

EFFECT OF GEN Y'S AFFECTIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS FACEBOOK MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

The ubiquitous role of technology in the lives of Generation (Gen) Y consumers is commonly recognized in scholarly circles, as well as the pervasive use of interactive and social media among younger consumers, which is significant for marketers from an advertising perspective. Widespread usage of social media such as Facebook is generating billions of dollars in advertising revenue, however, little is known about the attitudes of consumers towards advertising on this conduit in developing countries, especially in terms of the effect of various usage characteristics and demographic factors. This study investigates the influence of Facebook advertising on affective attitudes amongst Gen Y in South Africa (SA). The findings of the inquiry revealed a generally positive predisposition towards Facebook advertising *vis-à-vis* affective attitudes, which makes a noteworthy contribution to the limited social media research on hierarchy response theory in developing countries. This investigation should also assist companies and their brands to understand what makes Gen Y like and develop a preference for their products that are promoted on Facebook, as well as the impact of various usage and demographics variables, thereby abetting the development and implementation of more effective marketing communications on this vast digital interactive medium in South Africa.

Keywords: South Africa, Facebook, Marketing Communications, Gen Y, Affective Attitudes, Liking, Preference

1. INTRODUCTION

Social network sites (SNS) have rapidly emerged over the past decade, and within this short span of time, these sites have become a platform for users to express their feelings. SNS are traditionally online communities that share common activities and interests, and provide an array of ways for users to interact with one another via instant messaging, voice chat, videos, photographs, discussion groups and file-sharing (Zarrella, 2010). Online consumers spend increasing amounts of time expressing themselves on SNS, and it is anticipated that SNS will significantly influence purchase decisions. Furthermore, the massive user base of these sites makes them lucrative media for organizations to place advertisements. The most recent statistics indicate that Facebook is the largest SNS in the world, with 1.35 billion subscribers (Facebook, 2014a). Therefore, SNS have become imperative for global marketing communications, and are commanding a larger share of advertising budgets, especially to reach the younger generation, which is known as Gen Y. The adoption of SNS is prevalent and common among younger consumers who progressively incorporate social networking into their everyday lives (Shambare et al., 2012; Saxena and Khanna, 2013). Hence, owing to the enormous value of social network advertising (SNA) on Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter and others, further research is warranted.

There is also an absence of agreed factors in the research of online advertising effectiveness. The emphasis has been placed on social media metrics, as opposed to attitudinal responses, whereas online advertising has significant effects on attitudes that are

not exposed via click-through rates. Therefore, the aforementioned necessitates that online advertising effectiveness is evaluated from a more comprehensive viewpoint (Peters et al., 2013). Since online marketing communication is primarily driven by the desire of consumers, it is important to gain an understanding of the dynamic motivator of behavior, to be precise, the attitude, which is the chief driver of exposure to advertising (Chandra et al., 2012). Lutz (1985) argued that gauging perceptions about consumers' attitudes is imperative, since they may have an influence on attention, and responses to advertisements. Much research has focused on the assessment of consumers' attitudes, perceptions and usage of the Internet (Schlosser and Shavitt, 1999; Yoon, 2002; Drèze and Hussherr, 2003; Forsythe et al., 2006; Yoo, 2008; Park and Lee, 2009; Kuisma et al., 2010; Punj, 2011); and in recent times, social media (Gensler et al., 2013; Malthouse et al., 2013; Peters et al., 2013; Weinberg et al., 2013; Hautz et al., 2014; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Labrecque, 2014). However, if the primary objective of advertising is to establish a positive attitude towards advertising, thereby increasing the intention-to-purchase, then a favorable emotional response to advertising is the best gauge of advertising effectiveness (Aaker and Stayman, 1990; Brown and Stayman, 1992). Gen Ys' attitudes towards social network advertising are of significant importance to organizations as they may provide evidence of potential consumer behavior tendencies in the future, as well as their sentiments towards their products and brands. Hence, this research concentrates on the affective attitudes of Gen Y towards Facebook marketing communications.

The majority of the aforementioned studies focused on developed countries' social media users who have access to sound infrastructure and information technology, but in several instances have stagnating social media populations; whereas many developing nations' social media audiences have been rapidly expanding largely owing to the widespread use of mobile devices, which are used to access online SNS. There is also a dearth of research in developing countries concerning social media consumers, whose attitudes and usage characteristics may differ significantly in comparison to their American and European compatriots because of divergent cultural factors, as well as poor infrastructure and a lack of sound information technology that result in low levels of access and slow Internet speeds. Accordingly, this research intends to provide a South African perspective on the influence of Facebook marketing communications on Gen Y, where 25% of the population can be classified as a member of this cohort (Statistics SA, 2012).

Bolton et al. (2013) agreed with the aforementioned views and suggested that past research led to more queries than solutions. Furthermore, a large proportion of prior inquiries have used student samples whose consumer behavior may also change as they move through different life stages. Therefore, this study sought to obtain a more representative sample of the Gen Y cohort by also including employed (skilled and unskilled) and unemployed young adults, as up to half of this cohort is unemployed in SA (Statistics SA, 2012), from suburbs (mostly affluent) and townships (predominately disadvantaged) regions in the Western Cape, instead of only using a student sample. Bolton et al. (2013) also questioned if there were noticeable differences within the Gen Y cohort. Therefore, this empirical study not only aims to reveal Gen Y's affective attitudes towards advertising on the largest SNS, Facebook, but also investigates the influence of various usage characteristics and demographic factors that will be discussed in forthcoming text.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Social Media Contextualization

Social media and social networks are closely connected and are often referred to synonymously, but social networks are merely one element and are considered to be an example of a social media application. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe social media as an Internet group application that facilitates the production and transmission of user-generated content, in other words, the main principles of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 is the terminology, which is used to describe the trend in the use of World Wide Web (WWW) technology and web design to improve information sharing, creativity and collaboration among users. These notions have led to the development and advancement of web-based communities such as SNS. In simple terms, social media is the range of activities that integrate technology, social interaction and the construction of text, graphics, videos and audio via the Internet, with the express purpose of being shared. The interaction and the way in which information is portrayed depends largely on different perspectives and input from communities. Social media is really about user-generated content, collaboration, sharing (that is, Web 2.0) and connecting with others (Stokes, 2013).

SNS is a relatively cheap form of targeted marketing communication (via pay per impression or click models) and allows organizations to target according to various segmentation bases such as gender, age, language, relationship, lifestyles, education and other factors. Marketing communication on SNS in SA is underutilized and, consequently, it is possible to obtain high ratings for low costs. Furthermore, SNS users include a great deal of personal information when setting up their profiles and advertisers can, therefore, ensure that their advertisements reach the right target market. Hence, SNS display advertisements cost effective online marketing communication tools and have resulted in a growing share of impressions (Thomas, 2011).

A study of 2 000 consumers in the UK revealed that only 4% of people who use SNS clicked on display advertisements and less than 10% interacted with advertisements across SNS. However, 83% of the top 100 largest advertisers marketed their goods on SNS such as Facebook. This indicates that it may take some time before consumers who use SNS will become online shoppers through targeted marketing communications. The survey also revealed that 20% of consumers were annoyed by SNS marketing communication (Furlonger, 2009). However, eMarketer (2013) disclosed that a nearly 65% of brands worldwide have a presence in seven or more SNS, with more than 30% maintaining a presence in four to six, and only 5% using three or less than three sites. This could indicate that marketers are receiving a favorable return on investment, or they are initially using multiple SNS in order to establish what works for them. Therefore, further inquiry is needed owing to the lack of research in SA and divergent results of SNA efficacy.

2.2 Facebook Milieu

Marketers have realized that Facebook has huge potential as a marketing communication platform that enables them to reach and personally integrate with millions of their customers by creating their own Facebook pages and/or utilizing advertising opportunities, which are offered by Facebook. Organizations are able to use a number of segmentation factors, such as demographics (gender, age and education), geographic location and psychographics, since Facebook avails this information to organizations to target prospective and current consumers. Though, organizations are able to connect with current and prospective consumers on a deeper level by incorporating a social context into their advertising by showing when a consumer's friend has liked a particular organization's Facebook page

(Facebook, 2014a). More than nine out of ten of businesses that were surveyed in SA by Wronski and Goldstruck (2013) utilize Facebook. Sales was the primary objective for keeping an SNS presence and nearly one in two uses it to generate consumer leads.

Some believe that Facebook advertisements are not effective as users log on to SNS to socialize, however maintain that organizations that promote their brands via their own Facebook pages are more efficient, since consumers are able to interact with the brand. The average click rate of standard banner advertisements for the Internet was 0.2% and the response rate could be even lower for SNS (Curran et al., 2011). Webtrends revealed that Facebook's advertising click through rate (CTR) was low (0.051%), which has an influence on Facebook as a reliable advertising channel. Conversely, Facebook pages (80.79% clicks) are the most popular Facebook object, which is marketed by brands that use "social ads". This is probably because most organizations have not created anything outside of their brand page, which is where they interact with consumers. "Apps" receive 4.60% clicks and "events" 10.57% clicks. Facebook has altered the meaning of the word "like." From a Facebook perspective, a "like" is private preference, but also a declaration to the user's affiliations ("friends") on the whole social network of this predisposition. This is a strong endorsement and the affiliations, owing to the user's relationship with them, will, therefore, also be more inclined to like it as well. The value of social endorsements can be seen by the high number of users who click on sponsored story advertisements and subsequently become fans (over 77%) (Davis and Rosenstein, 2012b).

Wronski and Goldstruck (2013) established that there are about 9.4 million South Africans Facebook users, with an estimated 87% of South Africans accessing Facebook via their mobile phones, which is above Facebook's global average of 79% (Facebook, 2014a). Gen Y ranked Facebook as their third favorite social medium and cell phone application in the Generation Next Youth brand survey, which was conducted in SA in 2013 (HDI Youth Marketeers, 2014). Therefore, Facebook is a SNS that cannot be ignored by marketers as a marketing communication tool, but warrants further research, especially among the fickle younger generation that represents a quarter of the SA population.

2.3 Generation Y Cohort Theory

Generational cohort theory (GCT) posits that different segments of the population can be divided into distinct groups based upon historical events that fashion the behavior and attitudes of members within each cohort (Moore, 2012). GCT was generally applied in the US environment; but global homogeneity, advocated by technology innovation, aided the development of global GCT (Schewe and Meredith, 2004). Gen Y includes those who were born between 1982 and 1994 in SA, and is the primary focus of marketers owing to the size and increasing buying power of this cohort (Shipman, 2010). Census 2011 data also shows that the South African Gen Y comprises of over 13 million members, which is nearly a quarter of the SA population (Statistics SA, 2012). The South African Black Gen Y cohort includes a significant portion of the South African market (21%), particularly in terms of those who are and were students at tertiary institutions who represent a profitable target market segment owing to the fact that increased levels of higher education is connected with greater earning potential (Bevan-Dye et al., 2012).

Gen Y is technologically savvy, since they were born after the introduction of the computer and have little knowledge of the pre-Internet era (Black, 2010; Puybaraud, 2010). They have grown up with the rapid progression of digital interactive technology that has an enormous impact on them. Consequently, this ubiquitous environment, access to knowledge and data processing power have led Gen Y to process information and to think differently

than previous generations, since they prefer variety rather than linear; are skills-focused rather than content-fixated; and have a passion for lifelong experiential learning (Prensky, 2001; Nikirk, 2009). SNS is used by nearly 80% of Gen Y, but they are cautious to use their personal information and for what purposes, as they have grown up with online media. The fact that Gen Y are heavy SNS users does not mean that they trust this source. Therefore, many organisations are finding it difficult to establish appropriate SNS strategies to reach this notoriously fickle generation who tend to “like” and then subsequently “un-like” quickly, and will also adopt and drop SNS easily.

SA has both local and global influences that have shaped the different generation value systems of Gen Y while growing up. Gen Y's are often referred to as the “born free” generation in SA, since many Black South Africans have grown up in a country where they may have benefited from political transformation. There are differences between Gen Y, not only in terms of countries, but also within SA in terms of whether they live in townships or suburbs; and in rural or urban areas; however, this generation has still been significantly impacted by international influences and globalization. General characteristics of this group include being technologically confident, competent and continually connected, independent, optimistic, self-confident, lifestyle-centered, entrepreneurial and have big aspirations and high levels of “entitlement” (Du Chenne, 2011). However, in a developing country such as SA, many Gen Y would have grown up in more rural or poor environments and may have had limited exposure to technology, hence they may process information differently (Wessels and Steenkamp, 2009), therefore, additional research is necessary with this cohort.

2.4 Attitudes

Marketers have postulated various methods to empirically measure marketing communication effectiveness. Some assert that advertising is efficient only when it results in a purchase (Little, 1979); whereas others argue that there is a sequence of phases, also known as hierarchy response models, which include awareness of a product, knowledge, interest, favorable predispositions and eventually culminate in a purchase. This study is in agreement with the latter view, since consumers do not always respond instantaneously, but as relevant information is received, positive attitudes towards the product brand are formed before purchase behavior takes place. Furthermore, each stage of the hierarchy response models should be achieved before a purchase is made and, therefore, one or more stages often serve as marketing communication objectives for many organizations (Belch and Belch, 2012). Marketing communication objectives should describe the response that the marketer aims to have on the target audience (Koekemoer, 2004). From a marketing perspective, the *cognitive component* comprises of awareness, knowledge and information, which is received from advertising and other sources, in other words, has the consumer perceived a product and what is known about it? The *affective component* involves the consumer's feelings and emotions (like or dislike) towards a product. Emotions enhance positive or negative experiences, which comprise higher levels of affect such as interest, liking, preference and intention that may impact later behavior. The *behavioral or conative component* is concerned with the likelihood or tendency of how consumers will react or behave in a particular way to a product, which typically includes trial, purchase, rejection and/or adoption (Belch and Belch, 2012; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). Attitudes toward the advertising can be described as a consumer's sentiments of the general advertising stimulus. Lutz (1985) observed the attitudes toward the advertising as one-dimensional terms, and described attitudes toward the advertising as a tendency to respond in a positive or negative way to a certain advertising stimulus during a specific exposure event. Consequently, attitudes toward the advertising are only viewed from an affective perspective, with the cognitive and conative components excluded from consideration. Furthermore, the aforementioned theoretical attitudinal models

were developed from the analysis of traditional advertising media; hence, this investigation focuses on the affective attitude component (liking and preference) towards Facebook marketing communications.

2.5 Affective Attitude

Taylor et al. (2011) disclosed that SNS advertising acceptance was affected by how entertaining it was and by the information that it provided. Entertaining advertisements result in positive brand attitudes (Shimp, 1981; Shavitt et al., 1998; MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989); therefore, marketers should create entertaining advertisements as it would assist to increase the effectiveness of their messages. Several studies have revealed that affective attitudes towards advertising were a facilitator of advertising effects on purchase intention or consideration (Lutz, 1985; Aaker et al., 1986; Edell and Burke, 1987; Holbrook and Batra, 1987).

However, there have been contradictory findings in terms of recent attitudinal studies, which investigated SNA. Chandra et al. (2012) conducted research into attitudes towards social media advertising among undergraduate and postgraduate students. The study revealed that social media advertising aided the purchase decision, but held unfavorable attitudes in terms of affective (enjoyment, entertainment value and authenticity) components. Bannister et al. (2013) also established that the attitudes of US college students towards Facebook advertising were largely negative or indifferent. Respondents believed that Facebook advertisements were largely irrelevant, uninteresting, and would not generally click on them. Mir (2013) investigated the attitudes of students towards social media advertising in South Asia among 210 college students. The study concurred with the aforementioned research and entertainment (affective) was not found to have a positive influence on consumer attitudes. Conversely, Swani et al. (2013) examined message strategies that would promote online word-of-mouth for business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) Facebook accounts among 193 Fortune 500 Facebook accounts in the US. The analysis revealed that Facebook emotional-related message posts were effective at generating likes (affective) for B2C-service accounts and B2B accounts. Logan et al. (2013) examined the perceptions of the value of advertising on Facebook to television in terms of entertainment and information in the US. The inquiry ascertained that Facebook advertising was more effective when it was also entertaining (affective) and the same finding was applicable for television advertising. Labrecque (2014) also established positive affective (liking) attitudes regarding interaction with brands in social media environments among US respondents. In summary, there have been several studies that evaluated the affective attitudes towards SNA, which were predominantly conducted in the US; relatively small sample sizes were utilized; students were mainly utilized as the research population; none investigated the impact of usage factors or the influence of demographic factors on Facebook advertising and yielded divergent results.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1 Affective Attitudes

As stated in prior text, the theoretical hierarchy response model was developed from the analysis of traditional advertising media, whereas this investigation focuses on recent digital interactive media, namely Facebook advertising, to ascertain consumers' affective attitudes as they pass through the middle levels of the theoretical model. The rapid growth of Facebook has begun to slow in many first-world nations and started to reach saturation and/or even decline, while the number of Facebook users is still steadily climbing in developing nations. SA has seen a growth rate of almost 40% over the last year (Wronski and Goldstruck, 2013).

Accordingly, this paper is important to organizations since a majority have spent large percentages of their marketing communications budgets on Facebook, and need to determine whether this SNS has a favorable effect on consumers' attitudes. Furthermore, this empirical study is also important to academics and researchers, as there is a dearth of research investigating consumers' attitudes towards social media advertising in developing countries (Bolton et al., 2013; Okazaki and Taylor, 2013) and hence, will make a noteworthy addition to the theoretical attitudinal framework regarding SNA. Therefore, this research seeks to address some of these issues by means of the first research question:

RQ1: Does Facebook advertising have an effect on the affective attitudes of Gen Y in SA?

3.2 Usage Characteristics

As mentioned in prior text, a vast majority of South African Facebook users access Facebook via their mobile phones (Wronski and Goldstruck, 2013); consequently, it is important to determine if there are noteworthy differences between Gen Y's attitudes towards Facebook advertising in terms of how they access this SNS. Other usage elements that were examined to establish if they have an impact on Gen Y's affective attitudes towards Facebook advertising include: log on incidence; log on duration; length of usage; and profile update frequency. This inquiry is significant to both organizations and researchers, as it will provide a stronger notion of Gen Y's Facebook usage characteristics predispositions, and also determine if they have an influence on their liking and preference perceptions towards Facebook advertising, which will provide additional insight into Gen Y's consumer behavior in future eons. Moreover, there has been little inquiry to assess the impact of Facebook marketing communications regarding the affective attitudes of Gen Y consumers, which will make a noteworthy contribution to the further development of attitudinal research on SNA. The next research question is as follows:

RQ2: Do usage characteristics of Gen Y in SA have an influence on affective attitudes as a result of Facebook advertising?

3.3 Demographic Variables

Bolton et al. (2013) recommended that research should be conducted to determine if there were significant variances amid Gen Y subgroups regarding social media use. Hence, this research seeks to determine if particular demographic factors namely, gender, age and ethnic orientation have an influence on Gen Y's liking and preference perceptions of advertising on Facebook. Furthermore, the ethnic orientation investigation is important to organizations and academics owing to the well-known inequalities that occurred in SA's recent history, which resulted in widespread economic disparities. Moreover, few inquiries have examined the impact of demographic variables, specifically age (within a certain cohort) and ethnic orientation in terms of hierarchical response theory. The final research question is as follows:

RQ3: Do demographic factors have an impact on affective attitudes of Gen Y in SA because of Facebook advertising?

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Sampling

Gen Y is known for their propensity to be heavy users of interactive digital media and devices such as SNS and mobile devices (Henrie and Taylor, 2009; Black, 2010; Shambare et al., 2012; Smith, 2012). Additionally, a number of studies have disclosed that students are the principal users of SNS (Pempek et al., 2009; Shields, 2011; Yang, 2012; Kim et al., 2013; Logan et al., 2013;), while other research used students to investigate SNS in terms of

attitudes and/or advertising (Bayne, 2011; Chi, 2011; Chandra et al., 2012; Van Noort et al., 2012; Mir, 2013; Hautz et al., 2014). However, the researcher maintained that the sample should be selected from a wider research population group to provide a more comprehensive representation of Gen Y, rather than only using students in the study. Therefore, young working adults, students and young adults who were not studying or working yet (nearly one in three people in SA are unemployed, with this figure increasing to up to one in two among young adults (Statistics SA, 2012)) were included in the research population, in order to provide a more acceptable representation of Gen Y that were Facebook users and viewed advertising on this SNS. A sample frame is a list of elements from which a sample may be drawn; usually the research populations that interest human behavior are so large that from a practice point of view it is difficult to conduct research on all of them (Gates and McDaniel, 2008). A little over 11% of SA's population live in the Western Cape (Statistics SA, 2012) and was selected as the sample frame from which to draw the Gen Y sample. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed where several steps are used to draw the sample (Chisnall, 1981; Cooper and Schindler, 2006). Firstly, the researcher divided the research population into groups known as a unit, with each province in SA representing a unit, and the Western Cape being selected as stated above. Secondly, the region was separated into various geographic clusters that comprised of urban and rural areas, which included suburbs (middle to upper class) and townships (low to middle class), via a map of the Cape Peninsula. Thirdly, companies, colleges, universities, sports clubs and religious and other community groups were identified and randomly selected through the use of a regional telephone directory. Fourthly, these establishments were contacted telephonically to seek permission to carry out the survey and to determine if there were enough Gen Y members to participate in the study. Systematic sampling was used in the final step to select respondents from each group, with every third respondent being asked if they were willing to voluntarily participate in the research.

4.2 Data and Measures

A structured self-administered research instrument was used to collect the vast quantity of data, which was necessary for this research study. "Structured" means that the questions were standardized and asked in the same way, and self-administered questionnaires were completed by the respondents without the interviewer asking the questions, except for the filter questions to establish if the individual qualified for the study (Kent, 1993). Self-administered surveys hold advantages of being able to reach large research populations, have a high response rate and there is little respondent misunderstanding questions, since the interviewer could assist with issues that were not clear (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Two filter questions were asked to establish if the respondent qualified to participate in the study. Firstly, a double dichotomous filter question ascertained whether the respondent had used Facebook, and secondly, if they have noticed any advertisements on this SNS. If the respondent answered "no" to either of these questions or was not a member of Gen Y, then a suitable replacement was found by selecting the next respondent that answered both questions affirmatively. It is important to note that the respondents did not need to identify the companies or products that featured in the Facebook advertising, nor was any distinction made between the different kinds of Facebook marketing communication, as the objective of the research was to consider an affective influence of Facebook advertising on Gen Y's attitudes.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section included five multiple-choice questions, which provided additional information regarding the Facebook users' usage characteristics. These five questions addressed how users accessed Facebook, how long they

had used it, how often they logged on, how many hours they usually spent on this SNS, and the frequency with which they updated their profile status.

A nine-item scale was created to measure liking by adapting construct items from Duncan and Nelson (1985); Ducoffe (1996); and Lin et al. (2008); whereas a second nine-item scale to assess preference, was adapted from construct items from Martin et al. (2002) and Wang and Sun (2010). Together these items formed the affective attitude construct, which comprised of 5-point Likert-scale statements that ranged from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). Validity refers to the degree to which a measure sufficiently represents the construct that it intended to measure (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The Likert scale was organized to alternate negative and positive statements in order to prevent participants from selecting a single column. A lower mean score indicated a low level of liking and preference (Facebook advertising affective attitudes), whereas the converse was true. The third section included demographical factors of respondents, namely gender, age and population group.

A pre-test was conducted among one hundred respondents to identify and correct possible problem areas to ensure that the research instrument was reliable. Subsequently, a pilot study was conducted among another one hundred respondents to ensure the validity of the construct and to tweak other areas of the research process (Monette et al., 2005; Blumberg et al., 2011). The research utilized 20 Marketing students from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (who were reading towards their Bachelor degree) as fieldworkers. The fieldworkers were allocated certain areas, and contacted identified establishments to conduct the research on a face-to-face basis, which contributed to the high response rate (despite the voluntary participation), as well as to the fact that the questionnaire took no longer than 10 minutes to complete. Hence, a total of 3 601 useable questionnaires were collected over a three month period. The data was captured, coded and examined through statistical software known as SPSS (version 21).

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Facebook was accessed by means of both PC and mobile device (58.8%) by a majority of respondents who typically used Facebook on a daily basis (57.2%), spent one (41.2%) to two (27.4%) hours per log on session and nearly three-quarters updated their profile a minimum of once a week. The sample included a majority of females (57%); almost half of the respondents were 18 - 20 years old (46.7%), and the population groups essentially replicated the ethnicity in the Western Cape with Black (53.5%) and Colored (29.3%) being in a majority (Statistics SA, 2012). Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of usage characteristics and demographics of the Gen Y respondents who use Facebook.

Table 1: Facebook Usage Characteristics and Demographics

Facebook Usage Characteristics	n	%
<i>Access</i>		
Mobile Device	960	26.6
PC	525	14.6
Mobile Device & PC	2 116	58.8
<i>Length of usage</i>		
≤ 1 year	480	13.3
2 years	867	24.1
3 years	948	26.4
4 years	740	20.5
≥ 5 years	566	15.7

<i>Log on frequency</i>		
Daily	2 060	57.2
2 - 4 a week	822	22.9
Once a week	433	12.0
2 - 4 a month	195	5.4
Once a month	91	2.5
<i>Log on duration</i>		
≤ 1 hour	1 483	41.2
2 hours	989	27.4
3 hours	601	16.7
4 hours	295	8.2
≥ 5 hours	233	6.5
<i>Profile update incidence</i>		
Daily	1 106	30.7
2 - 4 a week	884	24.5
Once a week	687	19.1
2 - 4 a month	399	11.1
Once a month	525	14.6
<i>Demographics</i>		
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	1 548	43.0
Female	2 053	57.0
<i>Age</i>		
18 - 20	1 684	46.7
21 - 24	1 439	40.0
25 - 30	478	13.3
<i>Population group</i>		
White	436	12.1
Black	1 927	53.5
Colored	1 054	29.3
Indian/Asian	184	5.1

Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, standard deviations and non-parametric one-sample bi-nominal standardized test) were used to describe the results (Tables 1, 2 and 3). As mentioned previously, the respondents' affective attitude towards Facebook advertising was quantified by nine-item scales for each of the hierarchy response levels (refer to Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2: Facebook Advertising Liking Scale

	Mean	SD	P	Standardized Test Statistic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Advertising on Facebook has made me like the brands more (1)	3.15	1.359	.000	7.454	1								
Advertising on Facebook adds to the enjoyment of using Facebook (2)	3.03	1.371	.011	2.548	.610**	1							
Advertisements on Facebook are irritating and annoying ^S (3)	3.39	1.335	.000	15.959	.163**	.084**	1						
Advertisements on Facebook are entertaining and fun (4)	3.15	1.132	.000	7.353	.801**	.554**	.270**	1					
Facebook has a positive influence on me liking advertised products (5)	3.04	1.068	.028	2.195	.483**	.805**	.032	.543**	1				
Advertising on Facebook has made me like the products less ^S (6)	3.35	1.055	.000	21.202	.133**	.007	.689**	.063**	.041	1			
I have positive feelings for brands that are advertised on Facebook (7)	3.17	1.168	.000	9.460	.789**	.464**	.184**	.800**	.489**	.064**	1		
There are too few advertisements on Facebook (8)	2.86	1.242	.000	7.016	.336**	.642**	.013	.375**	.670**	-.059	.422**	1	
Facebook has a negative effect on me liking advertised brands ^S (9)	3.48	1.167	.000	23.757	.180**	.045*	.702**	.168**	.018	.725**	.123**	.144**	1

^S Negatively phrased statement scores were recoded

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Reliability refers to the measure that should consistently replicate the construct that it is measuring. The most common measure to determine the scale of reliability is Cronbach's α and a value of above 0.7 is deemed to be acceptable (Kline, 1999; Field, 2009; Pallant, 2010). Negatively phrased statements are important to reduce response bias, however, these statements score needed to be reversed, as they would have adversely affected the Cronbach's α result. Three statements in each of the nine item scales were reversed by using SPSS before Cronbach's α was used to establish the reliability of the constructs for each scale of the hierarchy response model (Kent, 1993; Field, 2009;). Cronbach's α was 0.765 for Facebook's advertising liking scale (Table 2) and 0.764 for the Facebook advertising preference scale (Table 3), thereby displaying healthy internal consistencies. The means for liking and preference also revealed that respondents were inclined to "agree" that Facebook advertising resulted in liking and preference. However, a non-parametric one-sample bi-nominal standardized test was utilized to determine if there was a significant difference. The test showed that for both of the scales there was a significant difference at $p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.05$, with the exception of one item in the preference scale. Pearson correlation coefficient analysis (Tables 2 and 3) largely revealed a positive relationship between the liking and preference construct items, but there was generally a higher positive correlation for the negatively reversed construct items that were recoded. Factor analysis was conducted in the form of a principle component analysis to establish validity of the liking and preference constructs. The first principle components of the liking and preference scales represented 46.98% and 52.77% of the variance (eigenvalues); the second principle components 30.65% and 28.86%; and the third principle components 13.20% and 9.19%; thereby accounting for 90.83% and 90.82% of the data variance, which showed that there was a relatively low divergence between the construct items. This indicates that the measured variables show an overall convergence of responses, thereby signifying the validity of the liking and preference scales.

A Generalized Linear Model (GLM) analysis of variance (ANOVA), while using the Wald's Chi-square permitted the researcher to establish whether the observed frequencies differ significantly from the projected frequencies (Field, 2009; Urdan, 2010). Bonferroni correction pair-wise comparisons post hoc tests were employed on the estimated marginal means, which allowed the researcher to compare the predictor (Facebook usage characteristics), and dependent variables (liking and preference), therefore establishing where there were significant differences between the variables (Hinton et al. 2004; Field, 2009). The GLM ANOVA was employed owing to the different number of observations for the predictor variables, whereby the GLM automatically "normalizes" the results. A smaller number of observations equates to greater standard errors, for example, there were not many respondents that logged on to Facebook only once a month (van Schalkwyk, 2012). Table 4 show the effect in terms of the Wald Chi-Square tests, which is based on the *Bonferroni correction* pairwise post hoc test among the estimated marginal means.

Table 3: Facebook Advertising Preference Scale

	Mean	SD	P	Standardized Test Statistic	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
I have no interest in brands that are advertised on Facebook ^S (10)	3.34	1.336	.000	14.983	1								
Advertisements on Facebook have increased my preference for specific products (11)	3.07	1.286	.000	4.050	.078**	1							
Advertising on Facebook improves the image of companies (12)	3.24	1.321	.000	12.374	.084**	.549**	1						
I avoid products that are advertised on Facebook ^S (13)	3.26	1.106	.000	14.144	.732**	.090**	.036	1					
Advertisements on Facebook are relevant to me and my interests (14)	3.08	1.012	.000	4.655	.106**	.725**	.503**	.010	1				
Advertisements on Facebook are effective in stimulating my preference in brands (15)	3.08	1.031	.000	4.735	.159**	.499**	.715**	.060*	.570**	1			
Advertisements on Facebook are ineffective in gaining my interest in products ^S (16)	3.27	1.214	.000	14.250	.674**	.077**	.060**	.712**	.034	.123**	1		
I prefer brands that are promoted on Facebook (17)	2.98	1.183	.118	1.563	.094**	.719**	.398**	.054*	.753**	.528**	-.028	1	
Advertisements on Facebook have a positive effect on my preference for brands (18)	3.06	1.197	.000	4.010	.192**	.520**	.708**	.139**	.504**	.766**	.087**	.618**	1

^S Negatively phrased statement scores were recoded

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4: Effect of Usage Characteristics and Demographics on Facebook Advertising Liking and Preference

	Liking			Preference		
Independent variables	Wald Chi-Square	Df	<i>p</i>	Wald Chi-Square	Df	<i>p</i>
Access	4.093	2	.129	1.034	2	.596
Length of usage	25.530	4	.000*	24.061	4	.000*
Log on frequency	7.708	4	.103	10.808	4	.029**
Log on duration	36.374	4	.000*	46.226	4	.000*
Profile update incidence	51.169	4	.000*	27.936	4	.000*
Gender	6.523	1	.011**	4.310	1	.038**
Age	1.646	2	.439	3.151	2	.207
Population group	26.220	3	.000*	4.447	3	.217

* Wald Chi-square test showed a significant difference at $p < 0.001$

** Wald Chi-square test showed a significant difference at $p < 0.05$

5.1 Affective Attitudes (RQ1)

The Wald Chi-Square test showed that there was a significant difference at $p < 0.001$ for liking ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.717$) owing to Facebook advertising. This study found that advertising on Facebook increased liking levels among the South African Gen Y cohort. Smith (2013) disclosed that there have been over 1.13 trillion likes since the launch of Facebook, and that an average of 4.5 billion likes transpires every day. The like button social plugin feature on Facebook can literally be equated to the liking level of the hierarchy response model, whereby consumers display a favorable affective attitude towards a company and its offerings. Pivot Conference (2013) revealed that marketing professionals' top five SNS marketing objectives were: consumer engagement (67%); brand lift (67%); influencing consumer behavior (61%); positive sentiment (liking) (59%); and increased sales (58%), but the creation of positive sentiment was the top objective. However, South African marketers should use social marketing communications prudently, as consumers may become irritated by overt advertising that was blatantly pushed at them via SNS, since their main use of such conduits is for informal and personal interactions. Consumers are favorably inclined to marketing communications from companies and brands that they have selected to "like" or "follow". Nearly one in four (24%) consumers were irritated by marketing communication from companies and brands that sent them unsolicited messages versus 11% who received messages from companies and brands that they followed (eMarketer, 2012). Logan et al. (2013) also revealed that SNS fulfills the need for information interchange, but the SNS advertising was found to be significantly more valuable when it was entertaining, thereby leading to positive sentiment.

The Wald Chi-Square test indicated that there was a significant difference at $p < 0.001$ for preference ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 0.701$), which was attributable to Facebook advertising. The research confirmed that advertising and Facebook improved preference levels amid young adults in SA. Taylor et al. (2011) confirmed that SNS advertising generated high entertainment value to the consumers and had four times more impact on positive consumers' attitudes towards advertising in comparison to information. Vakratsas and Ambler (1999) also found that online advertising likeability and brand preference were significantly related. However, Bayne (2011) disclosed that SNS marketing communication's influence was relatively low in stimulating interest and inclination to attend a special event. Therefore, South African organizations that uses Facebook as a marketing communications tool need to uncover what consumers like in order to influence the affective component, and should acquire information from everyone who is connected to the product such as the sales team and consumers in order to effectively reach Gen Y.

5.2 Usage Characteristics (RQ2)

No significant differences were found in terms of access for both liking and preference, whereas log on frequency only yielded a significant difference for preference. However, the *Bonferroni correction* pairwise comparisons of estimated marginal means reported significant differences for both liking and preference in terms of the other independent variables, namely length of usage, log on duration and profile update incidence.

Access: Dynamic Logic (2012) reported that brand liking and preference were nearly three times higher for mobile advertising compared to when viewed on computers. Jordaan et al. (2011) revealed that mobile phone advertising credibility was significantly higher in comparison to online advertising and nearly nine out of ten accesses Facebook via their mobile phones. This may be owing to the fact that Generation Y consumers are more familiar and use mobile phones perpetually in South Africa, thereby resulting in higher credibility.

Powers et al. (2012) revealed that online consumers used mobile devices for shopping activities, as well as for connecting to social media. The researcher expected that Facebook marketing communications, which were accessed by mobile devices ($M = 3.20$, $SE = 0.032$) would yield a greater positive affective attitude when Facebook was accessed by both PC and mobile device ($M = 3.16$, $SE = 0.028$) and PC ($M = 3.12$, $SE = 0.037$). This prediction was true in terms of the mean scores, but there was not a significant difference in terms of the *Bonferroni correction* pairwise comparisons of estimated marginal means.

Length of usage ($p < 0.001$): Respondents who had utilized Facebook for 5 years ($M = 3.05$, $SE = 0.037$) displayed lower levels of liking than those who had used the SNS for 1 year ($M = 3.20$, $SE = 0.041$), 2 years ($M = 3.24$, $SE = 0.034$), 3 years ($M = 3.15$, $SE = 0.033$) and 4 years ($M = 3.16$, $SE = 0.034$). SNS users who had used Facebook for 5 years ($M = 3.06$, $SE = 0.036$) displayed lower levels of preference than those who had utilized the SNS for 2 years ($M = 3.24$, $SE = 0.034$), 3 years ($M = 3.18$, $SE = 0.032$) and 4 years ($M = 3.19$, $SE = 0.033$). The aforementioned results indicated that young adults who have used Facebook for a long period of time (5 years or longer) had lower positive affective attitudes (liking and preference) in comparison to those who had used the SNS for a shorter duration. This is not a surprising finding, since it is explained by the fact that consumers become acclimatized to advertising and notice it less over time. Cox (2010) reported that advertising effectiveness declined amongst more experienced Internet users, as they began to find the advertising annoying and attempted to block them. Furthermore, other studies have also revealed that consumers' level of experience in utilizing online applications was an influential factor in their online purchase decision process (Balabanis and Vassileiou, 1999; Hoffman et al., 1999; Novak et al., 2000; Montoya-Weis et al., 2003).

Log on frequency ($p < 0.05$): Facebook users who logged on 2 - 4 times a month ($M = 3.30$, $SE = 0.052$) resulted in greater preference in comparison to those who logged on once a month ($M = 3.04$, $SE = 0.074$). The study revealed that Gen Y who logged on 2 - 4 times a month led to increased preference levels in relation to those who logged on only once a month. Maddox and Gong (2005) concluded that heavy online users, those who go online one or more times a day, increased the likelihood of using online content to make purchase decisions. Su (2010) also reported that nearly three quarters of young adults use Facebook several times a day, which increases chances of interacting with SNA. Conversely, Chandra et al. (2012) found that there was no significant difference between frequent and occasional users regarding the affective (liking) and cognitive (information) attitudinal components of social media advertising. However, there was a high standard error in this study owing to the low number of responses for these variables, since a majority of the respondents accessed Facebook on a daily or weekly basis.

Log on duration ($p < 0.001$): Participants who logged on for ≤ 1 hour ($M = 3.04$, $SE = 0.029$) resulted in lower liking than those who remained logged on for 2 hours ($M = 3.15$, $SE = 0.032$), 3 hours ($M = 3.21$, $SE = 0.036$) and 4 hours ($M = 3.24$, $SE = 0.045$). SNS users who logged on for ≤ 1 hour ($M = 3.03$, $SE = 0.028$) displayed lower preference levels than those who remained logged on for 2 hours ($M = 3.17$, $SE = 0.032$), 3 hours ($M = 3.24$, $SE = 0.035$) and 4 hours ($M = 3.20$, $SE = 0.045$). The survey disclosed that Facebook advertising was most ineffective when Gen Y spent one hour or less logged on to Facebook, which is a reasonable notion, as they would have less time to perceive the advertising on the SNS. Gen Y is able to multi-task, which allows them to watch television, send a text message, listen to music, surf the Internet and interact on Facebook simultaneously (Du Chenne, 2011). Therefore, their time is often divided and a majority does not spend protracted periods of time on Facebook per log on session, but rather logged on multiple times a day (Su, 2010), which is in congruence with the findings of this study that showed that over four in ten young adults

spent one hour or less per log-in. However, marketers are fortunate that Facebook frequently introduces new products (for example Facebook gifts, events, camera), social plugins (for example single sign-on, comments plugin, like button) and new apps (e.g. games, music listening, phones apps), as well as purchase companies (for example Atlas, Instagram, Push Pop, Press) to enhance the Facebook experience that demands more time from users (Facebook, 2014b).

Profile update incidence ($p < 0.001$): Respondents who updated their Facebook status daily ($M = 3.31$, $SE = 0.033$) displayed a greater level of liking in comparison to those who updated 2 - 4 times a week ($M = 3.19$, $SE = 0.035$), once a week ($M = 3.11$, $SE = 0.036$), 2 - 4 times a month ($M = 3.07$, $SE = 0.041$) and once a month ($M = 3.12$, $SE = 0.037$); those who updated their Facebook status 2 - 4 times a week ($M = 3.19$, $SE = 0.035$) exhibited higher liking levels compared to those who updated it 2 - 4 times a month ($M = 3.07$, $SE = 0.041$). SNS users who updated their Facebook status daily ($M = 3.26$, $SE = 0.033$) displayed higher preference levels compared to those who updated 2 - 4 times a month ($M = 3.12$, $SE = 0.040$) and once a month ($M = 3.07$, $SE = 0.036$). This research revealed that young adults who update their Facebook profile on a more regular basis resulted in more favorable affective attitudes (liking and preference). This is a logical notion, as greater interaction on Facebook should result in an increased activity with other features such as the advertisements. Furthermore, Facebook metrics could again be used to find potential consumers among those who frequently updated their profiles.

5.3 Demographic Variables (RQ3)

No significant differences were determined for age in terms of both liking and preference, whereas population group only generated a significance difference for liking. However, the Bonferroni correction pairwise comparisons of estimated marginal means disclosed a significant difference for both liking and preference regarding gender.

Gender ($p < 0.05$): Males ($M = 3.13$, $SE = 0.029$) reflected lower liking levels than females ($M = 3.19$, $SE = 0.028$), whereas males ($M = 3.14$, $SE = 0.028$) also showed lower preference levels than females ($M = 3.19$, $SE = 0.028$). The investigation established that Gen Y women displayed greater positive affective attitudes than their male counterparts. Women have increasingly begun to use SNS and marketers are keen to target them via this platform, since they partake in a greater number of social network activities and are also more probable to click on advertisements than men. AdParlor (2012) disclosed that the average advertising click-through rate for women was higher than men on Facebook. Bannister et al. (2013) reported that consumers believe that Facebook advertising was ineffective, but women had more positive attitudes than men. Wolin and Korgaonkar (2003) revealed that women were more likely to be annoyed by online advertising, but this cannot be equated to advertising on SNS. Conversely, Taylor et al. (2011) concluded that women had favorable attitudes towards advertising on SNS in terms of information and entertainment; however, all of these aforementioned studies were conducted in the US. Davis and Rosenstein (2012a) reported that there were more women who used Facebook than men, yet organizations persisted in spending more of their advertising budget targeting men on Facebook.

Population group ($p < 0.001$): White respondents ($M = 3.07$, $SE = 0.040$) showed lower liking levels in comparison to Colored ($M = 3.21$, $SE = 0.030$) and Black ($M = 3.18$, $SE = 0.026$) respondents. This inquiry found that the Colored and Black population groups displayed higher liking levels than their White counterparts. Access to the Internet and SNS has shown a significantly meaningful increase amongst the Colored (36%) and Black (29%) population groups over the past decade, but are behind the White (70%) ethnic group

(Statistics SA, 2012). The growth of the Black middle class (dubbed the Black Diamonds by UCT's Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing), which now equates to 16% of SA's population, will predominantly come from the Black Gen Y members who have a higher-education qualification (Bevan-Dye et al., 2009; Radebe, 2013) owing to the fact that education is correlated to increased earning potential, as well as higher social class status (Loudon and Della Bitta, 1993; Mowen, 1993; Schiffman et al., 2010). Black middle class disposable household income has risen by 35% and now totals over R400 billion per annum. Furthermore, over 75% of Black Diamonds children do not go to state schools, but rather attend private or former "model C" schools, which have expedited the increase of the Black middle class that are online and who use SNS such as Facebook (Shevel, 2013). However, many of their White counterparts have been using the Internet all of their lives, and have, accordingly, become more accustomed to Facebook advertising; hence they have developed an ability to ignore much of it.

6. IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 Theoretical Implications

Attitudes towards advertising have been studied for nearly a century in order to determine future consumer behavior; hence it is important to understand consumers' opinions and views about advertising. Hierarchy response models postulate that consumers move from lower level hierarchical responses to higher level hierarchical responses, in other words, starting with awareness and culminating in purchase, where the successive responses become more challenging to attain. The hierarchical response models have received widespread consideration in terms of an explanation of how advertising works, therefore, are deemed to be the basis for assessing advertising effectiveness (Yoo et al., 2010). These models were fashioned via traditional advertising research, with the most recent research aimed at comprehending how marketers have adapted their marketing communication strategies with the advent of interactive and social media, and the subsequently attitudinal effect of these adaptations on consumers. This research found that Facebook marketing communications has a favorable impact on the affective attitudes of Gen Y, which is in agreement with most other social media research. Smith et al. (2012) disclosed that Facebook appeared to provide a greater number of opportunities for organizations to interact with consumers to disseminate favorable sentiment (affective) brands. Van Noort (2012) posited that greater levels of online interactivity resulted in positive and stronger affective responses. Labrecque (2014) revealed a positive affective (liking) attitude regarding interaction with brands in social media environments. Hollebeek et al. (2014) found that consumer brand engagement in social media (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) had a positive influence on cognitive and affective attitudes. Saxena and Khanna (2013) suggested that SNS advertisements, which provided information and entertainment content, increased the advertising value, whereas a decline in value was found if the advertising was considered to be irritating as a result of poor entertainment and content value. Conversely, De Vries et al. (2012) found that informative brand posts were not found to be significantly interrelated with the number of social media likes. Furthermore, entertaining brand posts had a negative impact on the number of likes, probably owing to the fact that such brands contain irrelevant content for the brand, whereas consumers were only interested in the brand. Nevertheless, it can be generally surmised that advertising on Facebook corresponds with traditional advertising in terms of the mid-level, namely liking and preference, of hierarchy response models, thus making noteworthy addition to development of attitudinal theory among Gen Y.

Additionally, this study discovered that particular usage characteristics, namely length of usage, log on frequency, log on duration and profile update incidence, have an effect Gen

Y's liking and/or preference regarding Facebook marketing communication, while only access had no effect on the affective attitude. De Lanerolle (2012) disclosed that three-quarters of South African online social media users go online every day daily, whereas Chandra et al. (2012) revealed that frequent users displayed positive attitudes towards social media advertising, since it assisted with purchasing decisions, which is in agreement with this inquiry. Cox (2010) established that more experienced Internet users have a greater unfavorable attitude towards online advertising in comparison to online users with a year or less experience, which is in congruence with the results of this Facebook study. Taylor et al. (2011) disclosed that a number of consumers use social media to utilize time between their tasks; and also regularly use social media as part of their daily schedule. This daily routine may raise the possibility that consumers will perceive advertising on SNS favorably; as it may provide an added deviation and another means of time structuring, which is in consensus with the results of this investigation. Punj (2011) also observed a positive relationship regarding online consumers who shop online and use the Internet frequently. However, there has not been sufficient inquiry about the influence of usage factors on SNA and the affective components of hierarchy response models. Therefore, this study can be deemed as pioneering, since it makes a valuable and much needed contribution to this attitudinal genre of SNS research.

This investigation determined that gender and ethnic orientation had a positive impact on liking and/or preference, but no effect on the affective attitudes of age within a particular cohort, specifically Gen Y, in SA. Several other studies (Taylor et al., 2011; Bannister et al., 2013; Logan et al., 2013; Ruane and Wallace, 2013) have revealed that females held more favorable attitudes than males in terms of social media advertising, which was in agreement with the results of this study. Jordaan et al. (2011) supported research that was conducted on different South African ethnic groups to establish if there were differences regarding perceptions toward online advertising. Consequently, this research determined that ethnic orientation did have a favorable effect on the liking for Colored and Black population groups. Hence, these results also make an important addition to extending the theoretical framework of hierarchy response model research in SNA, especially since there have not been previous studies that have investigated the effect of ethnic orientation on the affective components of SNS attitudinal research.

6.2 Managerial Implications for Developing Countries

By examining consumers' affective, usage characteristics and demographics in terms of Facebook marketing communications, the inquiry holds important implications for organizations and marketers decisions regarding their SNS marketing strategies. This research determined that Facebook advertising had a significant attitudinal influence on liking and preference amongst Generation Y in SA. The findings support the decision of the 93% South African organizations, which were surveyed by Wronski and Goldstruck (2013), who use Facebook as a marketing communication tool to reach their consumers in SA, with some of them spending a large portion of their marketing communication budget to maintain an SNS presence. It should be taken into consideration though that Gen Y has not yet developed enduring consumer behavior tendencies, and as many of them are not working or students, hence it may lead to lower hierarchy response levels than their working counterparts, particularly in terms of the purchase stage. However, if organizations are able to positively influence amongst Gen Y's affective attitudes while they have little discretionary income, then they may see increased behavioral responses these individuals to find employment. Therefore, organizations in developing nations should continue to strive to use Facebook in a manner that will increase the number of likes that they receive by producing

advertising that is humorous, fun and enjoyable so that it will not be overlooked by young adults.

This inquiry established that Facebook marketing communications effectiveness was affected by a number of usage factors, namely length of usage, log on frequency, log on duration and profile update incidence, although how Facebook advertising was found to have no significant effect. Nevertheless, South African organizations still need to consider mobile marketing on SNS owing to the rapid adoption rate of mobile devices. Gen Y members who were experienced Facebook users (had used this SNS for 5 years or longer) were less susceptible to Facebook marketing communications' effect on liking and preference, where the opposite applied for less seasoned Facebook users. Hence, organizations in developing countries should ensure that they regularly change their advertisements on Facebook so that the phenomenon of "advertising wear out" does not occur, and they are able to entertain the longer term users to gain favorable sentiment. Facebook marketing communications had the largest impact on liking and preference relative to the greater number of hours that was spent with SNS by Gen Y. Although nearly 70% of the respondents spent two hours or less on Facebook per log on session, Facebook continues to launch a number of innovative social plugins, apps and new products to keep their members interested and coming back to spend longer periods of time using this SNS (Facebook, 2014b). South African marketers should also consider how to benefit from the abovementioned innovations in order to improve young adults' affective attitudes towards their brands, and make use of Facebook metrics to determine who of their consumers spends extended periods of time on Facebook. This investigation also found that Gen Y who frequently updated their profile on Facebook were more likely to hold the most positive liking and preference responses to marketing communication in respect of this SNS. Therefore, South African organizations could also utilize Facebook's vast array of apps (for example, mobile phone apps, music, movies and game apps), which are connected to more than nine million websites, and social plugins (for example, like and subscribe buttons, comments and single sign-on registration plugins) to ensure that young adults spent more time making changings to their profile (Facebook, 2014b).

Several demographic factors were found to influence the effectiveness of Facebook marketing communications. This paper disclosed that Gen Y females demonstrated more favorable liking and preference inclinations than their male compatriots. Wronski and Goldstruck (2013) indicated that the number of South African male and female Facebook users were evenly divided, but it was apparent by the advertisements on Facebook in SA that a greater portion of advertising budgets targeted men, whereas women have a more positive affective predisposition towards advertising on Facebook, which South African organizations should take into consideration when planning who to target on this SNS. Black and Colored Gen Y members held more positive liking and preference tendencies than the White population group. The Black middle class has recently passed their White compatriots in terms of purchasing power (Petzer and De Meyer, 2013), which has also meant greater exposure to Facebook marketing communications. Furthermore, an overwhelming majority (95%) of the Black middle class own cell phones and/or smartphones that are used to access the Internet and SNS, although access was not found to increase Facebook advertising effectiveness in this inquiry, therefore, it must also be taken into consideration when South African organizations target this lucrative market segment (Bevan-Dye et al., 2012; Shevel, 2013).

6.3 Conclusions

As new channels of communication and innovative technology evolve, marketers in developing countries must not be diffident to push the limits of implementation, nor remain dogmatic in utilizing SNA differently in comparison to traditional media. Hence, while SNS may have some similar characteristics to traditional media, the context and unique interactive nature of social media make it an inimitable advertising platform. As a new conduit of marketing communication, marketers should establish mechanisms to leverage SNS full potential and then uniformly meet consumer needs with the same value (Mabry, 2010). Marketers frequently use various metrics to assist them to understand the worth and create efficient marketing communication strategies to reach important target audience segments such as Gen Y. Characteristically, the methods include the number of fans or likes or the number of interactions on a given piece of content such as an advertisements, although these measures are important, but they fail to provide detailed data on SNS real influence on consumers (Lipsman et al., 2012). This paper has disclosed a greater depth of information on Gen Y's perceptions and attitudes towards Facebook advertising, which has resulted in a favorable affective predisposition among this cohort in South Africa. Additionally, a number of usage elements such as length of usage, log on duration and profile update frequency, as well as demographic factors such as gender and ethnicity have an impact on the liking and preference levels that will provide organizations in developing nations with a greater understanding of the true worth of Facebook marketing communications amid their younger target market, as well as from an academic perspective, which adds to the development of attitude-to-advertising theory regarding social media discourse.

6.4 Limitations and Further Research Directions

This investigation has several limitations and, consequently, will afford the opportunity to extend the research. No differentiation was made between the different types of Facebook advertising; hence its impact was analyzed collectively. Therefore, a potential research avenue could be to determine the effect of the various kinds of Facebook marketing communications. Only one attitude component and one SNS was analyzed, whereas further research could investigate cognitive and behavioral attitude elements, as well as other SNS such as Google+, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn and MXit. The survey took the form of cross-sectional research, while a longitudinal approach would result in a more comprehensive representation of the attitudes towards Facebook advertising over time. Gen Y is the most prevalent among SNS users, but may not represent the same attitudes and perceptions of the total SNS population in respect of Facebook advertising. Hence, future research could analyses attitudes towards Facebook advertising across generational cohorts. SA is a developing nation, so the findings may not be analogous with first world nations such as the United States and European countries, therefore, comparative studies with first world and other developing countries may yield a more representative view of attitudes towards Facebook advertising.

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