

Gender Role Portrayal in Nigeria Newspapers Advertisement

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Abstract

This study was designed to examine gender role portrayal in Nigeria newspaper advertisement. The secondary source of data collection was used; three national newspapers with a wide coverage were selected. The advertisements were content analyzed. The result reveals a significant shift in gender role portrayal in Nigeria newspaper advertisement. sex stereotype in advertisement has reduced even though males were still portrayed in executive roles in Nigeria newspaper advertisement than females. Theoretical and practical implications of results were discussed.

INTRODUCTION

In the twenty first century western world, the idea that women and men naturally possess distinct characteristics is often treated sceptically, but this was an almost universally held view in eighteenth century. Gender Schema Theory proposes that people especially children learns about gender roles from their surrounding culture. Ideas about gender difference were derived from classical thought, christain ideology, and contemporary science and medicine. Men and women were thought to inhabit bodies with different qualities and virtues. Gender roles, when followed, send signal of membership in a given gender (Bornstein, 2010). Men, as the stronger sex, were thought to be intelligent, courageous and determined. Women on the other hand, were more governed by their emotions, and their virtues were expected to be chastity, modesty, compassion and piety. Men were thought to be more aggressive; women more passive. These differences were echoed in the faults to which each sex was thought to be prone. Men were prone to violence, obstinacy, and selfishness, while women's sin was viewed as the result of their emotions, notably lust, excessive passion, sheepishness and laziness (Green, 2010). On the basis of this societal expectations gender roles were defined. All societies have carefully defined gender-role, although there are precise differences among societies. Gender (or sex) stereotypes are widely held beliefs about psychological differences between males and females, which often reflect gender roles (Babalola and Adebayo, 2003). Sex typing is our acquisition of sex or gender identity and learning the appropriate behaviour. Sex typing began early in Western culture, with parents often dressing their newborn baby boy or girl in blue or pink.

The Wikipedia free encyclopedia defines gender role as the social and behavioural norms that are considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex in the context of a specific culture, which differ widely between cultures and over time. It is not necessarily based on biological sex, either real or perceived, and it is distinct from sexual orientation. It is one's internal, personal sense of being a man or woman (or a boy or girl).The presence of gender role

has created a stereotype. This stereotype means that men and women need to follow their specific gender roles in order to be socially accepted. Gender roles have forced society to form a stereotype of what the "perfect woman" and "perfect man" should be. People base this "perfect woman or man" on what newspaper advertisements and other media portrays them to be. The qualities for the "perfect woman" include, femininity, beauty, respectful, in shape, nurturing, motherly, house wife, dependent, caretaker, and loving. For men, the "perfect man" is considered to be masculine, strong, a provider, in shape, and independent. If men and women do not follow these certain characteristics, they are often shunned and may not be socially accepted (Owolabi, 2009).

Advertising is a form of communication used to encourage or persuade an audience (viewers, readers or listeners) to continue or take some new action. Ehigie and Babalola (1995) defined advertising as an aspect of marketing, which is described in psychological terms as any form of visual, oral or audio-visual communication about goods and services in which the sender attempts to motivate the receiver into purchase action as a favourable response or feedback. Most commonly, the desired result is to drive consumer behaviour with respect to a commercial offering. The purpose of advertising may also be to reassure employees or stakeholders that a company is viable or successful. Advertising messages are usually paid for by sponsors and viewed via various traditional media; including mass media such as newspaper, magazines, television commercials, radio advertisement e.t.c. For the purpose of this study, the concentration of advertisement would be on newspaper.

A newspaper is a scheduled publication containing news of current events, informative articles, diverse features, editorials, and advertising. It usually is printed on relatively inexpensive, low-grade paper such as newsprint. General-interest newspapers typically publish stories on local and national political events and personalities, crime, business, entertainment, society and sports. Most traditional papers also feature an editorial page containing editorials written by an editor and columns that express the personal opinions of writers. The newspaper is typically funded by paid subscriptions and advertising. A wide variety of material has been published in newspapers, including editorial opinions, criticism, persuasion and op-eds; obituaries; entertainment features such as crosswords, sudoku and horoscopes; weather news and forecasts; advice, food and other columns; reviews of radio, movies, television, plays and restaurants; classified ads; display ads, radio and television listings, inserts from local merchants, editorial cartoons, gag cartoons and comic strips.

Zimmerman and Dahlberg (2008) state that since the rebirth of the women's movement in the 1960's, critics have consistently raged against the way advertising treats women. Scantly clad, suggestively portrayed women sell every different type of product in magazines and television. The voyeuristic portrayals of women as things not only to be looked at but also to be desired have always been used by some magazine in order to maximize sales. Examples include playboy, penthouse, and hustler. Recently due to technological advancements, advertising is all over the place in newspaper, hints and heart magazines, billboards pavement, side of buses, radio, and television and on the internet. Constantly, polarized gender messages in newspaper advertisement have fundamentally anti-social effects. Women and girls are more likely to be shown: in home, performing domestic chores such as laundry or cooking; as sex object who exist primarily to serve men; as victims who can't protect themselves and are the natural recipients of beatings, harassment, sexual assault and murder. Men and boys are also stereotyped by newspapers advertisement. Masculinity is often associated with machismo, independence, competition, emotional detachment, aggression and violence.

Advertisements often contain elements of gender in them. They come in the form of sexual images and it is usually the women who are sexually objectified. Women have traditionally been assumed to be dependent on men and thus requiring their protection. This furthers the common assumption that women are subservient to men, which then leads women to be viewed as sex objects (Zhou and Chen, 1997). Whipple and Courtney (2005) mentioned that one common stereotype model-product pairing is that of men and automobiles. For decades, cars have been presented as an object of male competition and outside the arena of women. Therefore, this lends support to the assumption that (we are interested to look at the representation of gender in newspaper advertisement) car advertisements are often targeted at men.

Water and Ellis (2006), in their paper, studies the impacts of advertising. The stereotyping of various groups, in this case - women, is one consequence that we should be wary of. Often, the media projects unattainable or unrealistic portrayals of women where being young and attractive are an ideal that should be pursued (Waters and Ellis 2006). In car advertisement, some evidence of this can be seen through the sexual innuendos that accompany the advertorials. The models are often shapely women who boast an almost unattainable figure. This then creates disillusionment when men see these models as womanly ideals and thus project these onto the women that he comes in contact with. As a result, this in turn leads women to turn the male gaze upon themselves where they also join in the chase for that ideal body. These stereotypes are definitely influential in their ability to shape the way both genders negotiate their identity. They also mention that stereotypes shown on television through these advertisements affect the perceptions of children who are exposed to them and these stereotypes will then remain with them ever as they grow older (Waters and Ellis, 2006).

Furthermore, because of these unrealistic portrayals, Ciochetto and Lynne (2008) also mentions how as a result advertising forges a very limited schema when it comes to women and their social interactions, mainly encouraging people to think of women in terms of their relationships with men, family, or sexuality. Studies have shown that images of women that dominate in magazine advertisements is of weak, childish, dependent, domestic, irrational, subordinate creatures, the producers of children and little else compared with men. Komisar (1971) suggests the audience of advertising could never know the reality of women's lives by looking at advertising, since "A woman's place is not only in the home, according to most advertising copywriters and art directors; it is in the kitchen or the laundry room". Komisar also refers to the image created by advertisers in 1960 as a combination sex object, wife, and mother who achieves fulfillment by looking beautiful for men. A woman is not depicted as intelligent, but submissive and subservient to men. If a woman has a job, it is as secretary or an airline hostess.

Courtney and Lockeretz (1999) examined images of women in paper advertisements. They reported the following findings which include the fact that: women were rarely shown in out-of-home working roles, not many women were shown as a professional or high-level business person, women rarely ventured from home by themselves or with other women, Women were shown as dependent on men's protection, Men were shown regarding women as sex objects or as domestic adjuncts, females were most often shown in ads for cleaning products, food products, beauty products, drugs, clothing and home appliances and finally that males were most often shown in ads for cars, travel, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, banks, industrial companies

Over the past decades, significant changes have occurred in gender roles and in gender-based division of labour (Burn, 1996; Shaffer, 2000; Udegbe, 2003). Perhaps, the most notable of this

change are the dramatic influx of women into the work-force and the progress women have made at entering professions and filling positions, once held almost exclusively by men (Kang 1997; Udegbe, 2003). Even though gender roles have undergone many changes in recent years, there are still large individual differences in people's perceptions of the behaviours and pronouncements considered acceptable for men and women. The aim of this research is to find out gender portrayal in Newspaper advertisement as see if the changes that have occurred in gender based division of labour is reflected in gender portrayal in Newspaper advertisement.

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis shall be tested in this study:

1. There will be more female as advert presenter in masculine products than male in feminine product.
2. More female will be portrayed in Nigeria Newspaper advertisement than male.
3. There will be no difference on how gender role would be portrayed in Punch, Vanguard and Guardian.
4. Male will perform executive role in Nigeria Newspaper than female.

METHODS

Materials

The aim of this research work is to investigate gender role portrayal in Nigeria Newspaper advertisement. There are about 25 Newspapers in Nigeria. Out of these newspapers, three were used as the material of this project. The newspapers are; Guardian, Punch and Vanguard, they were selected because of their national coverage and as major advertisement outlets in the Nigeria Newspaper industry.

Study area

The study was conducted in the library of Guardian Newspapers located at Total Bustop, Iyana Isolo in Lagos State, Nigeria. Copies of the three Newspapers (Guardian, Punch, and Vanguard) covering a period of six months - from the 1st July, 2014 to the 30th December, 2014 were analyzed. Adverts which are published more than once in the same newspaper or other types of newspapers were recorded once. The three newspapers were observed to be highly used for advertisements. Also, the July to December edition were used because as at the time of this study, they were the most recent publication. A period of six months was considered good enough to override any peculiarity that may be associated with a particular period or month.

Procedures

A secondary source of data collection was used, that is, advertisements in published selected Newspaper were used and the content analysis was based on the following factors:

- a) Product advertised
- b) Product, sex usage whether it is used by male, female or both
- c) The presenter of the advert (male, female or both)
- d) If both (are the presenters), who was used as the lead presenter? (male, female or both)
- e) The content of the message

The products advertised were examined if they are products solely used by male, female or both. If the product is commonly used by both sexes, who is the lead presenter of the product in the advert? If the product is used by both sexes, were they both used as lead presenter in the advert? (I.e the male and female). Did the advertisement follow the traditional or non-traditional mode i.e did male advertise masculine product or female advertise feminine product or otherwise? The way they are portrayed in the advertisement of particular products would explain how that particular advert perceived and view gender role. Another important

aspect of the analysis that has contributed to the collection of data is the issue of 'who the lead presenter' in the advert is when both sexes are used in advertisement. The lead presenter in an advert indicates that such gender is more recognised for the product advertised. The Newspaper advertisement were content analyzed and so as to determine how gender is portrayed in the newspaper advertisement, statistical tools such as percentages, tabulation and the Chi-square form of analysis was employed for the purpose of presenting the data in a very meaningful way. The Chi-square (χ^2) was used to test the hypothesis formulated.

RESULTS

Descriptive table

Newspapers	PF	PM	PB	PrF	PrM	PrB	LPrF	LPrM	LPrB	ErM	ErF
PUNCH	0	5	51	16	29	11	0	5	6	11	5
VANGUARD	0	0	7	2	4	1	0	0	1	1	2
GUARDIAN	0	2	18	1	15	4	0	0	4	1	0

KEY PF = Products used by female PM = Products used by male PB = products used by both

PrF = presenter of adverts (female) PrM = presenter of adverts (male) PrB = presenter of adverts (both)

LPrF = Lead presenter female (if both) LPrM = Lead presenter male (if both) LPrB = Lead presenter both ErM = Executive roles by men ErF = Executive roles by female

The first hypothesis which states that there will be more female as advert presenter in masculine products than male presenter in feminine products was tested using Chi-square. The result is presented below:

Table 1: Descriptive table showing the percentage of male and female presenter in Nigeria Newspaper advert.

	PUNCH	VANGUARD	GUARDIAN	TOTAL	%
Pm	5	0	2	7	9.5
PrF	16	2	1	19	25.7
PF	0	0	0	0	0
PrM	29	4	15	48	64.9
	50	6	18	74	

Table 2 Chi-square table showing the portrayal of female presenter in products used by male and male presenter in products used by female.

Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\frac{(Fo-Fe)^2}{Fe}$
5	4.72	0.28	0.08	0.016
0	0.56	-0.56	0.31	0
2	1.70	0.3	0.09	0.045
16	12.83	3.17	10.05	0.63
2	1.54	0.46	0.21	0.11
1	4.62	-3.62	13.10	13.1
0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0
29	32.43	-3.43	11.76	0.41
4	3.89	0.11	0.01	0.0025
15	11.67	3.33	11.09	0.74
				$\Sigma = 15.05$

χ^2 obtained value = 15.05

df = 6 χ^2 critical value = 12.59

The Chi-square result shows that the obtained value 15.05 is greater than the critical value 12.59. It means that the hypothesis which states that 'There will be more female as advert presenter in masculine products than male presenter in feminine products' is rejected. $df = 6$, critical $\chi^2 = 12.59$, $\chi^2 (6) = 15.05$, $P < .05$.

The second hypothesis which states that more female will be portrayed in Nigeria Newspaper advertisement than male was tested using Chi-square. The result is presented in the table below:

Table 3: Descriptive table showing the percentage of how female and male are portrayed in Nigeria Newspaper Advertisement.

	PUNCH	VANGUARD	GUARDIAN	TOTAL	%
PrF	16	2	1	19	28.4
PrM	29	4	15	48	71.6
	45	6	16	67	

Table 4: Chi-square table showing portrayal of male and female in Nigeria Newspaper advertisement.

Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\frac{(Fo-Fe)^2}{Fe}$
16	12.76	3.24	10.50	0.66
2	1.70	0.3	0.09	0.04
1	4.53	-3.54	12.46	12.46
29	32.24	-3.24	10.50	0.36
4	4.30	-0.30	0.09	0.02
15	11.46	3.54	12.53	0.84
				$\Sigma = 14.38$

χ^2 obtained value = 14.38, $DF = 2$, χ^2 critical value = 5.99

The Chi-square for this hypothesis shows that the obtained value 14.38 is greater than the critical value 5.99. It means that the hypothesis which states that 'more female will be portrayed in Nigeria Newspaper advertisement than male' is accepted.

$DF = 2$, critical $\chi^2 = 5.99$, $\chi^2 (2) = 14.38$, $P < .05$.

The third hypothesis which states that male will perform executive role in Nigeria Newspaper than female was tested using Chi-square. The result is presented in the table below:

Table 5: Descriptive table showing the percentage of executive role performed by male and female in Nigeria Newspaper advert.

	PUNCH	VANGUARD	GUARDIAN	TOTAL	%
ErM	11	1	1	13	65
ErF	5	2	0	7	35
	16	3	1	20	

Table 6: Chi-square table showing the executive roles performed by male and female.

Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\frac{(Fo-Fe)^2}{Fe}$
11	10.4	0.6	0.36	0.03
1	1.95	-0.95	0.90	0.9
1	0.65	0.35	0.12	0.12
5	5.6	-0.6	0.36	0.07
2	1.05	0.95	0.90	0.45
0	0.35	-0.35	0.12	0
				$\Sigma = 1.57$

χ^2 obtained value = 1.57 $DF = 2$ χ^2 critical value = 5.99

The Chi-square for this hypothesis shows that the obtained value 1.57 is less than the critical value 5.99. It means that the hypothesis which states that 'male will perform executive role in Nigeria Newspaper than female is accepted.

DF = 2, critical $\chi^2 = 5.99$, $\chi^2 (2) = 1.57$, $P > .05$.

DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis states that there will be more female as advert presenter in masculine products than male in feminine products. From the result of the research, it is confirmed that more male was portrayed as advert presenter in feminine products than female. On the contrary, from the result of the research, there is no product solely used by female. All products advertised are used by both male and female. This therefore made it possible to have more male portrayed as advert presenter because there are no feminine products.

In relation to attribution theory, which is concerned with how individuals interpret events and how this relates to their thinking and behaviour? Attribution theory deals with how the social perceiver uses information to arrive at causal explanations for events. It examines what information is gathered and how it is combined to form a causal judgment" (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) Attribution theory is concerned with how and why ordinary people explain events as they do. Advertisers believe that products sell at higher rate when female is used as the lead presenter because users of the products would see the appearance of the presenter as a motivator. When products are for male users, it is believed that females are seen as emotional stimulants by male and would always go for products with sexy female presenter. This can be compared with turnover of products with unattractive female presenter. This is in line with Whipple et al's (1985) findings; they assert that effective role portrayals are found to be a function of three factors –appropriate match between the gender of the depicted model and the gender-image of the product; the setting of the portrayal; and the portrayals liberatedness and realism.

The second hypothesis states that more female will be portrayed in Nigeria Newspaper advertisement than male. The result of this research confirmed that, more female was portrayed in Nigeria Newspaper than male. Data gathered showed that even when products are used by both male and female, the female gender was still portrayed as lead presenter. And this result is consistent with the Gender Schema theory which states that the environment as a whole has a way of dictating individual's role. And so, it is believed that jobs like modelling, or advertising should be a feminine job. The schema is presumably formed from interactions with the environment. Newspaper advertisement is stereotypically associated with a female that's why on most cover pages of magazines and newspaper, females are used.

Carpenter and Edison (2004) in their research on "the portrayal of women in advertising over the past forty years" also concurred that women are portrayed much more than male in advertisement. Gender role is the set of societal expectations that dictates how an individual of a gender should behave, think and feel. During the past century, perception of all 3 aspects of gender have changed, particularly that of gender role. The Gender Schema theory concerns the development of an internal schema, or mental framework, which organizes and directs the behaviour of an individual as a male or female. Gender Schema of being female might include using more female for advert job than male.

The third hypothesis states that there is no difference on how gender role would be portrayed in Punch, Vanguard and Guardian. The result confirmed that there was no significant difference among the types of Newspaper adverts. From the information gathered and the data analysis,

the result shows that there is no significant difference among the Punch, Vanguard and Guardian Newspaper. However, there is need for more research on this study.

The fourth hypothesis states that male will perform executive roles in Nigeria Newspaper advert than female. The result of this research confirmed that executive roles are played by male in Nigeria Newspaper than female. This hypothesis is being consistent with the findings of cognitive developmental theories. In their researches on cognitive development, it was observed that during development, male and female learn their gender role while growing up and they fix their cognition on that mentality. For this reason, male grow up to 'think as a cooperate person', while female grow up to 'work in the kitchen'. Children develop the stereotypic conceptions of gender from what they see and hear around them, once they achieve gender constancy, they believe that their own gender is fixed and irreversible.

Heidelberg,(2010) opposed this finding in his research on how women are portrayed in executive positions. He concluded that more women should be in executive positions. In his opinion, companies can't do without the potential of highly qualified women. One reason for this is the demographic change, another one the necessity to institutionalize a multiplicity of aptitudes and perspectives on the management level of companies.

To Piaget, a developmental psychologist, cognitive development was a progressive reorganization of mental processes as a result of biological maturation and environmental experience. Children construct an understanding of the world around them, and then experience discrepancies between what they already know and what they discover in their environment. Moreover, Piaget claims the idea that cognitive development is at the center of human organism and language is contingent on cognitive development. Lawrence Kohlberg suggested that children had made a cognitive judgement about their identity before they select same sex models for sex typed behaviour. The cognitive development theory contends that because children consistently hear themselves called "boy" or "girl", they begin to conceive of themselves as being of one sex or the other. Ultimately, from such interactions, children develop a conception of attitudes towards and behavioural expectations concerning that gender.

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