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**RESEARCH TOPIC**

**THE IMPACT OF ONLINE ADVERTISING ON CONSUMERISM, AMONGST  
UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE STUDENTS.**

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I want to use this opportunity to thank God for His mercies and grace to me during the course of my study. I am forever grateful to the One and Only true God, the one who is and who is to come.

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my lovely husband Mr Patrick Igonor for all his effort, encouragement and love. I am really blessed to have been found by you. Thanks for being the best husband in the world.



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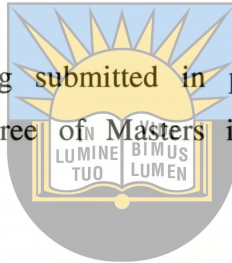
# DECLARATIONS

This work has not been previously accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed .....

Date.....

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Communication at the University of Fort Hare.



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Date.....

This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated.

Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references.

Signed .....

Date.....

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTERS	PAGES
Acknowledgements.....	2
Dedications.....	3
Declarations.....	4
Table of contents.....	5
List of acronyms.....	10
List of figures.....	11
Abstract.....	12
<b>Chapter one</b>	
1. Background of study.....	13
1.1 Internet and advertising: a background.....	14
1.2 History of online adverts.....	15
1.3 Online advertisements.....	17
1.4 Key concepts in online advertising.....	21
1.5 Advantages of online advertising.....	21
1.6 Disadvantages of online advertising.....	23
1.7 Consumerism.....	24
1.8 Conclusion.....	28
<b>Chapter two</b>	
2. Overview of online advertising .....	31
2.1 Conceptual framework.....	32
2.2 Communication patterns in online advertising.....	33
2.3 Illegal versus legal internet advertising.....	34
2.4 Theoretical framework.....	35



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

2.4.1 Online advertising and student's internet use in foreign countries.....	37
2.4.1.1 New York.....	37
2.4.2 Internet use at tertiary institution outside Africa.....	39
2.4.2.1 Study conducted in 27 institutions in the United States .....	39
2.4.2.2 India.....	41
2.4.3 Online advertising and student's internet use in African countries.....	44
2.4.3.1 Tanzania.....	44
2.4.3.2 Ghana.....	46
2.4.3.3 Nigeria.....	48
2.4.3.4 Cameroon.....	54
2.4.3.5 Uganda.....	56
2.4.4 Summary of studies reviewed and lessons learnt.....	57
2.4.5 Online advertising and students internet use in South Africa.....	59
2.4.5.1 Cape town .....	59
2.4.5.2 Total online advertising spending in South Africa.....	60
2.4.5.3 University of Fort Hare, Alice .....	61
2.5 Conclusion.....	64



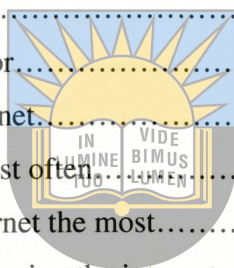
University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

### **Chapter three**

3. Qualitative & Quantitative research.....	66
3.1 Triangulation.....	68
3.2 Choosing a quantitative or qualitative method.....	69
3.3 Data collection.....	70
3.3.1 Questionnaires.....	70
3.3.2 Sampling frame.....	70
3.3.3 Interviews.....	71
3.4 Data analysis.....	73
3.5 Ethical considerations .....	74
3.6 Conclusion.....	74

## Chapter four

4. Summary of findings .....	76
4.1 Marital status of students in Fort Hare.....	78
4.2 Percentage of respondents according to gender.....	78
4.3 Age category of respondents.....	78
4.4 Nationality of respondents.....	78
4.5 Year of study.....	78
4.6 Internet usage.....	79
4.7 What students use the internet for.....	79
4.8 How often students use the internet.....	80
4.9 Which website students visit most often.....	80
4.10 Where do students use the internet the most.....	81
4.11 At what age did students starts using the internet.....	82
4.12 Ownership of personal computers.....	82
4.13 Searching of products and services via the internet.....	83
4.14 Reason why students use the internet to search for products and services.....	84
4.15 How often students use the internet to search for products and services.....	85
4.16 Why students do not use the internet to search for products and services.....	85
4.17 Response of students to online adverts in form of website links.....	86
4.18 Reasons why students click on website link advert.....	87
4.19 How often students click on website link advert.....	88
4.20 Reasons why students do not click on website link adverts.....	88
4.21 Response of students to online adverts in form of online directory.....	89
4.22 Reasons why students browse for on online directory.....	89
4.23 How often students browse for online directory.....	90
4.24 Reasons why students do not browse for online directory.....	91
4.25 Students response to online advert in form of animated banners and pop-ups.....	91
4.26 Reasons why students click on animated advertising banner or pop-ups.....	93
4.27 How often students click on animated advertising banner or pop-ups.....	93



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

4.28 Reasons why students do not click on animated advertising banner or pop-ups.....	94
4.29 Students response to opt – in email newsletter.....	95
4.30 Reasons why students open opt-in email newsletters.....	96
4.31 How often students open opt-in email newsletter.....	96
4.32 Reasons for not opening opt-in email newsletter.....	97
4.33 Do online adverts motivate students to purchase.....	98
4.34 The promotion of unhappiness by the undue exposure to online adverts when students don't have the means to access the advertised product or service.....	99
4.35 Online purchase.....	100
4.36 Why students make online purchase.....	100
4.37 Reasons why students do not make online purchase.....	101
4.38 Which advertised products on the internet attracts students the most.....	101
4.39 Which advertised service on the internet attracts students the most.....	102
4.40 Student perception of online advertising.....	103
4.41 Summary of findings.....	106
4.42 Conclusion.....	108



## Chapter five

5.1 Concluding discussion.....	110
A.) Establishing the impact of online advertising on students.....	111
B.) Examining whether online advertising encourages consumerism amongst students.....	111
C.) Investigating the effectiveness of online adverts.....	111
D.) Finding out the benefits of online advertisements to advertisers.....	112
5.2 Lessons learned.....	112
5.3 Recommendations.....	113
5.3.1 Objective viewing of commercial online adverts by students.....	113
5.3.2 Balanced viewing of educational online adverts by students.....	113
5.3.3 Reasonable viewing of scam online adverts by students.....	113

5.3.4	Students should not equate consuming with happiness.....	114
5.3.5	Education of students on the technological know how of the internet.....	114
5.3.6	Subscribing and renewing subscriptions to various recent journals.....	114
5.3.7	Suggestions for future research.....	115
5.3.8	Conclusion.....	116
	Appendices.....	119
	Bibliography.....	124



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

**US:** United States

**ARPANET:** Advanced Research Projects Agency Network

**MILNET:** Military Network

**WWW:** World Wide Web

**AT&T:** American Telephone and Telegraph

**MCI:** Media Control Interface

**CBS:** Columbia Broadcasting system

**ESPN:** Entertainment and Sports Programming

**CPM:** Cost Per Thousand Impressions

**MSN:** Microsoft Network

**UK:** United Kingdom

**PWC:** Price Water Coppers *Together in Excellence*

**FAQS:** Frequently Asked Questions

**UCLAS:** University College of Lands and Architectural Studies

**OPAC:** Online Public Access Catalog

**LAUTECH:** Ladoke Akintola University of Technology

**SPSS:** Statistical Package for Social Sciences

**FUTO:** Federal University of Technology Owerri

**USD:** United States Dollars

**HIV:** Human Immunodeficiency Virus

**AIDS:** Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

**IAB:** Interactive Advertising Bureau



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# LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES	PAGES
Figure 1 - Online advertising history timeline.....	16
Figure 2 – Cameroonian research.....	55
Figure 3 – Questionnaires sample table.....	71
Figure 4 – Interviews sample table.....	73
Figure 5 – What students use the internet for.....	79
Figure 6 – How often students use the internet.....	80
Figure 7 – Which websites students visit most often.....	81
Figure 8 – Where do you use the internet.....	82
Figure 9 – How many students own personal computers.....	83
Figure 10 – Why students use the internet to search for products and services.....	84
Figure 11 – How often students use the internet to search for products and services.....	85
Figure 12 – Reasons why students do not use the internet to search.....	86
Figure 13 – Why students click on a website link advert.....	87
Figure 14 - How often students click on website link advertising.....	88
Figure 15 - Reasons why students do not click on web site link advert.....	89
Figure 16 - Reasons why students check online directories.....	90
Figure 17 – How often students check online directories.....	90
Figure 18 – Reasons why students do not check click on online directories.....	91
Figure 19 - Do students click on animated banner online adverts.....	92
Figure 20 – Why students click on animated banner online adverts.....	93
Figure 21 – How often students click on animated advertising.....	94
Figure 22 – Reasons why students click on animated advertising.....	95
Figure 23 – Reasons why students open opt in e-mail newsletters.....	96
Figure 24 – How often students open opt – in e-mail newsletters.....	97
Figure 25 – Reasons why students do not open opt –in e-mail newsletters.....	97
Figure 26 – Why students makes online purchase.....	100
Figure 27 – Reasons why students do not make online purchase.....	101
Figure 28 – Online advertised product that interests students most.....	102
Figure 29 – Which advertised service attracts students the most.....	102

## ABSTRACT

The penetration and significance of the internet to communication processes have made it an essential accessory in commercial processes. The internet is the platform for various new developments in telecommunications and media, including the advertising sector. Marketers are beginning to set aside part of their advertising budget for online advertising. This study explores the impact of online advertising and its promotion of consumerism amongst students. Specifically, the study examines to what extent are students exposed to online advertising, how much the exposure to online advertising influences student consumerism and what are the reasons for the growing use of the internet as a channel of advertisements. This research is built on a multidisciplinary approach in terms of its theoretical framework by combining theories from mass media, new media, advertising and political economy, because the internet is a part of the mass media, in as much as it is a new form of media. A single theory approach can not exhaustively address the questions of the social impact of online advertising therefore these three theories namely; technological determinism, cybernetic capitalism and suggestion theory are employed. Three concepts of online advertising in the market arena namely; a seller's market is emerging in online advertising; marketers are demanding more accountability and consumers are demanding more control are examined in this study. This study hypothesized that the invasion of the internet by online adverts, is promoting the equation of personal happiness with the purchasing of material possessions and consumption, otherwise known as consumerism amongst students. Results of the study revealed that; students respond to online adverts; it motivates them to purchase and more than half confessed to consuming online advertised services and products in order to feel happy and to fall into a social class in the society. Recommendations are made with regards to balanced viewing of educational online adverts by students, students not equating consumption or purchasing with happiness and the school subscribing to various recent journals.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1. BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

This study seeks to find out the impact of online adverts on students at a tertiary institution. Information on student use of the internet in tertiary institutions has concentrated on what students use the internet for and not on the impact of specific features of the internet on students (Mkhululi, 2005). This study will attempt to answer the following research questions; to what extent are students exposed to online advertising, how much the exposure to online advertising influences student consumerism and what are the reasons for the growing use of the internet as a channel of advertisements. This research will use the critical research approach by focusing on the social and cultural effects of mass communication and their role in perpetuating an unjust social order. In addition, this study addresses concerns that arose from the researcher's Honours degree project, which examined the use of the internet as an academic research tool among UFH students (Igonor, 2006). The Honours degree project could not examine the impact of internet on social lives of students and this research endeavors to investigate the social impact of online advertising on students and the promotion of consumerism.

The principal objectives of this study is to establish the impact of online advertising on students, examining whether online advertising encourages consumerism amongst students. The study will investigate the effectiveness of online adverts and find out the benefits of online advertisements to advertisers. Carrying out this study will contribute to the extant debates on the impact of the internet and specifically online advertising on patterns of consumerism among tertiary institution students. It is hoped that this study will contribute to debates on online advertising and orchestrate programs that focus on using online advertising to promote positive social and academic virtues in students. Contrary to administrative media studies that concentrate on the use of mass

communication within given political economic order to influence audiences, sell products and promote politicians (Harms et al, 1990). The research would probably sensitize students on how to protect themselves from negative online adverts that could affect their purchasing habits, personal behaviours and studies and finally to motivate further research on aspects of the impact of internet on students.

This research problem is that the invasion of the internet by online adverts, is promoting the equation of personal happiness with purchasing material possessions and consumption, otherwise known as consumerism amongst students (Wilkinson, 2005 & Buchanan, 2005). The goal of this research therefore is to gain an in-depth understanding of how online advertising promotes consumerism in students. The first chapter of this research will discuss the background of the relationship between the internet and advertising and the history of online adverts, while also delving into a detailed discussion on online adverts; its key concepts, advantages and disadvantages. This research will proceed to providing a critical argument surrounding the issue of consumerism.

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### **1.1 INTERNET AND ADVERTISING: A BACKGROUND**

The internet is one of the most modern tools in the world of communication. In the early days of the internet, it was primarily used by the US government as a main information network between APRANET, a research based network between universities and the military MILNET (Janoschka, 2004). The internet came into the world of communication in the 1990s, it became a global platform open to all kinds of information, entertainment and communication, one of which is online advertising (Janoschka, 2004). It has now become a well accepted source of information resource and it can be safely concluded that the internet has become the latest mass medium. The reliance of students on the internet is apparent in its use for information, communication and entertainment (Igonor, 2006). Unfortunately, while students pursue these various paths on the internet, they cannot escape the ever so popular online advertising and marketing pop ups.

Silk, et al (2001) observed that the internet is emerging as a new, independent and highly competitive advertising medium. It will have a broad and substantial long-term impact on

intermedia rivalry, because the internet is emerging as an adaptive, hybrid medium with respect to the factors hypothesized to affect intermedia substitutability, namely, audience addressability, audience control and contractual flexibility. It looms as a potential substitute or complement for all of the major categories of existing media and appears capable of serving a wide range of communications objectives for advertisers (Silk et al, 2001). The permeation and importance of internet to communication processes have made it an essential commercial commodity. It is the backbone of the digital age in the advertising industry. The order of the day is now convergence, which is a process whereby the functions of various media are merging and the activities of the corporations in the telecommunications, media and computing industries are overlapping (O'Brien, 1998). Online advertising is gradually contributing to the problematic issue of consumerism globally (Twitchell, 2002).

## **1.2 HISTORY OF ONLINE ADVERTS**

Online advertising was born on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October, 1994, once HotWired signed up fourteen advertisers for its online debut (Kaye et al, 2001). By the following year, the internet became publicly accepted as an interactive medium. For example, United Airlines and Maytag introduced their websites and promoted them through the use of online banner adverts (Kaye et al, 2001). Online advertising originated as a result of advertising agencies realizing the need to employ a variety of strategies in reaction to new conditions of communication, diversified markets and customers (Janoschka, 2004). The growth of internet advertising has been purely phenomenal. It all began with banner adverts that were as bland and common as road side billboards and it has exploded into a rich-media interactive environment (Kaye et al, 2001).

In January 1998, the commercial domain became the largest domain on the internet with 28% of all internet hosts (Schlosser et al, 1999). The commercial domain is the largest and fastest growing on the World Wide Web with an estimated 63% of all sites on the web (Schlosser et al, 1999). It is becoming more obvious that businesses are taking advantage of the marketing forum available in cyber space (Schlosser et al, 1999). The internet has become a great mechanism for information dissemination and an avenue for

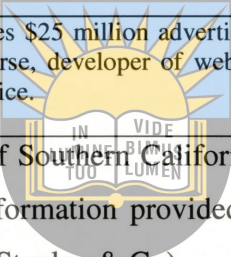
interaction and collaboration between individuals, irrespective of their geographical location (Leiner et al, 2006). Online advertising has become a world of rich media where banners pop up into their own browser windows, advertisements appear on screen before the page is finished downloading, advertising interrupts online games and other interactions and images are beginning to resemble television commercials (Kaye et al, 2001).

The internet does not necessarily refer only to the World Wide Web; it involves all forms of communication through network channels (Biyani, 2006). As at 2001, top companies like Microsoft, Yahoo!, Amazon and American Online reached between 125 to 442 million viewers. It soon became obvious that internet advertising has the capability of reaching large number of viewers. In today's economy, internet advertising accounts for 2% of all advertising spending (Biyani, 2006). A popular web site namely, ClassMates.com reaches the largest audience through banner adverts at 12.16%. The most popular advertising domain remains yahoo.com, which reaches 32.34% of all internet users world wide (Biyani, 2006). Find below a timeline of online advertising history:

<b>October 1994</b>	HotWired launches with the first banner adverts on the internet. Advertisers include AT&T, MCI, Sprint, Volvo and others. Time Warner opens Pathfinder service with ads from AT&T; Ziff Davis launches ZD Net on the Web.
<b>January 1995</b>	Five advertisers join Vibe Online, paying \$40,000 for 6 months. Advertisers include: MCI, Saturn, Timex, Jim Bean, and AirWalk.
<b>February 1995</b>	Procter & Gamble names Grey Interactive its interactive agency of record. CBS launches its web site. ESPN starts pitching advertisers on \$1 million charter sponsorships of its site and other online properties.
<b>March 1995</b>	Yahoo! goes commercial. Ragu opens its web site. It is the first packaged goods marketers to do so.
<b>July 1995</b>	Forrester Research reports that online advert spending will total \$37 million for the year. InfoSeek and Netscape shift to a CPM model to sell Web Ads.
<b>August 1995</b>	Microsoft launches Microsoft Network (MSN) online service. Kraft and Procter & Gamble register 184 domain names on the internet.
<b>September 1995</b>	ESPNET SportsZone signs advertisers to contracts totaling more than \$1 million.

<b>October 1995</b>	Audit Bureau of Circulations starts testing audits of Web sites. Poppe Tyson spins off its Web advert sales unit as DoubleClick.
<b>January 1996</b>	Microsoft pays \$200,000 to sponsor the Super Bowl Web site. The New York Times launches on the Web with \$120,000-per-year sponsors Toyota and Chemical Bank.
<b>May 1996</b>	iVillage receives \$800,000 in ad commitments using an advert model that combines editorial with marketing. FocalLink Communications introduces Market Match Web media planning tool.
<b>December 1996</b>	In 1996, Companies spent \$301 millions dollars in Web advertising. Consumers spent \$1.3 billion on-line. And the number of households online reached 15.2 million.
<b>March 1997</b>	Yahoo! makes \$25 million advertising commitment to Netscape. Microsoft acquires Interse, developer of web site analysis software, to be integrated into BackOffice.

Figure 1 (EC2 Project, University of Southern California, 2001. Source: The contents of this timeline were adapted from information provided by Advertising Age, The Direct Marketing Association and Morgan Stanley & Co).

  
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### **1.3 ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS**

In general, advertising is a paid, non personal communication through different forms of media by business firms, non – profit organizations and individuals who are some way identified in the advertising message and whose intentions are to inform or persuade members of a particular audience (Schlosser et al, 1999). Online advertising is the optimisation of a website to attain peak position in the organic search engine results, pay per click advertising, email marketing, placing of links on related directories and portals, distribution of press releases, blogs, viral marketing and banner advertising (Search Maestros, 2006). Advertising on the internet is a simple and cost effective way to advertise and it is already competing with the traditional forms of prints and broadcast advertising.

Online advertising can be viewed as a social contract between advertisers and internet users (Gordon, 1997). The contract comprises of, access to advertisements, placement of

advertisements, message, influence on fee and information collection. The explosion of the growth of internet advertising is very reminiscent of the early days of television advertising. According to the internet advertising bureau, there has been a revenue surge of 161% in spending on internet advertising, thereby outstripping even the most optimistic forecast (Armstrong et al, 2001). The current growth rate of commercial internet Web site is estimated to be more than 4,400 sites per day, infact, there are approximately, 1.5 million Web pages at the current time, an 88% increase from the previous year, that means, an average of 1.9 million Web pages are created daily (Armstrong et al, 2001).

At present, brands have started shifting their budgets from old media to online advertising platforms. As consumers increasingly turn toward alternative channels for news, information and entertainment, brands are questioning the value of large expenditures on traditional advertising mediums such as, television, magazines, newspapers and radio. As a result, they are starting to invest in all forms of internet advertising. For example, online advertising market in the UK is well established, and expanding at a steady pace (eMarketer, 2007). In fact, internet adverts are expected to represent 18% of all UK advertising spending in 2007, it is reported by the UK online advertising report that the state of internet adverts in Britain, is becoming a model for the future of advertising around the world (eMarketer, 2007). This is due to the advances in broadband and mobile internet access and technology which is fueling the growth.

In order to determine the effectiveness of online advertising, especially in the business-to-consumer area, it is important to consider the issue of consumers trust in the sellers, products they cannot see or touch and electronic systems with which they might not have enough previous experience. In other to overcome this barrier, online advertisers always put into consideration establishing the trustworthiness of the internet merchant, trustworthiness of the internet as a shopping medium, infrastructural (contextual) factors such as security, third-party certification, company size, demographic variables) (Lee et al, 2001). In addition, all these antecedent variables are moderated by the individual

consumer's degree of trust propensity, which reflects personality traits, culture, and experience (Lee et al, 2001).

Some marketing executives thought that the impact of the internet on advertising and marketing is just another emerging niche medium with some peculiar creative capabilities and constraints and that it may never transform consumer marketing in the similar way that network television revolutionized consumer culture and commercial practice in the past (Cartellieri, 1997). Whereas, online advertising has grown over the years, to become more than just a complement to traditional marketing practices (Cartellieri, 1997). In some organizations, the budget expenditure on broadcast and print media is been reduced due to fresh investment in online advertising and it has transformed the whole approach to marketing communications (Cartellieri, 1997).

The sharp rise of online advertising in South Africa is a depiction of the effectiveness of this form of advertising on consumers (World Wide Worx, 2006). Online advertising revenue in South Africa is expected to reach R183-million in 2006 and to pass the R200-million mark in 2007 (World Wide Worx, 2006). This industry in South Africa is growing rapidly and can now claim itself to be tracking global growth trends. "It is now a strong creative platform that offers real connections with consumers whilst being highly measurable and data driven" (Online Publishers Association, chairperson, Hanly, 2006). In addition, Massey, (2006) argues that teenagers are most likely to be influenced by advertising than any other age group, even though they might not be consciously aware of it. For example, popular slogans like "Have It Your Way", "Just Do It", "Ipod, Therefore I Am", "Reach Out and Touch Someone", "It's Everywhere You Want To Be", "Finger Lickin' Good", "Be All You Can Be", are popular slogans that rings a bell many times in a day in the ears of teenagers (Massey, 2006). These slogans unconsciously motivate them to go for these brands.

'Experience Incorporated' conducted a survey on 'Online Advertising: Habits survey' with a sample of over 300 students and recent graduates from colleges and universities in America to determine their attitudes on online advertising and e-commerce (Experience

Incorporated, 2006). It was discovered that, students especially between the ages of 18 and 34 years old are easily motivated to buy products or services based on what they see in online advertisements (Experience Incorporated, 2006). One explanation is that, students spend a significant amount of time online researching products and services before purchasing and eventually when they do purchase, they do it online (Experience Incorporated, 2006). The survey revealed that 98% of students have made a purchase of a product or service online. Other significant observation that emerged from the study included:

- **No Purchase Without Online Research First**

Most of the respondents spend at least 1-2 hours researching products or services prior to making a purchase (53%). About, 27% spend less than 1 hour, while 20% spend 3 hours or more (Experience Incorporated, 2006).

- **Online Adverts Have a Significant Influence on 18-34 Year Olds**

Out of all the respondents, 52% of respondents said they have purchased a product or service based on an online advertisement and 34% find online advertising the most influential means to get them to learn more about a product or service (Experience Incorporated, 2006).

- **Context is Key**

About, 41% of respondents said online advertisements will resonate if they are related to the content that they are reading (Experience Incorporated, 2006). Also, 34% of the respondents agree that a contest or promotion that presents some value easily motivates them to act on the advertisement. Finally, 17% responded that personalization is critical as they will respond to a banner advert that is based on their profile or online behavior (Experience Incorporated, 2006). The result of this survey further asserts the fact that indeed, students are easily persuaded by online adverts to purchase products and services and this research will further proceed to investigate its promotion of consumerism, using the students of the University of Fort Hare as samples.

## **1.4 KEY CONCEPTS IN ONLINE ADVERTISING**

Online advertising can be divided into five major categories namely, search engines, pay per click, paid inclusions, banners and email marketing (Search Maestros, 2006). For **search engines**, advertisers aim at achieving a top position (Search Maestros, 2006). There are billions of sites competing for attention on the web, as such, it is important to make sure that the advertised web sites or addresses are in prominent positions and easy to find by potential customers. **Pay per click:** In this category, space is purchased on a highly visible portion of the page and pays for each visitor who clicks on the link (Search Maestros, 2006). For example: Google adwords and overture. **Paid inclusions:** In other to advertise on some directories and portals, a set fee for inclusion is charged. A web page or URL is then included by search engines for an annual consideration, although a top position is not guaranteed. **Banners:** This involves the purchase of most often animated banners in prominent positions on highly trafficked sites (Search Maestros, 2006). The banners are sold on a cost per 1000 impressions basis, whether the banners are clicked on or not. **Email marketing:** Involves the use of Opt-in email newsletters, which is an excellent method of attracting highly qualified visitor traffic (Search Maestros, 2006). Its advantage is that, it reaches the customer directly in their inbox (Search Maestros, 2006). These concepts would be explored further on in the research.

## **1.5 ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE ADVERTISING**

They are various potential benefits that accrue to advertising on the internet that are not available through traditional advertising media channels. Internet advertising allows for information richness that is; the communication of substantially more content – rich product information to consumers. This is unlike the broadcast nature of television, radio, billboard and print that constrains traditional advertisement to one short memorable message. There is also the ease of updating and maintenance of online adverts, than it is to maintain traditional adverts (Schlosser et al, 1999). It is also less costly and it lacks the delays of other media. Online adverts gives room for additional brand relevant information that is important for building brand image, whereas in traditional adverts,

certain brand relevant information are considered too frivolous given the space limitations. Internet advertising also allows advertisers to easily and inexpensively collect detailed data about their internet market in exchange for product incentives (Schlosser et al, 1999). They can also obtain precise measures of the pages of their web sites that were most visited and for how long and how the individuals came to the site and where the visitors originated. In addition through online focus groups, consumer reactions to products and adverts can be obtained.

Internet advertising has the ability to reach a world wide audience. This global exposure capability clearly expands the company market to include global markets, because it allows consumers from around the world to visit the web site. Also, the type of information transmitted and the method of transmission is more flexible in online adverts because, the internet allow for interactivity (Schlosser et al, 1999). For example, the consumer has the ability to choose between the information being technically advanced or just been simple in terms of the information being textual, graphic, video or auditory and even whether a product demonstration or detailed product description is used (Schlosser et al, 1999). In addition, online adverts are an effective tool of customer service. Relationships are enhanced because online adverts are available upon demand all day, every day for online products trails or demonstrations and providing online up-to date accurate technical support, thereby reducing purchase uncertainty.

Through the use of interactive games and contests, online sites can encourage role – playing which makes online adverts to be more persuasive and engaging (Schlosser et al, 1999). Through the use of role - playing, the consumers generates arguments in favour of the product which is often more persuasive to the individual than other generated arguments (Schlosser et al, 1999). Online adverts makes possible purchase decisions by providing detailed product and purchase details by providing the nearest dealer and quoting prices (Schlosser et al, 1999). It gives consumers the opportunity to make a purchase at that moment in their homes. This feature removes the gap between adverts exposure and purchase response and it creates the opportunity for the ultimate in impulse buying (Schlosser et al, 1999). This impulse buying is the root of consumerism, because

all these advantageous features of the internet make it easier for the consumers to consume products and services more easily.

## **1.6 DISADVANTAGES OF ONLINE ADVERTISING**

In as much as there is a wide array of the benefits of online advertising, it also has its downbeat. Advertising on the internet is highly selective which makes it very difficult to reach a large group of people, because internet users are still very specialized (Grady and Loshin, 2000). Most consumers don't have computers nor have access to the internet, therefore, products that are singularly advertised on the internet reach only this segment of people. A common problem with all new technology is that they are not dependable. For example, there are several sites that crash on a regular basis (Grady and Loshin, 2000). Also, shockwave as well as others require plug-ins that the user must download; most often consumers would rather go to another page instead of trying to download (Grady and Loshin, 2000). In addition, the internet is made up of millions of web sites with numerous online adverts splashed over the pages (Grady and Loshin, 2000). It can be very difficult to attract the attention of an average internet user. Therefore, just as in traditional advertising, online advertisers must find creative ways to stand out among the rest.

Besides, online adverts with graphics take a longer time to load and if the page takes too long to open, the browser clicks the stop button (Grady and Loshin, 2000). This is a common occurrence and therefore, advertisers loose all the possibility of reaching consumers who just can't wait. Finally, there is the issue of internet users who still use old browsers. In as much as Netscape navigator and Microsoft explorer is free to download from the web, it is amazing how many people are still using Netscape versions 1.0 and 2.0. Therefore, no matter how beautifully designed an advert is with all the newest technology, internet users with old browsers still would not able to be reached by the adverts (Grady and Loshin, 2000).

## **1.7 CONSUMERISM**

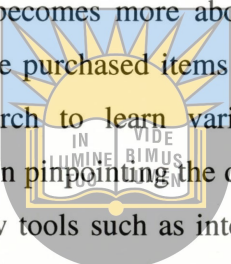
Consumerism is a way of life that combines high levels of material affluence with an emphasis on symbolic and emotional meanings associated with shopping and acquiring possessions (Twitchell, 2002). Positively, consumerism can be taken to mean the stimulation of the economy while facilitating people's liberties to shape their identities and subcultures (Twitchell, 2002). On the contrary, critics see consumerism as a manipulated and environmentally destructive habit leading to too many units of material being designed, produced, advertised, sold, and discarded (Rosenblatt 1999; World Watch Institute, 2004). Indeed, one apparent consequence of modern capitalism, industrial revolution and of marketing is, according to Twitchell (2002), the way the society now operates is not based on what you make, but on what is consumed.

The concept's of consumerism is a society in which many people formulates their goals in life partly through acquiring goods that they clearly do not need for subsistence or for traditional display (Stearns, 2001). This society is enmeshed in the process of shopping and acquisition because it derives happiness from the possession of new items that they buy and exhibit (Stearns, 2001). This society is encouraged, maintained and serviced by many institutions like the hardworking shopkeepers who try to lure customers into buying more than they need, to the product designers who always seek to put new twists on established models and to advertisers who seek to create new needs through various advertising gimmicks and manipulations (Stearns, 2001).

Consumerism is among the most surprising and unexpected developments in modern history, because it comprises of the most jarring clashes with previous traditional values. Modern consumerism first began in the West and by the late nineteenth century, it was spreading elsewhere. Although there were vital signs of consumerism in Africa and Asia, modern consumerism started in the West, wrapped up in issues of Western influence, which is often referred to as Westernization (Stearns, 2001). Westernization is the spread of consumer behaviours, often under the urgent leadership of European and United States commercial companies. Up until now, Western influence in the world at large still rests

on consumer standards more than any other influence, it has even outlast military and colonial predominance (Stearns, 2001).

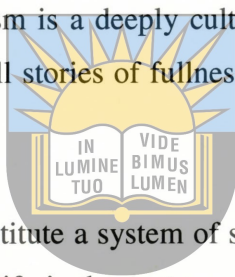
Consumerism is not just the conventional *shopaholic concept*, but a complicated set of organizations, relationships, and ethically problematic practices involving science and technology (Cohen, 2003). Product designers, manufacturing engineers, solid state physicists and those trained in scientific and technical specialty in conjunction with advertising industries, have participated in the development and spread of the consumer society we now live in (Cohen, 2003). The dividing line between purchasing and consumerism is when purchasing becomes more about shopping and its psychosocial benefits than about actual use of the purchased items (Cohen, 2003). Psychologists and statisticians conduct market research to learn various ways for stimulating sales, "constantly gaining more precision in pinpointing the demographic and lifestyle trends of consumer segments, employing new tools such as internet *cookies* to monitor the *click-streams* of e-shoppers" (Cohen, 2003: 402).



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Consumerism means more than choice between competing brands. It is actually tormenting, just to highlight the problems facing the affluent shopper (Hilton, 2003). The shopper is faced with mental paralysis while attempting to make a choice among identical brands (Hilton, 2003). Ordinarily, the only genuine gratification derived from products and services are their intrinsic utility. Therefore, if consumers are persuaded to purchase products and services for other reasons, (for example, for non-utilitarian aspects), it can be concluded that they are being duped in some way or the other (Campbell, 1987). It is often blamed on non-informative adverts which concentrate on associating product with desirable images. Although it is clear that the gratification derived from a product or service cannot be separated from the images and ideas with which they are linked (Campbell, 1987). For example, drinking champagne or eating caviare is often associated with living in luxury. Consumerism is inevitably encouraged through advertising because, advertisers' concentrates on the associations of products and services, whilst ignoring the presentation of such information about the utility, such as the calorific or alcoholic content (Campbell, 1987).

Advertising changes product into brands, because brands are products with something extra, which is the added value. All brands are products, but not all products are brands, the difference is how it is advertised. For example, it's not just about eating an hamburger in MacDonal'd's, but the fun and optimism. Brand advertising sees its mission as not just of telling the consumers facts about products, but of adding value to them, in other to help them become and endure, as brands (Davidson, 1992). Advertisers mediate between how consumers live their lives and how manufacturers set about manufacturing products because it is in the brand that consumerism and culture meet (Davidson, 1992). The social meaning of objects and the pleasure those meanings give are the most obvious indications that indeed, consumerism is a deeply cultural thing. Consumers are given a taste of paradise, because they retell stories of fullness, of their conceits and of paradise consumed (Davidson, 1992).



The objects of material reality constitute a system of signification. Superimposed on this system and the discourse of daily life is the system of communication belonging to the logotechniques of consumerism and advertising (Kelliner, 1995). These two are part of the same process of capital accumulation under conditions of postmodernity or late capitalism (Kelliner, 1995). Capitalism does not only have a problem with production that is personified by class struggle, which Marx was keenly interested in as we know, but also a problem with the realization of surplus value which depends on the market. It is for such a reason as this, that sign value and the connotations of consumerism or what Baudrillard refers to as a system of objects, which becomes important in capitalist society (Kelliner, 1995).

The twentieth Century has seen a sustained and dramatic rise in the income and purchasing power of the average consumer, who is exposed to a huge and constantly changing array of goods. Simultaneously, the development of new technological innovations in mass communication, have transformed the format of messages in the world of advertisements (Jhally et al, 1990). Advertisers now devote less time to talking about products, but shifting their emphasis instead to claims about how those products could change the lives of people, because the consumer society has evolved and

therefore, marketing and advertising evolved with it (Jhally et al, 1990). As at now, the manufacture of material objects produced for consumption not only satisfy immediate needs such as food and shelter, but it serves as ‘markers’ and communicators for interpersonal distinctions in terms of honor, prestige, power, rank – in social groups. This is where the real importance of advertising lies in the modern society, ‘it is the privileged discourse for the circulation of messages and social cues about interplay between persons and objects’, the root of consumerism (Jhally et al, 1990).

In many ways, the beauty of consumerism as an ideology is dependent on the self-gratification that it provides the consumer (Miles, 1998). In terms of the relationship between students’ consumption and the construction of identity, the consumption of fashion, sport, popular music and new technological innovation is especially fascinating. When students procure these goods, services and ideas, they feel as if they belong to a mini subculture of consumption (Miles, 1998). Young consumers like students are more fully aware of the structural pressures of advertising, which are aimed at influencing their consumption patterns. Ultimately, they are willing to trade their individuality that is of course, inevitably lost through consumption in order to secure a sense of stability in what is in many respects an unstable world. Consumption provides young people some semblance of stability in a risk society (Miles, 1998). These choices all serve to reinforce the ideologies of consumerism. Although, consumerism seems to provide some sort of freedom of choice on the surface, the extent to which those freedoms are freely available is highly debatable, because an increase in the range of choice available to consumers does not always bring with it the resources or the opportunity to explore such choices at will (Miles, 1998).

Advanced capitalism has destabilized traditional markers and values of class because; the centralization of production has drawn consumers away from the static, rural hierarchies and introduced a newer, more fluid social currency (Stoneley, 2003). This new confused and unregulated social arena brought about a situation in which, the bourgeoisie now use their money to situate themselves in “communities of taste”. Social demarcation is now entirely dependent on cognitive appetite, because this newly enriched white collar and

business classes asserts themselves through a showcasing of self and home. This upward spiral growth in production and consumption has enabled the rise of the middle class, who in turn confirms their rise through consumption (Stoneley, 2003). This research will proceed to confirm if some students also consume in order to fit into this new class in the society.

## **1.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has provided discussions surrounding the background of the internet and advertising and the history of online adverts. Detailed discussions on online adverts; its key concepts, advantages and disadvantages were also interrogated. Finally, the concept of consumerism was critically examined. This chapter established the fact the internet is now a viable and highly efficient platform for advertising so much so that; it is having a high impact on company's budget for advertising which formerly was strictly only via traditional advertising. The various advantages of online advertising over traditional advertising, especially in terms of the ability to measure feedback is one of the reasons responsible for this change. Depending on how it is perceived, consumerism could either be negative or positive. This research is on the camp of those who see consumerism not just as an opportunity for consumers to make their well deserved desired choices and a stimulant for the economy, but as a social vice that offends the moral standards of a society.

This is because due to consumerism, consumers no longer consume just for the sake of products utilitarian benefits, but for the symbolic and emotional meanings associated with the goods and services purchased. Thereby, promoting the establishments of social classes and unattainable "pseudo happiness" in the society which is now becoming rampant amongst students of tertiary institutions. In light of the introduced issue of students being influenced and motivated to buy through online advertising, the second chapter will provide relevant literature reviews to the topic, in order to consider past generated findings and to find the position where this research will be making an addition. Also, the theoretical dispositions of this research approach will be discussed and

connections between this study's theoretical framework and concepts will be made with the literatures reviewed.



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## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

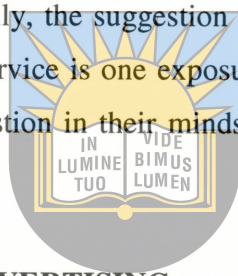
The first chapter of this research introduced the topic of this study by delving into various discussions surrounding online advertising and its influence on students. This second chapter will discuss the issue of students being motivated to buy by online adverts and its promotion of consumerism. The theoretical approach of the research and the conceptual framework will be employed in critically reviewing these literatures. This study draws from three theoretical frameworks of technological determinism (Webster, 2002), cybernetic capitalism (Gardner, 1987) and suggestion theory (Lindloff, 2002). Also, this study's conceptual frame work is derived from Bruner's (2005) three conceptualizations of online advertising namely: *A seller's market is emerging in online advertising; marketers are demanding more accountability and consumers are demanding more control.*

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The aim of this study is to determine the impact of online advertising on the promotion of consumerism among students, at the University of Fort Hare. The major problem facing this study is the lack of available and accessible research on the social impacts of online advertising among students in Africa. There is an abundance of similar studies carried out in Europe and the United States because this is an emerging area of research in communication. There is however available research on the educational use of the internet in tertiary education in Africa, which this study will refer to, albeit minimally.

This study will build on a multidisciplinary approach by combining theories from mass media, new media, advertising and political economy, because the internet is a part of the mass media, in as much as it is a new form of media. On the other hand, understanding online advertising requires rethinking concepts of advertising and consumerism, hence, the need to refer to socio- economic theories. As a result, there is thus no single theory that adequately addresses the questions of social impact of online advertng. To deal with

this problematic, this study draws from three theoretical frameworks of technological determinism (Webster, 2002), cybernetic capitalism (Gardner, 1987) and suggestion theory (Lindloff, 2002). In a brief synopsis, technological determinism is the belief that the prevalent technology in a society determines its cultural values, social structure and history (Webster, 2002), such as; the impact of the internet on students has changed their information seeking and communication behaviour. Cybernetic capitalism generally holds that those that control the means of production in a society employ the use of digital networks to persuade those who only consume but can not invest to needlessly purchase with their small income so as to ensure they remain at the bottom of the social class ladder (Gardner, 1987). Finally, the suggestion theory aver that all it needs to get people to purchase a product or service is one exposure to an advert which registers an unconscious but undeniable suggestion in their minds which springs up once there is a need for purchase.



## **2. OVERVIEW OF ONLINE ADVERTISING**

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Internet advertising is different from traditional advertising in that the internet has the capability to extend the function of advertising far beyond what traditional media are able to accomplish (Hairon and & Leckenby, 2004). Online advertising is capable of influencing students to make purchase more than traditional adverts because students spend more time with the internet. For example, students can click on a banner advert for an e-book, check out the table contents or review other people's comments on the book, place an order and even probably, download the e-book to their computers, all through the internet (Hairon Li and Leckenby, 2004). It is practically impossible for traditional advertising to provide such level of combined channel capacity of transaction, distribution and communication (Hairon Li and Leckenby, 2004). The internet is able to enable this because of its horizontal integration of three marketing channel capacities mentioned above namely, communication, transaction and distribution. It also possesses vertical integration of marketing communications, which includes advertising, public relations, sales promotion and direct marketing (Hairon Li and Leckenby, 2004). The internet including the web, also has an advantageous characteristic over traditional media

in that it is interactive as it provides for the possibility of interaction with messages conveyed in that medium (Hairon Li and Leckenby, 2004).

The internet has become more than just a communication mechanism when observed from the perspective of consumerism, infact it is an aid to consumer empowerment (Rha, 2002). The internet now has roles to play in all of the three stages of consumption namely, pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase (Rha, 2002). The role of the internet in all stages is slightly different from each other. Firstly, at the pre-purchase stage, the emphasis is on guiding consumers to useful sources of product and service information through channels such as online advertising (Rha, 2002). It also seeks to explore the possible evaluation of information in terms of its degree of usefulness and independence. Secondly, at purchase stage, the importance is on locating and evaluating networks of buyers groups, in order to give the consumers opportunity to effectively bargain for improved terms of sale (Rha, 2002). Lastly, the post – purchase stage on the internet plays an important role in guiding consumers to web sites where they can get help to gain redress for unsatisfactory purchase and even give the possibility of instructing consumers on how to use the sites (Rha, 2002).

## **2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The internet enables various forms of online advertising and marketing such as permission email, keyword targeted search engine advertising, floating animated page takeovers, interactive on page rich media ads, streaming audio and video and consumer-fueled “viral” marketing (Bruner, 2005). To explore these concepts further, this chapter builds on Bruner’s (2005) three conceptualizations of online advertising. These are: *A seller’s market is emerging in online advertising; Marketers are demanding more accountability and Consumers are demanding more control.*

**A seller’s market is emerging in online advertising.** The advertising industry is experiencing a major transformation of pricing dynamics, because of the changes in the supply and demand of the advertising inventory (Bruner, 2005). Depending on the

economy, a buyer's market is a situation in which there are fewer buyers around than there are sellers, which puts buyers in a stronger negotiating position. On the other hand, a seller's market is when there are more buyers looking for products and services than there are sellers, such as during property booms (Bruner, 2005). At these times the sellers have the upper hand and property prices rise.

**Marketers are demanding more accountability.** In return for company's advertising spending, there is now a demand for accountability (Bruner, 2005). For the online media, this is represented by a double edged sword, in that; the internet is able to measure consumer's response to online adverts. The internet has the ability to measure both brand and performance. This advantage of the internet over traditional media is attracting more converts who are diverting more money into online advertising (Bruner, 2005).

**Consumers are demanding more control.** Unlike the traditional media that restricts consumer's choice, they are patronizing the internet even more because it's a hands-on experience. This is because consumers can use the mouse and keyboards, read, research, watch, listen, write, send, meet, organize, post program, purchase and much more. All these are possible through simple devices which operate over millions of network of collaborators and destinations (Bruner, 2005).

### **2.3 COMMUNICATION PATTERNS IN ONLINE ADVERTISING**

The concept of communication on the internet is referred to as interactive mass communication (Janoschka, 2004). The elementary meaning of communication is a process in which some kind of information or message is exchanged between communicators, in which there is a sender who transfers the message to a receiver (Janoschka, 2004). The form of this message however can be verbal or non-verbal, oral or written, printed, electronic and digital. However, it is important to note that it is difficult to define communication, because of its use in so many fields (Janoschka, 2004). Nevertheless, communication can be divided into two basic forms namely, mass communication (that is uni-directional from a single sender to a mass audience) and

interpersonal communication or face to face communication (this is reciprocal interaction between individuals). Communication can be viewed from different perspectives, as is the case in discussions of communication patterns in online communication and advertising.

On the internet, communication is basically about the transfer of information. With regards to online advertising, online advertising carry advertising message. Information on the internet is transferred uni-directionally as a kind of monologue and two-directionally as a kind of dialogue (Janoschka, 2004). Exchange of information of users' feedback in online advertising occurs at different stages depending on the level of interactivity of the advertising instrument. For example, feedback in online advertising can be a single click on web adverts to individual customization by pull down menus or free key word entry. This is different from feedback to traditional advertising which is purchase or non purchase (Janoschka, 2004). The purpose of a communication process is always to inform, entertain, persuade or create a relationship. The main purpose of online advertising is persuasion and relation. Online advertising communication comprises of impacting or influencing the behaviours and attitudes of others and the force of action. Finally, communication is intentional or unintentional, but in online advertising, communication is always intentional with a certain goal or effect (Janoschka, 2004).

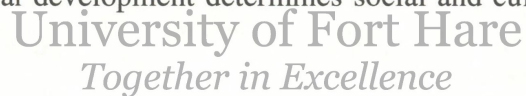
### **2.3 ILLEGAL VERSUS LEGAL INTERNET ADVERTISING**

Online advertising that is legal involves any form of advertising that employs the use of search engines, an advertising network or volunteer-based e-mail advertising (Biyani, 2006). Illegal online advertising includes all forms of spamming, that is the sending of unsolicited bulk e-mail to the boxes of innocent internet users (Biyani, 2006). Unsolicited e-mail refers to messages sent electronically that were not asked for by the recipient (Biyani, 2006). For Bulk e-mails to qualify as spam, it must have been sent to multiple unsolicited receivers. Spams are also transferred through other channels such as instant messaging, blogs and mobile phone; however, the most common channel is through e-mails. Spamming cost almost nothing and it gives companies the opportunity of reaching

millions of user's inboxes with e-mails, but most responsible companies try not to be associated with such acts because of the high chance of being prosecuted (Biyani, 2006).

## **2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This section will discuss in detail the three theoretical frameworks that this study will be built on. Firstly, technological determinism theory asserts that a society's technology determines its cultural values, social structure, or history (Webster, 2002). Technological determinism is a sociological reasoning that implies that technologies are the decisive agents of social change. Technology is the driving force of change (Webster, 2002). Technological determinism is the belief that technologies have an “overwhelming and inevitable power to drive human actions and social change” (Lievrouw and Livingstone, 2006, 21). Technological determinism has been defined as the belief in technology as a key governing force in society (Merritt Roe Smith, 1994). Bruce Bimber describes it as the idea that technological development determines social and cultural change (Hughes, 1983).



The innovation of the internet has affected the socio cultural life of students. That is, students now depend on the internet for various social cultural activities like, entertainment, sourcing of information, education, communication and socialization purposes. The use of the internet by students and their unavoidable contact with online advertising, either in form of banner adverts, search engines, pay per click, spam and e-mail has influenced their relationship with material possessions. These exposures is promoting consumerism amongst students and their definition of happiness, so much so that materials and services are equated with the possession of the various advertised products and services they are exposed to on online adverts.

Technological determinism is the belief that technologies have an overwhelming and inevitable power to drive human actions and social change, as a result the upper classes in the society uses this principle to further enrich their pockets and to keep the labour and middle class members of the society under their control (Huster, 2000). This issue leads

to the use of this second theory namely; cybernetic capitalism theory, which asserts that digital network, has become the central nervous system of capitalists who seek to influence consumers to continue to purchase products and services in order for them to maintain their position on top of the social class ladder in the society.

Cybernetics, as conceived by Norbert Weiner in the 1940's, is a master science founded on the issues of control and communication (Gardner, 1987). This theory is concerned with self-correcting and self-regulating systems, be they mechanical or human; and posits that the functioning of the living organism and the operation of the new communication machines exhibit crucial parallels in feedback, control, and the processing of information (Gardner, 1987). Cybernetic capitalism has produced a deep asymmetry whereby transnational's impose their presence on the internet and extend their reach into our lives while reserving the power and prerogatives of private pipelines for themselves, for example through online advertising. This theory will help to explain the motive of online advertisers and how they influence students, thereby promoting consumerism.

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The introduction of the internet has caused social and cultural change amongst students based on the theory of technological determinism and through cybernetic capitalism, online advertisers keep devising various means of keeping consumers to keep consuming for the unachievable attainment of happiness through consumption. This next theory therefore, will elucidate on how online advertising works to set off this process.

Suggestion theory asserts that advertising makes a suggestion, which is to buy a specific product/service. Once the intended audience (i.e. the target market) sees the advertisement, the advertisement is successful if the suggestion is planted in the person's mind (Lindloff, 2002). The suggestion lives in the person's memory until a need arrival occurs. Also, reinforcement creates a synergism with the suggestion and causes an action to occur. Action refers to the purchasing of the product/service. At this point, the person will continue to use the product creating continued use, or they will not continue to use the product, thus causing discontinued use. If the product lives up to the message of the advertising that houses the suggestion to purchase, the consumer will continue to use the

product. If it does not live up to the advertising message, then, discontinued use will occur (Lindloff, 2002). This process explains how students once exposed to these adverts become caught up in the consumerism web.

#### **2.4.1 ONLINE ADVERTISING AND STUDENT'S INTERNET USE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES**

##### **2.4.1.1 NEW YORK**

The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) announced on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June, 2007, that internet advertising revenues have reached a new record of \$4.9 billion for the first quarter of 2007 (Internet Advertising Revenue Report, 2007). The 2007 first quarter revenues represent a 26 % increase over Q1 2006 at \$3.8 billion and a 2 % increase over Q4 2006 at \$4.8 billion (Internet Advertising Revenue Report, 2007). The data represents all companies that report meaningful online advertising revenues and they are considered most accurate because they are derived directly from information supplied by companies selling advertising on the internet (Internet Advertising Revenue Report, 2007). This includes various types of internet advertising such as Web sites, commercial online services, free e-mail providers, and all other companies selling online advertising.

The survey revealed that the increased growth of online advertising revenue clearly describes marketers increased comfort in the exceptional vitality and accountability of the medium (Internet Advertising Revenue Report, 2007). Online advertising gets in touch with consumers at an unprecedented level of efficiency and measurability that provides marketers with actionable data (Internet Advertising Revenue Report, 2007). Furthermore, the ever-changing landscape of new platforms and technologies that augment interactive publicity guarantees the expansion of this medium of advertising (Internet Advertising Revenue Report, 2007).

The unprecedented growth of online advertising worldwide has sparked the interest that ignited the passion for this research to explore its influence in South Africa and among the students of the University of Fort Hare. In addition, the study also concurs with one

the concepts of this study which holds that, *a sellers market is emerging on online advertising* (Bruner, 2005). More companies and individuals are rushing to advertise on the internet and therefore, companies that sell spaces on the internet for advertising are setting higher conditions and prices for sale. This is due to the fact that demand is higher than supply. Also, the second concept holds that *marketers are demanding more accountability* (Bruner, 2005). According to the study above, more and more marketers are investing more of their advertising budget in online advertising because, it has the capability of being accountable in terms of measuring how many responses the adverts received and it can also measure brand and performance. This is a major advantage over traditional advertising which can not account for such feedback.

The last concept holds that *consumers are demanding more control* (Bruner, 2005). This is evident in that, the reason in the growth of internet advertising is because, consumers are beginning to prefer online adverts; because they can read, research, watch, listen, write, send, organize and purchase all at once on the internet. This is an advantage over traditional advertising because they are so short that most times, it's hard for the consumer to get all the details at once. The result of this study also agrees with one of the theory the researcher will be employing, which is '*technological determinism*' (Webster, 2002). This theory holds that, technologies are the decisive agents of social change.

This is evident in the study in that, the introduction of the internet into the advertising industry has indeed altered the industry. It has impacted marketers' view that used to believe that, there were no more avenues for advertising. Most marketers are now investing more of their budget on online adverts. Lastly, this study agrees with the '*cybernetic capitalism*' theory (Gardner, 1987). It holds that digital network, has become the central nervous system of capitalists who seek to influence consumers to continue to purchase products and services in order for them to maintain their position on top of the social class ladder in the society. This is evident in the manner in which marketers are embracing online adverts.

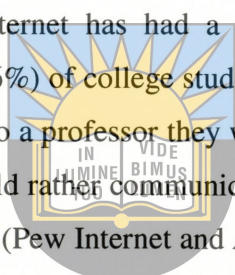
## **2.4.2 INTERNET USE AT TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE AFRICA**

### **2.4.2.1 STUDY CONDUCTED IN 27 INSTITUTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES**

A research was conducted by Pew Internet and American Life project (2002) to establish the internet's impact on college students' daily lives, and to determine the impact of that use on their academic and social routines. The methodology of the research was based on two surveys on college students who were at two year and four year public and private colleges and Universities in the continental United States (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). The surveys were shared among undergraduate and graduate students registered in degree programs at various 27 institutions of higher education across the United States (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). Paper surveys were randomly distributed at a wide range of higher education institution by researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago between March 2002 and June 2002. Over all, 2,054 surveys were returned. Additional materials were obtained from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates in 2001, among a sample of 16,125 internet users, who are 18 years and above, and who had access to broadband internet. Find below a detailed discussion on the study's findings (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002).

It was concluded that indeed, college students are early adopters and heavy users of the internet and it's a part of their daily routine, because they grew up with the computer among other reasons (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). It has become entrenched into their daily communication habits and as become a form of technology that is as common as a television or a telephone. Only, 20% of today's college students started using computers between the ages of 5 and 8. As soon as they clocked the age of 16 to about 18, all of the present current college students had started using computers and the internet (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). Only 59% of the general populations have gone online, compared to 86% of college students. Also, 72% of college students are regularly checking for e-mails at least once a day (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002).

In addition, 49% of the students started using the internet in college, while 47% had been using the internet from home. Majority of the students, (85%) own computers and two-thirds (66%) have at least two email addresses (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). About, 78% of the students have at one time or the other gone online just to browse for fun, compared to 64% of all general internet users. Also, 60% of college internet users have downloaded music files, compared to 28% of the overall population (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). That means that college students are twice as likely to do so. Students are twice as likely (26%) to use instant messaging on a daily basis compared to the average internet user which is 12%. Close to four-fifths of students (79%) concur that the internet has had a positive impact on their college academic experience. About half (46%) of college students consent to the fact that, email enables them to express their ideas to a professor they would not have expressed in class. But, only 19% asserts that they would rather communicate more with their professors via email than they through face-to-face (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002).



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Practically, about three-quarters (73%) of college students claim that they would rather use the internet to source for academic than the library, while only 9% said they use the library more than the internet (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). Close to half of college students (48%) are obligated to use the internet to communicate with classmates in at least some of their classes (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). Two-thirds (68%) of college students are subscribed to one or more academic-oriented mailing lists that are in connection with their studies, to conduct email discussions about topics covered in their classes (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). More than half (58%) of the students have communicated with their instructors to enquire about their results. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of the students email their professors to report absences. About, 42% of college students assert that they primarily communicate socially. Merely 10% of college students' use the internet principally for entertainment (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002).

Almost three-fourths (72%) of college students claim that most of their online communication is with friends. Over two-thirds (69%) of college students are more likely

to communicate socially via the phone, than through the internet. About, 85% of college students regard the internet as a simple and inconvenient choice of communicating with friends (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). Finally, 37% of college students use the internet to forward messages to family and friends (Jones et al and Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002).

This study is an exhaustive research on various relationships that students have with the internet and its impacts on their educational and social lives. However, despite all the areas that were surveyed, there was not one mention of the impact of online advertising on students (Jones et al and Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). This research will attempt to add to these various findings, the impact of the internet on students, in terms of online advertising and students and its promotion of consumerism.

The result of this study confirms the theory of '*technological determinism*' which claims that technological development determines social and cultural change (Webster, 2002). The introduction of the internet has completely altered the communication style of students. About, 72% of the students use the internet daily for communicating with friends and family through the use of e-mails and chatting, which previously was via letter writing or even telephone calls (Jones et al and Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002). In addition, 73% of the students would rather source for information on the internet than using the library, which are often advertised online in academic journals. This agrees with the concept that claims that *consumers are demanding more control* (Bruner, 2005). Students would rather browse for the specific information they need and order it directly on the internet, than the library.

#### **2.4.2.2 INDIA**

Another study was conducted in India on internet use by teachers and students in engineering colleges of Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh states of India (Kumar and Kaur, 2006). The objective of the study was to investigate the patterns of internet use; the internet skills of the engineering professionals; the perceived impact of the

internet on their academic efficiency and problems faced by them while using the internet (Kumar and Kaur, 2006). This study also sought to inquire if the internet can replace library services and also besides this, it also investigated the diverse purposes for which the internet is used which include the use of internet services for teaching, learning and research; the impact of the internet on teaching, learning and research and the satisfaction that the internet facilities provided by the engineering colleges under study provides (Kumar and Kaur, 2006).

The sample of that study consisted of the students and teachers of all the engineering colleges of the three States under study. The schools were visited personally by the investigator to collect data from the respondents. Questionnaires were distributed among 1,980 teachers and students in all the 66 engineering colleges of the three states of India under study (Kumar and Kaur, 2006). The response rate was 80.9 percent and a random sampling process was adopted. A total of 1,603 questionnaires, that is 658 (41.0%) from the teachers and 945 (59.0%) from the students respectively were returned. Out of the respondents to the study, 1,144 (71.4 percent) were male and 459 (28.6 per cent) were female. About 622 of the respondents (38.8 percent) were aged 15-20, 599 (37.4 per cent) were 21-25, 252 (15.7 percent) were 26-30, 67 (4.7 percent) were 31-35, 39 (2.4 percent) were 36-40, 18 (1.1 percent) were 41-45, and 6 (0.4 per cent) were 46 years or over (Kumar and Kaur, 2006).

The result of the study revealed that 502 (31.3 percent) of the respondents had been using the internet for 2-4 years. Another 449 (28.0 percent) respondents had used it for 1-2 years; 389 (24.3 percent) respondents specified having used it for more than 4 years; 157 (9.8 percent) respondents had used it for 6 months – 1 year, and 106 (6.6 percent) respondents had been using it for six months or less than six months. The study revealed that most of the respondents have been using the internet for more than 2 years (Kumar and Kaur, 2006). The study also revealed that a total of 781 (48.7 percent) respondents asserts that they made use of the internet 2-3 times in a week while, 699 (43.6 percent) indicated that they use the internet every day. In addition, 86 (5.4 percent) use it 2-3 times in a month, while 37 (2.3 percent) respondents asserts that they use the internet

once in a month. It can therefore be concluded that they all use it 2-3 times in a week (Kumar and Kaur, 2006).

Nearly all the respondents 541 (33.7 percent), revealed that they use the internet for 2-4 hours a week. A total of 408 (25.5 per cent) use the internet for 5-6 hours, 302 (18.8 percent) for 7-9 hours, 167 (10.4 percent) for 10-20 hours and 103 (6.4 percent) for more than 20 hours a week. Only 82 (5.1 percent) respondents indicated that they use the internet for less than one hour a week. Out of the respondents, 1,060 (66.1 percent) revealed that they access the internet from their college or work place, while only 310 (19.3 percent) accessed the internet from home (Kumar and Kaur, 2006). Only 233 (14.5 per cent) made use of the internet in other places such as cyber café or a friend/colleague's home. Majority of the respondents that is 1,194 (74.5 percent) asserts that they learnt how to use the internet through trial and error method. While, 1,094 (68.3 percent) accepted that they took instruction from their colleagues and friends, while more than half of the respondents 882 (55.0 percent) acquired their internet skills through self instruction. Only, 110 (6.9 percent) of the users learnt how to use the internet through formal training offered by the college and 133 (8.3 percent) participated in other training courses such as external courses and workshops (Kumar and Kaur, 2006).

About 1157 (74.2 percent) respondents makes use of the internet for educational purpose; 814 (50.8 percent) respondents for research purpose; 794 (49.5 percent) for communication purpose and 484 (30.2 percent) respondents acknowledge that they also use the internet for entertainment purpose. This study therefore reveals that most of the respondents use the internet for educational purpose, while the use of the internet for entertainment purpose is the least (Kumar and Kaur, 2006). Also, most of the respondents 1,601 (99.9 percent) make use of the electronic mail for communication, which made it the most popular services adopted by the respondents on the internet. About 1,587 (99 percent) of the respondents browse the internet for the World Wide. Furthermore, 1,584 (98.8 percent) respondents use the internet for search engines; chatting came fourth with 1187 (74 percent) responses; FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) with 814 (50.8 percent) responses; FTP (File Transfer Protocol) with 629

(39.2 percent) responses; telnet with 561 (35 percent) responses; BBS (Bulletin Board Services) with 413 (25.8 per cent) responses; listservs/ discussion groups with 276 (17.2 percent) responses and archie with 241 (15 percent) responses (Kumar and Kaur, 2006).

About 1,435 (89.5 percent) respondents believe that the internet is time saving when compared to the use of conventional documents when sourcing for information. In addition, most of the respondents 1,350 (84.2 per cent), believe that the internet is more informative when compared to conventional documents. In terms of sourcing for information, 1,157 (72.2 percent) asserts that the internet is preferred because it is less expensive. In terms of the library services, 1,243 (77.5 percent) asserts that the internet cannot replace library services. They maintain that it can only supplement the services provided by the library (Kumar and Kaur, 2006).

In summary, the Kumar and Kaur (2006) study reveals that the respondents believe that both the internet and the library are excellent sources of information but, the internet is more effective, more useful and more informative because it is faster in providing desired information. However, about 143 (22.5 percent) respondents are convinced that sooner or later, the internet will replace the services provided by the library because of the ease of locating information on the internet. The study suggested that the availability of internet services should be increased and it should be provided 24 hours a day (Kumar & Kaur, 2006). The Indian study has been able to explore the various uses of the internet, but this present study will go a step further in investigating the impact of a specific service of the internet namely online advertising on students and its promotion of consumerism.

### **2.4.3 ONLINE ADVERTISING AND STUDENT'S INTERNET USE IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

#### **2.4.3.1 TANZANIA**

A study was conducted in the University of Dar es Salaam, with the objective of determining the purpose for which students of the University use the internet (Luambano et al, 2004). The goal of the study was to investigate if students were using the internet for academic purposes. The study also went a step further to explore the level of students'

access to the internet, as well as the challenges students face in internet use. The main campus and UCLAS libraries in the University have the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) installed to replace the manual card catalogues in order to make it easier for the students' to have access to academic information on the internet. Questionnaires and interviews were employed as research instrument to collect data for the study. Also, focus groups and participant observation were also inculcated in the data collection process (Luambano et al, 2004).

The result of that study revealed that the level of student's access to the internet is low, and the most cogent reason that was discovered was that, during the time of study, computers with internet facilities were inadequate (Luambano et al, 2004). In addition, it was also revealed that, even students who had access to internet facilities were not making use of the facility effectively (Luambano et al, 2004). The main use of the internet by students was for communication with friends and relatives; it far exceeded its use for academic purposes. This was because they lacked the skills required for effective use of the internet. The recommendations of the study were; the provision of more computers with internet facilities, an increase in internet access speed and the provision of more chances of training in internet use (Luambano et al, 2004).

This research also asserts the theory of technology determinism (Webster, 2002) because the students of this university have adopted the use of the internet as a communication tool with their friends and family which hitherto was not utilised for such purposes (Luambano et al, 2004). The research above investigated if students of the University of Dar es Salaam use the internet as a source of academic information, but this present research will explore another aspect of the variant relationships between students and the internet. This other aspect is the impact of online advertising on students and its probable promotion of consumerism. The samples of the research will also be from a University in Africa namely, University of Fort Hare.

#### 2.4.3.2 GHANA

Furthermore, a study was conducted in Ghana on the adoption of the internet amongst final year students in the country's oldest business school (Hinson and Amidu, 2006). The purpose of the study was to investigate the level of awareness and utilization of the internet for academic research and learning among level 400 (final year) students. The methodology of the research was a cross-sectional survey approach because it was restricted to final year students in the 2003–2004 year graduating class (Hinson and Amidu, 2006). The research also made use of a convenience sampling technique which was implemented by means of questionnaire administration and personal interviews. Questionnaires were administered to the students before a business policy lecture (Hinson and Amidu, 2006). The structured questionnaire was constructed with both open and close ended questions. In addition, there were also, in-depth interviews with the respondents, because the study dealt with a research that had to do with technology, there are latent issues that could only be uncovered by open discussions. The generated data were analysed and presented by means of simple descriptive statistics (Hinson and Amidu, 2006).

The study revealed that developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, are often rich in the resources of people and staffing, if not in material resources (Hinson and Amidu, 2006). Promotion of information literacy is fundamentally reliant on using people differently, that is to better effect, not on injecting more resourcing into under-funded services (even though this is also important in many regards) (Hinson and Amidu, 2006). The ruling systems at teaching universities, including lecturers and heads of departments, must, as a matter of exigency, adopt mechanisms for the creation of better information skills and make students aware of the benefits of internet usage. The services available through the internet, and the basic skills required to use the internet should be reinforced to the students (Hinson and Amidu, 2006).

The study recommended that the University of Ghana's Business School should shift towards the establishment of instructional labs which would work in conjunction with the

school's library to guarantee that students are appropriately trained on business, teaching and research uses of the internet (Hinson and Amidu, 2006). This research was conducted in Africa amongst tertiary institution students and was able to properly study the adoption level and rate of the internet among the students. This present research will be researching issues surrounding internet adoption and use by students, but will be concentrating on the specific feature of the impact of online advertising on the students and its promotion of consumerism among University of Fort Hare students.

A similar study was conducted in Ghana at the Balme library in the University of Ghana on internet use at the library by the students (Alemna and Adanu, 2005). The users of the internet at the computer laboratory of the Balme library were required to complete a questionnaire on reasons for using the internet. A total of 3136 people made use of the internet during the period of survey (Alemna and Adanu, 2005). The study revealed that among the various services offered on the internet, communication via e-mail is the most adopted. This was closely followed by the use of the internet as a source of information for research. Out of all the services on the internet, the use of the internet for e-mail/browsing was the least (Alemna and Adanu, 2005). Out of the 3,136 people that were surveyed, majority (1,412) use the internet for sending emails only, 166 for research only but only 35 use the internet for both e-mail and research. Only a few (2) use the internet for chatting, 44 for browsing and just a minute number (1) use the internet for both email and browsing. About 8 of the respondents use the internet for typing and there was no response from 1,468 of the people who made use of the internet during the period of survey.

The study also revealed that the viability of the internet as a strong support for academic work is not being properly utilised at the University of Ghana (Alemna and Adanu, 2005). The internet facility at the school also has the disadvantage of it being slow in operation. This study recommends that the University should plan towards purchasing and operating on the platform of its own internet service (Alemna and Adanu, 2005). The establishment of such a platform might be rather expensive but if all the five state-owned universities come together, it will be a lot cheaper (Alemna and Adanu, 2005). The study

also concludes that at the University of Ghana, the internet has made a noteworthy breakthrough. It has made available current information to the academic society and has also made communication readily available and at an affordable price (Alemna and Adanu, 2005).

#### **2.4.3.3 NIGERIA**

Another study was conducted in Nigeria on the impact of internet browsing on students' academic performance at tertiary level of education among student' from five science-based courses; mathematics, physics, computer science, civil and mechanical engineering (Osunade, 2003). It was conducted in two institutions in Oyo state Nigeria namely, University of Ibadan and Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) (Osunade, 2003). The purpose of the study was to assess the outcome of internet access on students' academic performance with the specific tasks of examining 'internet browsing' as a knowledge acquisition tool and evaluating the end product of 'internet browsing' on students academic performance.

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The study was initiated as a result of rising commercialization of the internet in Nigeria and the revolution of information flow and systems (Osunade, 2003). The study asserts that the internet is now being used in a variety of ways to promote productivity, communication, business, advertisement, and marketing in Nigeria (Osunade, 2003). Internet usage for educational purpose is just receiving credit, as the need by most institutions to run distance-learning programs and the need to connect academic staff to international resources for improved instruction and research. The hypothesis of the research was, "There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students with internet access and those without access" (Osunade, 2003:11).

The research methodology was experimental in nature (Osunade, 2003). The study employed the use of two groups under different conditions. The first group (test group) was given access to the internet. These were the University of Ibadan students. The second group (control) is LAUTECH University students because, as at the time of the

study the University did not have any internet access hence this grouping method. The purposive sampling technique was employed. 300, 400 and 500 level students were chosen from five different science and applied science-based departments in the two universities. Registration forms, aptitude tests and internet training manuals as instruments to obtain responses from the participants (Osunade, 2003).

The forms were constructed to obtain personal information from the student, while the aptitude tests (pre and post) were used to evaluate the students' academic performance and intellectual capability so as to eliminate the influence of other factors in the test. Data collection was collected at two different stages (Osunade, 2003). At the first stage, the students were asked to fill the forms and also took the pre test. Meanwhile at this stage, the test group was afforded the opportunity of having access to the internet for two weeks at the rate of four hours per week. Two weeks after this process, both groups then sat for the post test. The Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software version 7.5 was employed for the analysis (Osunade, 2003).

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The study established that there exists a significant difference in the results of students with internet access and those without internet access; significant improvement was noted in the post test scores of the test group and male participants were more than female participants (Osunade, 2003). The findings also revealed that students use the internet at an average of two to three days per week; in addition, male participants prefer night browsing, while the female participants prefer to browse at daytime and the participants started using the internet in the year 2001 (Osunade, 2003). The most popular use of the internet among students is for sending and receiving electronic mail (email); nearly all the students have used the internet sometime in the past and finally about 60% of the students are in the 21-25 age brackets (Osunade, 2003).

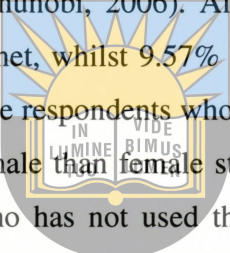
The study recommended that students should pay for the use of the internet provided by the university but it should be attractive enough for the students (Osunade, 2003). The Nigerian study concludes that there is a significant difference in the academic performance of students who have access to the internet and those without; in that the test

group was significantly better than that of the control group (Osunade, 2003). This Nigerian study was able to conduct an exhaustive study on the impact of internet browsing on students' academic performance, but this present study will look at the impact of online adverts that students are exposed to while browsing on the internet and its promotion of consumerism (Osunade, 2003). Also, the results of this research agree with the theory of '*technological determinism*' in that, the introduction of the internet to students have influenced their academic performance because they have access to academic materials online. According to this theory, students depend on this new technology for various social cultural activities like sourcing of information for educational purposes (Webster, 2002). Technological determinists hold that just like the weather, technology is autonomous; it causes social change (Hughes, 1983). The internet has indeed affected the socio cultural life of students.

A survey was conducted in the Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO), Nigeria with the aim of revealing the rate and purpose of internet use by students in order to be accurate in the provision of effective internet services for the students (Anunobi, 2006). The University community of F.U.T.O was exposed to the internet in the month of October 2004. The university which is situated 34km away from Owerri the Capital city of Imo State had been cut off from the global society ever since its movement to the permanent site in 1996. Most often, students and staff travel to benefit from the internet facility located in the city. But, the University Library is close to the provision of internet facility in the Library (Anunobi, 2006). In total, 1,200 self completion questionnaires were randomly distributed to the students in their residence halls. A total of 67.66% was returned and the results were collated and analyzed using tables, frequency and percentages. Five departments in the University were represented in the following order: Engineering and Engineering Technology (SEET 65%); Agriculture and Agricultural Technology (SAAT 15.38%); Science (SOSC 20.32%); Management Technology (SMAT 8.79%); and Health Technology (SOHT 0.54%). All the academic levels were represented except the first year students which were not part of the sample (Anunobi, 2006).

In summary, the result of the research revealed that most of the students in this tertiary institution use the internet mainly for academic purposes in spite of the location of the facility. Management and agricultural sciences students, use the internet more often than those of engineering and sciences. In addition, the long distance of the internet facility center to the students' residence determines the time spent and the regularity of the visit to the center (Anunobi, 2006). The Nigerian study revealed interesting results:

**Rate of internet use:** About 95.56% of the male students have used the internet before while only 4.43% have not, representing the 68.42% of the entire students who have not made use of the internet before (Anunobi, 2006). Alternatively 90.42% of the female students have made use of the internet, whilst 9.57% have not used the internet before, which represents 31.57% of the entire respondents who have not used the internet before. Therefore, it is obvious that more male than female students have not used the internet before. Majority of the students who has not used the internet before originates from SEET (31.57%); SOSOC (31.57%) and SAAT (26.31%) than in SMAT (10.52%) (Anunobi, 2006).

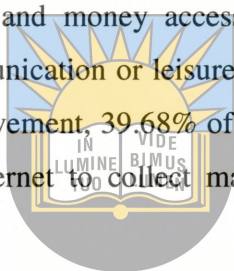
  
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**Location of internet center used:** Also, 69.76% of the students makes use of the internet center located at Owerri, 25.47% use the only one in the University (Anunobi, 2006). 3.09%, 0.95% and 0.71% use the internet centers at Ihiagwa, Obinze and Nekede respectively (these are villages surrounding to the University). From this result, it is obvious that students spend a lot of time, money and even risk their lives traveling about 30km to Owerri just to use the internet (Anunobi, 2006).

**Frequency of use:** About half (50.27%) of the students visited the internet only once in a week. The next majority of the students (30.21%) use the internet once a month. In addition, there were (15.93%) respondents who use it between 2 and 3 times in a week and a very low (3.57%) that use it just once a day. A little less than half 44.62% of the students use up 3hours and more while using the internet, which is more than 20.81% and 14.40% of the students that spend 2hours and 1hour respectively. In the midst of the students who spend 3hours or more, the result revealed that 26.92% use it once in a week

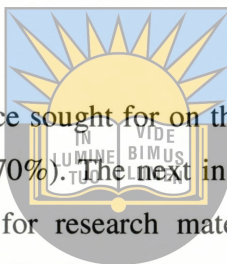
while those left over (15.10%, 1.78% and 0.82%) visit the internet monthly, daily and 2hourly in a week respectively. This illustrates that the less often they visit, the more time they spend. This is also evidence in the set who visit 2 to 3 times a week, only 0.82% of the 15.93% spend 3hours and more differing to 9.61% that spends an hour (Anunobi, 2006).

**Purpose of internet use:** The results shows that (81.08%) visit the cyber café for academic purposes, (15.02%) do so for recreational purpose while (3.88%) make use of the internet for communication purposes (Anunobi, 2006). This reveals that most of the students spend their time, energy and money accessing the internet for educational reasons; just a few do so for communication or leisure (Anunobi, 2006). 52.77% of the students focus on knowledge improvement, 39.68% of the students gathers materials for assignment and 7.53% use the internet to collect materials for research and projects (Anunobi, 2006).



The Nigerian research concluded that university students irrespective of the location of the internet facility use the internet and it not a barrier but, it determines the time and frequency of visit. It was recommend that the university library should install and provide internet services at a subsidized rate and hence reduce students' risk of information search elsewhere than the library (Anunobi, 2006). This study is an exhaustive study on internet use amongst tertiary institution students with interesting results (Anunobi, 2006). In addition, the frequency of the visits to use the internet and the location the students need to travel to in order to use the internet, despite the risk of life, the time and money commitment asserts the fact that indeed, technology determines the social and cultural life of the society according to the '*technological determinism theory*' (Webster, 2002). This present research will not stop at finding out what the students use the internet for and how often they use it, but it will investigate the social impact of the internet on the students in terms of online advertising and also to examine if it promotes consumerism amongst students.

Additionally, a study was conducted in Delta state Nigeria to evaluate the impact of the internet for learning, teaching and research in institutions of higher learning in Delta State (Ureigho et al, 2006). Students and staff of four tertiary institutions within Delta State, namely; Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe-Oghara, Petroleum Training Institute, Effurun and College of Education, Warri where employed as samples. About 120 questionnaires made up of 13 questions were evenly shared amongst these institutions. In all, 111 questionnaires were returned at the end of the process, which made the research a 92.5% response rate (Ureigho et al, 2006). With the use of SPSS 10.0 and Microsoft Excel 2000, the collected data was analysed and the survey revealed that;



Online chatting is the primary service sought for on the internet by staff and students of high institutions in Delta State (21.70%). The next in line is communication through e-mail services (20.92%). Sourcing for research materials on the internet rated third (19.87%). In the fourth place is On-line dating (18.75%), which is followed by entertainment (15.53%) and last of all religious information, ranked least (3.22%) (Ureigho et al, 2006). Majority of internet users fall between the age group of 21–23 years (29.7%). It was also concluded that males use the internet more than females because the results reveal that, 54% of the respondents were males while only 46% were females. In addition, a total of 106 (95.5%) respondents assert that the internet has positively influenced the educational systems of Delta State while only 5 (4.5%) did not agree to this. About 108 (97.3%) respondents reveal their consent to the fact that the benefit of internet technology in the state would increase if there is the provision of internet within campuses (Ureigho et al, 2006).

This research wrapped up with the decision that there would be a significant improvement in research through proper enlightenment, formal training on the use of internet and lastly, the provision of effective internet services in tertiary institutions in Delta State (Ureigho et al, 2006). This finding is also in accordance with the theory of technological determinism, because students' reliance on the internet for communication and entertainment is heavy. It is a crucial part of their social and cultural life (Webster,

2002). This research investigated the educational impact of the internet on the staff and student of four tertiary institutions in Delta State. The point of departure of this present research is that it will be exploring the social impact of a specific feature of the internet which is online advertising on the students of the University of Fort Hare.

#### **2.4.3.4 CAMEROON**

A different study examined the level of internet access in Cameroon's institutions of learning at the turn of the century and perceptions of librarians, faculty and graduate students on the present level of access to research literature both in the form of print and electronic (Jonas et al, 2004). Cameroon is a country of 16.2 million people on the west coast of Sub-Saharan Africa with a per capita income of \$540 (USD). The study was conducted in six of the seven universities in Cameroon with survey questions administered to 91 faculty members, librarians and students from the institutions during the academic year 2001 -2002 (Jonas et al, 2004).

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The Cameroonian study involved Universities of Buea, Douala, Dschang, Ngaoundere, Yaoundé I and II and UCAC Yaoundé. Population samples were selected from faculty members and graduate students. In terms of facilities, the study relied on libraries and their internet terminals (Jonas et al, 2004). These are the Universities in which the survey was conducted, although the seventh institution, the University of Ngaoundere was experiencing student protests during the period of data gathering. The participants were required to reveal the current degree of access to both print and online journals, in order establish their priorities and interest for scholarly communication for the future (Jonas et al, 2004). The findings of the survey revealed that university students have limited access to the internet which often is at personal expense; they have discovered the vast possibilities of the internet for increasing access to scholarly resources (Jonas et al, 2004). The students make use of this medium as an opportunity of having access to research and international online journals. The following table reveals the value of open access publishing purposes (rated out of 100).

Value of Open Access	Students(n =32)	Instructors(n=41)	Librarians(n=8)	Combined(N=81)
Increase access to Africa journals	74	64	68	68
Increase access to overseas journals	53	72	76	65
Increase the international indexing of African journals	63	39	63	50
Improve opportunities of publishing in overseas journals	56	62	60	61
Increase opportunities for publishing new African journals	57	57	55	57

Figure 2

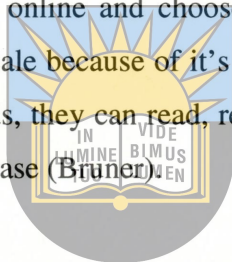
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In addition, the findings also revealed that out of the six universities that were surveyed, only 10% of the students reported to have any university access to the internet compared to 40% of faculty members (Jonas et al, 2004). It was also clear that majority of the students depend on internet cafes for internet access, which is rather expensive and costly for the students in locations that are not favorable to scholarly inquiry or learning. The table below reveals the percentage using principal sources of internet access (Jonas et al, 2004).

Because of the issue of cost and availability, the internet is yet to become, a primary source of academic information and research in most of the universities in Cameroon (Jonas et al, 2004). The research concluded that without access to some form of basic level of academic resources, it is very difficult to deliver and participate in a university education (Jonas et al, 2004). This study has been able to explore the level of internet

access of tertiary institution students in Cameroon (Jonas et al, 2004). This present research will go an extra mile in not only exploring how much access tertiary institution students have access to the internet, but also the impact of online adverts that they are constantly exposed to and its promotion of consumerism in their consumer behaviour (Jonas et al, 2004).

These findings would seem to concur with Bruner's concept that *consumers are demanding more control*, because over 75% of the students pay heavily to source for information on the internet because they do not have access in their schools (Bruner, 2005). These students prefer to go online and choose amongst the various advertised academic materials be it free or on sale because of it's a hands – on experience in which with hands on mouse and keyboards, they can read, research, watch, listen, write, send, meet, organize, and if possible purchase (Bruner).



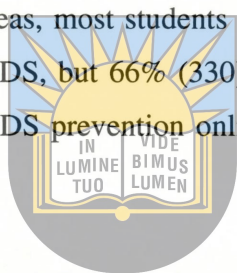
#### **2.4.3.5 UGANDA**

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Another study was conducted on the internet among Ugandan adolescents and its implication for HIV intervention in order to determine the utility of developing technology-based interventions in resource-limited settings (Ybara, 2006). The study was a cross-sectional survey of the use of the internet among adolescents aged between 12–18 years in Mbarara, Uganda, a municipality mainly serving a rural population in sub-Saharan Africa. The respondents of this study were selected randomly from qualified students that attend one of five participating secondary day and boarding schools in Mbarara, Uganda (Ybara, 2006). In total, 538 students were selected but only 93% (500) participated. Some of the questions that the study intended to answer were, to what extent are they exposed to computers and the internet; are they interested in accessing health information online and who uses the internet and how (Ybara, 2006).

The study revealed that 45% (223) of the respondents asserts ever having used the internet and even 78% (175) of them claimed to have gone online in the previous week (Ybara, 2006). The study also revealed that as maternal education increased, so also did

the odds of adolescent internet use. About 82% of the students reported to have used the internet at school; 57% said they go online at internet cafes; only 17% access the internet in their homes and additionally about 11% made use of the internet at a home other than theirs (Ybara, 2006). Approximately two in five respondents (38%) reported to have employed the use of the internet to search for information on their health. More than one-third (35%) of the students had used the internet to locate information about HIV/AIDS and nearly 20% had looked for sexual health information. The study discovered that searching for information on HIV / AIDS on the internet is particularly connected to the use of the internet on a weekly basis and emailing, visiting chat rooms, and playing online games (Ybara, 2006). Whereas, most students that went online in school do not search for information on HIV / AIDS, but 66% (330) reported that they would search more for information about HIV/AIDS prevention online if the internet was use if free (Ybara, 2006).



The study concluded that the craving of the students to use and the actual use of the internet to inquire about sexual health and HIV/AIDS information is very high among secondary school students in Mbarara (Ybara, 2006). It recommended that the internet may possibly be a promising stratagem in delivering a low-cost HIV/AIDS risk reduction interventions in a resource-limited location that is rich in growing internet access. This study also asserts the theory of technological determinism which claims that new technology changes the social and cultural lives of people (Webster, 2002). The students in the study are beginning to incorporate the use o the internet to search for information that can protect their health which hither to was not sop. The study was an exhaustive research on the use of the internet in the health industry, but this present research will not only study internet use amongst students but will investigate the impact of a specific feature of the internet on them, specifically; online advertising and its promotion of consumerism.

#### **2.4.4 SUMMARY OF STUDIES REVIEWED AND LESSONS LEARNT**

In summary, the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP study on the growth of internet advertising revenues revealed that in the first quarter of

the year 2007, revenues increased by a range of 26 % over Q1 2006 at \$3.8 billion and a 2 % increase over Q4 2006 at \$4.8 billion (Internet Advertising Revenue Report, 2007). This revealed that online advertising is indeed on the increase globally. Also, the American research conducted by Pew Internet and American Life project (2002) on internet's impact on college students' daily lives and its impact on their academic and social routines showed that college students are early adopters and heavy users of the internet and it's a part of their daily routine (Pew Internet and American Life project, 2002).

Another study was conducted in India on internet use by teachers and students in engineering colleges of Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh states of India (Kumar and Kaur, 2006). In summary, the Kumar and Kaur (2006) study reveals that the respondents see the internet and the library as excellent sources of information. But in terms of preference, the internet is more effective, more useful and more informative because it is faster in providing desired information (Kumar and Kaur, 2006). The study conducted in the University of Dar es Salaam, on the use of the internet by students for academic purpose showed that the level of student's access to the internet is low, and the most cogent reason that was discovered was that, during the time of study, computers with internet facilities were inadequate (Luambano et al, 2004).

Another study conducted in Nigeria on the impact of internet browsing on students' academic performance at tertiary level of education among student' from five science-based courses; mathematics, physics, computer science, civil and mechanical engineering (Osunade, 2003). This study established that there is a significant difference in the results of students with internet access and those without internet access; significant improvement was noted in the post test scores of the test group; male participants were more than female participants (Osunade, 2003).

A different study examined the level of internet access in Cameroon's institutions of learning and perceptions of librarians, faculty and graduate students on the present level of access to research literature both in the form of print and electronic (Jonas et al, 2004).

The study concluded that because of the issue of cost and availability, the internet is yet to become, a primary source of academic information and research in most of the universities in Cameroon (Jonas et al, 2004). The Ugandan study on the use of the internet among Ugandan adolescents and its implication for HIV intervention in order to determine the utility of developing technology-based interventions in resource-limited settings (Ybara, 2006). The study concluded that the craving of the students to use and the actual use of the internet to inquire about sexual health and HIV/AIDS information is very high among secondary school students in Mbarara (Ybara, 2006).

#### **2.4.5 ONLINE ADVERTISING AND STUDENTS INTERNET USE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

##### **2.4.5.1 CAPETOWN**

At Cape Technikon Library Services in South Africa, a study was conducted on access to the internet and its use in references (Darries, 2004). The survey was conducted electronically using the Web and e-mail to distribute the questionnaire. The target populations were the heads of reference services at large libraries and directors of smaller libraries of the 36 higher education institution in South Africa. The rate of response to the questionnaire was 28 (30.4%), although 2 of the questionnaires were spoilt (Darries, 2004). Therefore, the findings of the survey are based on the 26 (28.2%) completed questionnaire that came back intact (Darries, 2004). In total, 94 librarians were identified and they consist of heads and unit leaders of reference services, vice directors and directors (Darries, 2004). The distribution of the questionnaires was to 94 librarians, 21 at the 15 technikons and 73 at the 21 universities through e-mail. The Web site where the questionnaire was posted was: <http://www.capewebdesing/library>. The aims of the research were to ascertain to what extent students at higher education institutions have access to and are trained on the know how of internet use in the library; to access the use of the internet as an instruction information and reference tool (Darries, 2004).

The findings revealed that all the libraries have access to the internet and only one didn't provide internet access to the users; all the librarians have access to the internet for a longer period of time than their users; training for internet use is on a one-to-one basis at

point of use (Darries, 2004). The study also showed that majority of the librarians had attended formal internet training programs; most of the libraries have Web sites, but only a few of the librarians have individual pages that they update and maintain; most importantly, many libraries lack adequate computer and internet facilities (Darries, 2004). In this study, librarians answered a median average of 2.2 queries a day and just over half 13 (54.3%) indicated that the library Web site generated reference queries; a median average queries were received per day (Darries, 2004).

The Cape Technikon study recommended that the number of computer facilities available to users should be increased and also the internet bandwidth connection speed in higher education libraries should be increased (Darries, 2004). This study has been able to explore internet access and use in higher education in the pre-merger landscape. The point of departure of this present research from that under review is that, this research will not only investigate how much access students have to the internet, but as a result of its frequent use, the impact of online advertising among students and its promotion of consumerism will be investigated.

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#### **2.4.5.2 TOTAL ONLINE ADVERTISING SPENDING IN SOUTH AFRICA**

According to a study conducted by Marketing Web, South Africa, it was discovered that in 2006, the total advertising spending in the country was R20.1-billion, excluding self-promotion which is a 17% growth from the year 2005 which was R3-billion. Online advertising showed good growth of 24% and direct mail grew by 12% (Marketing Web, 2007). It was also discovered that the retail sector is the number one spending, with revenue of R4.8-billion. It was also the top spending category in daily newspapers with an ad spend of R814-billion. 40% share of total media spend (excluding self promotion) went to print advertising with a 12 percent: 28 percent split between magazines and newspapers. With one step behind is televising advertising, which gets a 38% share of total media (Marketing Web, 2007).

It can be deduced from the result of the survey that online advertising is also becoming more and more popular in South Africa with a growth of 24% in the year 2006

(Marketing Web, 2007). This study will be studying the impact of online advertising on the younger part of the generation of South Africa, specifically the students of the University of Fort Hare. The findings of the marketing web study agree with the concept that *marketers are demanding more accountability*, in that marketers are increasing their budget for online advertising because of its various advantages over traditional advertising (Bruner, 2005). The rate of response and performance can be easily measured. This impact can be seen in the result that asserts that the television advertising industry growth is one step behind with 38% growth (Marketing Web, 2007). The 24% growth in online advertising in South Africa also confirms the advertising theory namely, '*suggestion theory*' (Lindloff, 2002). Marketers have discovered the effectiveness of advertising on the internet because, consumers are spending more time on the internet and once they are exposed to these adverts on the internet, the suggestion process starts and it will definitely influence surfers' purchasing behaviour at one point or the other (Lindloff, 2002).

#### **2.4.5.3 UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE, ALICE**

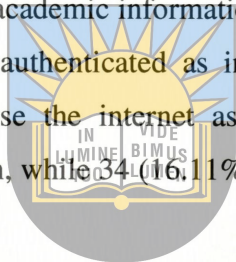
A research was carried out in the University of Fort Hare on 'Student Internet use in Tertiary Institution: A study of Internet usage in the University of Fort Hare's Walk-in Computer Labs' (Mkhululi, 2005). The major aim of this research was to find out why students use the internet as well as what they use it for. Also it sought to investigate the impact of internet use on the academic activities of students and to investigate to what degree has the internet changed or contributed to an interactive learning experience of students for students (Mkhululi, 2005). The findings of the research were that, 51% of students use the internet for their academic research and also to access information about an assignment topic (Mkhululi, 2005). About, 26% of students heavily rely on the internet daily in place of watching television with the other 27% indicating they never use the internet but instead they read their books and newspapers and 24% said they use the internet daily instead of reading (Mkhululi, 2005). The research was able to explore the various activities students use the internet for, but this present research will investigate the impact of online adverts on the same students of the University of Fort Hare and its probable promotion of consumerism.

Another study was conducted on the internet as a source of academic information and its impact on university libraries (Igonor, 2006). The objectives of the research were to determine to what degree and how often students depend on the internet as sources of academic information and its impact on library usage. It also sought to scrutinize which out of the two sources of information students really prefer (Igonor, 2006). Additionally, the research also probed the reasons for the increasing trend in using online materials as compared to published materials from the library and the study also analyzed the impact of this trend on library professionals, academic activities and academic productions (Igonor, 2006). The research employed both the quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to overcome the weaknesses or intrinsic biases and problems that come with using only single methods. The sample of this research comprises of; the students of the University of Fort Hare, main campus in Alice; lecturers in the University of Fort Hare main campus, Alice and librarians from the University of Fort Hare library, main campus, Alice (Igonor, 2006).



The research instruments were questionnaires, structured with close ended questions was used to collect data. The population of the data was 250 students, 5 librarians and 20 lecturers. The students were chosen randomly from 5 faculties namely science, education, human soc. Science and law (Igonor, 2006). The lecturers were included in the sample to verify the sources students often reference as their sources of information in their assignments and the librarians to enquire from them the trend they have noticed regarding the use of the internet and libraries for academic information by students since they work at the libraries (Igonor, 2006). Out of the 250 close- ended questionnaires that were dispersed, only 211 were returned. Amongst the 211 samples that were examined, 12 (5.69%) were married, 197 (93.36%) being the majority were single and just 2 (0.95%) were divorced. In terms of gender distribution, 112 (53.08%) were males and 99 (46.92%) were females. Based on their age category, most of the respondents, 132 (62.56%) fall between the age bracket of 21 -25. followed by 16 - 20, which were 54 (25.59%) (Igonor, 2006).

In addition, 24 (11.37%) were between the ages 26- 35, while there was only 1 (0.47%) respondents that is above the age of 36. The survey also revealed the multi nationality of students present in the University of Fort Hare. The nationalities include South Africa, Zimbabwean, Nigeria, Kenyan and a host of others. Majority of course were South Africans which were 125 (59.24%). This is followed by students from Zimbabwe which totaled 70 (33.18%). The main objective of this research is to inquire to what degree and how often students depend on the internet as sources of academic information and its impact on library usage (Igonor, 2006). The survey ascertained that majority of the students (95.26%) use the internet as a source of academic information. This reveals an overdependence on the internet for academic information, despite the fact information on the internet is not as proven and authenticated as information from the library. The students (64.93%) claimed they use the internet as a source because of the ready availability of necessary information, while 34 (16.11%) of the students admit it is due to easy access.



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This survey also indicated the dependence of students on the internet as a source of academic information, because (47.39%) students use the internet as a source of academic information 4 times a week, while also, 74 (37 + 37) students agreed to the use of online information more than once a week and less than 4 times per week (Igonor, 2006). Even though some students claim to use the internet and the library simultaneously, 15.64% students agree to the use of online information as the only source because of the lack of books in the library. The survey discovered that 172 (81.52%) trust the quality of online information, while 39 (18.48%) students do not trust the quality of online information, despite the fact that online information, especially freely accessible articles are not verified and proven. 57.64% students agree that the reason why they use online information is because of relevance, while 26.54% students only use online information because of the content (Igonor, 2006).

The survey also generated some disturbing result in terms of the plagiarism and copyright crimes being committed by students within the University, because 31.75% agree to copying and pasting information directly from the internet (Igonor, 2006). This reveals a

lazy attitude towards academic work by students and the quality of their overall productions are to be questioned (Igonor, 2006). In the University of Fort Hare, the use of the internet by students as a source of academic information, either as the only or supplementary source is drastically changing the way they source for academic information (Igonor, 2006). This is also impacting their attitude to schoolwork, the quality of the school academic productions (both humanly and paper wise) and with new functions being developed daily, the future of the library as a source is shaking (Igonor, 2006). This research will examine the impact of the internet socially on students in terms of online advertising and its promotion of consumerism.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, various researches have been reviewed and this research will contribute to their findings. One of the literatures that were reviewed is the study by the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC). This survey concludes that the growth of online advertising revenue reveals the comfort of marketers in the vivacity and accountability of the medium. This unprecedented growth of online advertising worldwide has sparked interest for this research to explore its influence among students of the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. Another research was conducted by Pew Internet and American Life project to discover internet's impact on college students' daily lives, and to determine the impact of that use on their academic and social routines. The study reveals that, college students are early adopters and heavy users of the internet and it's a part of their daily routine, because they grew up with the computer among other reasons. Although, this study examined the various relationships that students have with the internet and its impacts on their educational and social lives, the impact of online advertising on students was not investigated.

Additionally, in Nigeria, a study was conducted on the impact of internet browsing on students' academic performance at tertiary level of education among student' from five science-based courses. It shows that there is a significant difference in the academic performance of students who have access to the internet and those without. This study

was able to conduct an exhaustive study on the impact of internet browsing on students' academic performance, but this present study will look at the impact of online adverts that students are exposed to while browsing on the internet and its promotion of consumerism. The next chapter of this study will discuss the research methodology.




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## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter will discuss the research methodology employed in this study. It will clarify the various features and differences of qualitative, quantitative and triangulation research methods. The reasons for the choice of a qualitative or quantitative research method in a study will be examined. In addition, the data collection process will be scrutinized. Furthermore, the sampling frame and the analysis of the content of this study will be discussed. Finally, the ethical considerations surrounding this study will be discussed.

#### **3. QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**



This research employed both the quantitative and qualitative research methodology in order to overcome the challenges that come with using single approaches. Research methods can be classified in various ways; however one of the most common distinctions is between qualitative and quantitative research methods. Quantitative research methods were originally developed in the natural sciences to study natural phenomena (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994). Examples of quantitative methods that are now well accepted in the social sciences include survey methods, formal methods such as econometrics and numerical methods such as mathematical modeling. Qualitative research methods were developed in the social sciences to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena. Examples of qualitative methods are action research, case study research and ethnography (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994).

Qualitative data sources include observation and participant observation (fieldwork), interviews, questionnaires, documents, texts and the researcher's impressions and reactions. Qualitative research methods are designed to help researchers understand people and the socio / cultural contexts within which they live (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994). The goal of understanding a phenomenon from the point of view of the participants and its particular social and institutional context is largely lost when textual data are quantified (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994). Quantitative and qualitative research

can be employed independently of each other; though combining research methods is usually recommended. This is known as triangulation (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994).

It is often argued that all forms of research ultimately have a qualitative grounding but in terms of a quantitative research, there is nothing that can be referred to as qualitative data, because everything is either 1 or 0. Qualitative research aims at a complete, detailed description and most often, the researcher only know roughly in advance the anticipated result of the study (Neill, 2007). In addition, qualitative research is mostly recommended during the early stages of studies and the research design emerges as the study open up. Also, the data gathering instrument is the researcher and the data is in the form of words, pictures or objects. In qualitative research the interpretation of the survey result is subjective because the researcher's point of view reflects in the interpretation because of the use of such methods as participant observation and in-depth interviews. Finally the data generated from a qualitative research is more 'rich', time consuming and it is difficult to generalise (Neill, 2007).

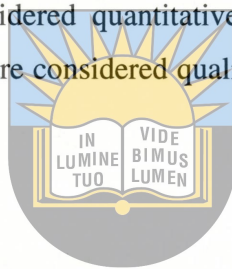
The logo of the University of Fort Hare, featuring a sun rising over an open book with the Latin motto 'IN VIDE LUMINE BIMUS' on the pages.

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For quantitative research, the aim of the researcher is to classify features, count them, and construct statistical models in order to explain what is being observed. In quantitative research, the aim, objective and the prospect of the research is clearly known in advance and most often this form of research is recommended at the latter phases of research projects (Neill, 2007). Before data is collected, all the various aspects of the intended study are painstakingly constructed and designed, the researcher employs the use of tools such as questionnaires or equipment to collect numerical data and the data generated is in the form of numbers and statistics (Neill, 2007). Most importantly, the result of a quantitative survey is objective in nature because; it seeks precise measurement and analysis of target concepts through the use of surveys and questionnaires. Finally, quantitative data are more efficient, they are able to test hypotheses, but may miss contextual detail (Neill, 2007).

In addition to the qualitative versus quantitative data gathering process distinction, there are other distinctions which are commonly identified. Quantitative research methods have

also been classified as objective, that is, an objective judgment which is undistorted by emotion or personal bias based on observable phenomena, versus subjective/Qualitative. Subjective meaning judgment based on individual and internal perceptible which has to do with the researchers' own experience and interpretation of the experience (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). It is usually modified by individual bias thereby making the judgment subjective. This form of interpretation is difficult to describe in numeric or concrete terms. Another distinguishing factor is whether the data to be collected are already enumerated, whether they can be collected and enumerated or whether they must remain as verbal descriptions. Generally, data that are collected and that can be immediately transported into numbers are considered quantitative. Whereas, data that can not be structured in the form of numbers, are considered qualitative in design (Brink and Wood, 1998).



### **3.1 TRIANGULATION**

Triangulation is the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon or construct. It is a method of establishing the accuracy of information by comparing three or more types of independent points of view on data sources bearing on the same findings (Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994). There are five fundamental variety of triangulation; *data triangulation* involves time, space, and persons; *investigator triangulation* is the use of multiple observers; *theory triangulation* is the use of more than one theoretical design in the interpretation of a phenomenon; *methodological triangulation* is the use of more than one method and may consist of within-method or between-method strategies; *multiple triangulation*, in this case, the researcher combines in one investigation multiple observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data, and methodologies (Fitzgibbons, 2003).

Methodological triangulation which involves using more than one method can make findings more robust and it gives a range of perspectives (Fitzgibbons, 2003). Also, when mixing methods in social sciences research, it is important to implement the sequence of the qualitative and quantitative data collection in the planned study; there must be

prioritization of the qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis and the stage of integration of the qualitative and quantitative data and findings must be put into consideration (Creswell, 2003). This research employed the methodological triangulation research methods, through the use of close ended *questionnaires* and *interviews* in order to conduct an exhaustive research from different perspectives which will definitely reach accurate results and views that might be hidden in the respondents.

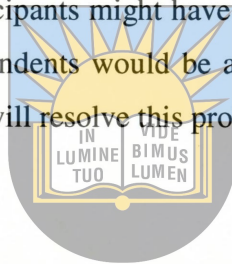
### **3.2 CHOOSING A QUANTITATIVE OR QUALITATIVE METHOD**

The choice between the use of a quantitative or/and qualitative research methods is based on the type of research design. For example, exploratory designs primarily use flexible open ended qualitative data collection methods, whereas descriptive designs combine qualitative and quantitative methods. All other designs may incorporate qualitative data collection as an enhancement to the data but not as a primary data collection method (Brink & Wood, 1998). In as much as there are quite a number of differences between these methods, there is little difference between the approaches since all methods are quantitative in nature, because anything can be counted - even purely verbal responses, perhaps after sorting comments into similar groups; and that all approaches are qualitative, because answers to even the firmest numeric questions may conceal a variety of meanings (Trochim, 2006).

The real difference however is not so much in the method applied, but a researcher's approach. Despite that, some methods are more quantitative (e.g. surveys, automated counting), and other methods are more qualitative (e.g. in-depth interviews and group discussions). However, there can be qualitative surveys - using mostly open-ended questions. There can also be quantitative group discussions using the consensus group technique.

### **3.3 DATA COLLECTION**

**3.3.1 QUESTIONNAIRES:** The quantitative aspect employed the use of close ended self completion questionnaires. The researcher made use of questionnaires to gather data because they are more objective and are relatively quick to collect information. The choice of the use of questionnaires is due to fact that they are more objective because responses are gathered in a standardized way. In addition, information can be received from a large number of people and it is relatively quick to collect information using a questionnaire (Milne, 1999). Although, questionnaires may have the disadvantage, of not been able to explain questions participants might have misinterpreted, the 'other' section of the questionnaire were the respondents would be allowed to use their own words to describe their personal evaluations will resolve this problematic.



### **3.3.2 SAMPLING FRAME**

The sample of this research comprises of the students of the University of Fort Hare, main campus in Alice. The research instruments are structured questionnaires, with close ended questions. Interviews will be conducted with some students. The population of the data is 200 students. Only 160 students filled the questionnaires. A total of 160 students were sampled from the Faculties of Science & Agriculture, Management & Commerce, Humanities and Law, which totals 40 students per faculty. Out of the 40 students from each faculty, the students were divided into 10 each within the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> year students to fill the questionnaires. Find below a tabular representation:

FACULTES	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
	Students	Students	Students	Students
Sciences Agriculture	10	10	10	10
Education	10	10	10	10
Human Soc. Scie	10	10	10	10
Law	10	10	10	10

Figure 3 (Questionnaires)



### 3.3.3 INTERVIEWS

Also, interviews were conducted via focus groups format for the qualitative aspect of the study with some of the students. Since the researcher will be combining both methods, the weaknesses and biases of both methods would have been made up for with the combination. Qualitative research interview is an effort to understand the world from the subjects' point of view and to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations (Kvale, 1996). The population of the data is 200 students. Only 40 students were interviewed from the Faculties of Science & Agriculture, Education, Humanities and Law which totals 10 students per faculty. Out of the 10 students from each faculty, the students were divided into 2 each within the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year, while 4 each from 5<sup>th</sup> year students for the interviews.

There are three major types of interviews, namely; structured, semistructured and in depth interviews. Structured interview is the administration of structured questionnaires by interviewers who are trained to ask fixed choice questions in a standardized method. Semistructured interviews are loose in structure and are made up of open ended questions that describe the area to be explored, at least initially. Although the interviewer or

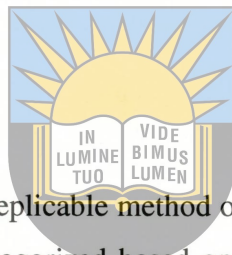
interviewee may diverge in order to follow up on an idea in more detail. Finally, In-depth interviews are less structured and most often, cover only one or two issues, but in much greater detail. It is largely made up of clarification and probing for details (Britten, 1995). This research will conduct in – depth interviews in the form of focus groups, in order to make up for the disadvantages of close ended questionnaires because, according to Sykes (1991), the best use of the qualitative research method is when it is combined with the quantitative method.

In the applied social sciences, focus group discussions or group in-depth interviews are among the most widely used research tool visitors (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990). Focus groups take advantage of the interaction between small groups of people. Participants respond to and build on what others in the group have said visitors (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990). It is believed that this synergistic approach produces more insightful information and it encourages discussion participants to give more candid answers. Focus groups are further characterized by the presence of a moderator and the use of a discussion guide. Focus groups are normally made up of anywhere between 6 and 12 people with common characteristics visitors (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990).

These must be in relation to what is being studied, and can consist of demographic characteristics as well as a certain knowledge base or familiarity with a given topic. For instance, when studying perceptions about a certain destination, it may be important to have a group that has visited it before, while another group would be composed of non-visitors (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990). Find below a tabular representation of the samples:

FACULTES	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
	Students	Students	Students	Students
Sciences	2	2	2	4
Education	2	2	2	4
Human Soc. Sci	2	2	2	4
Law	2	2	2	4

Figure 4 (Interviews)



### 3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Content analysis is the systematic, replicable method of compressing group of words into text that are less in content and categorized based on explicit rules of coding (Stemler, 2001). It has the attractive element of being unobtrusive and is useful in dealing with large volumes of data (Stemler, 2001). Most often, in social research, data analysis is made up of three major steps namely, cleaning and organizing the data for analysis / data preparation, describing the data / descriptive statistics and testing hypotheses and models / inferential statistics respectively. Data preparation involves checking or logging in data, checking for accuracy in data, entering data into the computer, transforming data and the development and documentation of a database structure which incorporates the various measures.

Secondly, descriptive statistics describes the basic features of the data in a study. Simple summaries are provided about the sample and the measures (Trochim, 2006). In conjunction with simple graphics analysis, the basis of virtually every quantitative analysis of data is formed. Inferential statistics scrutinize questions, models and hypotheses (Trochim, 2006). Most often, conclusions from inferential statistics extend further than the immediate data alone. For example, inferential statistics is used to make judgments about the probability of an observed difference between groups to determine if one is dependable or the other might have happened by chance in the study. Therefore,

inferential statistics is employed to make inferences from data to more general conditions while, descriptive statistics simply describes what is happening in a data (Trochim, 2006). The data collected in this research was analyzed via the SPSS statistical software. This research quantified and analyzed the presence, meanings and relationships of words, concepts and made inferences to construct meaning.

### **3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical issues are of particular importance in the context of a qualitative research because of the level of individual in-depth interviews which often reveal sensitive areas of life, which the respondents reveal to the researcher, as well as quantitative research. The use of this information is very important in research ethics. These are some of the ethical practices that were employed while carrying out this research; *voluntary participation*: the participants of this study were not coerced into participating in the research. It was out of their free volition; *Informed consent*: the respondents were fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in the research and their consent to participate were obtained; *risk of harm*: in addition, the participants of this study were not put in any situation that can result to them being harmed. In this case, harm is defined as both physical and psychological; *confidentiality*: the identity of the participants are protected and finally *anonymity*: The participant of this is and will remain anonymous throughout the study (Trochim, 2006).

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the research methodology of the study. It also examined the various features and differences of qualitative, quantitative and triangulation research methods. The data collection process was analyzed as well as the sampling frame and the analysis of the content of this study were discussed. Finally, the ethical considerations of this study were explained. There were quiet a number of challenges that were encountered while conducting this study. Firstly, there was the problem of question technicality, that is; the study requires the asking of questions that are quiet difficult to

understand, unless the respondents are conversant with the technical language of the internet such as, online directories, e-mail newsletters, website link advertising, animated advertising banners / pop –ups and opt in e-mail news letters.

Due to the fact that questionnaires are standardised in nature, it is not possible to explain any points in the questionnaire that participants might misinterpret. This was solved by piloting the distribution of the questionnaires with a brief explanation of some of the technical terms which describes the features the students are already accustomed to on the internet but might not know what it is called technically. There was also the issue of time frame limitation, because the study was scheduled to be completed at a set time and it was a challenge to get as many questionnaires back as possible from the respondents. Eventually, most of the respondents were very supportive and the questionnaires were returned as soon as possible. A total of 160 questionnaires were circulated and it was vital to the study that the response rate is favourable in order for the study to be fully representative of the different sections in the school.

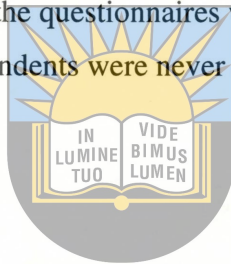
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One of the reasons why the students were not eager to respond was because some of them thought that they will not benefit from responding. This was solved when the benefits of the study to them were highlighted and were also told that their identity would be anonymous. Additionally, open-ended questions usually produce large amounts of data which takes time to record, process and analyse. This was solved by ensuring that the data were recorded as the questionnaires came in, therefore the data was not allowed to pile up and it was finished and analysed in a very short time. The next chapter will collate and analyze the data collated for this research.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Online advertising is a growing form of advertising channel world wide and even in South Africa. The excessive use of the internet for different purposes by students exposes them to different forms of online adverts. The study seeks to find out the impact of online adverts on students, their level of response to these adverts and its probable promotion of consumerism. The study distributed a total of 160 close ended questionnaires but only 151 were returned because some of the questionnaires were taken away with the promise of being returned later but, the respondents were never cited again.



#### 4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

*Students use the internet to search for products and services before purchase.* Most (84%) of the students use search engines, to locate products and services advertised online. Only 16% claim not to search for products and services on the internet. About 42% does so because of the availability of necessary information while 22% said it is because of easy access. Also, 19% says it's because of the relevance of information they find, while 1% claim that it is because of ease of usage. Furthermore, 59% of the students claim to use the internet to search for products and services more than twice a week, while 17% does so once a week. About 8% does so once a month.

*Students click on website link adverts to view products and services before purchase.* About 85% of the respondents asserts to clicking on website link adverts, while only 15% concur not to click on the adverts. Also, just as in the case of searching for products and services through search engines, the most popular reason also for clicking on website link adverts is due to the availability of necessary information as affirmed by 36%. In addition, 29% claim that this is due to easy access, while 17% says it's because of the relevance of the information and 3% says it's due to easy usage. More than half (53%)

click on website link adverts more than twice a week while 21% click on it once a week. Also, 9% click on it once a month, while only 2% do so once a year.

*Students click on animated banners and pop – ups online adverts to view products and services before purchase.* The third form of online advert that was examined is animated banners and pop-ups. More than half (59%) of the respondents concur to clicking on banners and pop-ups online advert, but 41% claim not to take interest. In all, 14% of the respondents say the reason why they take interest in this form of online advert is because of the easy access. Also, 19% say it is due to availability of necessary information, while 13% claim it's because of the relevance of the information. Only 3% say it's due to easy usage. A large percentage (28%) of the respondents click on these adverts more than twice a week, while 21% agree they do just once a week. Only about 8% do so once a month as little as 2% only does so once a year.

*Students open opt – in e-mail newsletters to view products and services before purchase.* A large number of the respondents concur to opening opt – in email newsletters; while 40% say they do not. In all, 23% of the respondents claim to open this advert because of the availability of necessary information, while closely behind that is easy access at 22%. About 11% of the respondents do so because of the relevance of the information, while only 4% is due to easy usage. In addition, 47% of the students open these newsletters more than twice a week while only 10% does so once a week. Also, 3% open the advert once a month.

*Online adverts motivate students to purchase.* This survey interestingly revealed that 70% of the respondents who are students are motivated to purchase through the exposure to the various forms of online adverts. *Online adverts promote consumerism, amongst University of Fort Hare students.* More than half (51%) of the respondents to this study who are students, asserts that the undue exposure to online adverts, irrespective of the type, makes them feel unhappy when they can not afford to purchase the advertised product and services. Only 49% claim not to be unhappy if they cannot make purchase.

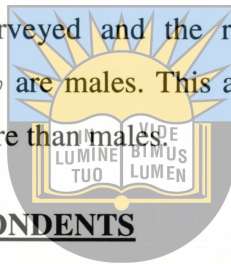
This study will now proceed to provide a detail description and the analyses of the results generated in this study.

#### **4.1 MARITAL STATUS OF STUDENTS IN FORT HARE:**

Out of the 151 respondents, it was discovered that 93% of the students are single, 6% are married and only 1% is divorced. The reveals that the majority of the students in the University of Fort Hare are not married.

#### **4.2 PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO GENDER**

A total of 151 students were surveyed and the result revealed that, 52% of the respondents are females, while 48% are males. This asserts the fact that there are more females in the University of Fort Hare than males.



#### **4.3 AGE CATEGORY OF RESPONDENTS**

This study also reveals that majority (51%) of the students in the University of Fort Hare fall between the 21 – 25 age groups. This is followed by the 16 – 20 age group at 28% and 20% of the students are between the ages of 26 – 35 age group. In the least is 1% which represents students who are 36 years and above.

#### **4.4 NATIONALITY OF RESPONDENTS**

University of Fort Hare is a school of multi nationality students which is evident in the response of this survey. The nationalities include South Africa, Zimbabwean, Nigeria, Kenyan and a host of others. Majority of course were South Africans which represents 55% of the respondents. This is followed by Zimbabwe which represents 22% of the respondents and next is Lesotho at 9%. Botswana and Nigerian students are at a tie because they both represent 5% each of the respondents and the least nationality in the school is DRC.

#### **4.5 YEAR OF STUDY**

Out of the respondents of the survey, 27% of the students are at the second year of their study, while closely followed are first year students at 26%. Also, 24% of the

respondents are third year students and lastly a total of 23% of the respondents are post graduate students.

#### 4.6 INTERNET USAGE

This study also revealed that all the respondents of the study use the internet. This is a highly impressive result because it shows that the students of the University of Fort Hare are employing effectively the internet for various purposes. It also shows that the school has not been left out of the information revolution.

#### 4.7 WHAT STUDENTS USE THE INTERNET FOR:

The respondents were also required to reveal what they use the internet for and it was discovered that majority (79%) of respondents use the internet for the purpose of acquiring information. This is followed by entertainment at 59% and closely on it tail is the use of the internet for communication at 58%. Although, only 41% of the respondents claim to use the internet for educational purposes. This shows that the priority of the students of the University of Fort Hare use of the internet is to search for information and the use of the internet for educational purposes has not been fully utilised by all the students.

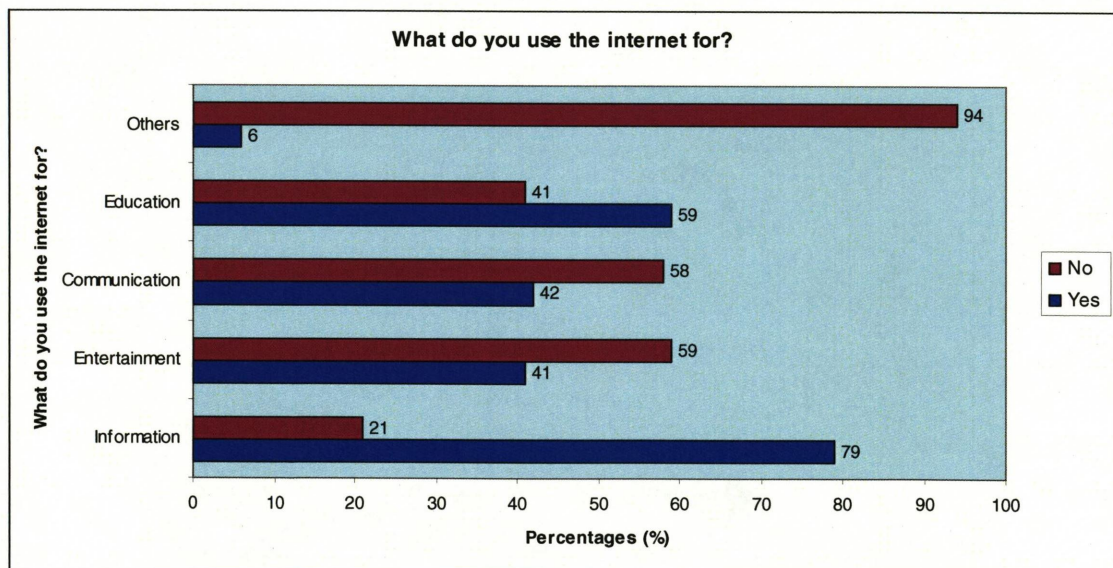


Figure 5

#### **4.8 HOW OFTEN STUDENTS USE THE INTERNET:**

The respondents of this study also revealed that majority (64%) of the respondents use the internet more than thrice a week. This reveals they are highly dependent on the internet for the various reasons why they use the internet. About 17% of the respondents use the internet twice a week while only 9% use the internet thrice a week. Only 7% claim to use the internet once a week while only a minute few of 3% use the internet once a month. This asserts the fact that majority of the students of the University of Fort Hare constantly use the internet regularly. This also means that students are regularly exposed to the various forms of online advertising on a regular basis.

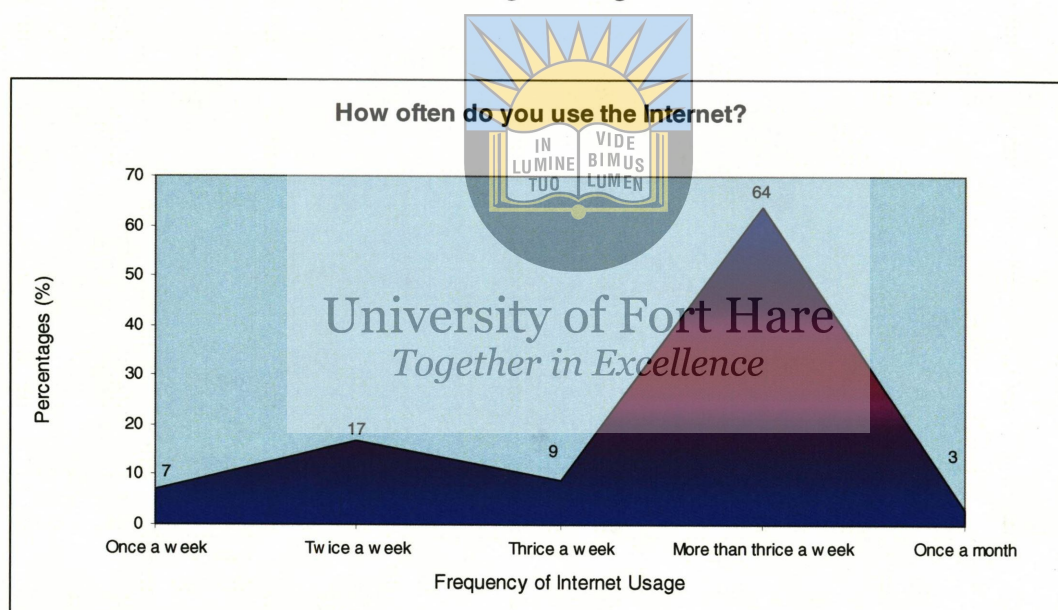


Figure 6

#### **4.9 WHICH WEBSITE STUDENTS VISIT MOST OFTEN:**

The study also revealed that majority (83%) of the students visit the Google website most often. This is followed by Yahoo at 63% and MSN at 6%. The remaining respondents claim to visit other websites often. This shows that the students of the University are constantly exposed to the various adverts that appear on these globally popular websites. This study will later reveal whether they do responds to these adverts and if it motivates them to make purchase.

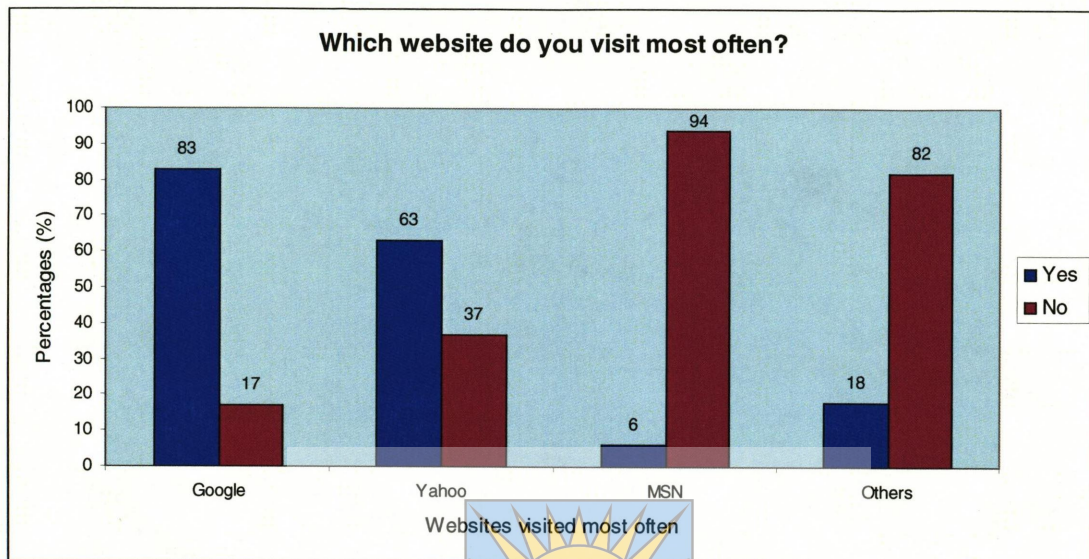


Figure 7



#### **4.10 WHERE DO STUDENTS USE THE INTERNET THE MOST:**

The respondents were also required to reveal where they use the internet the most. A total of 76% of the respondents reveal that they use the internet at the school library. About 48% claim to use the internet in their departmental reading rooms while 5% use the internet at cyber cafes. Only 3% use the internet at home; 1 % in Telecenters and 4% in other places. The shows that the internet facility provided by the school is encouraging the students to use the internet. Internet facility at the departments also helps to relive the rush for the facility at the libraries. The penetration of the internet into the individual homes of the students is still very low which show that this community is yet to be advanced to the stage of being connected to the internet exhaustively. Also, the school authorities should look in to ways of encouraging the government to establish more telecenters in the school environ such as Alice town.

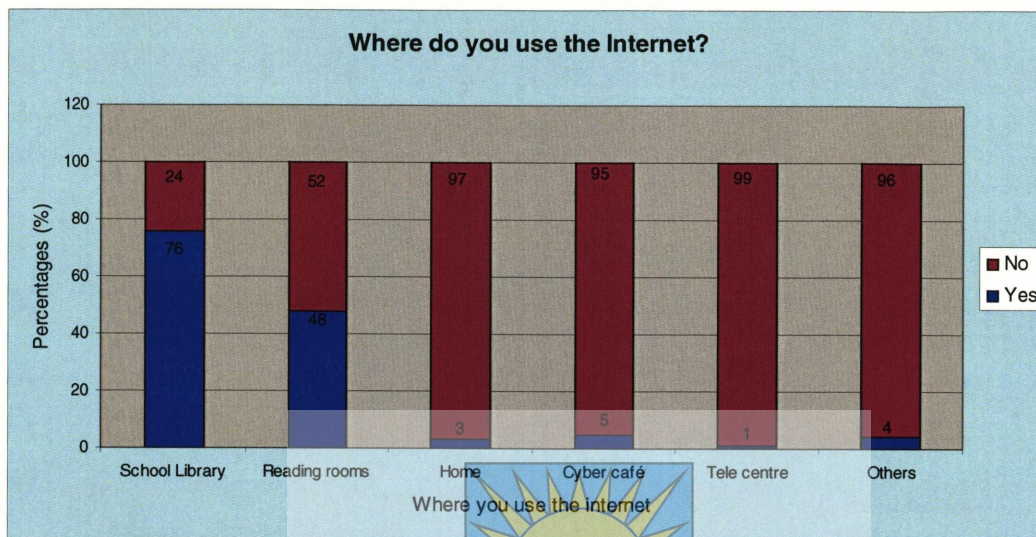


Figure 8

#### **4.11 AT WHAT AGE DID STUDENTS START USING THE INTERNET:**

The study also revealed that majority (64%) of the students started using the internet while they were between the ages of 16 -20. About 22% started between the ages of 21 - 25, while 13% between 11 -15. Only 1% started using the internet between the ages of 26 -30. In comparison to foreign countries in which exposures to the internet is as early as at the age of ten, the students of the University of Fort Hare are rather late in their use of the internet. Although, based on the apartheid history of the country, this shows signs of great improvement in a historically black disadvantaged University, for 64% of the students to have learnt how to use the internet as early as 16 -20 years old.

#### **4.12 OWNERSHIP OF PERSONAL COMPUTERS:**

The study also disclosed the fact that only 16% of the respondents have their own personal computers while, 84% does not have personal computers.

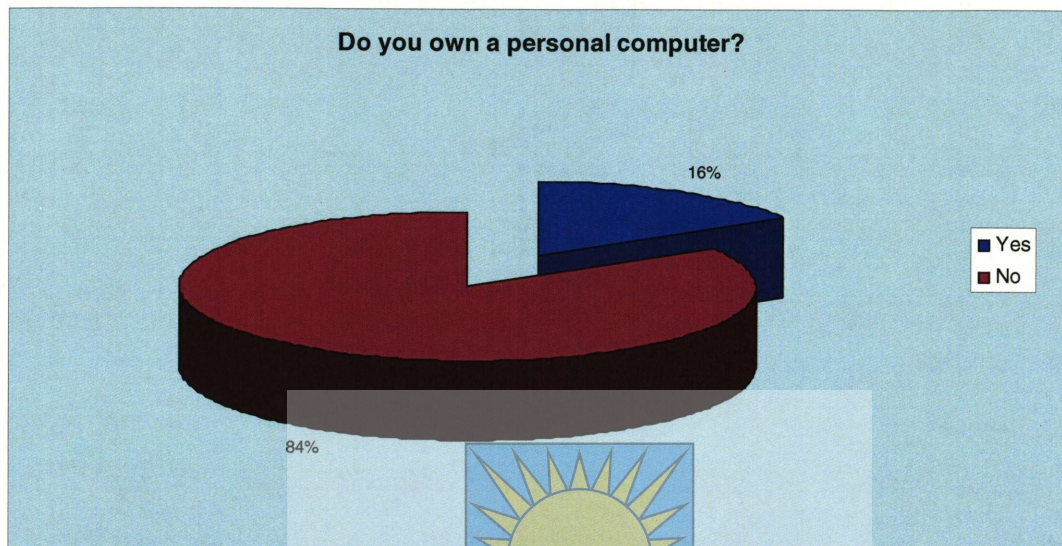


Figure 9



#### **4.13 SEARCHING OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES VIA THE INTERNET:**

This study researched the impact of online advertising on students. This was categorized into five different types. The first type is searching for products and services via search engines in order to locate advertisers web sites to view the products and services which either leads to purchase or not. This study revealed that 84% of the students use search engines to locate products and services advertised online. Only 16% claims not to search for products and services on the internet. This makes it one of the most popular form of online advertising that respondents employ the most. This finding also asserts one of the researchers study concepts which say that *consumers are demanding more control* (Bruner, 2005).

This is because instead of waiting endlessly for a particular product to be advertised on television, news papers , bill boards or on any of the traditional media channels in which they have access to only very little information, students as consumers would rather search for the advert at their own convenience and pace online. This finding also corroborate with one of the researchers theoretical framework which is *technological determinism*. This theory asserts that a society's technology determines its cultural values,

social structure, or history (Webster, 2002). Technological determinism is a sociological reasoning that implies that technologies are the decisive agents of social change. Technology is the driving force of change (Webster, 2002). Instead of the old conventional and only way of being exposed to advertisements, students as consumers now have the opportunity to view adverts on the internet. Therefore it can be safely concluded that online adverts have caused a change in the student's social and cultural behaviours.

#### **4.14 REASON WHY STUDENTS USE THE INTERNET TO SEARCH FOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:**

The respondents were required to give reasons why they use the internet to search for products and services. The study revealed that 42% do so because of the availability of necessary information while 22% said it is because of easy access. Also, 19% say it's because of the relevance of information they find, while 1% claim that it is because of ease of usage. This exposes the fact that, the most important reason why students as consumers respond more to this form of online advert is because of the abundance of the availability of necessary information.

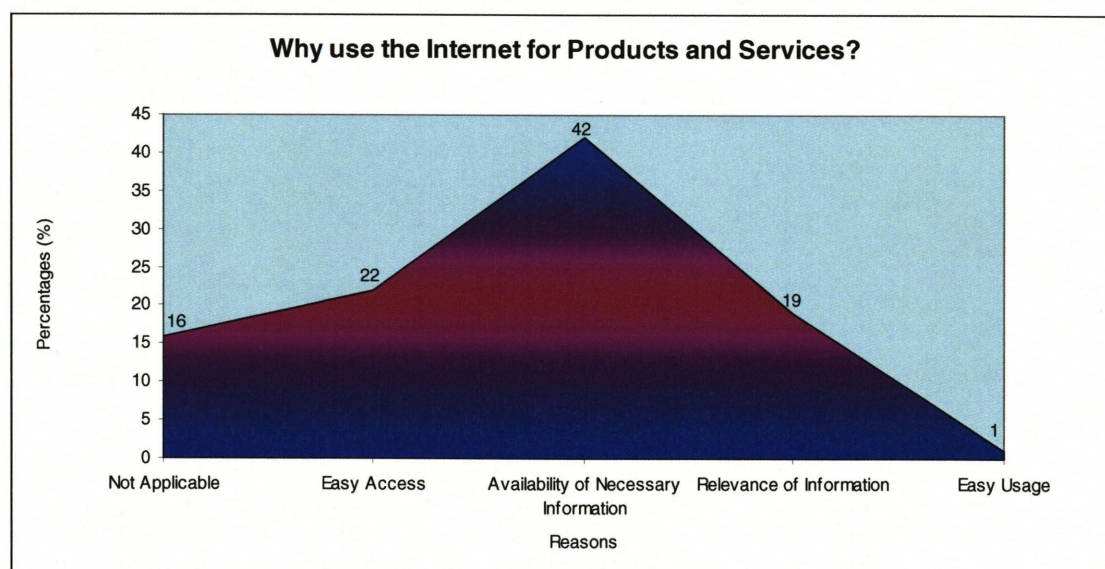


Figure 10

#### **4.15 HOW OFTEN STUDENTS USE THE INTERNET TO SEARCH FOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:**

Furthermore, 59% of the students claim to use the internet to search for products and services more than twice a week, while 17% does so once a week. About 8% does so once a month. This means that more than half of the students are exposed to this form of online advertising more than twice a week. This is one of the reasons why this form of adverts is gradually on the increase in South Africa.

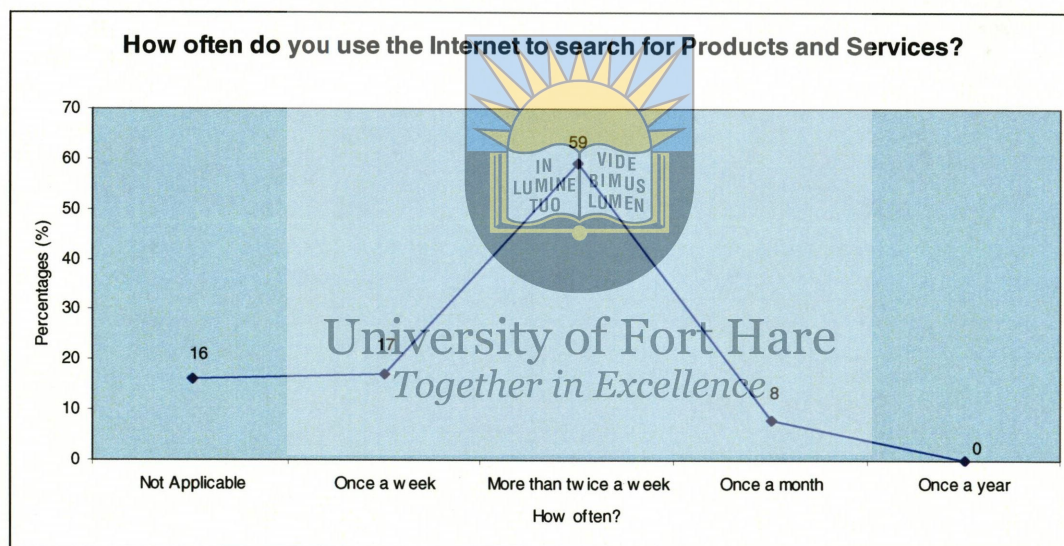


Figure 11

#### **4. 16 WHY STUDENTS DO NOT USE THE INTERNET TO SEARCH FOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:**

About 16% of the respondents had already said that they do not use the internet to search for products and services. They were asked why and 5% said it is due to lack of relevant information. There is a tie on the reasons of too much information and lack of internet operation skills, as both are at 4% each. Only 2% said it is too costly to access and 1% said that it is because of lack of physical access.

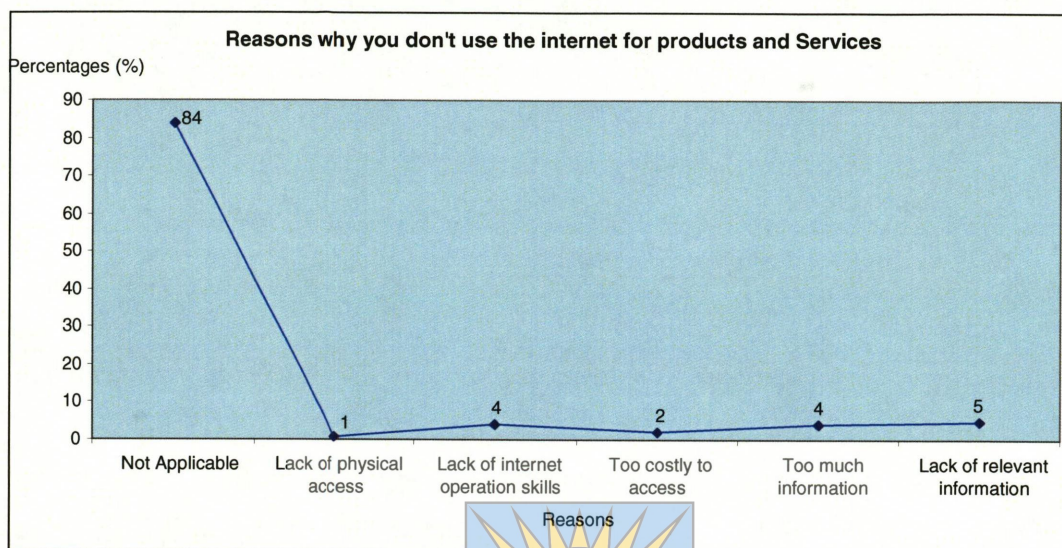


Figure 12

#### **4.17 RESPONSE OF STUDENTS TO ONLINE ADVERTS IN FORM OF WEBSITE LINKS:**

The second type of online advertising that was investigated in this research is website link advertising. About 85% of the respondents asserts to clicking on website link adverts, while only 15% concur not to click on the adverts. This also makes it one of the most popular forms of online advertising amongst the students. Additionally, the result of this study also affirms the theory of *technological determinism* which holds that technologies have an “overwhelming and inevitable power to drive human actions and social change” (Lievrouw and Livingstone, 2006: 21). It is the idea that technological development determines social and cultural change (Hughes, 1983). This is because 85% of the respondents have incorporated the use of website links to locate products and services which might eventually lead to purchase. This is an obvious change from the traditional way of being exposed to adverts.

According to Bruner (2005), *consumers are demanding more control* because unlike the traditional media that restricts consumer’s choice, students as consumers are beginning to patronize online adverts even more because it’s a hands-on experience. Students can easily go online being in total control of the mouse and keyboards, they can read,

research, watch, listen, write, send, meet, organize, post program, purchase and much more, through the internet. The fact that 85% of the respondents click on website link adverts also affirms one of the researchers' study concepts which is that, *marketers are demanding more accountability* (Bruner, 2005). This concept refers to the emerging demand of companies from advertisers to account for the effectiveness of their adverts in return for their spending. That is for example, for every customer that clicks on a website link advert, the advertising company would be able to measure the number of clicks on the site. This major advantage of the internet over traditional media is attracting more converts who are diverting more money into online advertising, because the internet has the ability to measure both brand and performance.

#### **4.18 REASONS WHY STUDENTS CLICK ON WEBSITE LINK ADVERT:**

Furthermore, just as in the case of searching for products and services through search engines, the most popular reason also for clicking on website link adverts is due to the availability of necessary information as affirmed by 36%. In addition, 29% claims this is due to easy access, while 17% says it's because of the relevance of the information and 3% says it's due to easy usage.

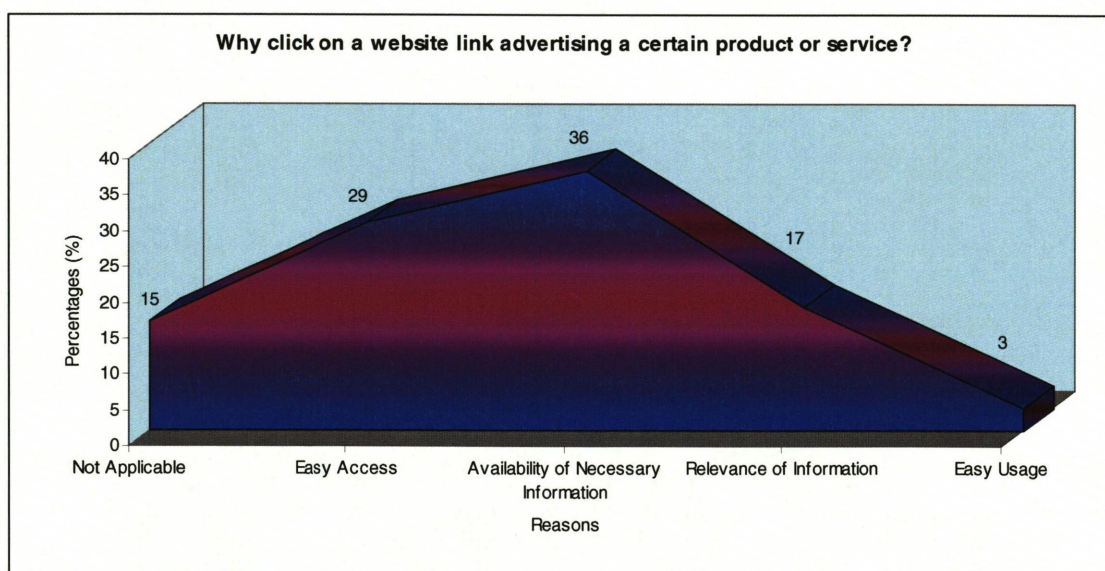


Figure 13

#### **4.19 HOW OFTEN STUDENTS CLICK ON WEBSITE LINK ADVERT:**

The study also discovered that more than half of the students (53%) click on website link advert more than twice a week while 21% click on it once a week. Also, 9% click on it once a month, while only 2% do so once a year. This shows the reason why advertisers are gradually increasing their budget for online advert, because of the frequency of the visit of their potential consumers.

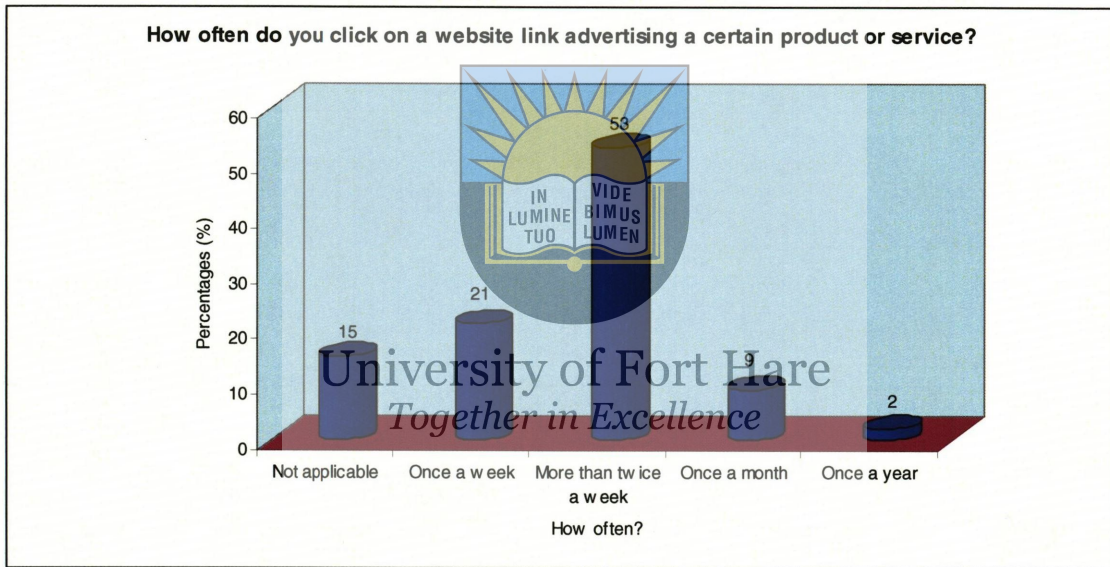


Figure 14

#### **4.20 REASONS WHY STUDENTS DO NOT CLICK ON WEBSITE LINK ADVERTS:**

About 15% of the respondents had already asserted that they do not click on website link adverts. They were asked to give the reasons why they do not and 4% said it's due to lack of internet operation skill. At 3% each, there is a tie between the reasons too much information, too costly to access and lack of physical access. Lastly, 2% of the respondents say that they do not because of lack of relevant information.

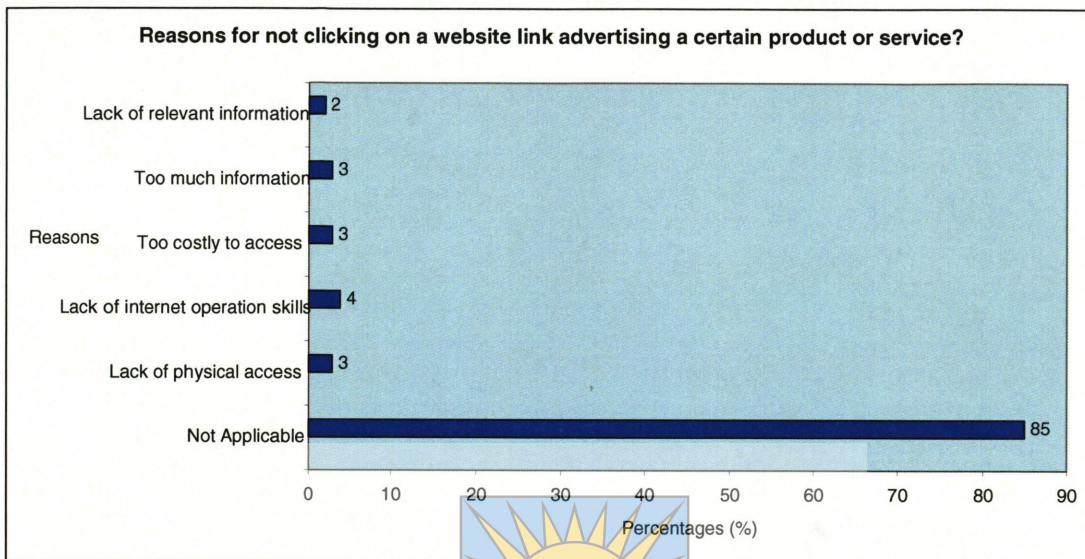


Figure 15

#### **4.21 RESPONSE OF STUDENTS TO ONLINE ADVERTS IN FORM OF ONLINE DIRECTORY:**

The third form of online advert that was investigated is online directory. About 51% of the respondents assert to have gone online to check online directories of various companies that might be producing or providing the product and service respectively that they may need. Although, only 49% of the respondents claim not to have visited online directories on the internet. This reveals that this form of online advertising is not particularly popular among the students of the University of Fort Hare as the other two that have been examined lately, but obviously more than half of them employ and respond to this form of online advert.

#### **4.22 REASONS WHY STUDENTS BROWSE FOR ON ONLINE DIRECTORY:**

Unlike the other form of online advert, the most reason why students browse for online advert is due to easy access which 18% of them asserts. This is closely followed by availability of necessary information at 17% and relevance of information at 13%. Only 3% claim to take interest in online directory because of easy usage.

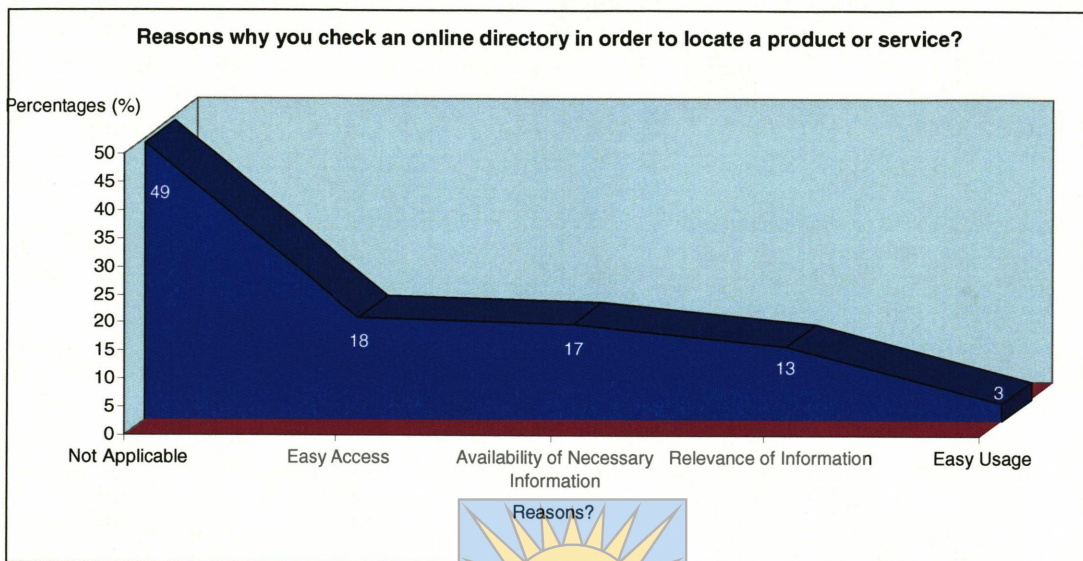
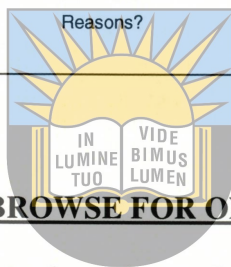


Figure 16



**4.23 HOW OFTEN STUDENTS BROWSE FOR ONLINE DIRECTORY:**

A great percentage (24%) of the respondents that are interested in online directory concur that they do so more than twice a week and 15% once a month. About 10% does so once a week and only 2% check for online directory once a year.

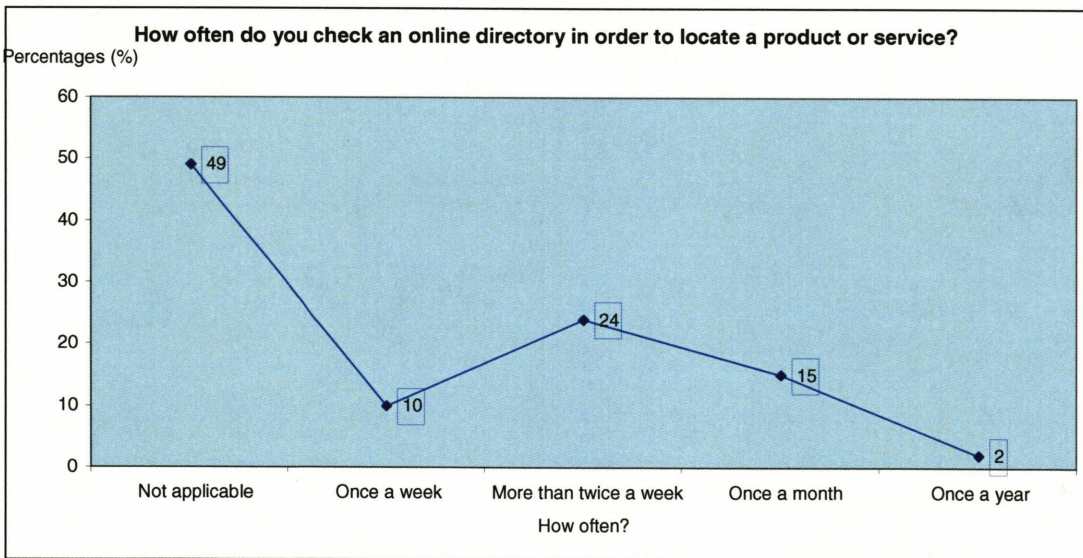


Figure 17

#### **4.24 REASONS WHY STUDENTS DO NOT BROWSE FOR ONLINE DIRECTORY:**

A total of 49% of the respondents had already agreed to not having any interest in online directories. They were required to provide reasons why they do not and it was revealed that a majority (18%) of them concur to have no interest because of lack of relevant information and 14% say it due to lack of internet operation skills. There is a tie between the reasons of lack of physical access and too much information at 8% while only 1% say it's because the internet is to costly to access.

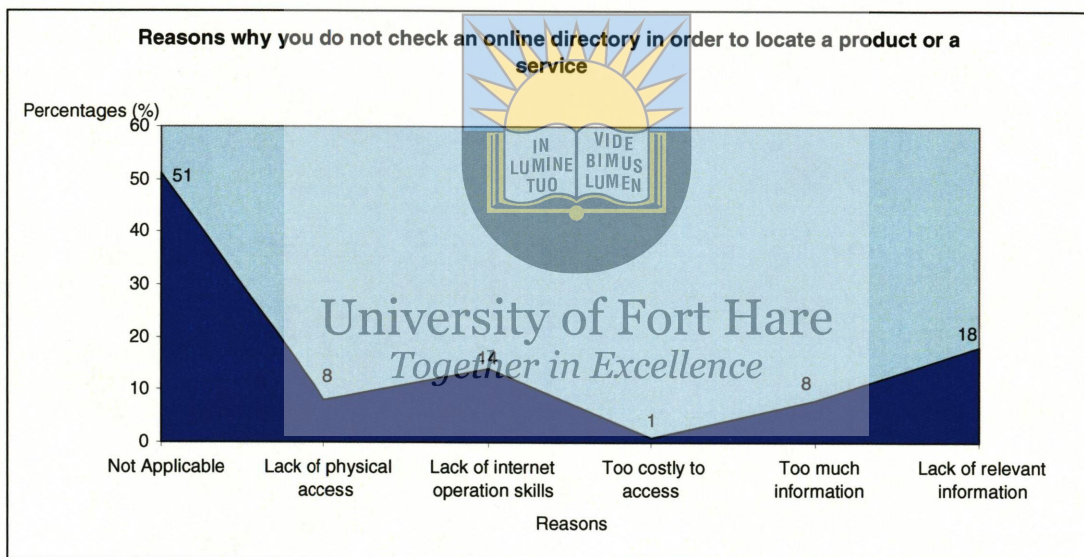


Figure 18

#### **4.25 STUDENTS RESPONSE TO ONLINE ADVERT IN FORM OF ANIMATED BANNERS AND POP-UPS:**

Furthermore the third form of online advert that was examined is animated banners and pop-ups. More than half (59%) of the respondents concur to clicking on banners and pop-ups online advert, but 41% claim not to take interest. This also shows that online advertising is actually quite popular among students and they do respond to the adverts. This finding also asserts the cybernetic capitalism theory which states that digital network, has become the central nervous system of capitalists who seek to influence

consumers to continue to purchase products and services in order for them to maintain their position on top of the social class ladder in the society (Gardner, 1987). This study has been able to expose the fact that more and more people are becoming aware of online adverts and are taking interest in them.

This is why advertisers are taking advantage of the interest of their to be customers in this form of adverts in order to explore all the various channels they can use to sap money out of the middle class members of the society in order for them to maintain their own position at the top. This also concurs with one of the researcher's concept which is that *marketers are demanding more accountability* (Bruner, 2005). That is, in exchange for company's advertising spending, there is now a demand for accountability. In online media, this is represented by a double edged sword, in that; the internet is able to measure consumer's response to online adverts, for example the number of response can be measured by the number of clicks on animated banners and pop – ups.

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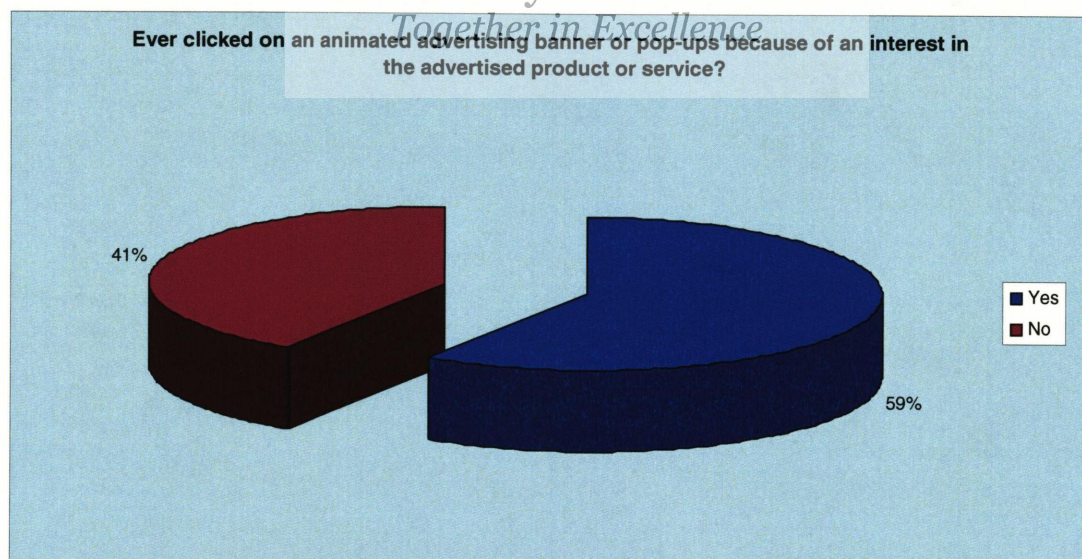


Figure 19

#### **4. 26 REASONS WHY STUDENTS CLICK ON ANIMATED ADVERTISING BANNER OR POP-UPS:**

In all, 14% of the respondents say the reason why they take interest in this form of online advert is because of the easy access. This is very obvious because you do not even have to search for these adverts, they just pop up as students browse through the internet. Also, 19% say it is due to availability of necessary information, while 13% claim it's because of the relevance of the information. Only 3% say it's due to easy usage.

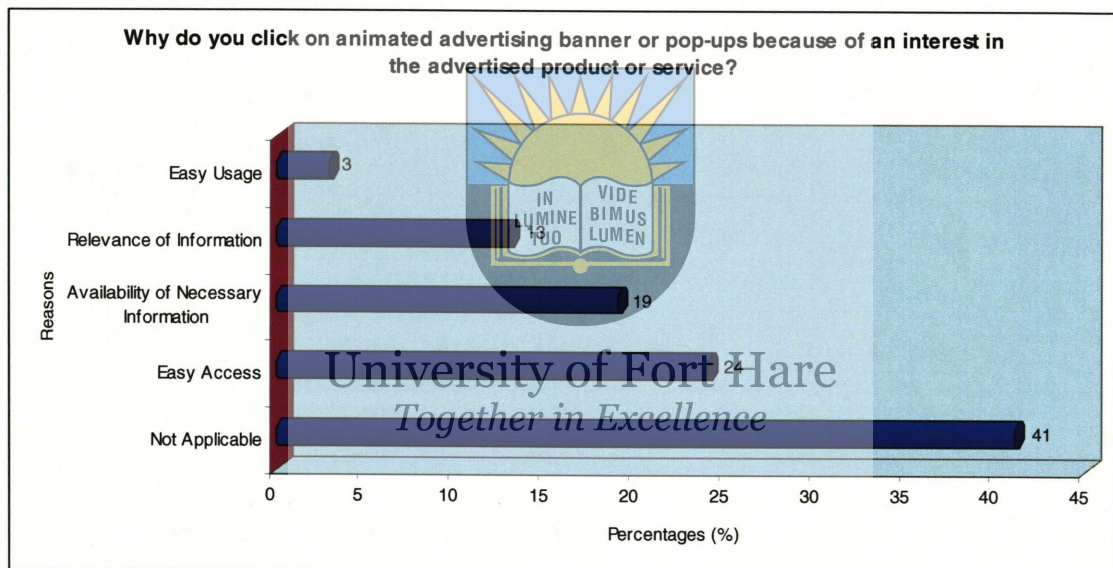


Figure 20

#### **4.27 HOW OFTEN STUDENTS CLICK ON ANIMATED ADVERTISING BANNER OR POP-UPS:**

A large percentage (28%) of the respondents click on these adverts more than twice a week, while 21% agree they do just once a week. Only about 8% do so once a month and as little as 2% only does so once a year.

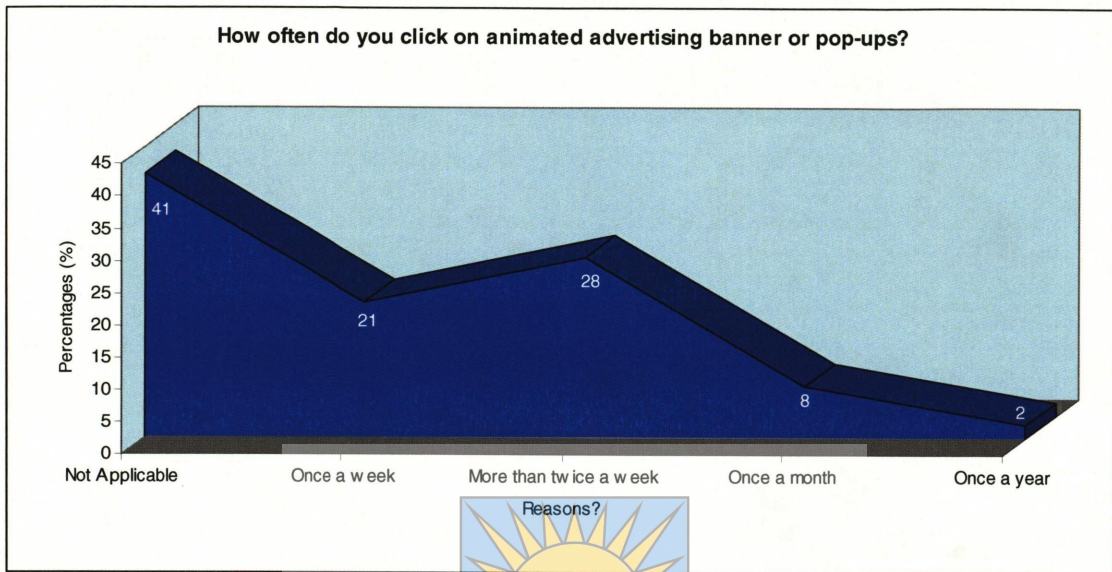


Figure 21



#### **4.28 REASONS WHY STUDENTS DO NOT CLICK ON ANIMATED ADVERTISING BANNER OR POP-UPS:**

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About 41% of the respondents had already revealed that they do not respond to animated banners and pop-ups. When asked why, 17% said it's due to lack of relevant information, while 12% say it's due to lack of internet operation skill. This is true because, most often, after clicking on the adverts, the respondent is required to further click some buttons in order to get a full view of the advert. Also 6% say it's due to lack of physical access; 4% say it's because of too much information and 2% say it's due to the cost of access which is quite high.

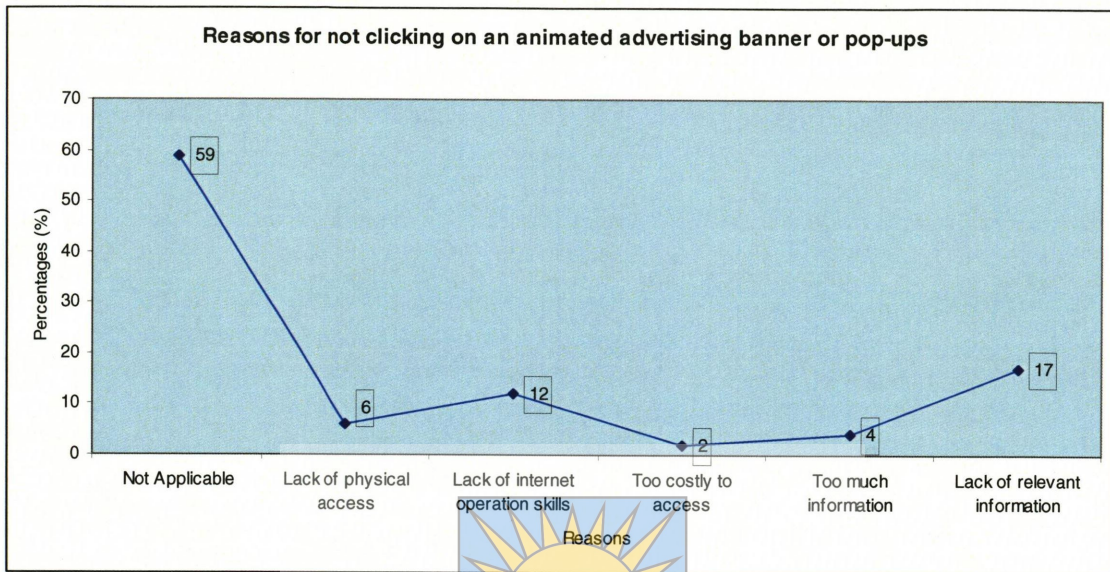
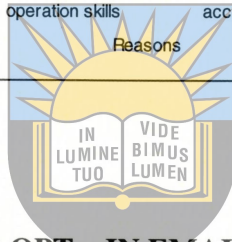


Figure 22



#### **4.29 STUDENTS RESPONSE TO OPT – IN EMAIL NEWSLETTER:**

The last form of online adverts that was investigated is opt – in email newsletters. These are mostly scam mails that are sent to receivers inbox with the hope that they would be opened (Search Maestros, 2006). These forms of mails are mostly found in the bulk mails and are mostly in form of pornography and scam mails (Search Maestros, 2006). It is an excellent method of attracting highly qualified visitor traffic. Its advantage is that, it reaches the customer directly in their inbox (Search Maestros, 2006). They can also be said to be illegal because, illegal online advertising includes all forms of spamming, that is the sending of unsolicited bulk e-mail to the boxes of innocent internet users (Biyani, 2006).

Unsolicited e-mail refers to messages sent electronically that were not asked for by the recipient (Biyani, 2006). A large number of the respondents (60%) concur to opening opt – in email newsletters; while 40% say they do not. The finding of this study asserts also another of the researchers theoretical framework which is suggestion theory. It asserts that advertising makes a suggestion, which is to buy a specific product/service. Once the intended audience (i.e. the target market) sees the advertisement, the

advertisement is successful if the suggestion is planted in the person’s mind. If the product lives up to the message of the advertising that houses the suggestion to purchase, the consumer will continue to use the product (Lindloff, 2002).

**4. 30 REASONS WHY STUDENTS OPEN OPT-IN EMAIL NEWSLETTERS:**

In all, 23% of the respondents claim to open this advert because of the availability of necessary information, while closely behind that is easy access at 22%. About 11% of the respondents do so because of the relevance of the information, while only 4% is due to easy usage.

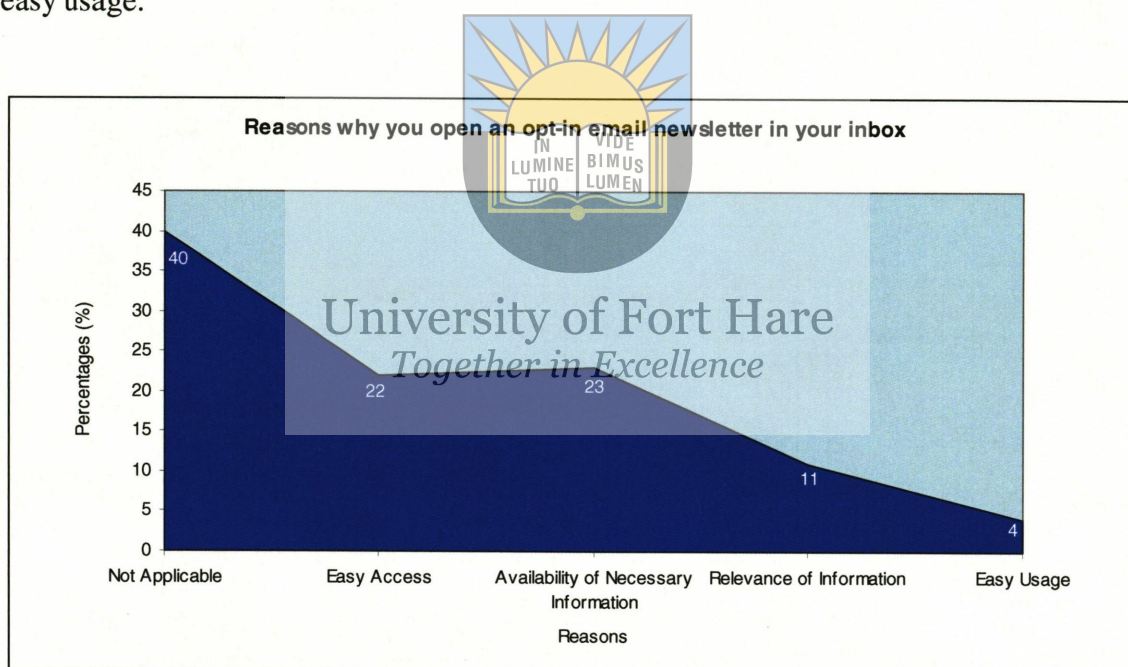


Figure 23

**4. 31 HOW OFTEN STUDENTS OPEN OPT-IN EMAIL NEWSLETTER:**

In addition, 47% of the students open these newsletters more than twice a week while only 10% does so once a week. Also, 3% opens them once a month.

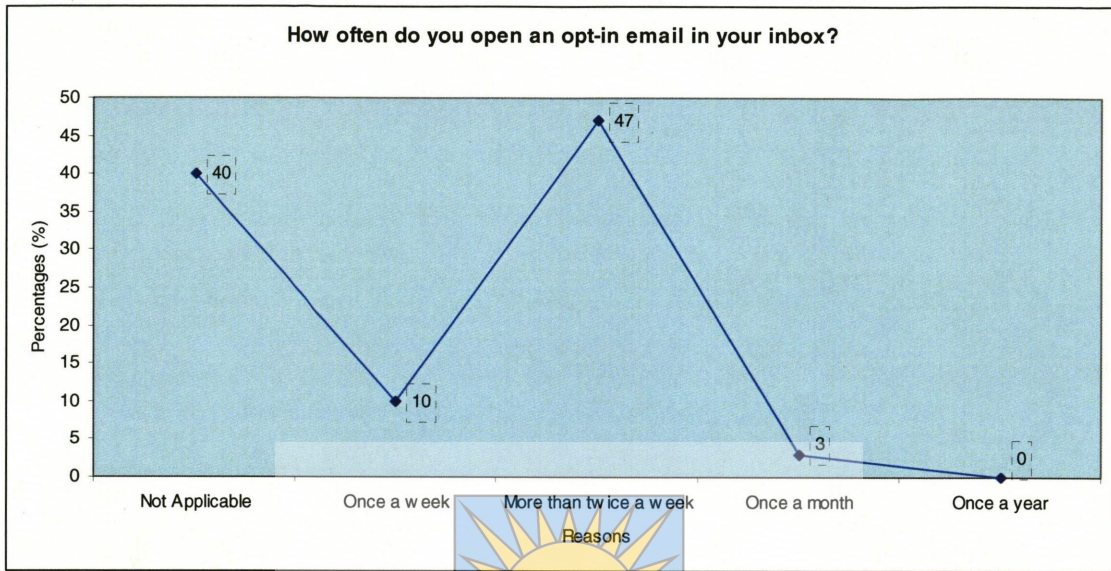


Figure 24

**4. 32 REASONS FOR NOT OPENING OPT-IN EMAIL NEWSLETTER:**

About 40% of the respondents had already asserted that they do not open opt – in email newsletters. They were asked why and 15% said it's because of lack of relevant information; 11% say it's due to too much information; 9% say it's too costly to access and 6% say its lack of physical access. This also confirms that this form of online advert is also on the rise.

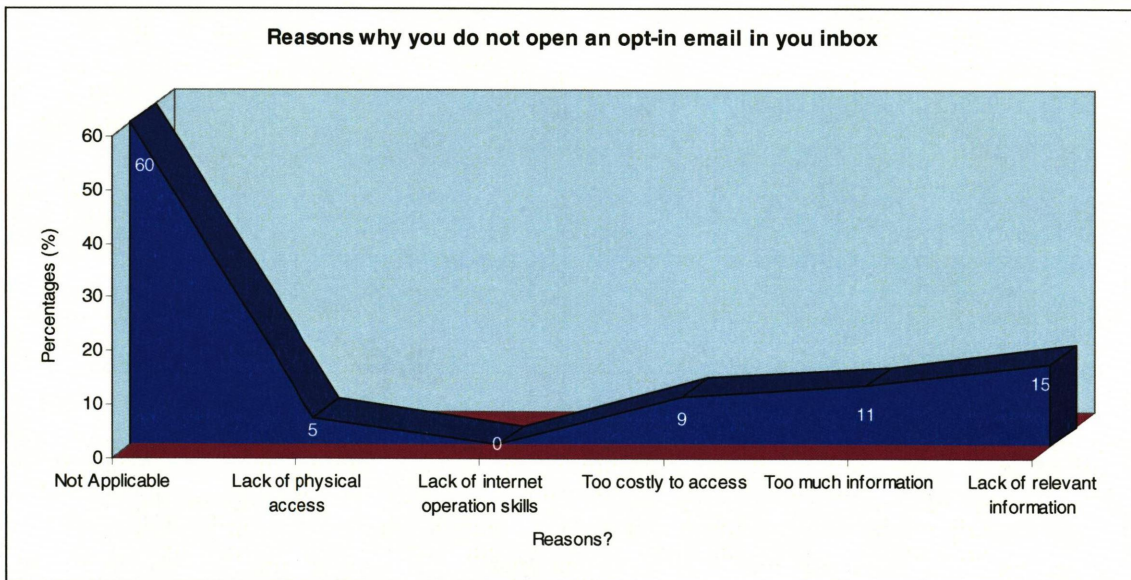


Figure 25

#### **4. 33 DO ONLINE ADVERTS MOTIVATE STUDENTS TO PURCHASE:**

This survey interestingly revealed that 70% of the respondents who are students are motivated to purchase through the exposure to the various forms of online adverts. This excellently asserts one of the theoretical frameworks of this research which is the suggestion theory (Lindloff, 2002). It asserts that in general, the process of advertising starts with a suggestion, which is to buy a specific product/service. Once the intended audience (i.e. the target market) sees the advert, the advertisement is successful if the suggestion is planted in the person's mind. Therefore, the suggestion will live on in the person's memory until a need occurs. Usually, reinforcement creates a synergism with the suggestion, which catalyses action to occur. Action in this term refers to the purchasing of the product/service. If the product lives up to the message of the advertising that houses the suggestion to purchase, the consumer will continue to use the product. If it does not live up to the advertising message, then, discontinued use will occur (Lindloff, 2002). This process explains how students once exposed to these adverts become caught up in the consumerism web.

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The fact that online adverts motivates the students of the University of Fort Hare to purchase also corroborate with the theory of cybernetic capitalism. This is the use of digital network as a central nervous system by capitalists who seek to influence consumers to continue to purchase products and services in order for them to maintain their spot on top of the social class ladder in the society (Gardner, 1987). Cybernetic capitalism has produced a deep asymmetry whereby transnational's impose their presence on the internet and extend their reach into the lives of browsers while reserving the power and prerogatives of private pipelines for themselves, for example through online advertising. Most of the students of the University of Fort Hare fall within the lower or middle class family. Therefore, they are further enriching the pockets of those in the higher class in the society by patronising the products and services advertised online through their upkeep allowance.

#### **4.34 THE PROMOTION OF UNHAPPINESS BY THE UNDUE EXPOSURE TO ONLINE ADVERTS WHEN STUDENTS DON'T HAVE THE MEANS TO ACCESS THE ADVERTISED PRODUCT OR SERVICE:**

More than half (51%) of the respondents to this study who are students, asserted that the undue exposure to online adverts, irrespective of the type, makes them feel unhappy when they can not afford to purchase the advertised product and service. Only 49% claim not to be unhappy if they cannot make purchase. It can therefore be concluded that indeed, online adverts is gradually promoting consumerism amongst the students of the University of Fort Hare because, students equate purchasing advertised products and services with happiness (Wilkinson, 2005 & Buchanan, 2005). This is because, it was stated earlier on in this study that the *research problem* of this study is, *the invasion of the internet by online adverts, is promoting the equation of personal happiness with purchasing material possessions and consumption, otherwise known as consumerism amongst students*. Consumerism is inevitably encouraged through advertising because, advertisers' concentrates on the associations of products and services, whilst ignoring the presentation of such information about the utility, such as the calorific or alcoholic content (Campbell, 1987).

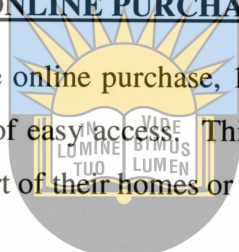
In many ways, the beauty of consumerism as an ideology is dependent on the self-gratification that it provides the consumer (Miles, 1998). In terms of the relationship between students' consumption and the construction of identity, the consumption of fashion, sport, popular music and new technological innovation is especially fascinating. When students procure these goods, services and ideas, they feel as if they belong to a mini subculture of consumption (Miles, 1998). Because online adverts motivates students to purchase and they feel unhappy if they can not purchase these products or services, it can be safely concluded that online advertising is gradually promoting consumerism amongst the students, because if they can afford it, they will not hesitate to make purchase just to make them feel happier and not necessarily for the utility value of the product.

#### 4.35 ONLINE PURCHASE:

Majority of the students, (88%) claim not to make online purchase but, a growing and significant percentage of 12% claims to make purchase online. This shows that the use of the internet for purchasing is growing rapidly among students and this will further encourage the patronising of the products and services that are usually advertised via online adverts. Advertisers have noticed this growth and they are taking advantage of this improvement.

#### 4.36 WHY STUDENTS MAKE ONLINE PURCHASE:

Out of the 12% that claim to make online purchase, 10% say they do so because of the ease of purchase and 2% because of easy access. This is obvious because they can just make purchase online in the comfort of their homes or residence.



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Why do you make online purchase?

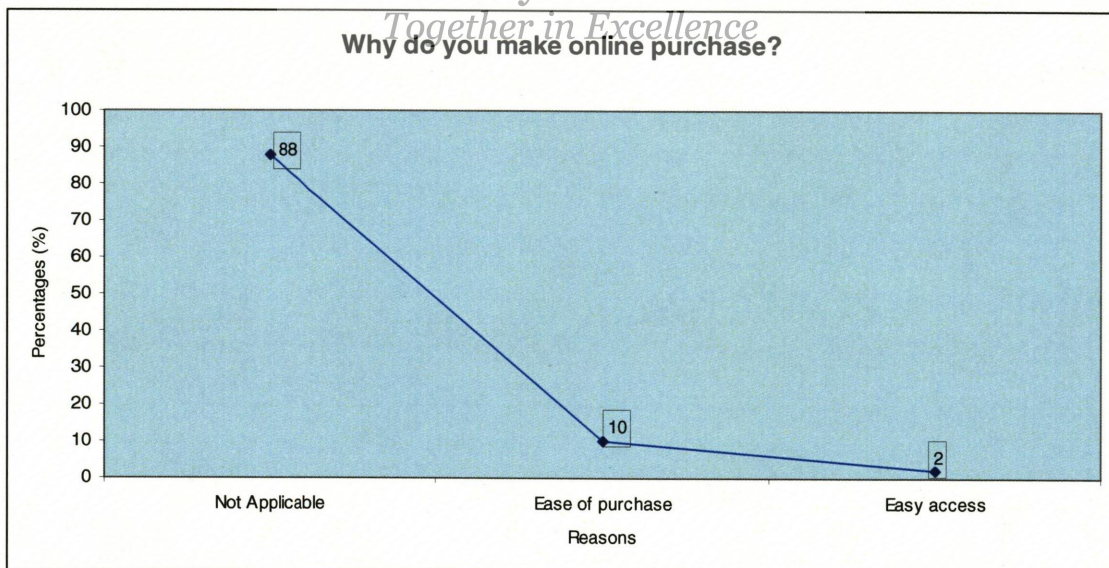


Figure 26

#### **4.37 REASONS WHY STUDENTS DO NOT MAKE ONLINE PURCHASE:**

About 88% of the students had already indicated that they do not make online purchase, when asked why, 49% of them say its because of no means of purchase (credit cards); 21% say its because of lack of trust in online purchase and 18% say its due to lack of interest.

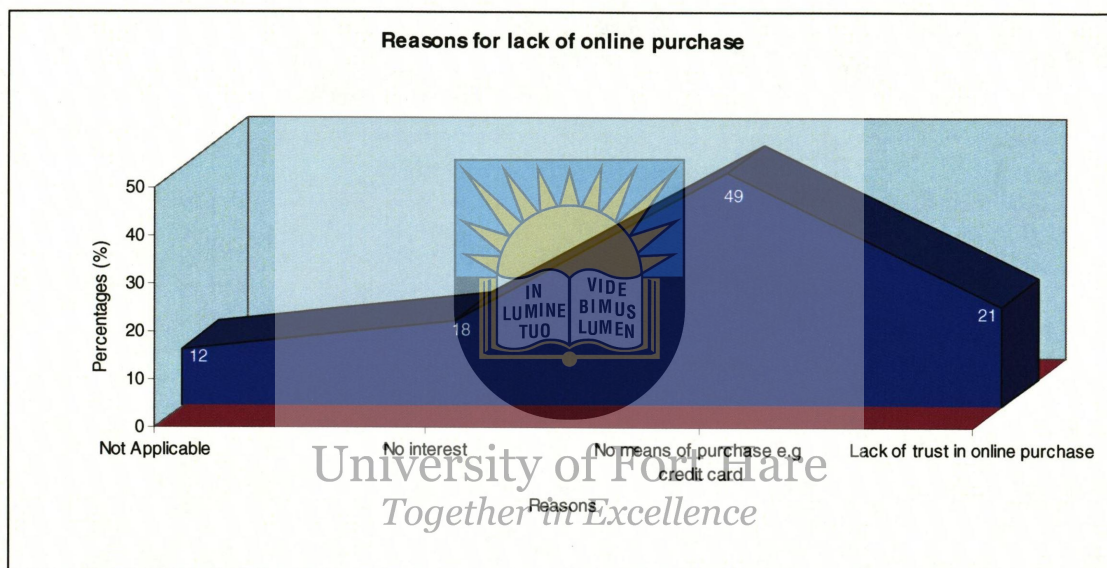


Figure 27

#### **4.38 WHICH ADVERTISED PRODUCTS ON THE INTERNET ATTRACTS STUDENTS THE MOST:**

In all, 34% of the respondents claim that they are most attracted to electronics online adverts making it the most popular. In addition, 28% are mostly attracted to clothing and accessories; 13% to automobiles; 11% to sports and utilities and 8% to house hold items.

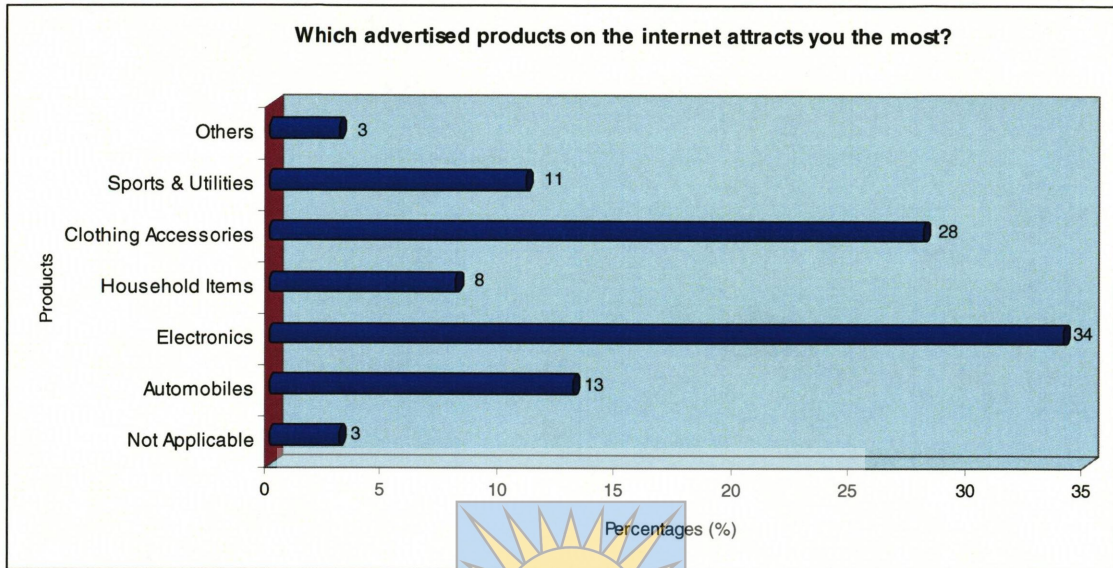


Figure 28

**4.39 WHICH ADVERTISED SERVICE ON THE INTERNET ATTRACTS STUDENTS THE MOST:**

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The most popular service advertised online to students is E-learning at 52%; online banking at 26% and 21% say others.

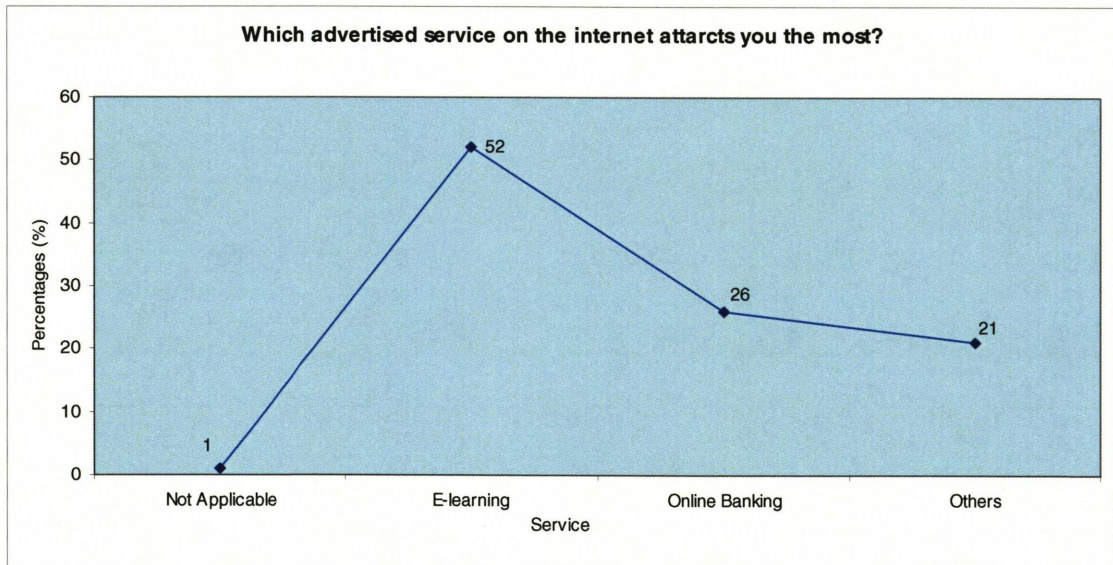


Figure 29

#### **4.40 STUDENT PERCEPTION OF ONLINE ADVERTISING**

The methodology of this study is via the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. The researcher will now proceed in reporting the views of students when asked to comment in general on online advertising, its promotion of consumerism, its motivation to purchase and their general trust in online advertising. The major themes that arose from the interviews that were conducted are; *inability to afford advertised products and services causes disinterest in online adverts*: While interviews were being conducted, some of the students revealed that online adverts are boring when they can't afford buying what is being advertised (Arts Building, 2007: Focus Group Discussion). Some even went to the extent of saying that online advertising has no impact on them all because they have no means of purchase (Arts Building, 2007: Focus Group Discussion).

*Lack of trust in the safety of internet purchase reduces the effectiveness of online adverts*; some of the students also revealed that in as much as they are interested in online adverts and it motivates them to purchase, they would not perform the purchase online, but would rather elsewhere (Arts Building, 2007: Focus Group Discussion). That is, if there is enough trust in online purchase, the level of response to online adverts would be higher. *Students exposure to online adverts promotes students consumerism*; in view of the fact that consumerism is seen as the equation of personal happiness with the consumption of goods and services, students were asked if they feel unhappy just because they cant afford to consume the products and services advertised on the internet (Wilkinson, 2005 and Buchanan, 2005). More than half of the interviewee revealed that they feel bad when they can not afford most especially the; clothes, cars, shoes, computers and vacation trips advertised online (Arts Building: 2007, Focus Group Discussion). The reason why they actually want the products were not necessarily because of the utilitarian benefit of the products, but because they do not want to be left out of a particular social class in the school.

*Online advert is informative, effective, interesting, convenient and motivates students to purchase*; majority of the interviewee asserts to the view that online adverts are

interesting to view, easy to locate and highly informative; interestingly, some even said they search for products and services on the internet as a form of relaxation (Arts Building, 2007: Focus Group Discussion). Some also commented on the fact that online advert reduces the cost of going to merchandising places and retail stores because it offers easy, affordable and convenient delivery services (Arts Building, 2007: Focus Group Discussion). *Online advert is informative, effective, interesting, convenient and motivates students to purchase*; majority of the interviewee asserts to the view that online adverts are interesting to view, easy to locate and highly informative; interestingly, some even said they search for products and services on the internet as a form of relaxation (Arts Building, 2007: Focus Group Discussion). Some also commented on the fact that online advert reduces the cost of going to merchandising places and retail stores because it offers easy, affordable and convenient delivery services Arts Building: 2007: Focus Group Discussion).



In general, the qualitative aspect of this research produced result that interestingly corroborate with the results generated from the questionnaires, although it brought out some additional issues. It was discovered that, in general, students are attracted to online adverts because of the attractive visual images (Arts Building, 2007: Focus Group Discussion). Some also said that they are generally more informative because there is more space for the producers to add more information about the advertised product and service in online advertising (Arts Building, 2007: Focus Group Discussion). Issues of trust came up in that, in as much as they are attracted to online adverts, some of them could be scams and believe that they might be cheated if they do the purchasing online. They would rather make the purchase physically, even though they were prompted to buy on the internet.

Some of the respondents say they do not have personal computers; therefore, the little time accorded them in the library to browse the internet for educational purposes would be wasted viewing online adverts (Sandra, 2007: Interview). While, right on the other hand, some are totally in love with online adverts, it motivates them to purchase and they believe it even takes the stress of having to go and make physical purchase in shops or

supermarket out of their lives and makes the whole process less costly, e.g., it cuts fuel price because of the delivery services they offer (Aya, 2007: Interview). Another hindrance to the growth of online adverts is the lack of credit cards which makes it impossible to make purchase online, even though they still buy as a result of the exposure to the adverts.

Finally, it was also discovered, especially among ladies that, they even use online adverts viewing for leisure purposes (Letti, 2007: Interview). That is, after searching for academic information and they are tired; some of them just decide to search for their various coveted products (clothes and accessories for females and automobiles and electronics for males) and services just to satisfy their viewing pleasure (Mercy, 2007: Interview). It sure does motivate them to purchase when they can finally afford it, but just viewing the products alone, gratify their longing for them and relieves their sadness of not being able to purchase meanwhile. Mostly, the coveted products and services are not items they need to survive; they are just items they fanaticise about, maybe because they were seen on some celebrities or because it will lift them to another class or category in the school as awards are given to the best dressed and a host lot of others.

It can be concluded that online adverts attracts students. It motivates them to buy. Some do not make purchase until they have first searched for the item online. Some wish to consume the advertised products not necessarily for the utility gratification, but to satisfy their fantasy; to be accepted by others and to fall into a particular category in the society. This is asserted by Hilton (2003) who concurred that, consumerism means more than choice between competing brands, it is actually tormenting, just to highlight the problems facing the affluent shopper and even the non affluent shopper, such as some students. The shopper is faced with mental paralysis while attempting to make a choice among identical brands (Hilton, 2003). Ordinarily, the only genuine gratification derived from products and services are their intrinsic utility but, if consumers are persuaded to purchase products and services for other reasons, (for example, for non-utilitarian aspects), it can be concluded that they are being influenced by the images and ideas with which they are linked (Campbell, 1987).

#### **4.41 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:**

This study revealed that all the respondents of the study use the internet. The respondents were also required to reveal what they use the internet for and it was discovered that majority (79%) of respondents use the internet for the purpose of acquiring information. This is followed by entertainment at 59% and closely on its tail is the use of the internet for communication at 58%. Although, only 41% of the respondents claim to use the internet for educational purposes. Majority (64%) of the respondents use the internet more than thrice a week. About 17% of the respondents use the internet twice a week while only 9% use the internet thrice a week. Only 7% claim to use the internet once a week while only a minute few of 3% use the internet once a month. Most (83%) of the students visit the Google website most often. This is followed by Yahoo at 63% and MSN at 6%. The remaining respondents claim to visit other websites often.

A total of 76% of the respondents reveal that they use the internet at the school library. About 48% claim to use the internet in their departmental reading rooms while 5% use the internet at cyber cafes. Only 3% use the internet at home; 1 % in Tele centers and 4% in other places. The study also revealed that majority (64%) of the students started using the internet while they were between the ages of 16 -20. About 22% started between the ages of 21 -25, while 13% between 11 -15. Only 1% started using the internet between the ages of 26 -30. About 16% of the respondents had already said that they do not use the internet to search for products and services. They were asked why and 5% said it is due to lack of relevant information. There is a tie on the reasons of too much information and lack of internet operation skills, as both are 4% each. Only 2% said it is too costly to access and 1% said that it is because of lack of physical access.

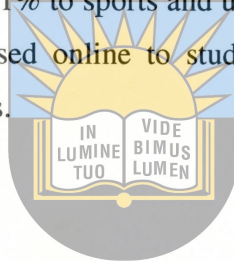
About 15% of the respondents had already asserted that they do not click on website link advert. They were asked to give the reasons why they do not and 4% said it's due to the lack of internet operation skill. At 3% each, there is a tie between the reasons why they do not click on the links, these were; too much information; too costly to access and lack of physical access. Lastly, 2% of the respondents say that they do not because of lack of

relevant information. The third form of online advert that was investigated is online directory. About 51% of the respondents assert to have gone online to check online directories. Although, 49% of the respondents claim not to visit online directories on the internet.

Unlike the other form of online advert, the most reason why students browse for online advert is due to easy access which 18% of them asserts. This is closely followed by availability of necessary information at 17% and Relevance of information at 13%. Only 3% claim to take interest in online directory because of easy usage. A great percentage (24%) of the respondents that are interested in online directory concur that they do so more than twice a week and 15% once a month. About 10% does so once a week and only 2% check for online directory once a year. A total of 49% of the respondents had already agreed not have any interest in online directories. They were required to provide reasons why they do not and it was revealed that a majority (18%) of them concur to have no interest because of lack of relevant information and 14% say it is due to lack of internet operation skills. There is a tie between the reasons of lack of physical access and too much information at 85% while only 1% say it's because the internet is too costly to access.

About 41% of the respondents had already revealed that they do not respond to animated banners and pop-ups. When asked why, 17% said it's due to lack of relevant information, while 12% say it's due to lack of internet operation skill. Also 6% say it's due to lack of physical access; 4% say it's because of too much information and 2% say it's due to the cost of access which is quite high. About 40% of the respondents had already asserted that they do not open opt-in email newsletters. They were asked why and 15% said it's because of lack of relevant information; 11% say it's due to too much information; 9% say it's too costly to access and 6% say it's lack of physical access. This also confirms that this form of online advert is also on the rise. Majority of the students (88%), claim not to make online purchase but, a growing and significant percentage of 12% claims to make purchase online.

This shows that the use of the internet for purchasing is growing rapidly among students and this will further encourage the patronising of products and services that are usually advertised via online adverts. Out of the 12% that claim to make online purchase, 10% say they do so because of the ease of purchase and 2% because of easy access. About 88% of the students had already indicated that they do not make online purchase, when asked why, 49% of them say its because of no means of purchase (credit cards); 21% say its because of lack of trust in online purchase and 18% say its due to lack of interest. In all, 34% of the respondents claim that they are most attracted to electronics online adverts making it the most popular. In addition, 28% are mostly attracted to clothing and accessories; 13% to automobiles; 11% to sports and utilities and 8% to house hold items. The most popular service advertised online to students is E-learning at 52%; online banking at 26% and 21% say others.



#### **4.42 CONCLUSION:**

This chapter presented and analysed the result of the quantitative and qualitative aspects of this study. This study has exposed that indeed the students of the University of Fort Hare are attracted to online adverts, it motivates them to purchase and it is even promoting consumerism amongst the students. The findings of this research addressed the research questions of; to what extent are students exposed to online advertising; how much the exposure to online advertising influences student consumerism and what are the reasons for the growing use of the internet as a channel of advertisements. This study was able to achieve this by focusing on the following objectives; establishing the impact of online advertising on students; examining whether online advertising encourages consumerism amongst students; investigating the effectiveness of online adverts and finding out the benefits of online advertisements to advertisers.

This research was not able to address other aspects of this study because of the constraint of time and streamlined focus. The study could have researched the impact of online adverts on students' academic performance or a comparative study between online adverts and traditional adverts amongst students. However, this study has been able to

establish that students are indeed interested in online adverts, it motivates them to purchase and it does promote student consumerism. The next chapter will conclude the study and provide recommendations and suggestions for further research.



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## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION**

The internet has become the platform for the most recent means of communication, which includes an active process of processing, storage and circulation of messages. It has even revolutionized the advertising industry in that; advertisers are no longer employing the traditional media as the only means of communication with their customers. They are now to a large extent advertising over the internet which is growing rapidly, so much so; companies are now beginning to use part of their advert budget, which was earlier used only for advertising via traditional media for online advertising. It has been proven that, students' use of the internet is so much on the increase; it is almost becoming an addiction for some (Igonor, 2006). Therefore, because students' use of the internet compared to the rest of the population use is on the increase, their level of exposure to online adverts can not be overestimated.

Students are constantly viewing these adverts either in the form of animated banners or pop-ups, online directory, via search engines, website links and e-mail newsletters. In addition, these incursion of the internet by online adverts, is promoting the equation of personal happiness with purchasing material possessions and consumption, otherwise known as consumerism amongst students. This is because, according to the suggestion theory (Lindloff, 2002), once students see these adverts, a process starts within them which might either lead to consumption or not. In general, this study is an endeavor to study the social impact of online advertising on students and the promotion of consumerism.

This study began with the objective of:

- A. ESTABLISHING THE IMPACT OF ONLINE ADVERTISING ON STUDENTS: From the result of this survey, it has been confirmed that online advertising has a significant impact on the students of the University of Fort Hare, based on their level of response and also on the fact that it motivates them to purchase. In terms of response, a large number of the respondents (60%) concur to opening opt – in email newsletters; about 51% of the respondents asserts to have gone online to check online directories; about 85% of the respondents asserts to clicking on website link adverts; about 84% of the students use search engines to locate products and services advertised online and more than half (59%) of the respondents concur to clicking on banners and pop-ups online advert. In addition, in terms of online adverts impact on students purchasing habits, this study revealed that 70% of the students are motivated to purchase through exposures to various forms of online adverts.
- B. EXAMINING WHETHER ONLINE ADVERTISING ENCOURAGES CONSUMERISM AMONGST STUDENTS: In general, consumerism is the equation of personal happiness with purchasing material possessions and consumption. The study revealed that more than half (51%) of the students, asserts that the undue exposure to online adverts, irrespective of the type, makes them feel unhappy when they can not afford to purchase the advertised product or have access to the advertised service. During in depth interview sessions with the students, they confessed that these adverts make them purchase even when they do not really need the product and would shop sometimes just to feel good. This shows that online advert is gradually promoting consumerism with more than half of the students consenting to this fact.
- C. INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ONLINE ADVERTS: The effectiveness of online adverts can be measured based on the level of response it receives, which this study has revealed to be quite high and impressive enough to benefit advertisers. Online advert can also be said to be very effective because (70%) of the students are motivated to purchase through exposures to online

adverts. Furthermore, 34% of the students claim that they are most attracted to electronics online adverts making it the most popular. In addition, 28% are mostly attracted to clothing and accessories; 13% to automobiles; 11% to sports and utilities and 8% to house hold items. The most popular service advertised online to students is E-learning at 52%; online banking at 26% and 21% say others. This study has indicated that online advert is very effective amongst students.

**D. FINDING OUT THE BENEFITS OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS TO ADVERTISERS:** Based on this study, online adverts motivate students to purchase. It is more cost effective than advertising via traditional advert because, more information can be included in these adverts. The adverts can be viewed for as long as possible, whereas, traditional adverts are very short and expensive. Online adverts reach a world wide audience and customer's service relationships are encouraged because, customers can easily communicate with the advertisers and receive replies and hands on information easily. Finally, online adverts enable advertisers to easily measure how effective the adverts are, by counting the number of clicks on the adverts.

## **5.2 LESSONS LEARNED**

Various lessons have learnt from this study. One of this is that without a doubt, online advertising, even though still growing, is an effective form of advertising and even students are attracted by these adverts. Another important lesson especially for positive advertisers, especially for those who provide academic information is that, online adverts motivate students to purchase. Infact, this study revealed that the most attractive service on the internet to students is e-learning. Online advertising offers additional benefits to advertisers which they can not derive from traditional adverts in that, online adverts generates feedbacks that help them to measure both performance and brand. Since students are so attracted to online adverts, the school can even look at ways in which online adverts can be employed as a communication tool with its alumni. A crucial lesson learnt in this study is that online adverts promote students consumerism. The fact that

they are exposed to various advertised products and services on the internet make them feel just like shopping, even though they might not have a genuine need for the product or service. These purchases are made for the purpose of falling into a particular social group in the society.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

After a successful completion of this study, it is the researchers' opinion that there are quite a number of recommendations that needs to addressed, such as:

#### **5.3.3 OBJECTIVE VIEWING OF COMMERCIAL ONLINE ADVERTS BY STUDENTS:**

Students should view online adverts objectively that is; they should view or search for products and services on the internet, with the intent of getting the necessary information needed before purchase. Not because they want to purchase because they think it will make them feel better or purchase in other to fall among a particular class or group in the society. They should not allow themselves to be dissuaded by these adverts.

#### **5.3.4 BALANCED VIEWING OF EDUCATIONAL ONLINE ADVERTS BY STUDENTS:**

In addition, the study recommends that students should be wary of the multitude of websites available on the internet that supposedly provide academic information. The internet is an excellent source of academic information for students, but not all the information on the internet is proven and authentic enough for academic use.

#### **5.3.3 REASONABLE VIEWING OF SCAM ONLINE ADVERTS BY STUDENTS:**

In addition, the school should purchase software's that will stop scam mails and x-rated websites from being allowed into the computers in the school, so that students will not

even be exposed to adverts that can distract them from their study; encourage illicit behaviour and prevent them from being ripped-off financially.

#### 5.3.4 STUDENTS SHOULD NOT EQUATE CONSUMING WITH HAPPINESS:

Furthermore, this study has verified that online advert is promoting consumerism amongst students. Therefore, students should be cautious of the reasons why they view online adverts and why it motivates them to purchase. They should remain focused and objective while viewing the adverts and should not allow themselves to be caught up in the consumerism web by purchasing for the non utilitarian aspect of the products or service; such as belonging to a particular social group in the society or to just feel good about themselves.

#### 5.3.5 EDUCATION OF STUDENTS ON THE TECHNOLOGICAL KNOW HOW OF THE INTERNET:

There are many advertised journals and articles on the internet that could help students perform better academically. This study revealed that E-learning is the most attractive service to students on the internet, but some of the students indicate that lack of internet skills is one of the reasons why they do not access online adverts. Therefore, the school should organize workshops that will educate students on how to effectively use the internet for positive reasons like, e- learning.

#### 5.3.9 SUBSCRIBING AND RENEWING SUBSCRIPTIONS TO VARIOUS RECENT JOURNALS:

Also, since students are more attracted to e-learning, the school should look into various ways of subscribing and renewing subscriptions to various recent journals for students use.

#### **5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

There are several other ways in which this research can be conducted. Firstly, in terms of methodology, since a combination of quantitative and qualitative method was employed in this research, a strictly qualitative or even ethnographic approach can be employed for further study. Also, the use of advanced qualitative methods will further reveal hidden reason why students are actually motivated to purchase as a result of their exposure to online adverts. In addition, the research was limited only to the Alice campus of the University of Fort Hare, but the sample can be further expanded to involve East London and Bisho campuses. A comparative study can also be conducted that will include three to four Universities in the Eastern Cape or from the different provinces, to be able to conduct an empirical study on the trend of the impact of online advertising on students and its promotion of consumerism.



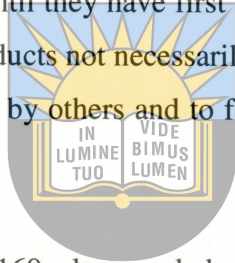
This study can also be undertaken in a school where access to the internet is unlimited and more students have their own personal computers that are connected to the internet and especially where more of the students actually have the means of purchase, in terms of excess cash and credit cards. Furthermore, a close study can be conducted on the aspects of demographics, to see if age, gender, study level, marital status or academic pursuit also affects the way students are impacted by online adverts. This study can also be modified in terms of students in primary schools in societies where access to the internet starts at an early age. Furthermore, the study can also be conducted by using traditional forms (television, radio, billboards, radio and newspapers) of media as a control study to introduce a new product, while employing the use of online advert to introduce another product in a school environment and see how students will repose to both in terms of purchase during the same period with the same level of exposure. Additionally, this study can also be conducted by employing other theoretical approaches.

## **5.5 CONCLUSION**

This study has been able to verify that indeed students are attracted to online adverts, it motivates them to purchase and it is promoting consumerism amongst them. This study is not ignoring the positive impact of online adverts, as it is very useful in making informed choices amongst the numerous products and services in the market place. In conclusion to this study, this section will summarise the different chapters. The first chapter provided discussions surrounding the background of the internet and advertising and the history of online adverts. Detailed discussions on online adverts; its key concepts, advantages and disadvantages were also interrogated and the concept of consumerism was critically examined and discussed.

In the second chapter, various researches were reviewed; firstly from foreign countries; African countries and within South Africa. One of the literatures that were reviewed is the study by the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC). This survey concludes that the growth of online advertising revenue reveals the comfort of marketers in the vivacity and accountability of the medium. Another research was conducted by Pew Internet and American Life project to discover internet's impact on college students' daily lives, and to determine the impact of that use on their academic and social routines. The study reveals that, college students are early adopters and heavy users of the internet and it's a part of their daily routine, because they grew up with the computer among other reasons. Although, this study examined the various relationships that students have with the internet and its impacts on their educational and social lives, the impact of online advertising on students was not investigated. The third chapter discussed the research methodology of the study. It also examined the various features and differences of qualitative, quantitative and triangulation research methods. The data collection process was analyzed as well as the sampling frame and the analysis of the content of this study was discussed. Finally, the ethical considerations of this study were explained.

The qualitative aspect of this research produced result that fascinatingly corroborate with the outcome generated from the questionnaires, although it also brought out some additional issues. The summary of the result is that students are attracted to online adverts because of the attractive visual images; online adverts are generally more informative because there is more space for the producers to add more information about the advertised product and service in online advertising. Furthermore, it sure does motivate them to purchase if they can finally afford it, but just viewing the products alone, gratify their longing for them and relieves their sadness of not being able to purchase meanwhile. Therefore, it can be concluded that online adverts attracts students. It motivates them to buy. Some do not make purchase until they have first searched for the item online. Some wish to consume the advertised products not necessarily for the utility gratification, but to satisfy their fantasy; to be accepted by others and to fall into a particular category in the society.



This study distributed a total of 160 close ended questionnaires but only 151 were returned. Out of the 151 respondents, it was discovered that 93% of the students are single, 6% are married and only 1% is divorced. About 52% of the respondents are females, while 48% are males. Majority (51%) of the students in the University of Fort Hare, fall between the 21 – 25 age group. In terms of nationalities, South Africans are 55%. This is followed by Zimbabwe which represents 22% of the respondents and next is Lesotho at 9%. About 79% of the students use the internet for the purpose of acquiring information. This is followed by entertainment at 59% and closely on its tail is the use of the internet for communication at 58%. Although, only 41% of the respondents claim to use the internet for educational purposes. Majority (64%) of the respondents use the internet more than thrice a week.

Furthermore, 59% of the students claim to use the internet to search for products and services more than twice a week, while 17% does so once a week. About 8% does so once a month. About 85% of the respondents asserts to clicking on website link adverts, while only 15% concur not to click on the adverts. More than half (53%) click on website link advert more than twice a week while 21% click on it once a week. The third form of

online advert that was investigated is online directory. About 51% of the respondents assert to have gone online to check online directories access. Furthermore, the fourth form of online advert that was examined is animated banners and pop-ups. More than half (59%) of the respondents concur to clicking on banners and pop-ups online advert, but 41% claim not to take interest. A large number of the respondents concur to opening opt – in email newsletters; while 40% say they do not.

This survey interestingly revealed that 70% of the students are motivated to purchase through the exposure to the various forms of online adverts. More than half (51%) of the respondents to this study who are students, asserts that the undue exposure to online adverts, irrespective of the type, makes them feel unhappy when they can not afford to purchase the advertised product and services. Only 49% claim not to be unhappy if they cannot make purchase. In all, 34% of the respondents claim that they are most attracted to electronics online adverts making it the most popular. In addition, 28% are mostly attracted to clothing and accessories; 13% to automobiles; 11% to sports and utilities and 8% to house hold items. The most popular service advertised online to students is E-learning at 52%; online banking at 26% and 21% say others.

This study has exposed that indeed the students of the University of Fort Hare are attracted to online adverts, it motivates them to purchase and it is even promoting consumerism amongst the students.

## APPENDIX 1

### QUESTIONNAIRE

#### THE IMPACT OF ONLINE ADVERTISING ON CONSUMERISM, AMONGST UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE STUDENTS.

My name is Omolara O. Igonor from the Department of Communications, University of Fort Hare, Alice. I am currently conducting a research on the impact of online advertising on students. I will appreciate if you could fill out this questionnaire with utmost sincerity. The aims and objectives of this study are to establish the impact of online advertising on students and to examine whether online advertising encourages consumerism amongst students. This study will also investigate the general effectiveness of online adverts.

**INSTRUCTION: MARK (X) IN APPROPRIATE BOXES.**

#### SECTION ONE

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1. Marital Status:

Married	Single	Divorced	Widow	Separated	Others

2. Gender:

Male	Female

3. Age:

16 – 20	21 – 25	26 - 35	36 and above

4. Nationality:

--

5. Faculty:

Social Science	Science & Agriculture	Law	Management & Commerce

6. Department:

--

7. Educational Level:

1 <sup>st</sup> Year	2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	4 <sup>th</sup> Year	Post Graduate

## **SECTION TWO**

8. Do you use the Internet?

Yes	No

9. What do you use the internet for?

Information	Entertainment	Communication	Education	Other

10. How often do you use the internet?

Once a week	Twice a week	Thrice a week	More than thrice a week	Once a month

11. Which websites do you visit most often?

Google	Yahoo	MSN	Other

12. Where do you use the internet?

School Library	Departmental Reading Rooms	Home	Cyber Café	Tele Center	Other

13. At what age did you start using the internet?

5 – 10	11 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 25	26 – 30	31 and above

14. Do you own a personal computer?

Yes	No

## **SECTION THREE**

15. Do you use the internet to search for products and services?

Yes	No

16. If yes, why?

Easy access	Availability of necessary information	Relevance of information	Easy Usage

17. If yes, how often?

Once a week	More than twice a week	Once a month	Once a year

18. If no, why?

Lack of physical access	Lack of Internet operation skill	Too Costly to access	Too much Information	Lack of relevant information

19. Have you ever clicked on a **website link advertising** a certain product or service?

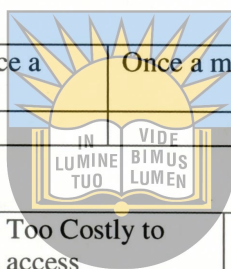
Yes	No

20. If yes, why?

Easy access	Availability of necessary information	Relevance of information	Easy Usage

21. If yes, how often?

Once a week	More than twice a week	Once a month	Once a year



22. If no, why?

Lack of physical access	Lack of Internet operation skill	Too Costly to access	Too much Information	Lack of relevant information

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23. Have you ever checked an **online directory** in order to locate a product or service?

Yes	No

24. If yes, why?

Easy access	Availability of necessary information	Relevance of information	Easy Usage

25. If yes, how often?

Once a week	More than twice a week	Once a month	Once a year

26. If no, why?

Lack of physical access	Lack of Internet operation skill	Too Costly to access	Too much Information	Lack of relevant information

27. Have you ever clicked on an **animated advertising banner or pop – ups** because of an interest in the advertised product or service?

Yes	No

28. If yes, why?

Easy access	Availability of necessary information	Relevance of information	Easy Usage

29. If yes, how often?

Once a week	More than twice a week	Once a month	Once a year

30. If no, why?

Lack of physical access	Lack of Internet operation skill	Too Costly to access	Too much Information	Lack of relevant information

31. Have you ever opened an opt – in email newsletter in your inbox advertising a product or service?

Yes	No



32. If yes, why?

Easy access	Availability of necessary information	Relevance of information	Easy Usage

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33. If yes, how often?

Once a week	More than twice a week	Once a month	Once a year

34. If no, why?

Lack of physical access	Lack of Internet operation skill	Too Costly to access	Too much Information	Lack of relevant information

35. Do online adverts (in respective of the form as highlighted above) motivate you to purchase?

Yes	No

36. Do you think the undue exposure to online adverts whenever you are surfing (in respective of the form as highlighted above) makes you feel unhappy if you don't have the product or access to the service?

Yes	No

37. Have you ever made an online purchase?

Yes	No

38. If yes why?

Ease of purchase	Easy access	

39. If no why?

No interest	No means for purchase e.g. credit card	Lack of trust in online purchase

40. Which advertised product on the internet attracts you the most?

Automobiles	Electronics	Household items	Clothing's Accessories	Sports and Utilities	Others

41. Which advertised service on the internet attracts you the most?

E- Learning	Online Banking	Other



42. Additional comment: .....

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