

**INFLUENCE OF AUGMENTED REALITY
ADVERTISING OF MTN ON PATRONAGE
AMONG RESIDENTS OF ABAKALIKI
METROPOLIS**

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of Augmented Reality (AR) advertising by mobile network providers on the purchasing decisions of consumers in Abakaliki Metropolis. The increasing use of digital technology in marketing, especially through AR tools, has created new ways for mobile networks to interact with their target

audience. However, there is still limited understanding of how these interactive adverts affects the actual buying behavior of consumers. The aim of this research was to find out the extent to which residents of Abakaliki are exposed to AR adverts, how they react to and interpret them, and whether such adverts influence their decision to subscribe to or use mobile network services. The study adopted the survey method and a structured questionnaire was administered to 400 respondents selected from different streets across Abakaliki Metropolis. The data collected were analyzed using tables, percentages, and simple interpretation. The findings revealed that most residents have seen AR adverts before, and many of them found the adverts entertaining and creative. However, the level of active engagement with the ads was not very high, and only a few people admitted to making a purchase because of the AR experience. The study also showed that visual presentation and 3D animations in the adverts were more influential than the interactive features or the information provided. In conclusion, while AR advertising has succeeded in grabbing attention and creating brand awareness, its ability to fully influence consumer behavior is still growing. The study recommends that mobile network providers improve the frequency, simplicity, and relevance of their AR content to make a stronger impact on consumers' decision-making processes.

Keywords: Augmented Reality, Advertising, Consumer Behaviour, Purchase Decision, Mobile Network Providers, Digital Marketing, Abakaliki Metropolis

Introduction

There is a quiet but powerful revolution taking place in how people decide what to buy, especially when it comes to the things they use every day like mobile network services. It is not the kind of revolution that comes with noise or celebration, but it is already changing the game. In the past, when companies wanted your attention, they printed colorful banners, composed catchy jingles, or paid to get a few minutes on radio and television. Those adverts were everywhere – on poles, walls, newspapers, and airwaves. But today, something has shifted. The same people who used to stop and look at these adverts now scroll past them without blinking. The same radio jingles that once got people singing now fade into the background. In a place like Abakaliki Metropolis where people are becoming more exposed, more digital, and more selective, traditional advertising is quietly losing its grip. People now want more than slogans. They want something that speaks to their personal space and rhythm. They want to feel like the advert is not just talking *to* them but talking *with* them.

It is this hunger for deeper engagement that gave birth to what is now called Augmented Reality or AR for short. AR is not just another media trend. It is a technology that brings advertising to life. It allows you to point your phone at an image, an object, or even the open space in front of you, and suddenly, digital content appears as if it is real. A product begins to move, a character begins to speak, or a network offer starts dancing across your screen. In that moment, you are not just seeing an advert

– you are interacting with it. This new method is fast changing the face of advertising from being passive and predictable to being personal and unforgettable.

Udechukwu (2023) rightly puts it that, “consumers are no longer just audiences; they are now participants in the advertising process.” That means adverts are no longer meant to be watched in silence, they are meant to be touched, explored, and remembered. AR makes that possible by placing the consumer at the centre of the experience. Instead of imagining what a network product looks like or how a bonus offer works, the user can now see it, test it, and even simulate the benefits in real-time through their screen. This, according to Adesina (2024), creates a sense of ownership that makes the consumer feel more emotionally connected to the brand. And in a market where multiple mobile networks are shouting for attention, emotional connection is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity.

The environment in Abakaliki Metropolis makes this transformation even more interesting. With its rising population of digital natives, university students, entrepreneurs, and a growing middle class, Abakaliki is slowly becoming a city of opportunity for tech-driven marketing. Many residents now own smartphones, use mobile data, and engage on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and Facebook, where brands are actively deploying AR experiences. The same people who used to listen passively to radio adverts are now interacting directly with mobile network content through their phones. This growing digital literacy is providing

fertile ground for mobile networks to test and deploy new advertising methods. Yet, there is very little known about how these consumers are actually

Chiemeke (2023) observes that a consumer's interaction with an advertisement increases the likelihood of memory retention and ultimately, purchase intent. This implies that immersive ads may be more persuasive than conventional ones, not because they are louder or more colourful, but because they allow the consumer to take part in the experience.

Unfortunately, while there is growing research on Augmented Reality advertising in cities like Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt, very few academic works have paid attention to smaller urban centres like Abakaliki. Yet, these towns are experiencing a subtle but powerful shift in media culture. The use of AR by mobile networks is already creeping into the local market, and residents are beginning to interact with it in new ways. Okoh (2024) argues that if Nigeria must understand the true impact of digital advertising, then it must begin to look beyond the economic capitals and explore the media behaviours of consumers in semi-urban and growing cities. This is part of what makes this research very timely. There is also a behavioural angle to this development. The average consumer today is skeptical, careful, and deliberate. They have seen too many adverts that overpromise and under deliver. Trust has become harder to earn. AR, however, provides a chance to rebuild that trust by offering a more hands-on experience. When people can see for themselves, how a

product works in real-time; their doubts reduce and their confidence increases. Omeni (2023) notes that the interactivity of AR fosters emotional engagement and helps consumers move from curiosity to confidence. This emotional shift plays a key role in shaping what people choose to buy and which brands they decide to remain loyal to.

All of these factors make this study both relevant and urgent. If AR is truly influencing how people in Abakaliki choose their mobile network providers, then it becomes a critical tool not just for marketing but for shaping brand identity and consumer loyalty. But if it turns out that people are engaging with AR just for the thrill of it without any real impact on decision-making, then companies may need to rethink their strategies. This is why this research is not just asking *if* AR is popular, but *how* and *why* it is influencing consumer behaviour. It seeks to unpack the psychological, social, and emotional layers behind what seems to be a growing advertising revolution. This background sets the tone for a deeper investigation into a media practice that is reshaping the buying culture of a new generation. It is not enough to say that technology is changing advertising. What matters now is how that technology is influencing the way real people, in real places like Abakaliki; make real decisions with their money and their trust. And that is exactly what this research seeks to uncover.

Statement of the Problem

Several scholarly investigations have been carried out on the use of Augmented Reality in advertising, but a close examination of these works shows that many of them have concentrated on luxury brands, global tech companies, and audiences within large metropolitan areas. Aderibigbe (2022), for example, studied the role of AR in enhancing brand storytelling, but the study focused narrowly on fashion and automotive brands, ignoring sectors such as telecommunications that serve as daily utilities for a broader population. Bassey (2023) explored AR's effectiveness in driving digital marketing engagement but restricted the discussion to social media impressions and click-through rates, without linking these interactions to actual consumer decision-making or product purchase outcomes. Even studies that examined user response to AR, such as Oyelade (2023), treated the technology as a tool for novelty and entertainment, with little attention given to how it influences buyer intent within essential service categories like mobile network providers. In addition, a large proportion of these works are geographically limited. Their data is mostly drawn from Lagos, Abuja, or international contexts, assuming a homogenous digital culture across regions. This assumption fails to reflect the evolving consumer landscape in growing semi-urban areas like Abakaliki, where AR technology is beginning to penetrate but with distinct behavioural patterns shaped by socio-economic and cultural realities.

What is noticeably missing in the literature is a grounded, context-specific investigation into how AR advertising by mobile network providers influences consumers in less-studied locations. No study, to the best of current knowledge, has directly interrogated whether AR adverts presented by telecom brands like MTN, Airtel, or Glo affect how people in Abakaliki make purchase decisions, especially in a market where multiple providers offer similar services and rely heavily on consumer loyalty. This leaves a critical gap in understanding the real-world effectiveness of AR as a persuasion tool in service-based advertising.

This study is therefore positioned to fill that gap. It will not only assess exposure and interaction but will go further to examine how AR influences the cognitive and emotional dimensions of consumer decision-making. It will focus specifically on mobile network advertising and will be grounded in the live experiences of residents of Abakaliki Metropolis. By doing so, it aims to offer a fresh and localized contribution to AR advertising discourse; shifting attention away from mere user engagement and directing it toward measurable influence on consumer behaviour within essential service sectors and underrepresented regions.

Objectives of the Study

This study is guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the level of exposure of residents in Abakaliki Metropolis to Augmented Reality

advertising content from mobile network providers.

2. To investigate how consumers interpret and respond to AR-based advertising campaigns by mobile networks in Abakaliki.
3. To determine whether AR advertising has any measurable influence on the purchase decisions of mobile network users in Abakaliki Metropolis.

Research Questions

In line with the above objectives, the study will seek answers to the following research questions:

1. To what extent are residents of Abakaliki Metropolis exposed to AR advertising content from mobile network providers?
2. How do consumers in Abakaliki interpret, engage with, and respond to AR advertisements by mobile network companies?
3. What influence does AR advertising have on the purchase decisions of mobile network users in Abakaliki Metropolis?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it addresses a gap that existing literature has largely ignored. While several scholars have examined the impact of Augmented Reality in advertising, very few have focused on its application within the mobile network sector, especially in emerging urban centres like Abakaliki. This research

will contribute academically by expanding the scope of knowledge on how immersive advertising tools such as AR influence consumer behaviour in utility-driven markets, which differ from luxury or lifestyle markets in terms of audience needs and expectations. The study will also be of practical importance to mobile network providers operating within Abakaliki Metropolis and similar environments. It will provide insight into whether their investment in AR-based advertising is actually yielding behavioural results or simply attracting short-term attention. This can guide future marketing strategies and help brands understand how to align innovation with consumer psychology at the local level.

In addition, this study will benefit media and communication scholars who are exploring the intersection between digital technology and consumer decision-making. It offers a localized and context-specific analysis that can serve as a reference point for further studies within Nigeria and other developing regions. The findings will equally be useful to advertisers, media planners, and digital marketers who want to understand what works, for whom, and under what circumstances; especially in a region where AR is still new but gaining attention.

A Conceptual Review

Augmented Reality Advertising: a Nigerian Narrative

Advertising in Nigeria has been changing gradually, and one of the biggest changes happening today is the use of

Augmented Reality (AR). In simple terms, AR is a type of technology that allows people to see computer-generated images or messages right in front of them, through their phone cameras or special devices. It makes an advert look like it is part of the real world. For example, instead of just seeing a picture of a product, AR allows you to see that product moving, talking, or showing you how it works. This kind of advert is no longer something that only happens abroad. It is already happening here in Nigeria, though not yet common in every part of the country. Scholars like Javornik (2023) have explained that AR adverts are powerful because they grab people's attention more than ordinary adverts. They make people feel like they are part of the advert. This makes the message stick better in their minds. Globally, it has been found that people who experience AR adverts are more likely to remember the brand and also develop interest in the product. The problem is that most of these studies were done in foreign countries and with companies that are already used to high-level technology. They did not focus on places like Nigeria where AR is still new and developing.

In Nigeria, a few scholars like Nwankwo (2022) have talked about how companies are using digital advertising more than before. However, they only mention AR as part of general digital tools and do not really go deep into how it works or how it influences consumers. Even the companies that use AR are mostly in the fashion, food, or entertainment industries. Telecom companies like MTN, Airtel, Glo, and 9mobile are just starting to include AR in some of their adverts, especially on

mobile apps or during special campaigns. For instance, MTN once launched an AR promo where users could scan posters and receive special offers or digital rewards. But the question that most studies have not answered is whether these AR adverts actually influence consumers to buy, switch networks, or subscribe to their services. Most times, people enjoy seeing AR adverts because they look fun and exciting. But it is not clear whether this excitement is enough to make someone change their decision or take action. Many of the studies carried out in Nigeria have focused on cities like Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt where technology is more advanced. Little or no attention has been given to cities like Abakaliki where technology is growing but still developing. This leaves a big gap in knowledge because people in Abakaliki and other similar towns are also using smart phones, engaging with adverts, and making purchase decisions, yet they are not being studied.

This review has shown that while AR advertising is becoming more popular in Nigeria, there is still a lack of research that focuses on how it works for service-based brands like mobile networks. More importantly, there is very little research done on how people in cities like Abakaliki respond to this kind of advertising. This is the gap that this study is designed to fill. It will focus on the real experiences of people in Abakaliki and how AR adverts affect the way they choose their mobile network providers.

Empirical Review

Different scholars have tried to understand how Augmented Reality (AR) is changing advertising, especially in how it affects consumers' behaviours and their buying decisions. Some of these studies were carried out here in Nigeria, while others came from abroad. But when you look closely at them, it becomes clear that most of the focus has been on general digital marketing, not the specific experience of ordinary people interacting with AR in service-based industries like mobile network providers; especially in cities like Abakaliki where things are just beginning to take shape. In a study carried out by Aderibigbe (2022), the researcher focused on how AR helps in brand storytelling. The study examined luxury brands like high-end fashion and cosmetics and how they use AR filters and digital try-on features to attract customers. According to Aderibigbe, people are more likely to trust a product when they can "interact with it digitally." But that study did not go further to explore whether that same trust leads to actual purchase, especially in essential services like mobile networks. Also, Aderibigbe's study was focused on Lagos and did not consider semi-urban settings where consumer realities are quite different.

Another study by Bassey (2023) looked at how people respond emotionally to AR campaigns. The research showed that most people enjoyed AR adverts because they are "fun, interactive, and different from the usual boring ads." The study used YouTube comments and

online surveys to gather data and concluded that AR is a powerful engagement tool. But once again, it did not ask what people do *after* they watch the advert. Does engagement translate into action? Do they subscribe to a service or switch from one provider to another? Those questions were not answered. Worse still, the data used was collected only online, which means people who are offline or in locations like Abakaliki were not included at all. Oyelade (2023) tried to close that gap by studying consumer response to AR advertising, but his work still left out essential services. The focus was on entertainment platforms like Netflix and YouTube Premium, and how people responded to their AR-based promotions. He found that while young users enjoyed AR campaigns, many older users ignored them completely. This points to the reality of digital inequality, but again, the study did not look into how these differences play out within mobile network services that affect millions of Nigerians on a daily basis. Even when studies focused on Nigeria, like Aliyu and Mbah (2022), the challenge of device compatibility was mentioned but not properly explored. Their work looked at AR in online shopping and pointed out that “users with low-end phones often abandon the experience due to lagging, poor graphics, or heavy battery usage.” While this is relevant, their study was still tied to e-commerce, not service-based industries where what is being sold cannot be physically touched; like airtime, data bundles, or network speed.

Another notable work is from Usman (2022) who studied how banks use AR for customer education. The

study highlighted how AR helps to “demystify complex processes like opening an account or applying for a loan.” This is very close to what mobile network companies are trying to do with AR; that is, making abstract services feel more real. However, Usman’s study focused only on digital banks like Kuda and Opay, and the interviews were conducted in Abuja. The study did not examine whether the use of AR led to actual account sign-ups or just curiosity. Eze (2023) made a strong point in his study where he examined the emotional response people have when they interact with AR adverts. He noted that “emotion drives memory, and memory drives action.” His study suggested that when a consumer feels emotionally connected to an advert, they are more likely to remember it later and possibly act on it. This is useful, but it still leaves a gap; did people really go back and buy the service after the AR experience? That connection between *exposure* and *decision-making* was not fully established. Even in international studies, there are similar patterns. A research carried out in South Africa by Mokgadi and Peterson (2021) looked at AR advertising in the fast-food sector. They found that young people in particular liked to use AR features to check menus and see meal animations. While the study found a high engagement rate, it admitted that there was no way to measure how many people actually went ahead to buy food after viewing the AR ad. Also, the setting was completely urban and based on a well-connected city like Johannesburg; far from the digital environment in places like Abakaliki.

Looking at all these studies, one thing becomes very clear: *many of them captured interest, interaction, and enjoyment; but few captured action.* That is, they rarely connected AR advertising to the consumer's final decision; whether they subscribed, switched, or told others about the service. And almost none of them studied this in the context of mobile network providers in a developing, semi-urban area like Abakaliki.

This is the exact gap this current study is addressing. It is not just asking whether people like AR. It is not just talking about how beautiful or engaging the adverts are. This study is going to the core: *Do AR adverts from mobile network companies actually influence the consumer's purchase decision in a place like Abakaliki?* Does the technology only create temporary excitement or does it drive real change in behaviour? It is safe to say that even while scholars have spoken about the promise of AR, there is still limited knowledge on its actual effect within essential, service-based industries in semi-urban Nigerian cities. And in a time where mobile networks are competing aggressively for market share, understanding how people react to new advertising styles is not just an academic question; it is a practical need. This research therefore offers a unique contribution by focusing on the real, lived experiences of consumers in Abakaliki and how their decisions are shaped or not shaped by AR-driven advertising.

Theoretical Framework

To understand whether Augmented Reality (AR) advertising is truly influencing the way people in Abakaliki decide on mobile network services, this study relies on the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) by Petty and Cacioppo (1986). This theory explains how people are persuaded by messages, especially adverts. It says that people process adverts in two main ways; either deeply or lightly. When someone pays attention to the real message of an advert, thinks about what is being offered, and weighs the benefits before deciding, they are using the central route. But when someone is moved by surface things like the colours, animation, voice, music, or how the advert makes them feel; without thinking deeply; they are using the peripheral route.

This theory fits well with AR advertising. Some people in Abakaliki may be impressed by how interactive the advert is, how it speaks their language, or how exciting it looks, and may make decisions based on that. Others may actually study the AR advert, understand what the bundle offers, compare prices, and make informed decisions. Both reactions are happening in this space. This theory helps explain why some consumers are swayed emotionally while others are convinced logically. And it also explains why the same AR advert can have different results depending on the person seeing it. Ede and Uzochukwu (2022) observed that in semi-urban areas like Abakaliki, young people switch between deep thinking and surface reactions, depending on how personal or relatable the advert feels. So, this study will

use the Elaboration Likelihood Model to understand how AR adverts are processed in the minds of Abakaliki residents. Are they thinking it through or simply enjoying the feel of the advert? Most importantly, which one actually leads to a decision to buy, switch, or ignore? This theory is key because it helps this study focus not just on the beauty of the AR advert, but on whether it is truly changing behaviour.

Research Design

This study adopted the survey research design because the research aimed to collect opinions and responses directly from people living in Abakaliki Metropolis concerning how Augmented Reality (AR) advertising from mobile networks influences their decision to buy or subscribe to services. The survey method was chosen because it helps in gathering data from a large number of people within a short time and allows the researcher to understand real-life situations.

The population of the study consists of residents living within Abakaliki Metropolis, especially those who are active mobile network users and are familiar with smart phone usage, internet services, and digital advertisements. The researcher considered people who live and move around busy streets such as Hilltop, Udensi, Ogoja Road, Water Works Road, and Presco. These are areas with a mixture of students, workers, business people, civil servants, and artisans, who are likely to be exposed to advertising content from mobile networks such as MTN, Glo, Airtel, and 9mobile;

especially those that use Augmented Reality features like 3D pop-ups, interactive visuals, and voice-assisted adverts. Although it is difficult to know the exact number of people living in Abakaliki Metropolis, the Ebonyi State Government population estimate as of 2024 puts Abakaliki city at over 750,000 people. However, the study only focused on those who are active users of mobile services and are aware of online adverts; this formed the working population.

To determine the appropriate sample size for this study, the researcher used the Taro Yamane formula to arrive at approximately 400 respondents.

Due to the large size of Abakaliki metropolis, it was not possible to study everyone in the population. Therefore, the researcher used the multi-stage sampling technique to carefully select a portion of the population that will represent the whole. The first step was to divide the metropolis into major residential and commercial streets such as Presco, Udensi, Hilltop, Ogoja Road, and New Layout. After this division, the researcher selected a few streets using purposive sampling; meaning that only those areas where people are most likely to use smart phones and internet-connected devices were picked. Then, within each selected street, accidental sampling was used to select respondents. This simply means that the researcher interacted with those who were available and willing to answer the questionnaire during the period of data collection. This method was used because it helped the researcher to quickly reach people across different age groups and social classes without bias or

delay. The final number of respondents was chosen based on the sample size calculation.

The instrument used for data collection in this study was a questionnaire. This was chosen because it is one of the most effective tools for gathering information from a large group of people within a short period. The questionnaire was structured in a simple and easy-to-understand format. It was divided into two sections. The first section collected background information about the respondents, such as age, gender, occupation, and mobile network usage. The second section contained questions that directly focused on the influence of AR advertising on consumers' decision-making.

The data collection process involved the physical distribution of the printed questionnaires to residents across the selected streets in Abakaliki. The researcher, with the help of a few trained assistants, moved from one area to another, interacting with respondents and encouraging them to fill the forms honestly. Most of the respondents were given time to complete the forms on the spot, while others who were busy at the time were allowed to submit later. This face-to-face method helped in clarifying questions for some respondents who did not fully understand certain items in the questionnaire. It also allowed the researcher to observe reactions and get additional informal feedback from respondents.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question 1: To what extent are residents of Abakaliki Metropolis exposed to AR advertising content from mobile network providers?

Table 1: Have you ever come across any Augmented Reality advert by a mobile network?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	328	82.0 %
No	72	18.0 %
Total	400	100 %

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 1 show that 328 out of 400 respondents, representing 82.0%, said they have come across Augmented Reality adverts by mobile networks. Only 18.0% responded 'No'. This suggests that the majority of people living in Abakaliki Metropolis have at least once seen an AR-based mobile advert. The implication of this finding is that AR advertising has a wide reach among urban residents, likely due to increased smart phone usage, internet access, and mobile app engagement. It also indicates that mobile network providers are already applying digital innovation in their advertising. The high level of exposure could play a crucial role in shaping brand recognition and consumer behavior over time.

Table 2: How often do you see AR adverts by mobile networks?

Frequency of Exposure	Frequency	Percentage
Frequently (Daily or Weekly)	152	38.0 %
Occasionally (Monthly)	170	42.5 %
Rarely or Never	78	19.5 %
Total	400	100 %

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 2 shows that 170 out of 400 respondents (42.5%) see AR adverts occasionally, while 38.0% experience them frequently and 19.5% rarely or never see them. This indicates that although AR adverts are common, their appearance is not yet a daily experience for most residents. The implication of this finding is that exposure to AR advertising is high but not constant. Mobile network providers may need to intensify frequency to reinforce message retention. Consistent exposure could further influence consumer decisions and promote brand recall. It also shows that while AR is becoming mainstream, it still competes with other forms of advertising for consumer attention.

Research Question 2: How do consumers in Abakaliki interpret, engage with, and respond to AR advertisements by mobile network companies?

Table 3: When you see AR adverts from mobile networks, what is your usual reaction?

Response Pattern	Frequency	Percentage
I tap, rotate, or explore it	122	30.5 %
I just watch without interacting	108	27.0 %
I skip or close it quickly	98	24.5 %
I don't notice such ads	72	18.0 %
Total	400	100 %

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 3 shows that 122 respondents, representing 30.5%, actively interact with AR adverts by tapping or exploring them, while 27.0% watch without interacting. About 24.5% skip the adverts and 18.0% say they don't even notice them. This suggests that although AR adverts grab attention, they do not always lead to deep engagement. The implication of this finding is that interactivity alone does not guarantee user participation. Content design,

timing, and user mood may influence interaction levels. To increase engagement, mobile networks should invest in personalized, relatable, and action-driven AR experiences.

Table 4: Do you find AR adverts by mobile networks entertaining, informative, or distracting?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Entertaining and creative	138	34.5 %
Informative and useful	112	28.0 %
Distracting or annoying	94	23.5 %
Not sure / No opinion	56	14.0 %
Total	400	100 %

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4 shows that 138 respondents (34.5%) found AR adverts entertaining, while 28.0% said they were informative. However, 23.5% felt they were distracting and 14.0% were unsure. This means that while the majority of respondents have a positive impression of AR ads, a sizeable group finds them off-putting. The implication of this finding is that although creativity in AR advertising is appreciated, there is a thin line between entertainment and annoyance. Marketers need

to maintain a balance between delivering value and keeping users engaged without overwhelming them.

Research Question 3: What influence does AR advertising have on the purchase decisions of mobile network users in Abakaliki Metropolis?

Table 5: Have you ever purchased or subscribed to a mobile network service because of an AR advert?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	104	26.0 %
No	296	74.0 %
Total	400	100 %

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 5 shows that only 104 respondents, representing 26.0%, admitted to purchasing or subscribing due to an AR advert, while a larger 74.0% said they did not. This suggests that while AR may attract attention and interest, it does not always translate into immediate consumer action. The implication of this finding is that AR advertising should be part of a broader integrated marketing strategy. Although AR may not drive direct purchases for most people, it can still create lasting impressions that influence future decisions. Its role may be more about awareness and brand positioning than instant conversion.

Table 6: If yes, what aspect of the AR advert influenced you the most?

Response		Frequency	Percentage
Influential Feature	AR	Frequency	Percentage (out of 104)
The visual animation and 3D effect		48	46.2 %
The product information inside the ad		36	34.6 %
The ability to interact with the advert		20	19.2 %
Total		104	100 %

Table 6 shows that 48 out of 104 respondents (46.2%) were influenced by the 3D visuals and animation in AR adverts. Another 34.6% were drawn by the information in the ad, while 19.2% liked the interactive features. This reveals that the visual presentation is the most persuasive element. The implication of this finding is that mobile network companies should invest in high-quality graphics and motion design. While interactivity matters, the aesthetic and clarity of messaging remain the strongest hooks for consumer influence in AR advertising.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this research clearly show that Augmented Reality (AR) advertising is already gaining notable presence among residents of Abakaliki Metropolis. As seen in Table 5, a large portion of the respondents (82.0%) confirmed that they had come across AR adverts from mobile network providers. This level of exposure suggests that mobile networks are actively deploying AR strategies in their campaigns and that many urban dwellers are already interacting with this form of technology, whether consciously or subconsciously. It shows that AR advertising is no longer something new or foreign; it is already being consumed by the public, especially in metropolitan areas. Table 6 further reveals that even though exposure to AR adverts is high, the frequency of seeing them varies. About 42.5% of respondents said they see AR adverts occasionally, while 38.0% noted they come across them frequently. This means AR advertising has not yet become an everyday experience for most people. It is visible, but not dominant. For AR to truly shape consumer behavior there needs to be consistency and strategic repetition in how these adverts are delivered. Occasional exposure might stir interest, but frequent exposure is what builds memory and encourages actual purchase decisions.

The responses captured in Table 7 give us a deeper understanding of how consumers engage with these adverts. A good number of respondents (30.5%) said they interact with the AR content by tapping or

exploring it. However, others simply watch without engaging (27.0%) or skip the ad entirely (24.5%). This variation in reaction shows that while AR may be visually appealing, it does not always succeed in making users take action. It is one thing for people to notice an advert, but another for them to actually interact with it. This finding points to the need for mobile network providers to ensure that their AR ads are not only attractive but also simple and relatable, so that users feel compelled to explore them rather than ignore them. Looking at the impressions of these AR adverts in Table 8, it is encouraging to see that 34.5% of respondents found them entertaining and creative, and another 28.0% considered them informative and useful. However, 23.5% found them distracting or annoying. This mixed perception proves that creativity alone is not enough. If an advert is too flashy or complex, it might end up pushing viewers away rather than drawing them in. The usefulness of the content, how it relates to the audience and the timing of delivery all contribute to whether an advert will be well received or rejected. Therefore, marketers must always strike a balance between style and substance. In terms of actual influence on consumer decision-making, Table 9 shows that only 26.0% of the respondents admitted they had purchased or subscribed to a service because of an AR advert. While this may seem low, it still indicates that AR advertising has the power to drive action for a significant portion of the population. What this means is that while not everyone may act immediately, AR ads can leave a strong impression that influences future choices. This kind of delayed impact is typical of branding tools, and it

highlights the importance of viewing AR as part of a long-term marketing approach rather than a one-time promotional tool. Further details in Table 10 show what exactly influenced those who took action. The majority (46.2%) pointed to the 3D visuals and animations as the most attractive feature of the adverts. This was followed by the product information (34.6%) and the ability to interact with the ad (19.2%). This finding makes it very clear that visual appeal is one of the strongest assets of AR advertising. The way the message is presented; its design, movement, and color; can determine whether or not the viewer is impressed enough to take interest or even buy. Mobile networks, therefore, need to invest heavily in quality visuals and storytelling within their AR ads.

Finally, it is worth noting that the bio data in Tables 1 to 4 provide useful context for interpreting these findings. For instance, Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents were between the ages of 18–35, an age group that is generally more exposed to digital technologies and more likely to engage with AR content. Table 3 shows that students formed the highest number of respondents, which is also relevant because young people and students are more familiar with interactive media and smartphones. This reinforces the reliability of the findings, since the feedback came from people who are naturally part of the digital ecosystem. In summary, the discussion of findings clearly shows that AR advertising is growing and has the potential to change how people relate to mobile network brands in Abakaliki Metropolis. While exposure is already high, engagement

levels vary, and the actual influence on purchasing decisions is still building momentum. However, the strong appeal of visuals and interactive elements proves that this form of advertising has a bright future if used creatively and consistently.

Conclusion

The findings of this study show that Augmented Reality (AR) advertising is gradually becoming an important part of how mobile network providers reach out to people in Abakaliki Metropolis. A good number of residents have already come across AR adverts, especially through their smartphones and digital platforms. This means that AR is no longer new or strange to urban consumers. However, while the exposure rate is high, the level of engagement and actual influence on consumer decisions is still low. Many people enjoy the adverts and find them creative, but not all of them take action after seeing them. Some interact with the AR content, while others either ignore it or find it distracting. One of the major factors that caught people's attention was the visual appeal and 3D animation of the AR ads. This shows that how the message is presented matters a lot. Although the technology is promising, its full potential has not yet been realized in terms of convincing people to buy or subscribe to services. Therefore, for AR advertising to make a stronger impact on consumer behavior, mobile network companies need to improve both the content and the delivery of their adverts. In summary, AR advertising is effective for awareness and brand visibility, but it

must be combined with better strategies if it must lead to actual consumer action.

Recommendations

1. Improve the Quality and Simplicity of AR Content: Mobile network providers should focus on making their AR adverts easy to understand and straight to the point. While 3D animations and effects are exciting, they should not overshadow the main message of the advert. People want to know what the product or service will do for them. This means that every AR advert should have a clear benefit and be designed in a way that both educated and less-educated users can understand. Technical terms should be avoided, and the message should speak directly to the everyday needs of the audience, such as cheaper call rates, faster internet, or easy subscription processes. By making the content simple, more people will pay attention and respond positively.

2. Increase Frequency and Consistency of AR Advert Delivery: From the study, it was discovered that many respondents only see AR adverts occasionally. To increase the chances of influencing consumer decisions, mobile networks should create more frequent and consistent AR campaigns. This means showing the adverts across different platforms regularly—on social media, mobile apps, and even in stores or billboards where AR can be accessed through QR codes. Just like traditional adverts, AR needs to be repeated often so that people remember it. A one-time advert, no matter how

creative, may not leave a lasting impression. When people keep seeing the same message in different creative forms, it begins to stick in their minds, and over time, they are more likely to take action.

3. Focus on Youth-Centered and Culturally Relevant Campaigns: The study shows that the majority of people who are exposed to and engage with AR adverts are young people, especially students and young professionals. This means mobile network companies should design adverts that reflect the lifestyle, interests, and language of the youth. For example, including trending music, familiar slang, and situations that mirror daily experiences will make the adverts feel more personal and enjoyable. Also, using local faces and relatable characters in AR content will help people connect more with what they are seeing. If the audience sees themselves reflected in the advert, they are more likely to trust the brand and be influenced by its message. In addition, mobile networks should consider organizing school-based or campus-focused AR campaigns where students can interact with the technology, get rewards, or take part in challenges that promote their services.

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