The Influence of Advertising Image on Customers' Final Online Purchase Decisions: A Survey Study

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Abstract: This paper investigates the images use in Sudani Telecom Company's (STC) advertisements and the degree to which it increases the public's knowledge about the company. The study was performed among a sample (191 persons) of the company's users in Khartoum City and the descriptive-analytical method was employed. Results revealed that there are statistically significant differences in the perceived degree to which the company's use of an image in SNSs advertisements increases the public's knowledge about and interest in the company and its services. It is recommended that National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) certainly updates its laws. It is also necessary for the company (STC) to employ advertising messages on SNSs, with a special focus on increasing content effectiveness. Furthermore, the company should be more open to the public and consider its demographic characteristics. The advertising image should be considered since it can inform the public and influence its purchase decisions and tendencies.

Keywords: Digital Image; Modern Media; Purchase Decision; Customers; Digital Marketing; Communication; Purchase.

1 Introduction

Advertising has observed a significant development over the last two decades, particularly with the advent of social networking sites (SNSs). To illustrate, institutions used to advertise through traditional methods of advertising and were inclined to buy spots on TV and radio, and purchase newspaper space. Other institutions tended to advertise in certain places, namely they positioned billboards in the busiest and most attractive areas and streets. Once SNSs were introduced, however, they received increasingly more attention and interest, inevitably grabbing the attention of organizations and companies, and scholars.

Advertising forms an essential part of our economic and social life as customers. This industry thrived and particularly became more important following the rapid developments of countries and the traffic growth, which in turn sprung from the modern developments and changes in telecommunication technologies. The latter developments contributed to changing the form and nature of the relationships between individuals and different institutions. In this study, we want to realize how publicity photos are used on networking sites and how they influence the final customer's purchase decisions. What adds to the importance of our study is the fact that more attention is being paid to publicity photos that used for institutional advertising. Moreover, new terms such as *image reading,* and *image dominance* have emerged.

Some enterprises are running competitive advertisements to achieve their primary goal-reaching out to the customer and influencing his tendencies and behaviors. In addition, enterprises spend a lot of money on advertising their services to keep customers interested in their services and products [1]. Institutions are nowadays giving attention to publicity photos since they help build up the product's reputation and promote the brand.

1.1 Terminology of the Research

- Influence: Literally, it is defined as the power to affect people or things (e.g., the influence of science on our society). The term is used frequently in social studies as well as other areas and specializations. We use this term to refer to the company's (advertiser) telecommunication actions and activities on SNSs, especially Facebook, that aim to provide information and therefore impact the final customer's decisions.

- Advertising image: It is a two-dimensional (length & width), stationary means reflecting the reality. It is, in another sense, a visual sign by which we perceive the virtual reality, not the reality itself (e.g., printed image, photograph) [2]. An element of telecommunication, the image contains material aspects such as dimension and color [3]. It is used to arouse the customer psychologically and spiritually, leading him to purchase the product or the service.

- Social networking sites (SNSs): As technology

platforms, they facilitate the exchange of ideas through several web applications [4]. They also allow the exchange of content that has been created by individuals and groups. Furthermore, these platforms enable users to rapidly access different contents (e.g., opinions, videos, images). Here we want to investigate how the advertising image published on STC's Facebook page can impact the customer's purchase decisions.

- Purchase decision: It refers to choosing from alternatives that have been already thought of in the decision-making process [5]. Accordingly, we refer to the customer's approach to the service provided by STC and the impact of advertising image on his purchase decisions.
- Final customer: An individual purchasing a commodity or service to satisfy his material or psychological need [6]. Similarly, we refer to individuals dealing with the services provided by STC, Sudan.
- Sudani Telecom Company (STC): This company is the main operator of Sudani Telecom Group in Sudan, making up 64 percent of the group's operating income. Established in 2006, STC provides landline and mobile services (G2, G3, +G4) and possesses wired and wireless infrastructures. For this reason, the company is the only operator in Sudan that provides both services.

1.2 Review of the Literature

Marketing through SNSs influences purchase intention [7]; however, advertising on Facebook has been shown not to significantly influence people's purchase decision-making. Yet the repetition of an advertisement does play an important role in motivating individuals to notice the advertisement [8]. Product quality is another factor influencing customers' purchase decision and their trust in a trademark. Reliability of a trademark in turn has a positive impact on purchase decision, and so does the image of that trademark [9].

SNSs are also found to influence users' intent to purchase Islamic dresses [10]. However, are individuals in different age groups differently influenced by an advertisement? No, found. To illustrate, participants of their study were shown an advertisement and to the same extent preferred a trademark. Two factors were found to determine the preference of individuals: Attractiveness (42.62 percent) and quality (40.16 percent). The advertisement shown to participants was preferred by most of them (< 71.43%).

Nonetheless, SNSs influence customers' purchase decisions differently by purchase stage, such that information given in the post-purchase stage was more influential than that given in the pre-purchase stage. Moreover, users' contents on SNSs also influence the purchase intent. Studies recommend that managers, marketers, and web developers better understand the benefits of SNSs and that companies adopt

SNSs, especially in marketing, and try to improve the effectiveness of their content on SNSs [11].

The studies mentioned above center around the impact of advertising and SNSs on customers' purchase decisions. However, none of them has investigated the impact of advertising image on SNSs. Furthermore, these studies have used different tools (e.g., questionnaires, notes) and were performed in different institutions. Having surveyed the literature, we were able to design the present research in such a way that suits its nature and features.

2 Methodologies

Research Objectives:

The study aims to:
1. Show the utilized image's impact on the final customer's purchase decision;
2. Describe the advertising image's contribution to increasing the public's interaction with the company;
3. Find out how the advertising image affects the public through SNSs;
4. Determine the degree to which the advertising image increases the public's interest in the company and its services.
5. Reveal the extent to which the advertising image influences the public's decision to purchase.

Research Questions:
1. How does the utilized image influence customer's purchase decisions?
2. To what extent does the advertising image increase the public's interaction with the company?
3. Has the advertising image influenced the public's purchase decision?
4. How does the advertising image help increase the public's interest in the company and its services?
5. Has the advertising image helped the public to make their purchase decision?

Research Hypotheses:
- **First hypothesis:** There are statistically significant differences between people who notice an advertising image on SNSs and the degree to which they are influenced by the advertisement.
- **Second hypothesis:** There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between the repetition of an advertising image and the degree to which the public perceives and is influenced by the advertisement's message.

Research Importance:

The present study is important as it shows how purchase decisions are made on the Internet, how an image influences this decision-making, and how these decision-making influences all the parties involved in the telecommunications market.

Research Limits:

Subject: We investigated the use of advertising images on SNSs and how they influence the final customer's purchase decisions.

Timing: From May (2020) to March (2021).

Place: The study was performed in Khartoum State (comprising Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Omdurman) and among the users of Sudani Telecom Company (STC).

Methodology: This study was a descriptive, analytical, and quantitative survey where facts and information were collected and analyzed, and then results were yielded and generalized [12]. The company users were surveyed about the company's a telecommunication and advertising form.

First: Advertising Image on SNSs

The image conveys different collective values and meanings, but also sometimes concerns only one individual, where it has specific meaning and value for him alone. Furthermore, image is a common language, which can be known across the world and even by the illiterate; it is the only human output bringing together people [13]. Individual's exchange and similarly react to an image. Image concerns not only sight but also the insight, where it stimulates feelings and emotions. Therefore, institutions should produce creative output and be concerned with visual culture.

1. Advertising image considering technological revolution:

As a result of the information revolution, and especially through media, the digital image has become commonplace in human life. Therefore, some wonder how this abundance contributes to understanding events, how the rapid distribution of images influences people's interaction with events, and how an image can give rise to profound, fast, and direct reactions [14].

Undoubtedly, interest has been shown in new SNSs advertisements, creating opportunities for institutions to disseminate their brand's message to many people, where the target can be contacted directly through the Internet [15]. Advertisement through communication platforms is no longer a want, but a necessity for institutions, especially those aiming at the youth, to benefit from marketing facilities on SNSs. In other words, institutions must develop a visual identity for themselves to increase their final profit. However, how to make advertisements more reinforcing for the target, how to determine the target, and how to create the advertisement's message so it can attract the customer [16]? For an institution to have a successful advertisement, the advertisement's design is of paramount importance. Designing must be done through professional methods, allowing the institution to move forward.

2. The importance of image in conveying the advertisement's message:

Because of the significant development of visual communication means, the image has become an important element in news reports, leading institutions to be concerned with the primary elements of producing modern digital images. Meanwhile, particular importance has been given to photography. The growing interest in this communication

form has developed the different aspects of advertising image culture in Arab societies [17].

3. Prerequisites for a successful advertising image on SNSs:

Following the changes in telecommunication technologies and the world economy, the photography profession has become unique. To illustrate, institutions need to communicate through images, in such a way that suits their strategies and visions [18]. For an image to have advertising effectiveness, the following factors must be considered:

Psychology of color: The customer's desire for an advertisement can increase and the advertisement can improve if proper colors are used in an image. The reverse is also true. That is, unwanted feelings are triggered by using improper colors in an image. Therefore, colors must be used carefully to mentally influence the customer [19].

Content: A necessary element in a photo, content includes the commodity or product displayed by the character(s) and accompanied by the background [20].

Second: The Importance of Studying Customer's Purchase Behavior regarding Telecommunication Services

The customer makes a purchase decision after going through several mental stages. He is influenced by several factors such as personal characteristics and the environment. A customer's decision (purchase decision) is a process taking place before, during, and after purchasing the product or service. Should institutions be able to consider this process, they will achieve their desired goals and help the customer make the purchase decision.

1. Stages of purchase decision-making:

The purchase process goes through five stages, beginning before the actual purchase and continuing long afterward. Therefore, marketers focus mainly on the whole purchase process rather than the customer's final decision (purchase decision). The purchase process is made of the following stages [21]:

- Need perception
- Data collection (i.e., searching for data)
- Alternative's evaluation
- Purchase decision
- Post-purchase behavior

2. Factors influencing customer's purchase decision

Environmental developments led most institutions to study and influence customers' behavior, as he or she is the marketing process's main target. Furthermore, the customer is now more intelligent than ever before, forcing companies to approach him more and try to access and interact with more age groups. To this end, several factors influencing customer's purchase decisions must be investigated:

2.1. Internal factors influencing purchase decision

As psychological factors, they include motivation as well as need that sufficiently urges the individual to perform certain behaviors to satisfy his desires. The following concepts further elaborate on the elements of psychological factors:

- Motives (motivation): "They are stimulating forces that comprise desires and needs to be satisfied or avoided." In other words, motives are latent and covert forces leading the

individual to display a certain positive or negative behavior. There are two types of motives [22]:

- Inborn vs. acquired
- Physiological vs. psychological

2.2. External factors influencing purchase decision

- Cultural and civil factors: "They include a set of values, customs, traditions, rituals, challenges, historical ambitions and cultural standards that an individual and society (family and other institutions) acquire [23]." Individuals and groups have common values that are based on life experiences.

- Social factors: Interested in this aspect, sociologists have shown the extent to which a customer is influenced by reference groups, especially by opinion leaders whose influence is certain and very obvious. This is because opinion leaders are experts and have information about different products, guiding individuals' purchase behavior [24]. The following entities influence customer's purchase behavior :

- **Reference groups:** Consisting of two or more persons, reference groups have a kind of exchange and interaction aimed at achieving joint goals.
- **Family:** Family is known to be "a social unit consisting of individuals who have biological relations and economic unity. Individuals in a family are from one or more generations [25]." Scientific studies confirm that family, as a whole, plays vital and primary roles in family purchase decisions.
- **Opinion leaders:** Thanks to their skills and other characteristics, opinion leaders can influence others' behaviors and opinions. Examples include influencers recruited by institutions to create content on SNSs. There are an increasing number of celebrities working as advertising influencers. Studies can deeply investigate those individuals' roles in the advertising process.

Third: How an Image on SNSs Influences Customer's Final Decision

To improve their interaction with customers, companies try to develop mutual relationships with them. Therefore, in marketing and advertising. companies made use of SNSs since the latter makes it very easy to access customers. This is especially true as SNSs have become more widespread, more effective, and easier to use.

Successful institutions can disseminate their message, deal with real life, and enhance the customer's life through their communication platforms. This can help the company to perfectly popularize its trademark and make it with a good reputation. Moreover, by developing a large and diverse network and creating suitable content, companies can satisfy customers' needs. Moreover, for an institution to make high sales, it must understand the customer's wishes and expectations, and, by providing information, motivate him or her to purchase its services.

Participants and Tool:

Research population refers to all research items that have common characteristics. The research population comprised all STC users on Facebook and the sample group was selected from STC service centers (27) in Khartoum State (Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Omdurman). However, one selection requirement was for individuals to follow the company's activity in Khartoum on Facebook.

For data collection, we presented a questionnaire to participants, asking them to fill it out. We adopted the mixed method, comprising both the qualitative and quantitative methods, which can best measure an organization's performance on SNSs. More importantly, this method measures the organization's return from connecting to the public. It also helps investigate how the organization's activities can influence the public's knowledge about the services and products provided. This method can be used to amend institutions' policies, operation mechanisms, and the way services are provided.

Tool Reliability and Validity

Reliability: The questionnaire was presented to a group of experts, experienced referees[1] for them to measure its reliability, to ensure the extent to which the questionnaire can measure the desired dimensions [26].

Validity: To test tool validity, the test-retest method with a one-week interval was employed. Twenty participants outside of the sample group were asked to fill out the questionnaire. We then calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all items, which was found to be .89. This percentage confirmed that the questionnaire could be used.

Sampling Method: We used cluster sampling as it allows for selecting a sample that represents various areas of Khartoum State (Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Omdurman). Thus, the primary population was divided into units, one of which was randomly selected. This unit was then divided into secondary units, out of which a new sample was selected. We continued this process until "the final unit" was selected, out of which a random sample was selected. The questionnaire was distributed as follows:

- **Khartoum (15 centers):** Eight centers were selected, and 80 questionnaires were distributed to them, with each center receiving 10 questionnaires.
- **Omdurman:** Six centers received 60 questionnaires.
- **Khartoum North:** Six centers receiving 60 questionnaires, 200 questionnaires were distributed, and 191 ones were returned to be analyzed.

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Distribution Normality Test:

Using the coefficient of skewness, the symmetry of distribution was measured, indicating that the distribution was symmetry (> 0.05) and data were distributed normally.

Demographic Information:

As shown in Table 1, 37.2 percent of participants aged between 20 to 29 years, 32.5 percent aged between 30 to 39 years, 21.5 percent aged between 40 to 49 years, 6.3 percent aged more than 50 years, and 2.6 percent aged less than 20 years. Furthermore, 48.7 percent of participants were males, and the remaining 51.3 percent were females. In terms of education, 53.9 percent had undergraduate education, 44.5 percent had post-graduate education, and the remaining 1.6 percent had secondary education. In terms of marital status, however, 51.8 percent of participants were single, 45 percent were married, 2.1 percent were divorced, and 1 percent were widows.

Statistical Analyses:

Having collected data, we analyzed them using SPSS. We used the following coefficients and tests:

- Frequency and percentage;
- Mean and standard deviation;
- Pearson correlation coefficient (for the linear relationship between two variables);
- Chi-Square Test (to determine the statistical significance level of the relationship between two nominal variables);
- T-Test (to determine the statistical significance level in the differences between the means of two groups for interval or ratio); and
- One-way ANOVA (to determine the statistical significance level in the means of more than two groups for interval or ratio).

Table 2, however, indicates the degree to which using images in the company's advertisements can increase the public's knowledge about the company. Results revealed that 18.3 percent of participants strongly agreed that using images in the company's advertisements on SNSs has raised their knowledge about the company. This is while 57.6 percent agreed (not strongly) on this point, 15.7 percent were neutral, and 8.4 percent disagreed.

Among participants who agreed on this point, there exist statistically significant differences ($\chi2 = 112.267$; < .001), implying that the percentage of participants who agreed on this point was high. There were nevertheless statistically no significant gender differences on this dimension (T-Value insignificant; > 0.05). Nor were there statistically significant differences in terms of educational level (F-Value insignificant; > 0.05).

There were also statistically significant differences between age groups in the degree to which they agreed that using images in SNSs advertisements increased their knowledge about the company (F-Value significant; < 0.01), with groups that aged below 20 and above 50 years showing greater scores. There were, however, statistically no significant differences between participants on this dimension as a function of marital status (F-Value insignificant; > 0.05).

Table 3 indicates that 13.6 percent of participants strongly agreed that using images in SNSs advertisements increased their interest in the company and its services, whereas 60.2 percent agreed (not strongly), 15.2 were neutral, and 11 percent disagreed. The differences between groups on this dimension were significant ($\chi2 = 112.267$, < 0.001), with those who agreed to show greater scores than did others.

Furthermore, findings showed that there were statistically no significant differences between males and females to the extent to which they agreed that image in SNSs advertisements increased their interest in the company and its services (T-Value insignificant; > 0.05). There were also statistically no significant differences between participants with different educational levels on this dimension (F-Value insignificant; > 0.05). Nor there were statistically significant differences between different age groups on this dimension (F-Value; > 0.05). The Table also shows that there were statistically no differences between different marital statuses on this dimension (F-Value insignificant; > 0.05).

In addition, Table 4 shows the extent to which the company's use of images in advertisements can influence customers' purchase decisions. In other words, 15.7 percent of participants strongly agreed that the company's use of images in SNSs advertisements would influence their purchase decisions, whereas 44.5 percent agreed (not strongly), 16.8 percent were neutral, 22.5 disagreed, and 0.5 strongly disagreed.

Moreover, there were statistically significant differences in the degree to which participants agreed that company's use of images in SNSs advertisements influences their purchase decisions ($\chi2 = 96.932$; < 0.001). This shows that participants to a high extent agreed that the company's use of images in SNSs advertisements would influence their purchase decisions. There were, however, statistically no significant differences on this dimension as a function of gender (T-Value insignificant; > 0.05), educational level (F-Value insignificant; > 0.05), age (F-Value insignificant; > 0.05), and marital status (F-Value insignificant; > 0.05).

In addition, Table 5 shows how successful the advertising image is in helping the customer to make purchase decisions. To illustrate, 14.1 percent of participants strongly agreed that the company's use of images in SNSs advertisements has successfully helped them make the final purchase decision regarding the services provided by the company. This is while 47.1 percent agreed on this point, 20.4 were neutral, 16.2 percent disagreed, and 2.1 percent strongly disagreed.

There were statistically significant differences in the perceived degree to which the company's use of an image in SNSs advertisements have helped the public to make the final purchase decision regarding the provided services ($\chi2 = 105.518$; < 0.001). In other words, most participants agreed that the company has been successful in this respect. Nonetheless, there are statistically no significant differences

between males and females on this point (T-Value insignificant; > 0.05), nor there were statistically significant differences on this point as a function of educational level (F-Value insignificant; > 0.05) and marital status (F-Value insignificant; > 0.05). Yet there do exist statistically significant differences between age groups in this respect (F-Value significant; < 0.05), with the age group below 20 years indicating greater scores.

Table 1: Demographic data.

	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	**Less than 20 years**	5	2.6%
	20-29 years	71	37.2%
	30-39 years	62	32.5%
	40-49 years	41	21.5%
	50 years and more	12	6.3%
	Total	191	100%
Gender	**Male**	93	48.7%
	Female	98	51.3%
	Total	191	100%
Educational level	**Secondary**	3	1.6%
	Undergraduate	103	53.9%
	Graduate	85	44.5%
	Total	191	100%
Marital status	**Single**	99	51.8%
	Married	86	45%
	Divorced	4	2.1%
	Widow	2	1%
	Total	191	100%

Table 2: The degree to which a company's use of images in advertisements increases the public's knowledge about the company.

Data Variable						Coefficients	Value	D.F.	Sig.
						χ^2	112.267	0.001	0.001
	Variable		N	Mean	SD	Coefficients	Value	D.F.	Sig.
The degree to which using image in a company's SNSs advertisements increases the public's knowledge about the company	Gender	Male							
		Female							
		Total	191	3.85	0.812	T	1.585	189	0.115 insignificant
	Education	Total	191	3.85	0.812	F	0.940	2	0.392 insignificant
								188	
								190	
	Age	Total	191	3.85	0.812	F	3.913	4	0.01
								186	
								190	
	Marital Status	Total	191	3.85	0.812	F	3.843	3	0.472 (insignificant)
								187	
								190	

1.00-1.80 signifies 'strongly disagree'; 1.81-2.60 signifies 'disagree'; 2.61-3.4 signifies 'neutral'; 3.41-4.2 signifies 'agree'; and 4.21-5.00 signifies 'strongly agree.'

Table 3: The degree to which a company's use of images in advertisements increases the public's interest in the company

Data Variable						Coefficients	Value	D.F	Sig.
						χ^2	126.969	3	0.001
	Variable		N	Mean	SD	Coefficients	Value	D.F	Sig.
The degree to which using image in a company's SNSs advertisements increases the public's interest in the company and its services	Gender	Male	98	3.77	0.784	T	0.016	189	0.988 insignificant
		Female	93	3.76	0.865				
		Total	191	3.76	0.812				
	Education	Secondary or lower	3	4.00	1.000	F	0.235	2	0.791 insignificant
		Undergraduate	103	3.79	0.749			188	
		Graduate	85	3.73	0.905			190	
		Total	191	3.76	0.822				
	Age	Less than 20 years	5	4.40	0.548	F	1.897	4	0.113 insignificant
		20-30 years	71	3.86	0.703			186	
		30-40 years	62	3.58	0.950			190	
		40-50 years	41	3.76	0.799				
		More than 50 years	12	3.92	0.793				
		Total	191	3.76	0.822				
	Marital Status	Single	99	3.83	0.783	F	0.531	3	0.662 insignificant
		Married	86	3.71	0.866			187	
		Divorced	4	3.50	1.000			190	
		Widow	2	3.50	0.707				
		Total	191	3.76	0.822				

Table 4: The degree to which a company's use of images in advertisements influences customer's purchase decisions.

Data Variable			N	Mean	SD	Coefficients	Value	D.F	Sig.
						$\chi2$	96.932	4	0.001
	Variable		N	Mean	SD	Coefficients	Value	D.F	Sig.
The degree to which a company's use of images in SNSs advertisement influences my purchase decisions	Gender	Male	98	3.52	1.028	T	0.044	189	0.965 insignificant
		Female	93	3.53	1.028				
		Total	191	3.52	1.025				
	Education	Secondary or lower	3	3.67	1.155	F	0.030	2	0.970 insignificant
		Undergraduate	103	3.52	1.018			188	
		Graduate	85	3.52	1.042			190	
		Total	191	3.52	1.025				
	Age					F	1.897	4	0.467 insignificant
								186	
								190	
		Total	191	3.52	1.025				
	Marital Status					F	0.634	3	0.594 insignificant
								187	
								190	
		Total	191	3.52	1.025				

Table 5: The degree to which a company's use of images in advertisements has succeeded in helping the customer to make the purchase decision.

Data Variable						Coefficients	Value	D.F	Sig.
						χ2	105.518	4	0.001
	Variable		N	Mean	SD	Coefficients	Value	D.F	Sig.
The degree to which a company's use of images in SNSs advertisement has been successful in helping the customer to make the purchase decision	Gender	Male	98	3.56	0.920	T	0.164	189	0.870 insignificant
		Female	93	3.54	1.069				
		Total	191	3.55	0.993				
	Education	Secondary or lower	3	4.00	1.000	F	0.320	2	0.727 insignificant
		Undergraduate	103	3.53	0.968			188	
		Graduate	85	3.55	1.029			190	
		Total	191	3.55	0.993				
	Age	Less than 20 years	5	4.20	0.837	F	2.664	4	0.05
		20-30 years	71	3.77	0.865			186	
		30-40 years	62	3.29	1.107			190	
		40-50 years	41	3.51	0.925				
		More than 50 years	12	3.42	1.084				
		Total	191	3.55	0.993				
	Marital Status	Single	99	3.64	0.974	F	0.814	3	0.487 insignificant
		Married	86	3.48	1.014			187	
		Divorced	4	3.00	1.155			190	
		Widow	2	3.50	0.707				
		Total	191	3.55	0.993				

3 Results

- There was a statistically significant correlation between displaying an advertising image to the public on SNSs and the degree of influence by the advertisement;
- There was a moderate positive relationship between displaying an advertising image to the public on SNSs and the degree of influence by the advertisement ($.3 < r < .7$; $\alpha = 0.01$). That is, the more the public is shown an advertising image on SNSs, the higher the influence by the advertisement will be;
- There was a statistically significant correlation between the repetition of an advertising image and the degree to which the public perceives the advertisement's message and is influenced by its content ($.3 < r < .7$; $\alpha = 0.01$). In other words, the more an advertising image repeats, the more the public will perceive the advertisement's message and be influenced by its content;
- There were statistically significant differences in the degree to which participants agreed that using an advertising image by the company on SNSs has increased their knowledge about the company. This finding is in line with that of which found that marketing on SNSs influences the purchase decision. Findings also suggested that there were statistically no significant differences between males and females in the perceived degree to which using an image in the company's advertisements on SNSs increases their knowledge about the company;
- Moreover, there were statistically significant differences in the degree to which image in SNSs advertisements increases the public's interest in the company and its services. There were, however, statistically no significant differences between males and females in this regard;
- There were also statistically significant differences in the perceived degree to which image in SNSs advertisements makes a good impression about the company. Yet there were statistically no significant differences between different educational levels on this point;
- There were statistically significant differences in the degree to which a company's use of images in SNSs advertisements influences purchase decisions. The latter study found that the trademark image has a positive impact on the purchase decision. Results also revealed that there are statistically no significant differences between marital statuses in the perceived degree to which a company's use of images in SNSs advertisements has influenced their purchase decisions; and
- Results suggested that there are statistically significant differences in the degree to which the company has succeeded in helping customers make their final purchase decisions by showing them images in SNSs advertisements, which revealed that SNSs influence users' purchase intent. On the other hand, there were statistically no significant differences between educational levels in this regard.

Recommendations:

- National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) in Sudan as well as the Ministry of Culture, Information and Tourism are to update their laws to regulate and improve advertising in general and image advertising. This can be done by entering contracts with academic and professional institutions, to train and enable individuals working in the field of advertising;
- Further research and studies should be done to measure the effectiveness of the advertisements that use images to influence the customer. Doing so also helps to understand users and increase their trust in the company's products, which in turn helps keep customers loyal to the products;
- The company should be more open to the public and consumers of its products. It should encourage them complaint about false advertising messages. This should be done by establishing groups that are responsible for monitoring and updating content on SNSs. Such groups should also be responsible for users' replies and comments. Experts who can improve the company's visual identity can be employed in this regard;
- An image must correctly reflect the content, particularly if the image is used to advertise a commodity or product. Content reliability can be ensured by comparing the image with the functional features of the commodity, such as the dimensions.
- Before a photograph is taken, its components should be present. Such components include the background, materials, lighting, and clothes. This can help to make the photo on SNSs more attractive to the public.

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