savings strategies such as sale, couponing and combos.

This research was limited in scope as it covered a fraction of the Soweto population, implying that the results may not necessarily represent the wider population. In addition to the geographic location constraint, widespread generalisation of the study in other South African townships could be inaccurate due to differences in psychographic and economic factors.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Research questionnaire

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is developed to identify the impact of electronic media advertising on consumer behaviour in South African Townships, with specific reference to Soweto. Your responses will remain safe, anonymous and will be used only for the research purposes. Thank you for your participation.

***Required**

Part I: Respondents Profile

(For the first question, please indicate your age in years and thereafter tick the appropriate box)

1. Age (Years) *

2. Highest Educational Qualification

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Grade twelve and below
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Bachelor
- ☐ Masters and above

3. Employment status

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Fulltime
- ☐ Part time
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Other: _____

4. Do you reside in Soweto and surrounding areas? (If yes, please go on and complete other questions. If no, please stop your answers here. Thank you for your participation)

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5. Do you have internet access via your cellular phone, laptop or any other device? (If yes, please go on and complete other questions. If no, please stop your answers here. Thank you for your participation)

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Part II: General Knowledge of Consumers

6. Which of the digital marketing channels listed below do you use? (Rating scale: 0 - not at all; 1 - at least; 2 - sometimes; 3 - * mostly)

Tick all that apply.

	0	1	2	3
Email	☐	☐	☐	☐
Microblogs (Twitter)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Facebook	☐	☐	☐	☐
News (News24, etc)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Video sharing (YT)	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. How much time do you spend using the internet (per day)?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Up to one hour a day
☐ 1 - 3 hours a day
☐ Over three hours a day

8. Where do you search for information before making a purchase?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Traditional media (TV, radio, newspaper)
☐ Internet (social media, blogs, online reviews)

9. Compared to traditional media, what are the advantages of digital advertising media? (please mark all true answers., if you * consider there is more than one)

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ More information and easier access
- ☐ Information reliability (due to information provided
- ☐ by other users and not only brands) Time saving
- ☐ can be informed without being interrupted while doing other activities (as in TV advertising)
- ☐ Better engagement with other users and brands

Part III: Online Advertising Impact Assessment

10. The advertisement is attention grabbing, as a result it influences me to buy the product (please select the most appropriate answer). Rating scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5) *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly agree

11. Online/internet advertising positively affects the following consumer behavioural stages (please select the most * appropriate box in each row). Rating scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5)

Tick all that apply.

	1	2	3	4	5
Awareness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interest	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Desire	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Purchase	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Which of the following is true about online adverts that grab your attention?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Frequent exposure of the advertisement, brand or product
- ☐ Visual elements of the advertisement
- ☐ The importance of the product to me
- ☐ The number of likes, comments and shares of the advertised product

Part IV: Consumer Buying Behaviour Assessment

13. Tick the most appropriate statement for each row. Rating scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5)

Tick all that apply.

	1	2	3	4	5
There is a positive relationship between advertising and consumer buying behavior	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I purchase products and brands that reflect my lifestyle and boost my confidence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I prefer sound recorded adverts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I consider product reviews before purchasing a product advertised online	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Google Forms



ANNEXURE E (b) – RESEARCH CONSENT FORM (IIE007)

The research consent form is to be completed by applicants who are conducting research for the purpose of studying towards a degree at either The IIE or another higher education institution. This form is to be completed by candidates who either already obtained ethics clearance from the registered institution or requires a gatekeeper's letter from The IIE for ethical clearance approval to consent on the use of The IIE students, staff sites or artefacts for the specific research project. The IIE subscribes to the Belmont Report as guideline for ethical research practice. The Belmont report highlights the following three principles *respect for persons*, *beneficence*, and *justice* as critical when considering ethical clearance or consent. Carefully consider your request from an ethics perspective before you submit. The IIE's Ethics Committee has the right to withhold any research that is not in alignment with the institutional policies and best practices of ethical research.

1. Candidates that are not affiliated to The IIE.

Applicants are required to submit the following documentation:

- Annexure E (b) – Research Consent Form (IIE007)
- Proposal of the study that served at the registered institutions ethics committee.
- Data collection instrument (for example: questionnaire, or interview Schedule).
- Copy of the consent form to be shared with participants.
- The ethics clearance certificate from the institution where you are registered for your studies. Should the institutions ethics committee require a gatekeepers letter from The IIE as part of the ethics application at the registered institution it should be noted as such on the below application.

Submit all documents to research@iie.ac.za

2. Candidates affiliated to The IIE.

Applicants are required to submit the following documentation:

- Annexure E (b) – Research Consent Form (IIE007)
- Proposal of the study that served at the registered institutions ethics committee.
- Data collection instrument (for example: questionnaire, or interview Schedule).
- Copy of the consent form to be shared with participants.
- The ethics clearance certificate from the institution where you are registered for your studies. Should the institutions ethics committee require a gatekeepers letter from The IIE as part of the ethics application at the registered institution it should be noted as such on the below application.

if you are a staff member of The IIE, kindly share your documentation with the respective brand research manager.

The purpose of this request for research consent is to obtain:	
Gatekeeper's Letter	

Research Consent	X
------------------	---

About the researcher															
Title	Prof		Dr		Ms	X	Mrs		Mr						
First name(s)			Nolufefe												
Last name			Nyamezele												
Student number			[REDACTED]												
SA ID number			8	4	1	1	1	7	0	4	5	0	0	8	5
Passport number (if applicable)															
Home address							Postal address								
7727 Camelthorn Street Roodekop Extension 11, Germiston							Tick if same as home address						✓		
							Click or tap here to enter text.								
Code:			1401				Code:								
Telephone number			N/A				Cell phone number			[REDACTED]					
Email			[REDACTED]												

About the researcher's affiliations													
Institutional affiliation													
Institution enrolled at			IIE Vega										
Qualification name			Bachelor of Arts Honours										
Discipline of study			Strategic Brand Communication Communicat										
About the supervisor or promoter													
Lead or Main Supervisor/ Promoter													
Title	Prof		Dr	X	Ms		Mrs		Mr				
First and last names			Cerneels Coetzee										
Email address			[REDACTED]										
Co-supervisor / promoter													
Title	Prof		Dr		Ms		Mrs		Mr				
First and last names													
Email address													

About the methodology					
Indicate by ticking the appropriate block and answering the relevant sections.					
Questionnaire		Interviews		Observations	
Existing		Structured		Number of observations	
Own	X	Semi-structured		Note what will be observed	
Open-ended		Number of interviews			
Number of respondents		Focus group or workshop			
Briefly identify, describe, or explain the questionnaire. The questionnaire is closed-ended		Participants per focus group			
		Number of focus groups			
		Briefly expand on the interview, workshop, or focus group questions.			
List of the student or staff groups, sites or artefacts under study		N/A			
Average time participants or respondents will be involved in research activities		10-15 minutes			

About the ethics considerations for the research						
Aspects considered for ethics consideration.	Informed consent	X	Anonymity	X	Confidentiality	X
	Committed to give feedback on the study		Voluntary participation	X	Vulnerable group involved	
	Elaborate on vulnerable groups		Other (specify):			
Additional Documentation to be submitted for Consent to be considered.	Research Proposal					
	Ethics clearance certificate or letter from institution who approved the research/ study or request for a gatekeeper's letter to be supplied for ethical clearance process by registered institution.					X
	Data collection Instrument(s): interview schedule or questionnaire					X
	Participant or respondent consent form that includes information sheet for participants or respondents					
	Audio-visual consent form (if applicable):					
Proposed submission date of the Ethics Clearance Certificate to The IIE.	Completion of the below fields is only required for candidates who requires a gatekeeper's letter as part of the institutional research ethics application process.					

Conditions for conducting research on or about students, staff, sites or artefacts of The Independent Institute of Education

1. A copy of the final paper must be submitted electronically to The IIE's Dean for Research and Postgraduate Studies at research@iie.ac.za as well as the Brand Research Manager no later than 30 days post finalisation.
2. The researcher(s) is not permitted to either refer to The IIE or any of its educational brands or to the name, logo, brand or any other identifiers of The IIE or any of its educational brands in any way, including, but not limited to, in questionnaires, surveys, interviews, proposal or research reports/articles. The IIE or educational brand in question must be referred to in a generic manner, for example, 'A private higher education institution/provider'.
3. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in the sample if the study is not anonymous.
4. If the Learning Management System (LMS) of The IIE is used, the researcher(s) is not permitted to refer to it by name. Learn needs to be referred to in a generic manner, for example "the Learning Management System of a private higher education institution/provider."
5. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the relevant person(s) at the brand or The IIE that would be involved in the study.
6. Research must be conducted in such a way that the normal programme and operations of the site/offices is not interrupted.
7. The campus head of a site must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher(s) may carry out the research at the site.
8. The researcher(s) may only use this data for these research purposes and in no other way.
9. Should the researcher(s) wish to publish this research or in any way make the results public, for example by publishing the results on a social media platform, this IIE's Ethics Committee will need to approve a request to this end first.
10. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
11. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research and informed consent from the participants or respondents was obtained, and, even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published.
12. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising their own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
13. If any of The IIE reports or policies are used as part of the research, all identifying information needs to be removed.
14. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled or advised based on this.
15. The reference number of the permission letter, if permission is granted, must appear, in one format or another, on all research documentation distributed amongst IIE staff or students.

Declaration by the researcher (student)

1. I declare that all statements made by myself in this application are true and accurate; and
2. I accept the conditions associated with the granting of approval to conduct research and undertake to abide by them.

20 June 2022

Signature of the researcher (student)	Date
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Declaration by the supervisor/promoter	
I declare that	
1. the above student is enrolled at the institution to which the undersigned is attached; 2. and that the research proposal and or study has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the institution at which the student is registered; or request a gatekeepers letter as part of the institution's Research Ethics Clearance application process. 3. and that the questionnaires/structured interviews/tests meet the criteria of: • Educational accountability; • Proper research design; • Sensitivity towards participants; • Correct content and terminology; • Acceptable grammar; and • Absence of non-essential/superfluous items.	
	
Signature of the supervisor/promoter	Date

Annexure C: Blurb for self-administered questionnaire

To whom it may concern,

I, **Nolufefe Nyamezele**, am a student at IIE-Vega (a brand of the Independent Institute of Education). I am currently conducting research for my **Bachelor of Arts Honours in Strategic Brand Communication** in which I am investigating the ***impact of online advertisement on consumer behaviour in Soweto***.

- Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;
- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.
- Your participation will be anonymous.

The study has been approved by my supervisor and the IIE-campus ethics committee. I can be contacted at: [REDACTED] if you have any questions or concerns.

I hereby acknowledge and give my full consent to the participation to this study as stipulated above. (Single choice).



YES



Date: 18/6/2022

Student name: Nolufefe Nyamezele Student number [REDACTED] Campus: Vega School (online)

Re: Approval of RESE8419/RMET8429 Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS/PGDip ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns, and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

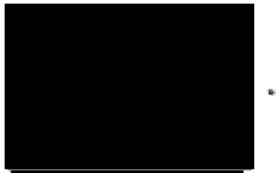
Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.

5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

Supervisor name: Dr Cerneels Coetzee



Signature:

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC) name: Dr Tish Taylor



Signature:

Concept Document

<u>Project details</u>		
Your Name: Nolufefe N. Nyamezele	Student Number: [REDACTED]	
Supervisor: Cerneels Coetzee	Date: 7 April 2022	Version: 4

<u>Proposed Title</u>	
Title	The impact of electronic advertising media on consumer behaviour in South African Townships, with reference to Soweto.

<u>Research details</u>	
Introduction	Media advertising has become one of the communication channels most used by companies and marketers to persuade customers to purchase products and services. There are different types and means of advertising in South Africa, including television (TV), radio, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet. With the advent of 4IR and the increased internet usage which has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the competition among advertising managers to become market leaders, achieve the highest market share and grab consumers' attention has shifted from the traditional media to the digital space. Digital interactive medium is a way of communicating with the target audience (consumer) in which they can participate actively and instantly (Koekemoer, 2014). Basile (2019) suggests that online advertising promotes ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor through interactive media. For the purposes of this study, the term 'internet' encompasses inter alia digital channels, namely, internet of things (IoT), Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, email, and WhatsApp.
Problem statement	The extent to which electronic advertising media influences consumer purchasing behavior in South African townships is not clear.
Purpose statement	The purpose of this study is to observe, determine and analyse the impact of electronic/digital advertising in South African townships to determine its influence on purchasing decisions.
Research question/s	What is the impact of internet advertising on the purchase decision of consumers' behaviour in South African townships?
Hypotheses/ Objectives	H1: Internet advertisements have a significant influence on awareness, interest, and desire stages of consumer behaviour. H2: There is a relationship between township factors such as level of education, lifestyle, and buying power and consumer purchase behaviour. .

Research rationale	This study will identify the themes, categories and variables related to advertising in digital media that impact purchases in Soweto to assist marketers and prospective businesses with interest in investing and or operating their businesses in the lucrative township economy.
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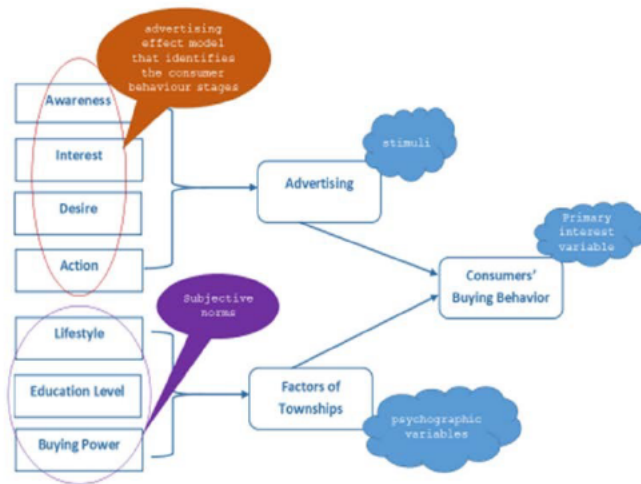
Literature overview

Key theories	The following key theories will be considered: • Theory of reasoned action (TRA) • Hierarchy of effects				
	• Consumer behavior (CB)				
Seminal authors/sources	Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (TRA); Elias St. Elmo Lewis (AIDA); Kevin Keller (CB); Lavidge and Steiner (hierarchy of effects). Sources: Journals, Books, Blogs, etc.				
Literature review themes	<u>Theme 1</u> Advertising	<u>Theme 2</u> Consumer Behavioural Stages	<u>Theme 3</u> Digital/ Internet advertising	<u>Theme 4</u> Impact of online advertising on purchases	<u>Theme 5</u>
Sources	Journal of Business and Retail Management Research; Rhodes Journalism Review; African Journal of Hospitality; First Steps in Research, Koekemoer, 2014; Ornico, 2021; BusinessTech, 2020:2021; Aksu et al., 2018, Keller & Swaminathan, 2020; Potgieter, Berman & Verity, 2019				
Key concepts	internet advertising, social networks, online digital media, the impact of online advertising on purchases and consumer behaviour.				

Provisional Research Approach

Paradigm	<u>Paradigm</u>	<u>Epistemology</u>	<u>Ontology</u>	<u>Axiology</u>
	Positivism	Deductive reasoning, Observable and measurable facts	Real, external experiments	Objectivity: the researcher will be detached from the subject of study

Figure 1 below depicts the Conceptual Research Model to be used



Approach/ design	The design chosen for this study is quantitative due to its naturistic process, ability to measures real life situations and its ability to allow for generalization and replication of the findings in the study. The key concepts of the study will be operationalised so that they can be measured. Additionally, the quantitative approach has been chosen for its rapid and affordable data gathering aspect and typically large sample size.
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<u>Provisional Research Plan</u>	
Population	The target population for the study is Soweto, which is South Africa's largest township.
Sampling	A probability sampling approach will be utilised by carrying out a survey using databases. Using stratified sampling, a sample of at least 50 women and men between 23 and 60 years of age from all social strata of Soweto will be selected.
Data collection method(s)	A questionnaire (survey) focusing on the impact of advertisement on consumers buying behaviour will be administered to the target population based on the reviewed literature applicable to the study. The survey will take the form of closed questions (comprising dichotomous, multiple choice and ranking questions and a five-point Likert scale starting from 1-Strongly agree to 5-Strongly disagree), will be administered via a Google Forms (digital platform) link which can also be shared via WhatsApp. Electronic copies of the survey will be sent to individual email addresses (email surveys) of the selected sample. This will allow respondents to complete the questionnaire at their convenience. Responses provided via the Google Forms link will be automatically updated on Google Drive while manually or hand completed questionnaire can be directly submitted to the researcher via email.
Data analysis method(s)	Data will be analyzed in a manner that maintains integrity and trustworthiness of the results while taking into account observations, consistent regularities and recurring patterns. The analysis will determine the measurement variables to identify the factors of advertising in digital media that influence consumers' purchase decisions. To organize and summarise response frequencies, frequency tables will be drawn up, and inferential statistics will be used when analyzing and comparing groups.

Ethical considerations and limitations

Ethics	The ethical concerns in research focus on how to treat people when conducting research and the appropriateness of activities the participants will be asked to complete. Ethical clearance will be obtained in the form of an ethics clearance letter from the IIE. In line with the IIE Ethical clearance requirements, the confidentiality of the respondents will be maintained. Additionally, no participant will be coerced into participating in the study, participation will be on a voluntary basis. The risks involved will also be outlined to ensure that their consent is obtained freely without coercion. The respondents will also be informed of their freedom to withdraw from participating in the study should they feel that they are at risk. Finally, the researcher will comply with the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information Act, Act No. 4 of 2013.
Limitations	The study will only focus on people who are active in digital media, using email survey as an instrument to collect data. This requires respondents with access to digital media vehicles such as internet of things (IoT), Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, email, and WhatsApp. Furthermore, the chosen data collection method requires literate respondents as there will be no assistance provided by the researcher during the completion of the survey. Thus, the study will rule out respondents that are not active internet users and those who are illiterate.

Reference List

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- Amoako, G.K., Okpattah, B.K. and Arthur, E. 2019. The impact of social media marketing on brand equity- A perspective of the telecommunication industry in Ghana. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research*, 13(03).
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