



COMMUNICATION STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF AI IN PLANNING, CREATING AND DISSEMINATING ADVERTISEMENT

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ABSTRACT: Artificial intelligence has been an intrinsic part of the creative industry in the recent era; its exceptional contribution to development and technological advancement is apt and can never be undermined in the process and practice of advertising. The essence of advertising is to promote a cause, goods, and services. Thus, AI helps in the improvement and creative tactics advancement of advertising. The study, amongst its objectives, sought to ascertain the use of artificial intelligence in creating and disseminating advertisements. Also, it tends to analyse the perception of mass communication undergraduate students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University on the contributions of AI towards the planning and creating of advertisements. The study is anchored on the technology determinism theory of mass communication. The census method of study was employed, adopting focus group discussion as the technique of data collection. The findings of this study will help in understanding the contributions and usability of artificial intelligence in the terrain of advertising, both digital and mainstream advertising.

KEYWORDS: Advertisement, AI, Creating, Disseminating, Perception, Planning, Student.



INTRODUCTION

Information Communication and Technology have, over the years, taken a new form, expanding over the shores of human intelligence to machine-assisted intelligence (Uche et al., 2016; National Communication Society, 2014). AI is a technology that affects how people communicate using the internet and is influenced by it, which means that it impacts how communication enhances change socially and in behaviour (Obiora, 2022). Likely, its effect will only continue to grow in the near future. AI has the power to drastically alter how people interact with one another and with the digital world, both positively and negatively, through their jobs and other socioeconomic institutions (Popenici & Kerr, 2017; Ojiakor et al., 2016). Artificial intelligence represents a new level of technological and scientific development that will significantly alter how the world operates as we know it, given the significant advancements in computing power, increasingly complex algorithms, and the capacity to process vast amounts of data (Obiora et al., 2025; Gasmi & Prlja, 2021).

The ability of machines to adapt to new situations, deal with emerging situations, solve problems, answer questions, devise plans, and perform various other functions that require some level of intelligence typically evident in human beings" is what Coppin (2024) defines as artificial intelligence. Every awareness campaign relies heavily on communication (Ezebuenyi & Ezeaka, 2015). By enhancing our access to information and services, AI is transforming industries (Ezeaka, 2024) and enhancing the virality of news on social media as well as enhancing the encoding and decoding of emojis on social media (Obiakor et al, 2025; Obiora et al, 2025). A computer system that can carry out tasks typically associated with intelligent beings is a standard definition of artificial intelligence (AI) (European Commission Joint Research Centre, 2018). It is comparable to the European Commission's definition, which states that artificial intelligence (AI) refers to systems that exhibit intelligent behaviour by analysing their surroundings and acting independently to accomplish a certain job (Boucher, 2020). According to Obiora, Nwammuo and Nwammuo (2025), artificial intelligence (AI) is the process of providing computers with human-like characteristics, including comprehension, reasoning, and problem-solving, in order to enable them to mimic intelligence. Nigerians' perceptions of AI-related advancements may be impacted by a stark lack of knowledge of cultural nuances in communication (Ezeaka, 2024).

AI is characterised as a set of disruptive technologies that enable solving problems, facilitating decision-making, and performing tasks akin to human intelligence in almost all areas of human disciplines like film (Obiora & Adikuru, 2024a), in curtailing drug abuse through generated memes for intervention strategy, (Obiora & Adikuru, 2024b; Ezeaka & Ochuba, 2024), in education, (Obiora & Uche, 2024), in public relations (Obiora, 2024), in problem-solving (Qin & Jiang, 2019), and in application of paywall in online newspaper industry (Obiora & Uche, 2023). Artificial Intelligence has played a pivotal role in enhancing advertising's competence, personalisation, targeting, and intelligence. It is widely believed that the future lies in the information age, where a nation's success hinges on its ability to handle information effectively (Enemuo, Ezeanyi & Ezeaka 2019). It's no doubt that AI has made a great paradigm shift in how global news flows in social media, it has changed how news flow globally on social media (Udeze, Nwodu, & Nwodu, 2015). Its impact on aiding development has no bound (Ezeaka & Nwodu, 2022), even in developing health communication it's presence has been felt (Ezeoke, Ezeaka, &



Nwodu, 2020). Also, in research the presence of AI has been aided where ChatGPT, QuillBot-AI, etc (Nwodu, & Nwodu, 2010, 2018). The communication networks are not left behind, there are prevalent everywhere and cannot deny the impact of AI in carrying out their services (Ezeali, Nwodu & Udoh, 2023).

According to Chen et al. (2019), this change has been made possible by automating and simplifying crucial advertising processes, such as media planning, ad design, ad procurement, consumer insight discovery, and impact evaluation. According to Donthu et al. (2022), the advertising sector has experienced a significant transition in recent decades. Modern technology developments, especially the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, have fueled this growth and are radically altering the conventional notion of advertising and its content (Campbell et al., 2022). AI is essential to helping advertisers with a variety of advertising tasks. As highlighted by Huh and Malthouse (2020), its capacity to enable the creation of highly targeted promotions through automated ad scheduling, placement, and media planning and purchase has led to a spike in its use in advertising in the modern era. With significant industry potential and exciting research opportunities, the field of AI advertising is expanding quickly. Concurrently, advertising has evolved from its conventional forms to incorporate a wide range of cutting-edge media platforms driven by new technology and the growth of digital media. Artificial intelligence (AI) is used in these cutting-edge advertising channels to increase the efficacy of advertisements.

This study delves beyond the realm of AI and advertising in relation to students' perception of AI creating and planning advertising since university students had claimed not to be aware of communication laws or feel indifferent about it (Obiora & Onyeka, 2022; Onyeka & Obiora, 2021). It encompasses the convergence of technology, psychology, and business. Its focus lies in understanding how today's upcoming advertising practitioners think in relation to artificial intelligence and figuring out how to succeed in this changing landscape of advertising .

Statement of Problem

Artificial intelligence in recent years has been a highly technological means likened to human intelligence, and it is also associated with making life easier, faster, and simpler for humanity. AI has become an increasingly integral part of advertising, revolutionising how advertisements are planned, created and disseminated. Artificial intelligence offers vast opportunities to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of advertising efforts, from predictive analytics in campaign planning to AI-powered content creations and targeted distribution. However, as AI's roles in advertising continue to expand, there is limited understanding of how students, the future professionals in the advertising field, perceive Artificial intelligence's impact on the advertising process. Thus, a lack of understanding amongst the students could influence their willingness to adopt these technologies and their preparedness for AI expansion in their future endeavours. If these misconceptions are unaddressed, mostly around issues of creativity, job security, data privacy and ethical considerations, it could create a moustache between these skills and mindset students bring into the industry and the demands of a rapidly evolving AI-enhanced advertising landscape.



Objectives of Study

The study is chiefly to ascertain the perception of COOU Mass communication students on the use of AI in planning, creating, and disseminating advertisements. However, the following objectives will help to elucidate the sagacity of the study;

1. Assess communication students' level of understanding and awareness of AI and AI tools used in creating and planning advertisements.
2. Investigate communication students' perception of AI roles in the advertising process.
3. Examine communication students' perceived benefits and limitations of AI use in advertisement creation, planning and dissemination.

Research Question

The following research questions will guide the process of this study;

1. What is the communication students' level of understanding and awareness of AI and its tools used in creating and planning advertisements?
2. What is the student's perception of AI roles in the advertising process?
3. What are the students' perceived benefits and limitations of AI use in advertisement creation, planning and dissemination?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

Thorstein Veblen's 1929 theory of technological determinism serves as the foundation for this investigation. Asemah, Nwammuo, and Nkwam-Uwaoma (2022) state that technical determinism is based on the idea that a society's technology defines its nature; it is seen to be the driving force behind its culture and determines its historical trajectory. Determinism in technology can take many different forms. Newer technology is introduced first, followed occasionally by other modifications. Existing knowledge may also be lost as a result of these changes (Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwam-Uwaoma, 2022). Thus, a society's level of knowledge is being influenced by technology.

A reductionist idea known as "technology determinism" holds that a society's social structure and cultural values are shaped by its technological advancements. Therefore, the view that technology is a major ruling force in a society can be summed up as technological determinism. According to Chandler (1995), referenced in Asemah, Nwammuo, and Nkwam-Uwaoma (2022), the technological determinist perspective is a philosophy of social change driven by technology, which is regarded as the primary force behind history. One technological advancement that has changed how various perspectives on life, social structures, and systems are viewed over time is artificial intelligence. According to the technological determinism theory, technology is the driving factor behind societal change. This suggests that human existence is shaped by communication



paradigms. Therefore, the application of artificial intelligence to the advertising industry represents an advancement above previous practices and ushers in a new era of change in the advertising landscape. According to Asemah, Nwammuo, and Nkwam-Uwaoma (2022), technological determinism is the simple belief that technology influences and changes fundamental aspects of behaviour and society, including how we think and act, how we interact with others, how we value ourselves, and how we learn.

Literature Review

Advertising as a Concept

According to Dunu et al. (2017), advertising is a type of marketing communication that is used to promote, influence, or control an audience (viewers, readers, or listeners; occasionally, a particular group) to carry on or perform a new action. While political and ideological advertising is also frequently used, the most common goal is to influence customer behaviour in relation to a commercial offering. As a result, producers use advertising services as a means of reaching out to prospective buyers and presenting their goods. Advertising is a type of sponsorship that uses the media to spread information and a way for manufacturers to inform prospective customers about their goods and services. Advertising is a sophisticated kind of communication that directs viewers to the most crucial information. Advertising is any form of paid non-personal display or promotion of ideas, goods, or services by a known sponsor/ advertiser. One economical way to spread knowledge is through advertising, brand inclinations or to inform others." According to the several definitions of advertising given, advertising is a way for a producer to communicate with potential consumers and influence the attitudes, sentiments, and convictions of customers regarding a product or items from the brand being advertised. Communication between advertisers and potential customers will be established through the distribution of adverts.

Artificial Intelligence: A concept

Artificial intelligence has become one of the 21st century's most revolutionary technologies, bringing about profound changes in our workplaces, lifestyles, and relationships with technology while also transforming economies, society, and industries globally (Dwivedi et al., 2021). According to the OECD, an artificial intelligence (AI) system is a machine-based system that can generate predictions, recommendations, or judgements that affect real or virtual environments for a specific set of human-defined objectives. According to the OECD (2019), AI systems are made to function with different degrees of autonomy. AI is the process of reproducing human cognitive functions in computers or machines so that they can think, react, and carry out activities similarly to people (Soni, 2020). It is a group of technologies that can carry out tasks that typically need human intellect, including robotics, speech and picture recognition, natural language processing, and problem-solving. These tasks are extremely specialised and sophisticated (Haleem et al., 2022). Given the speed at which AI is developing, intelligent robots that are supported by continuous research and development are expected to outperform humans in a number of fields (Pannu & Student, 2015). AI is unique in its ability to perceive the surroundings and take appropriate action since it uses neural networks to mimic human reasoning and problem-solving (Wisetsri et al., 2021).



As noted by Flavian et al. (2022) and de Keyser et al. (2019), these AI systems often lead to the displacement of human roles. In the creative industry, AI's invaluable applications are highlighted by (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2021), who categorise its usage into five distinct categories: content creation, information analysis, content enhancement and post-production workflows, information extraction and enhancement, and data compression. This extensive use of AI also extends to image generation, where neural networks use large data sets to synthesise high-quality visual content. Originally, Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs) were used. Recent advances in techniques such as diffusion-based methods have significantly improved both the variety and quality of generation. Despite these advances, it is still difficult to reproduce a wide range of image styles, especially those that closely resemble real photographs (Lu et al., 2023).

AI in advertising

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a key component of today's quickly changing advertising landscape, and it is undoubtedly impossible to have an impact without the internet (Duru et al., 2017). According to Panchiwala and Shah (2020), artificial intelligence (AI) seeks to give systems cognitive capabilities similar to those of humans by enabling algorithm-driven computers, or robots, to carry out jobs that have historically needed human intelligence. These abilities include understanding, thinking, drawing conclusions, differentiating, generalising, and—most importantly—learning from prior experiences. Machine learning is a noteworthy branch of artificial intelligence that is becoming more and more well-known in the advertising industry. According to Perlich et al. (2023), machine learning leverages the abundance of consumer data to create quick, well-informed advertising recommendations, overcoming the limitations of conventional advertising technologies. In the context of advertising, machine learning is more than just data processing; it also improves targeted media buying and clever audience segmentation. It refines its comprehension and decision-making skills with each new piece of data it examines, drawing comparisons to human learning and development (Shah et al., 2020).

Additionally, cloud computing enhances advertising methods by offering on-demand access to a pool of shared computing resources. It ensures effective information distribution by opening the door for quick responses and a cooperative digital environment. Interestingly, Yin et al. (2015) agree that it is crucial to resolve privacy concerns. However, there are a number of obstacles to incorporating these technologies into advertising. There are still relevant issues in spite of the progress, especially with regard to Big Data. Shah et al. (2020) outlined a number of difficulties, such as growing concerns about privacy, the disarray of fragmented data, the absence of outcomes that are customised for each user, barriers to data accessibility, and the potential for data manipulation. Addressing these issues will be crucial as the sector develops in order to guarantee a smooth and trustworthy interaction between advertising and customers.



METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative research method, while focus group discussion (FGD) served as the data collection technique. The study focused on Mass communication undergraduate students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam campus, with a total population of One thousand, three hundred and sixty-four students (1364). The Focus group was adopted to elicit information from the respondents directly, in a face-to-face discussion manner, on their personal perception of the subject of discussion. Sixty (60) discussants from Four (4) groups, with Fifteen (15) discussants per group, were randomly selected from the population of the study.

Data Presentation

Research Question One

What is the student's level of understanding and awareness of AI and its tools used in creating and planning advertisements?

This affirms the respondents' level of understanding and awareness of AI tools usage in creating and planning advertisements. Discussant "P" in group one said that she does not have much knowledge of any AI tools for advertising, stating her ignorance of the issue of discussion. However, she said she is aware of AI tools like ChatGPT and MetaAI, OpenAI, and others, but she is not aware of any AI tools that strictly aid advert creation.

Another respondent, Discussant "Z" in group four, said that He has an idea of AI tools used in Advert, such as Adcreative.AI, Superside, AdRolls and IBM Watson Ad Ai, amongst others. He said that AI tools in advertising are essential for creating exceptional ads with creative techniques. Discussant "Z" avers that *"AI tools are also used in advertising, most especially in the planning process, the creation and the strategic manipulation of the required terms. I sometimes make use of AdCreative.AI for creating content for my small business"*.

Again, Discussant "B", in group two, also aligned his assertion with Discussant "P", saying that he does not know much about AI tools that are used in advertising creation. This also goes in line with the revelation by Discussant "B" aligning with Discussant "G" and "L" in group three, who said they are not aware of or have any knowledge about Artificial Intelligence tools that aid the advertising process. This confirmation shows a low level of awareness in regard to AI tools that propel or help advertisement creation and dissemination processes.

Research Question Two

What is the student's perception of AI roles in the advertising process?

Artificial intelligence plays a pivotal role in the field of advertising. AI tools help create and plan strategic advertisements that aid advancement and creative minds. AI possesses various elements of change and modernisation. To ascertain the communication students' perception of AI roles in the advertising creation process, Discussant "Z" in group two highlights his belief in AI's doggedness in helping the advertisement process when he said, *"I perceive AI tools as a means to*



making well planned, creative and audience appeal kind of advert that resonates the scope of making a profit, in an easy, fast and also reliable.”

AI tools for advert creation help to provide sufficient information that helps build standard ads. Discussant “X” in group one affirmed that artificial intelligence provides a terrain to adequately equip creatives and advertising practitioners with quick and easy advertising strategies to advance their standards.

However, some respondents hold different views regarding AI use in advertisement creation, planning and dissemination. Discussant “H” said, “Inviting AI to the field of advertising will take a lot of experts out of business because of the degree of effectiveness and speed in AI use for advertising.

Discussant “E” in group four predicted that AI tools used in advert creation will cause a lot of individuals who are employed in an advertising firm to lose their jobs because of the proficiency and credibility associated with AI. Thus, there will be a reduction of manpower in the workforce environment as it concerns ads. Again, some discussants also said that AI use in advertising might also cause redundancy in the sense that this AI will cause those remaining in the field of advertising to be lazy and always rely on AI for their work.

Research Question Three

What are the students’ perceived benefits and limitations of AI use in advertisement creation, planning and dissemination?

There are numerous benefits and limitations associated with the use of AI in advert creation, planning and dissemination. Discussant “H” in group one said that the benefit of AI tools in advert creation and planning cannot be overemphasised in the realms that they make the process easier and faster but they also help reduce workload and enhance creativity. Another respondent, Discussant “O” in group four, also supported the words of Discussant “H” when she affirmed, “I think the benefits of using AI for advert planning, creation and dissemination is a welcomed development that outweighs its disadvantages or limitation because it provides creatives with essential clues to a strategic advert that his brains cannot fathom”.

Again, Discussant “P” in group three said, “The era of AI in advertising is here to stay; it is a crucial aspect of technological advancement that transcends the facets of human understanding. It perfects the creatives and makes every aspect of ad creation spontaneous.

However, with the above-highlighted benefits embedded in the use of AI in advertising creation and planning, it is saddled with various limitations that stand out in the process of creating well-detailed and functional ads. Discussant “B” in group two said, “In as much as AI makes work easier and faster in relation to AI in ads creation, there are ethical and social disjoints in connection with the outlined benefits. Ethically, AI will make worker lazy and unreliable, as well as lead to brain death because creatives will leave their whole job description to Artificial intelligence tools that are concerned with their duties. Another Discussant in group two supported the above assertion, adding that it will also lead to the loss of jobs for the employed in the advertising industry



because AI will be used to perform tasks which they cannot carry out at a given time without being paid every month. The above shows that with the various advantages linked to AI use in ads creation and planning, there are also contrasting limitations.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study is geared towards ascertaining students' perception of AI use in creating, planning and disseminating adverts. It was found in objective one that few respondents are aware of and also understand these AI tools used in advertising, while a good number of the respondents said they are not aware of any AI tools employed in advert creation, planning, and dissemination. The findings negate the findings of Timea and Veres (2023), in their study on Student's perception of AI in education 'when they found that one percent lacks information about AI tools for education, while 65% are well informed on AI tools for education, while 35% of the respondents are less interested in having the knowledge of AI tools for education.

Assessing the respondents' perception of AI roles in advertising, it was found that the respondents accepted AI to be a very helpful and essential tool that helps in creating exceptional and interesting ads. AI helps make ad audiences appealing and can also monitor the process of its dissemination. Some respondents who are already using this AI tool for advert creation said that Ad.creativeai, superside amongst other various AI tools they employ when they are creating their personal ads and promotional content. However, the finding is in contrast with that of Kshetri et al. (2024), who said that the use of AI in content marketing does not differ from traditional content marketing creation processes. It also does not influence the purchase intention and decisions of the target audience. Again, the findings are in tandem with that of Jaiwant (2023), which states that with the help of AI, advertisers can effectively reach the right audience with the appropriate information at the appropriate moment. This precise targeting significantly enhances the effectiveness of advertising campaigns.

Objective three focuses on the benefits and limitations of AI use in creating, planning, and disseminating advertisements. It was found that both benefits and limitations associated with using AI for advertising exist. Some of the benefits, as highlighted by the respondents, include easy access to credible information for the swift delivery of the advert project, metrics for assessing the target audience for the advert project, and a credible, functional and well-researched package of the advert that resonates amongst the target audience. However, the limitations associated with AI use in ad creation are laziness, work redundancy, lack of creative will, Job insecurity, and particular standard set-up, therefore causing mental death in humans.

CONCLUSION

The development of artificial intelligence is changing the world by affecting almost every segment of human life and work. Based on the process of "making intelligent machines", it was supposed to help people in different sectors and activities. Therefore, the implementation of AI technology



has drawn the attention of researchers in various scientific fields. One of them refers to advertising, which represents a sector of special importance for the entire society. Taking into account the sensitivity of the advertising sector, the application of AI systems should be approached with great caution. AI's ever-evolving capabilities mean that its acceptance is an ongoing journey. The implications of AI adoption in advertising are vast and varied. Content creators, marketers, developers, policymakers, and researchers must consider these implications to measure the likely success and impact of incorporating AI into advertisement strategies and policies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study makes the following recommendations based on the findings;

1. Advert practitioners and students should accept AI use in advertising creation as a welcome development that has come to stay.
2. Students and advertising practitioners should not be engrossed with the benefits of AI in ad creation, forgetting that a good advertising skill is a prerequisite for professional ad practice.
3. There should be the inclusion of AI tools for advertising into the curriculum of communication undergraduate students so as to equip them with the new world trends.
4. Future research should look at the directions of AI in personalised advertising, audience targeting and content creation.

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