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PERCEPTION OF THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN TELEVISION ADVERTISING AMONGST UMUAHIA RESIDENTS OF ABIA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The researcher set out to determine the Abia Audience perception of the portrayal of women in television Advertising. The fundamental reason behind the study is to ascertain the way Abia audiences, especially the women are portrayed in television advertising; two theories were used as theoretical framework; they are reception analysis theory and constructivism theory. The researcher adopted the survey research design, employing the questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. A population of 138,570 was used out of which a sample size of 400 respondents was studied. Findings from the respondents show that women are not happy about the way they are presented in television advertising. Also, findings show that women are generally found in advertisements for home products, baby items, cosmetics and food items. They are also generally portrayed stereotypically in the advertisement of entertainment, clothes, and cosmetics but are portrayed non-stereotypically in ads for tobacco, travel, food and financial services. Based on the conclusion, the researchers recommend advertisements where women were treated merely as an object to sell, need to be abandoned and women need to come up openly and boldly against their degrading presentation.*

KEYWORDS: Audience, Perception, Women's Portrayal, Television Advertising

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INTRODUCTION

In advertising, the advertiser usually has a need to advertise. The advertisement could be for any purpose, such as to generate awareness, etc but the basic advertisement represents the encoding of the advertiser's intent or purpose into a message. This encoding is normally performed by advertising agencies, where there exists a crop of professionals specially skilled in planning, creating and producing advertisements. The interpretation of advertisements requires more than just semantic understanding. The meaning of an ad is often found in metaphors that are expressed by words and/or pictures.

Advertising's economic function is essentially concerned with its role in stimulating commerce and industry in society. This it does in many ways that are direct and indirect. By promoting consumption, it generates a steady stream of buying and selling, which keeps the economic wheel of the society running. In providing information to consumers, thereby enabling manufacturers to reach them directly, it reduces the cost of distribution and thereby makes goods and service cheaper. Advertising in several ways stimulates economic activities in the society, and thus contributes to overall economic growth and development. According to Ozoh (2013) the social function of advertising is concerned with the many other things it has the capacity to do other than sales. Advertising promotes and advocates social values such as those bordering on sustainable development, child welfare, disease prevention, etc.

Advertising is any communication that is paid for by an identified sponsor, directed at a target audience, through the various mass media like radio, television, bill broad, newspaper and magazine, with the aim of creating awareness about goods and services. Sustained advertisement helps to create a desired brand image for a brand. Brand image is defined as "the perception of the brand in the minds of the customers" (Pahwa 2016, p.15). Consumers through repetitive exposure to an advertisement tend to develop a certain perception about the brand advertised which most of the time, may not have any bearing on its functional utility. Television advertisements have been very popular ever since they were introduced. The cost of television advertising often depends on the duration of the advertisement, the time of broadcast (prime time/lull time), sometimes the show on which it will be broadcast, and of course, the popularity of the television channel itself. Not only does the term "television advertising" refer to a commercial with color, motion, and sound like those you see on television, it also refers to those same types of commercials you might see on the web, in social media, on YouTube, or on Facebook (Ihechu, Dike & Oduh, 2019).

People are exposed to messages that inspire, persuade and earn their confidence through verbal engagement. These messages are designed in such a way that it can build trust, inspire loyalty and sell effectively. One of the most effective marketing communications is advertising (Pollay & Gallagher, 2015).

The United Nations conferences on women recognized the importance of the mass media on the image of women. The world plan for Action for the first United Nation's Decade on women in 1975 -1985 made the problems of violence against women an international agenda. The conferences noted that the mass communication media have great potential as a vehicle for social change and could exercise a great influence in helping to remove prejudices and stereotypes, accelerating the acceptance of women's development process as equal partners (Asemah, Edegoh & Ojih 2013). The gender stereotypical characters of commercials on

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television can have an influence on viewer's attitude, preference, perception, behavior and product's purchase decision (Kotwal & Sahni, 2017).

The roles which women portray in advertisements have been the subject of much public criticism and some empirical research. In recent years advertisers and their agencies have received criticism from a wide variety of sources concerning the manner in which women are portrayed in advertisements. The critics state that the women shown in adverts are too often "only housewives" stupid or incompetent; dependent on men; decorative or sex objects; passive; and not involved in making major decisions (Advertising Age, April 21, 1975).

Statement of the Problem

The exploitation of women in the media has been part of the advertising industry since its beginning, although the level to which women have been exploited has changed drastically. Women not only suffer in the rural part but the problem remains the same in the urban sector too.

While stereotyping still exists, advertising's portrayal of women does not speak well of them, because the residents of Abia perceive it in a negative way due to their level of exposure to such dress sense compared to other residents living in developed cities, therefore the intended advert message will not be achieved to the target audience due to the fact that their attention will be divided.

The residents of Abia often viewed women as sex object because they are identified by their physical attractiveness and their sex appeal. Most often than not, in advertisements especially, they have no relationship with the products but they are chosen and shown anyway because of what their bodies/figures can offer. Objectification of women is hence when women are reduced to a mere commodity, judged by their attributes of their bodies rather than who they are, as a person. The problem this study therefore investigates is Abia Audience Perception of the Portrayal of women in television advertising.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this work were to:

i. determine the extent to which women are negatively portrayed in television advertisements;

ii. determine the extent to which extent women are satisfied with the way they are portrayed in television advertisements;

iii. determine the extent to which women want a change in the way they are portrayed in advertisements; and

iv. determine the extent to which women are depicted in more than one role in television advertisement?

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two theories have been chosen to serve as the theoretical framework for the study; they are Reception theory and Constructivism theory.

Reception theory

Reception theory as developed by Stuart Hall in 1973 asserts that media texts are encoded and decoded. The producer encodes messages and values into their media which are then decoded by the audience. However, different audience members will decode the media in different ways and possibly not in the way the producer originally intended. Theorists who analyze media through reception studies and are concerned with the experience of cinema and television viewing for spectators, and how meaning is created through that experience. Reception theory argues that contextual factors, more than textual ones, influences the way the spectator views the film or television program. Contextual factors include elements of the viewer's identity as well as circumstances of exhibition, the spectator's preconceived notions concerning the film or television program's genre and production, and even broad social, historical and political issues. In short, reception theory places the viewer in context, taking into account all of the various factors that might influence how she or he will read and create meaning from the text. The most important, and at the same time most difficult, task in reception studies is gathering the information necessary to analyze how audiences experience television advertising.

The decoding of a message is defined as how effectively someone can receive and understand a message. It can be a result of verbal messages yet does not always have to be. It is possible to be pictures or media, emotions, or even body language. For example, if someone is talking louder, is red in the face, shouting and using more hand gestures, it can be inferred that perhaps they are angry. Decoding, Hall believed, was the most important part of the process. This was new because many other theories did not focus on it all (Procter, 2004). Once these signals are sent, the audiences, or the recipients of the communication, are presented with messages, signs and cues that have been pre-coded (Hall, 1973).

However, there is never solely one received message. As a result, the audience must add meaning and rebuild or recreate the message (Hall, 1973). Regardless of whether or not the message is one on one or to a crowd, decoding is all about receiving, absorbing and understanding the information that is being passed on.

The relevance of the theory to the study is the level of connotation of the visual sign, of its contextual reference and positioning in different discursive fields of meaning and association, thus the way women are portrayed in television advertising is based on ideological dimensions.

Constructivism Theory

The theory was propounded by Jesse Delia in 1968. The formalization of constructivism from a within –the- human perspective is generally attributed to Jean Piaget, who articulated a mechanism by which information from the environment and ideas from the individual interact and result in internalized structures developed by learners. He identified processes of assimilation and accommodation that are key in this interaction as individuals construct new knowledge from their experiences. When individuals' assimilate new information, they incorporate it into an already existing framework without changing that framework. This may occur when individual's experiences are aligned with their internal representations of the

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world, but may also occur as a failure to change a faculty understanding; for example, they may not notice events, may misunderstand input from others, or may decide that an event is a fluke and is therefore unimportant as information about the world.

In contrast, when an individual's experiences contradict their internal representations, they may change their perceptions of the experience to fit their internal representations.

According to the theory, accommodation is the process of reframing one's mental representation of the external world to fit new experiences. Accommodation can be understood as the mechanism by which failure leads to learning: when we act on expectation that the world operates in one way and it violates our expectations, we often fail, but by accommodating this new experience and reframing our model of the way the world works, we learn from the experience of failure, or others failure. The constructivism theory is relevant to the study because it explains how members of the public differently react to media messages, based on their experiences and internal representations of the world.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Advertising

Advertising is a paid for message by an identifiable sponsor directed to a particular target audience and transmitted via the mass media Ozoh, (2013, p.58) gave a comprehensive definition of advertising, thus;

> Advertising is the process of persuading potential customers to buy products or promote its services. It is the branch of marketing that deals with communicating to customers about products, brands and services. Advertising is a form of communication used to persuade an audience (viewers, readers or listeners) to take some action with respect to producers, ideas or services. Most commonly, the desired result is to drive consumer behavior with respect to a commercial offering, although political and ideological advertising is also common. Advertising messages are usually paid-for by sponsors and viewed via various traditional media including mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television commercials, radio advertisements, outdoor advertising or direct mail or new media, such as websites and text messages.

The purpose of advertising is to sell something: a product, a service or an idea. The real objective of advertising is effective communication between goods and clients and increasing awareness.

Portrayal of Women in Advertising

Advertising is one of the major media that affects our daily life consciously and unconsciously and is responsible for playing a significant role in shaping the society in a much broader perspective. Advertisements are messages paid for by those who send them and are intended to inform or influence people who receive them. Advertisers use different ways to affect the consumers' perception of the product. Storylines, taglines and portrayal of women are some of the tools used to touch on the specific emotions and make the consumers feel that they are missing out on some things by not using the products. The new man and new woman might be present in today's society but to what extent are advertisements an accurate account of this new

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picture is a question to ask? Has the representation of women in advertisements changed over a period of time? Or does it still confirm some traditional notions about women and their role in the society?

There is a stark contrast between how males and females are portrayed in advertisements. This difference in portrayal has nothing to do with biology or natural traits, but with how our culture defines feminine and masculine (Goffman,1976). The gender roles that women play in advertisements are the decorative role, recreational role, independent career role, self- involved role, carefree role and family roles. Women are generally found in advertisements for home products, baby items, cosmetics and food items.

Advertising is a vital marketing tool that enables the firms to communicate directly with the consumer. Therefore, ads are made with the intent to seek viewer attention and response. In order that viewers like an ad and are pushed to make a purchase, it is essential to craft advertising messages such that they elicit the desired response. In doing so, when women are portrayed in ads, it becomes important the type of portrayal preferred by the viewers (Nagi, 2014).

They are also generally portrayed stereotypically in the advertisement of entertainment, clothes, and cosmetics but are portrayed non-stereotypically in ads for tobacco, travel, food and financial services. Since ages, women have been reflected in stereotypical roles. She has been highlighted as "her place is in the home, they don't make important decisions, are regarded as sex objects by men and as being dependent on men (Courtney and Lockertz, 1971). The media is generally charged with depicting women as 'sex objects' that can grab attention and interests of viewers. The underlying messages emphasize sexuality, often presenting women as sex objects (Nagi, 2014).

Women were stereotyped in the advertisements in the aspects of "objectifying women", "showing women as subordinate to men", and as "mentally withdrawn from the larger scene" (Lindner, 2004). This is known as retro sexism in social terms i.e. the communication of culturally sanctioned aspects of femininity related to notions of dependency, attractiveness, and adherence to household tasks. Gradually this portrayal of women changed shape and in later 70's, 52% women were reflected as employed, 77% in non-working roles and only 6.67% were depicted in a family environment (Sullivan and Connor, 1988). Representation of women in advertisements has been experiencing a shift from the housewife centric advertisements to the career women advertisements. But female models are increasingly shown in advertisements to sell products that may or may not be directly related to them (Kang, 2002). The images of women are always attractive – who provides the desirable image for the advertisement, irrespective of her importance to the advertisement.

Despite the changes in this 21st Century, by far men still like to fit in the role of masculinity, but for modern women, being and fitting into the role of femininity has not been a very important need. "Femininity is now not a core value for them rather a swishy kind of glamour, utilized by confident women who know exactly what they are doing" (Gauntlett, 2008). Sex is an emotion that has been successfully employed by advertisers in promoting jeans, perfumes, alcohol, watches, personal products and cars (Chatterji, 2006). The social position of women has improved enormously over the years. With a few exceptions, advertisements have not done justice to this social change. Women are portrayed in unrealistic settings. Proper representation of women in advertisements leads to appreciation of women in the society. The stereotypical

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representation could negatively affect self-confidence of the women in the audiences. One important concern of stereotyping in advertising is that it can have a major influence on gender roles in the minds of the children. (Natarajan & Muthulingam 2020).

Sexism and gender stereotyping are still prevalent in the advertising industry. They are still portrayed as if they have been created only to man's comforts (Schaeffer, 2006). Even today, the images of women found in advertisements and commercials have the touch of the traditional homemaker or the sex object. Women are seen as the beloved wife when she is able to cook good food, excellent daughter-in-law when she follows the traditions of her mother-in-law and a great mother when she takes good care of her children. There is a lot of difference in the projection of women as compared to other nations as the common stereotypical portrayals seem more prevalent in Nigerian advertisements. Women are portrayed in provocative ways and more likely as sex objects. Although there is a difference in the product categories advertised by women, they are still portrayed more in traditional and stereotyped roles (Moorthi et al, 2014).

The latest advertisements on health drinks, detergent cakes and powders, soaps, medicines, cosmetics, mobile advertisements have represented women in a very rigorous way – very energetic, dynamic, strong and enthusiastic. Majority of Nigerian advertisements present a more unrealistic and unbalanced picture of a woman. There has been a general shift whereby advertisements have moved from showcasing women merely as tradition bound homemakers to those playing modern roles (Fatimah, 2016). There is a shift in the portrayal of the woman in advertisements from a mere housewife to a career-oriented and professional with the independent identity and multiple identities, who is a super woman successful in balancing her personal and professional life (Sukumar & Venkatesh, 2011). But not a single of these progressive advertisements shows a woman with a family or long-term relationship, subtly implying a sort of mutual exclusivity between independence/empowerment and family life. Women are treated as a trophy or a gift which will be given to the person who uses the advertised product. They are shown as being easily attracted to or influenced by the person who is using the product being advertised (Raina, 2014). They are used as an attractive and eye-catching element to capture the attention of viewers.

The masses like ads showing women in the role of mother or a working woman but they do not like the ads showing a woman in the traditional role of glamour girl (Bhullar, 2000). Also, men, women and children did not appreciate advertisements that exposed the body of a man or woman. The sexual content in advertisements is harmful for women as it promotes objectification of women's' body, the sexualization of women, discrimination against women and supports a society that accepts violence against women very easily (Perse, 2001). Advertisements in Nigeria are not fulfilling their duty towards the society. The projection of women in Nigerian advertisements can be done for highlighting the real issues of women's lives, for their upliftment, for the awareness among people about the rights of women, for the empowerment of women etc is being left out. Advertisements where women were treated merely as an object to sell, need to be abandoned and women need to come up openly and boldly against their degrading presentation (Nagi, 2014).

Gender Stereotypes in Television Advertising

Advertising itself has been around for many years now, in various forms. When people think of advertising, however, television is the primary medium recalled (Jin & Lutz, 2013). Taking

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this into consideration, attitudes toward television advertising can be considered representative of attitudes toward advertising in general. Based on this, it can also be generalized that television is the most influential medium for advertising. The objective of most advertising is to get the product or service's name out in order to sell the product. Though gender roles are getting refined and narrowed over the years, advertisers often use traditional gender stereotypes in their commercials based on the hypothesis that as people are well acquainted with such types of images, it helps the prospective customers to understand the content of the message without any doubt. (Sharma, 2017).

Advertisers hope that people will spread the word about their product to get more people to hear about it, or at the very least keep thinking about the brand, and the medium of advertising affects this (Berger & Iyengar, 2013). To have an ad become viral, for example, an advertiser may choose to create a television ad so it can be posted online and viewed and shared after airing. Gender roles are also a prevalent force in society. The construction of gender roles has created a number of stereotypes about the way that men and women act and carry themselves. According to a study by Burkette and Warhol (2009), men are expected to be public, outdoor people who are active and capable, while women are expected to be passive and helpless while being private and keeping indoors. It is key to note that even though a stereotyped trait may seem positive, it can still be harmful to the generalized population when that trait is expected of everyone in that group (Fiske, 2010). For example, being caring is typically a positive trait. However, when the trait is carried over to the overall group of women, a negative strain is placed on women who are not as caring as the expectation prescribes them to be. Similarly, physical strength is expected of men, and those who are not as strong as other men become excluded or even mocked. During the 1970's women in advertisements represented what society, especially the men of society hold as the ideal image for a woman, a perfect homemaker, whose role is limited to housewife, dependent on men, with lesser purchasing capacity, and rarely as professional (Yakkaldevi, 2014).

The combination of gender stereotyping and advertising leads to some interesting results. Disparities in gender representation in advertising begins at a young age – nearly three times more males than females are depicted in commercials targeted toward school aged children (Hentges & Meier, 2007). This is likely because young boys are more likely to listen to a male authority figure because of the negative social connotations of appearing feminine. According to the same study, males are 3.19 times as likely as each female to be portrayed as an authority figure in television commercials targeted to this age group.

Female representation only begins to increase when there is an increase in appearance-based products and feminine products in commercials targeted toward adolescents. There is no easy way to get a "before exposure" condition when working with television exposure. When there is male and female representation, however, there still exist stereotypes in their portrayals. This leads critics to say that television commercials are not a reflection of the overall advancement of the gender equality movement that has made large progress, especially in recent years (Eisend, 2010). When females are the central figures in commercials, they are typically portrayed as younger product users who are using domestic products at home or in dependent roles. Women are rarely shown as equal partners; for example, as a person who is employed and has her own will. These portrayals largely stem from the gender role norms accepted and prevalent in our society. The men are largely positioned as strong, independent and macho men, while women are generally confined to household chores, or mother/ caretaker roles whose world centres round the house (Nagi, 2014).

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In addition, females in television advertising take on a number of more submissive and less authoritative roles. These include being represented visually without speaking, providing opinions or non-scientific arguments, not giving the voice for the end comment, and being presented against a background of mostly other females. These portrayals are reversed for males. Additionally, occupational stereotyping is the most widely used type of stereotyping in advertising, which is disconcerting because of the progress women have made toward equal representation in the workplace and enrollment in higher education (Eisend, 2010). There are two major arguments laid out to explain the relationship between advertising and society: the mirror argument and the mold argument (Eisend, 2010). The mirror argument claims that advertising reflects the beliefs held by and present in society.

Alternately, the mold argument says that advertising molds society through its prevalence in the culture. This claims that people are influenced by what they see in advertising and carry these stereotypes into their beliefs and actions to create and reinforce societal values. The idea of cultivation analysis falls into line with the mold argument.

Thus, the present study intends to fill the gap, which is obviously how Abia residents perceive women in television advertisements and the reality as far as the role of women is concerned.

METHODOLOGY

The survey research design was deemed most appropriate for the study because it focuses on Abia resident's views, opinions and conceptions on the issues or events in the society. The questionnaire was used as an instrument of data collection. The purposive sampling technique was used to select areas in Umuahia, they include: Old Umuahia, Nsukwe, Afara and World Bank housing estate. The simple random technique was used to select one hundred (100) respondents from each of the areas. According to the National Population Census that was carried out in 2006, the figures stand at one hundred and thirty eight thousand five hundred and seventy (138,570) people in Umuahia South Local Government Area. To determine the sample size of the study, a statistical method propounded by Taro Yamane (1964) was used:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)2}$$

$$n = \frac{138,570}{1+138,570\ (0.05)2}$$

$$n = \frac{138,570}{347.425} = 398.8$$

$$n = 398.8$$

Therefore, the sample size is four hundred (400)

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DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The table below contains the data generated for the study. The items are aligned to the research questions. Thus, the analysis was done in line with the research questions.

Table 1: Study data

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Xi	%	Decision
1	Women are negatively portrayed in television advertisement	210	102	40	28	3.3	66	Accepted
2	The use of women persuades more people to patronize advertised good on television in Abia State	240	98	29	13	3.4	68	Accepted
3	In television advertisement women are depicted in more than one role	40	29	120	191	1.7	34	Rejected
4	Women in television advertisement appeals more to the consumers choice	23	15	140	202	1.2	24	Rejected
5	Consumers of products focus more on the woman's aesthetic features and forget the intended message.	220	105	38	17	3.3	66	Accepted
6	The extent to which women are used to advertise products is minimal.	191	95	64	30	3.1	62	Accepted
7	Women are very satisfied with the way they are portrayed in television advertisement	11	8	91	270	1.3	26	Rejected
8	Women want a change in the way they are portrayed in advertisements	250	100	13	17	3.5	70	Accepted

In the above table, eight items were used to ascertain the opinions of the respondents on the way Abia Audience perceives how women are portrayed in television advertising; out of the eight items, five were accepted while three were rejected.

Item 1, shows that there was an average score of 3.3. The score is significant because by implication, there was 66% agreement that women are negatively portrayed in television advertising, hence accepted.

Furthermore, Item 2 shows a significant mean score of 3.4 and indicates 68% agreement that the use of women persuades more people to patronize advertised goods on television in Abia State, hence accepted.

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Item 3 shows a mean score of 1.7. However, there was 34% agreement that in television advertisements women are not depicted in more than one role, hence rejected.

Item 4 shows a significant mean score of 1.2. Thus, there was 24% agreement that women in television advertisements do not appeal more to consumers' choice, hence rejected.

Item 5 contains data that resulted in a significant mean score of 3.3 which implies 66% agreement that consumers of products focus more on aesthetic features and forgets the intended message, hence accepted.

Item 6 shows a significant mean score of 3.1 which indicates 62% agreement that the extent to which women are used to advertise products is minimal, hence accepted.

Item 7 shows a mean score of 1.3 however, there was 26% agreement that women are not satisfied with the way they are portrayed in television advertisements, hence rejected.

Finally, Item 8 shows that respondents' ratings resulted in a mean score of 3.5. This result is significant and implies 70% agreement that women want a change in the way they are portrayed in television advertisements.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study set out to ascertain Abia Audience perception of the portrayal of women in television Advertising. The audience perception is discussed based on the research questions earlier posed to guide the study.

Research Question One: To what extent are women negatively portrayed in television advertisements?

According to Table item 1, shows that there was an average score of 3.3. The score is significant because by implication, there was 66% acceptance that women are negatively portrayed in television advertising. However, findings show that women are not happy about the way they are presented in television advertising. The majority of the respondents said that women are often portrayed negatively in television advertising as they are often used when it comes to creating artificiality, objectification etc. This is in line with the literature review where it was said that women are negatively portrayed in television advertising generally.

The mainstream media promote women as eye candy, valued for little more than their desirability and eagerness to please. As a result, advertising has a clear gender bias and the practice of tailoring ads to audiences based on their gender is so pervasive that it becomes obvious to us at an early age. These stereotypes eventually become acceptable in our culture. The images of today display the values of a society that has more interest in the body than the mind. Until the media and the advertising industry develop a new found respect for women the struggle to be taken seriously and viewed as equals will continue. Women are typically portrayed in advertising in the traditional role of a mother, housewife and sex symbol, and these do not represent women's diversity. This finding is in line with Furnham and Paltzer (2010), that was confirmed in most studies that the association between women and body products, or as other studies called them, "toiletries", "beauty products" and "personal care products", as well as "household and cleaning products,". For men, product associations were less clear, but

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some studies found associations between men and television advertisements for cars, telecommunications, electronics, technology and computers. However, based on these findings, it is expected that female primary characters will be more to be seen in ads for toiletries, beauty products and cleaning products, whereas male characters will be associated more with telecommunications, electronics, technology, computers or cars.

Research Question Two: To what extent are women satisfied with the way they are portrayed in television advertisements?

According to item 7 on the table, it shows a mean score of 1.3 however, there was 26% rejection that women are not satisfied with the way they are portrayed in television advertisements. Therefore, findings show that the females are the central figures in commercials, they are typically portrayed as younger product users who are using domestic products at home or in dependent roles. Females in television advertising take on a number of more submissive and less authoritative roles. These include being represented visually without speaking, providing opinions or non-scientific arguments, not giving the voice for the end comment, and being presented against a background of mostly other females. These portrayals are reversed for males. The finding is also related to the finding of Soni (2020) which indicates that 65% of women and 67% of men believe that these advertisements affect the way women are accepted in the society. Men's perception of women and their expectations of women's appearance are also affected in the process. This is true because today's advertisements affect women's self-esteem and confidence, and pressurize them to conform to certain body norms such as fair color, thin bodies etc.

Research Question Three: To what extent do women want a change in the way they are portrayed in advertisements?

According to item 8 on the table, it shows that respondents' ratings resulted in a mean score of 3.5. This result is significant and implies 70% acceptance that women want a change in the way they are portrayed in television advertisements. However, findings show that advertisements on television on products that involve domestic chores like washing, cooking, etc would discover that women are used (stereotype). This simply means that even the media project women as domestic vessels whose job does not exceed the kitchen. Even in television programmes where sexual harassment is involved, the female is always the appropriate choice to portray the character. This ought not to be, because negativity is not tied to women alone, neither is domestic chores to women, hence the change on women portrayal in advertisement. This finding is related to the finding of Claudia et al (2005) descriptions about women in the patriarchal society, some themes are outstanding, such as: the association of women to the domestic dimension of life, the role of mother and housekeeper, the absence of the feminine role in public domains of the society; women's lack of education; the specialization and the idealization of the body. Indeed, these themes, in some way, have also emerged from the data. The housekeeper and mother's roles are related to the image of "housewife". In addition, the portrayal of the feminine as "not intelligent" is, in some way, linked to the idea of not being educated. In the patriarchal regime women were kept illiterate in order to be dominated and not to participate in other arenas.

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Research Question Four: To what extent are women depicted in more than one role in television advertisement?

According to item 3 on the table, it shows a mean score of 1.7. However, there was 34% rejection that in television advertisements women are not depicted in more than one role. Therefore, findings show that women are generally found in advertisements for home products, baby items, cosmetics and food items. They are also generally portrayed stereotypically in the advertisement of entertainment, clothes, and cosmetics but are portrayed non-stereotypically in ads for tobacco, travel, food and financial services. The mainstream media promote women as eye candy, valued for little more than their desirability and eagerness to please. As a result, advertising has a clear gender bias and the practice of tailoring ads to audiences based on their gender is so pervasive that it becomes obvious to us at an early age. These stereotypes eventually become acceptable in our culture. The images of today display the values of a society that has more interest in the body than the mind. Until the media and the advertising industry develop a new found respect for women the struggle to be taken seriously and viewed as equals will continue.

However, the present study tends to fill the gap of Nigerian companies consistently using women in advertising specific product categories and how they are being portrayed on television advertisements. The prevalent categories of food and household products are also consistent with product categories that are generally considered the domain of the woman in the household. Thus, findings from the literature review indicate that advertisers link women consumer decision –making for low-involvement products rather than for high –involvement products. Also, women were seldom represented in product categories that are high-involvement products, such as electronics; the low frequency of women in sport-related product advertising is not surprising as sport is generally considered a male –oriented terrain.

The findings suggest that the common perception of women being impacted more by emotional appeals does not hold true. Advertisers seem to appeal to the rational, functional motivations of women rather than the emotional. It is possible that rational appeals are favored because women have become more involved in non-traditional consumer decision-making than before, leading to a change in the manner in which females make purchase decisions. The finding of this study is in line with the finding of Akestam N, Rosengren S, Dahlen M, & Liljedal K. (2021) which shows that advertising portrayals of women and men have a presumed negative influence on others, leading to higher levels of ad reactance, which has a negative impact on brand-related effects across model and participant gender, and for gender stereotypes in terms of physical characteristics and roles.

CONCLUSION

Stereotypes exist and are part of our lives and people act according to these stereotypes, because they are considered socially acceptable. He who controls the media controls the flow of information and the power of perception. The media's manipulation of women's sexuality also serves as further proof that women's bodies are still not their own in any arena. However, in the twenty- first century, the roles of women have changed, particularly in Nigeria. Women have liberated themselves through education and occupy prominent positions in large corporations and in government. Nowadays, Nigerian marketers often feature female models

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in print, broadcast and outdoor media acting as substitute communicators to convey marketing and advertising messages to the target market. Corollary to the above, it would be apt to conclude that portrayals of women in television advertisements do not always reflect reality and are often limited in nature.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The success of television advertisements in Nigeria owes a lot to the audience and ethical stance of media professionals. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations become necessary:

i. Advertisements where women were treated merely as an object to sell, need to be condemned and women need to come up openly and boldly against their degrading presentation.

ii. Also, the projection of women in Nigerian advertisements should be done for highlighting the real issues of women's lives, for their upliftment and for the awareness among people about the rights of women.

iii. Researchers should extend research on gender role stereotyping amongst both genders by assessing the impact of such portrayals on marketing effectiveness of the messages with respect to their emotional and behavioral responses to advertisements.

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