

Full Length Research Paper

Farmers' perception of agricultural advertisements in Nigerian newspapers in Ibadan municipality, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Evidently, the agricultural sector is attracting numerous investors who are learned but have little or no technical knowledge of agricultural production. Potentials of agricultural production are yet to be explored in print media to disseminate agricultural information in order to promote success of agriculture as an enterprise. The study therefore investigated readership of agricultural advertisements in Nigeria newspapers in Ibadan municipality of Oyo State, Nigeria. A list of four hundred and one (401) farmers was obtained from the local government office and thirty percent (30%) (122) of the farmers were randomly selected. A structured questionnaire guide containing open and close questions was used to elicit information from the respondents. The result of the analysis revealed that majority (52.69%) were between the age of 30 to 50, also indicates high (82.52%) literacy level above primary education. On marital status, 75.8% were married, 80.0% of the farmers practiced farming as secondary education, appreciable number (27.5%) have above 26 years farming experience. Quite high (60.8%) level of readership is recorded among respondents with larger percentage (14.2%) read newspaper at least once week. Respondents' perception and attitude (59.2 and 74.2%) were favourably disposed to advertising respectively. The inferential statistics analysis shows education (chi-square=21.07; $p \leq 0.01$) significantly related with respondents' perception of agricultural advertisements. However, marital status (chi-square=10.48; $p \geq 0.57$) and farming experience (chi-square=25.25; $p \geq 0.11$) were not significantly related. Correlation analysis of farmers attitude and perception of agricultural advertisements in newspapers was found to be significant ($r=0.385$; $p \leq 0.000$). Agricultural advertisements are a vanguard for awareness creation, boost agricultural enterprise and dissemination of agricultural information will receive wider reach within and outside farming population.

Key words: Agricultural advertisement, readership, newspapers.

INTRODUCTION

Advertising plays a prominent role in the success of any business irrespective of the type. The print media also plays a prominent role in the lives of individuals especially the literate in that they present issues in such a way that they help shape farmers' view, opinions and their perception of events. According to Olatunji (1991), scholars and policy makers have recently almost unanimously agreed that information constitute the crucial variable in the calculus of mental development. Hence, the importance of making agricultural information available to a wide audience through advertising.

Olowu (1990) asserted that Nigerian newspapers editors place more importance on revenue generating

content than agricultural subject matter, which is necessary in stimulating development of farmers. Farmers who read newspapers and farm magazines are more likely to adopt more of all types of improved practices than those who do not. This can have effect on their perception of such advertisements.

Now that the agricultural sector is attracting numerous investors who are learned but have little or no technical knowledge of agricultural production, it is therefore important that they are adequately considered in dissemination of agricultural information. Olowu (1990) stated that recent stringent fiscal policies in countries of the West African sub-region have government administrator,

Table 1. Sample of farmers for the study

Local government	No. of farmers	No. of farmers samples (30%)
Ibadan NW	82	25
Ibadan NE	45	14
Ibadan SE	105	32
Ibadan SW	70	21
Ibadan N	90	30

military and paramilitary personnel into agriculture. These new entrants who usually have higher education than the traditional farmers, into the farming enterprises may have brought about an upswing in the literacy level of farming audience. These group of people mostly urban based may rely on the news media especially the print media for the much needed agricultural information, it is therefore necessary to inquire how these set of literate farmers would obtain necessary agricultural information.

It is against this background that the following research questions emanated to assist in achieving the study.

1. What is the farmers' readership of newspapers?
2. What is the farmers' attitude to newspapers' agricultural advertisements?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The role of advertising in agricultural production

An effective marketing strategy should incorporate a good advertising policy. To be able to sell, the seller has to let the customer know goods or services he is offering for sale hence, the more the importance of advertising. According to Jefkins (1984) advertising is the means of making known in order to buy or sell goods or services.

The intention of advertising goods or services is to reach a large number of farmers. Consequently, the mass media are the most effective media through which advertising should be done. Specifically, newspaper could be because of the following reasons; the company could be new and therefore be unknown, it could advertise itself, or if new products and services are being introduced into the market, then the producer could undertake an advertisement to gain customers or to outwit his rivals (Oladeji, 1994). Jefkins (1984) stated that without advertisement, in 20th century industrial society, the capitalist or socialist could not have survived.

The agricultural industry like any other blooming industry needs advertising. The agricultural industry supplies raw materials to all other industries hence the need for advertising agricultural products and services is stressed. It is also the market for the products from other industries.

The great role of advertising is that it communicates the persuasive information and ideas to groups of people in

ways as to inspire change or reinforce desired attitudes (Lanihun, 1986). With this in mind, the role of advertising can not be over emphasized. However, because of the perishable nature of the agricultural produce at the peak season to prevent spoilage since it is a known fact that there is insufficient storage facility. For this to occur, vigorous advertising is required which will enable farmers to earn more and therefore make increase from input purchases. This will eventually lead to more production.

In addition, advertisements can be used to show where and how farm input can be obtained thereby reducing the problem of not obtaining required input on time by the farmers. Research on agriculture has been done and has come out with results on how agricultural production can be increased. Such results include high yielding breeds of animal, disease resistant breed of seeds and seedlings, mechanized farming. In spite of all these results, the contribution of agriculture to the Nigerian economy is still very low; the Central Banks of Nigeria's annual report of 2000 shows an increase in index of agricultural production by 3.3%. Agriculture may not improve if a measure such as advertising is not introduced or if it is not effective enough to result in a positive perception by farmers.

METHODOLOGY

The study area is Ibadan municipality. Ibadan city is the capital of Oyo state. Multi stage sampling was used to select sample for the study. Firstly, all the five local government areas in Ibadan municipality were all sampled. Secondly, a list of literate farmers was obtained from the local government offices from where thirty percent of the farmers were randomly selected to represent the sample population for the study.

Table 1 shows the number of farmers obtained from each local government and the total number sampled. The table also shows the sampling procedure.

A total number of 122 farmers randomly selected were interviewed using structured questionnaires containing both open and close ended questions to elicit information from the respondents.

Measurement of variables

Attitude

This was measured by developing 25 positive and negative statements on farmers' attitudes towards newspaper advertisements. Five point scale of strongly agree (5), agreed (4), undecided (3) strongly disagree (2), and disagree (1). Mean score was used to

Table 2. Selected personal characteristics of farmers.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age range (years)		
< 30	7	5.7
30-40	34	27.9
41-50	37	30.3
>50	44	36.1
Marital status		
Single	13	10.7
Married	101	82.7
Divorced	4	3.3
Widower	4	3.3
Educational level		
Primary	20	16.4
Secondary	26	21.3
Adult education	24	19.7
Tertiary	37	30.3
Others (Islamic education)	15	12.3
Occupation		
Farming	96	78.7
Civil servant	15	12.3
Teaching	5	4.1
Others(Trading)	6	4.9
Farming experience (years)		
<6	10	8.2
6-10	30	24.6
11-15	21	17.2
16-20	20	16.4
21-25	8	6.6
>26	33	27.0

categorize their attitude into favourable and unfavourable.

Age

This was measured by asking farmers to state their actual age.

Marital status

Respondents were asked to indicate; single, married, divorced and widowed. One is allotted each for the option.

Farmers' perception of agricultural advertisements in newspapers

1. Readership of newspapers: Yes (1) and no (0)

2. Frequency of reading: everyday (4), 1 to 2 days (3), 2 to 4 days (2), every week (1).

3. Purchase of newspaper: Yes (1), no (0)

4. Frequency of purchase: every day (4), twice a week (3), thrice a week (2), once a week (1)

5. Perception of advertisements, very favourable (3), favourable (2), unfavourable (1). The mean score was used to categorize them.

6. Response to advertisements: Yes (1), no (0)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It can be seen from Table 2 that majority of the farmers are between the age of 30 to 50 years (63.9%). This shows that the majority of the respondents are middle aged and they are in their productive age. The table also shows that 82.7% of the farmers are married. This indicates that the farmers have responsibilities for their families hence the need to seek for newspaper agricultural advertisements so that it can boost their production and also their sale.

From Table 2, it is clearly indicated that farmers have one form of education or the other. This shows a high literacy level among the farmers. It can also be seen from the table that 78.7% of the farmers engage in farming as their occupation. Table 2 also shows that the farmers are experienced farmers since appreciable number of them (27.0%) have more than 26 years of farming experience when compare with other ranges of farming experience. Makanjuola, (2002) in a related study affirm that the middle age group constitute the proportion of those who read newspapers and more often possess varying degree of experiences to which farming is inclusive.

Table 3 shows that a higher percentage (61.5%) of the farmers read newspapers. This is an indication of the high literacy level among the farmers. It is also seen from the table that majority of the farmers read newspapers at least once a week. This means that the farmers are conversant with newspaper content and they are more likely to see and read agricultural advertisements placed in the newspapers and respond to the advertisements.

It is also seen from Table 3 that many of the farmers purchase newspapers. This reveals that the farmers are aware of the importance of newspapers in their daily activities. On perception, 66.4% of the farmers are favourably disposed to advertising. This shows that the perception of the farmers towards agricultural advertisements is high. Also a high percentage of the farmers (74.6%) show favourable attitude towards newspaper advertisements. Nwachukwu, (2005) opined that farmers are favourably disposed to reading newspapers to access information rating to farming as an enterprise.

From Table 4, it was found that the educational level of farmers had a significant relationship with their perception of agricultural advertisements. This implies that their educational level has an effect on their perception of agricultural advertisements in newspapers. There exist also a significant relationship between primary occupation and farmers' perception of agricultural

Table 3. Farmers' perception of agricultural advertisements in newspapers.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Readership of newspaper		
Yes	75	61.5
No	47	38.5
Frequency of reading		
Everyday	53	43.4
1-2 days	24	19.7
3-4 days	17	13.9
Every week	28	23.0
Purchase of newspapers		
Yes	58	47.5
No	64	52.5
Frequency of purchase		
Everyday	43	35.2
Twice a week	23	18.9
Thrice a week	19	15.6
Once a week	37	30.3
Perception of advertisements		
Favourable	81	66.4
Unfavourable	22	18.0
Very favourable	19	15.6
Attitude ($\mu = 30.92$)		
Unfavourable ≤ 30.92	31	25.4
Favourable > 30.92	91	74.6
Response to advertisements		
Yes	91	74.6
No	31	25.4

Table 4. Chi square analysis of farmers' personal characteristics and their perception of agricultural advertisements.

Variable	X ²	Degree of freedom	P value	Decision
Marital status	10.480	12	0.57	Not significant
Educational level	21.067	15	0.01	Significant
Primary occupation	30.767	18	0.03	Significant
Farming experience	25.250	18	0.11	Not significant

Level of significance = 0.05,

advertisements. This means that the primary occupation of the farmers which is predominantly farming has an effect on their perception of agricultural advertisements. Marital status and farming experience are found not to be significantly related to farmers' perception of agricultural advertisements. In a related study by Meera et al. (2004)

and Lightfort (2003) found that education and primary occupation contribute significantly to readership of agricultural news.

The results from Table 5 revealed a significant relationship between the attitude of farmers and perception of newspapers agricultural advertisements. This significant

Table 5. Correlation analysis of farmers' attitude and perception of agricultural advertisements in the newspapers.

Variable	R- value	P value	Decision
Attitude	0.385	0.000	Significant

relationship implies a favourable attitude of farmers exist towards newspaper agricultural advertisements. This finding was corroborated by Padre et al. (2003) and Ramirez and Quarry (2004)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study ascertained that farmers are favourably disposed to agricultural advertisements in newspapers. The study also revealed that farmers' educational level and primary occupation have influence on the perception of farmers to agricultural advertisements in newspapers. Evidently, Agricultural advertisements are a vanguard for awareness creation, boost agricultural enterprise and dissemination of agricultural information to enhance wider reach within and outside farming population.

It is therefore recommended that Nigerian newspapers should place more emphasis on agricultural subject matter than only revenue generating content so that farmers would be encouraged to advertise in newspapers.

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