Gender stereotype and advertisement language on newspaper and magazine media platform in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study seeks to investigate gender stereotype and the language of advertising used in media platform in Nigeria. A convenient sampling was deployed to select three indigenous newspapers and two magazines in Nigeria. The three newspapers used for this study are the Tribune, Guardian and the Nation; and the two magazines used are Ovation and City people. The findings of the study revealed that gender bias occurs in media advertisement in Nigeria and it is more pronounced in newspaper than in the magazines. Body images of females in advertisement were more exposed that those of male and the most revealed female body parts were the arms, thigh and chest, among others, while for the males only their arms and legs were revealed. The majority of advertisement done in newspaper and magazines are gender specific, that is, they addressed particular and specific gender type thus neglecting the other gender type. The study recommends that the female gender should not be portrayed in the society as mere sex objects. Also, advertising agencies should endeavor to make advertisements to be gender neutral; however, it is also important to put into cognizance the particular gender for which the advertisement is produced.

Keywords: advertising model, gender differences, human body, image, media market

1. Background to the study

Advertising which is the promotion of commercial goods through the media has been an important phenomenon among producers and marketers and is increasingly influencing daily lives of individuals and activities of organizations. It is a double stand with two major functions: one is to persuade potential customers, and the other is to provide information to the potential customers (Yang, 2010). To achieve this, the mass media such as newspapers, magazines, radio and television are tools used by producers and marketers to convey these information and awareness of products and services to potential customers. This is done because potential customers are individuals from different backgrounds and with different views and perspectives of life, thus advertising agencies need to put and pull along resources to win them. This implies that advertising has to cater for different kinds of customers if such business would achieve higher competitive edge over its competitors.

In addition, the type of language used for communicating such information about products and services to potential customers is also of paramount interest to

advertising agencies. To this end, how to make advertising more effective has attracted many attention in the field of marketing and communication and other relevant fields of interest. For example, Mladenović, Vujović and Cigrovski (2010) affirmed that, almost every advertising agency employs both psychologists and sociologists who try to construct images and messages which the readers are more likely to accept. Images and messages that are in compliance with the views and values which the audiences (which in this study are known as potential customers) of a particular publication already have, are most likely to appeal to them. Thus, the need for readers to be constantly and continuously being surveyed (Vestergaard and Schrøder, 1985, p. 73). Therefore, the portrayal of men and women in adverts in magazines and other media need to correspond to the socially accepted images and values of their readers. Furthermore, van Herpen et al. (2000) stated that some potential customers prefer clear and credible advertisements, which are also easy to understand, howbeit, others prefer images. Advertisers are changing advertising strategies to make advertising more attractive and influential. This makes advertisers

including marketers and producers to selectively identify (which could include different genders) and use different languages that would meet the expectation of their potential customers. To this end, many advertisers use different means (which could include different genders) and languages to attract the majority to their products and services.

Language is known to be the medium of communication among individuals living in a community. Valiulis, O'Driscoll and Redmond (2007) state that meaning conveyed through language is critical to developing an understanding of how language can be used to reinforce gender stereotypes. The language of advertising has been connected with gender issues in every society. In particular, language and gender are significant issues that remain widely controversial in the domain of advertising. In addition, the development of advertising can be divided into four stages: the product information stage, the product image stage, the personalization stage and the lifestyle stage (Cheng and Schweitzer, 1996). This is the major reason why Yang (2010) states that information conveyed in advertisements to potential customers is turning from impersonal to personal. This is because potential customers/readers of these media tend to personalize such messages and information which they could use and the advertisers makes the information or messages easy to be personalized by them.

Furthermore, many media often divide the public into various demographic characteristics such as gender, age, educational qualification or occupational types, among others. For example, Yang (2010, p. 9) has stated that many media divide the public into female and male audience. Others focus their advertising on specific age group such as teenage boys and teenage girls. In addition, content and language of such advertisers and advert are often gender stereotypic (Willemsen, 1998). Also, some famous magazines and other media provide leading fashion for women all around the world and some have excluded female readers and only focused on supposed male interests, thus, making advertising a gender sensitive activity. Also, Smith (1985), Tannen (1991) and Coates (1993) state that women and men differ in the use of language. The problem is whether this gives a reason for advertisers to use different languages in advertising for female and male separately because this may consequently influence people's usage of language and the use of gender related images and pictures in advertising.

In addition, advertisers and marketers use women to sell everything ranging from household items, cigarettes, alcohol, furniture, etc., giving the impression that women need everything to make them complete or satisfied. For example, Ferguson, Kreshel and Tinkham (1990) affirm that women are portrayed as subordinate to men or merely as a decorative items when used in advertisement and Iijima Hall and Crum (1994) state that women are used as images of sex objects and decoration. Furthermore, when women appear in these adverts, their bodily exposure are greater: women are portrayed in these commercials through shots of the chest, leg, buttock and crotch and they appear in either leisure wear or swim wear, whereas the men were always dressed in work clothes (Iijima Hall and Crum, 1994). This could lead to problems in to the society as such adverts are contrary to the culture of most societies. As a product of human culture, adverts can reveal many cultural factors. Furthermore, women tend to be portrayed either in a degrading or demeaning fashion or in sex-role stereotypic behaviors (Yang, 2010). Also, Frith, Cheng and Shaw (2004), Matud, Rodríguez and Espinosa (2011) and Arima (2003) revealed that gender difference in advertising is a general phenomenon across the world. In Nigeria, such studies are limited. To this end, this study seeks to investigate gender sterotype and the language of advertising used in media platform in Nigeria. Also, the following research questions would drive this study.

1. Are advertising in Nigeria media gender biased?
2. What kind of product and service advert do males and females feature the most in Nigeria media?
3. How are males and females portrayed in these adverts?
4. Is there difference in the language employed in the selected adverts with respect to the different gender used?

1.1 Previous studies

Language is a means of communication used in a given society (Golzadeh et al., 2012) and without language, people living in a society may not be able to communicate (Udebunu, 2011). Also, we can use signs and symbols in language – whether they are sounds, written words, electronically produced images, musical notes, even objects – to stand for or to represent to other people our concepts, ideas and feelings. Thus, representation through language is therefore central to the processes by which meaning is produced (Devlin, 2006).

Furthermore, gender studies arise with the reaction against the main stream in which males were the center of society (Coates, 1993). However, women now gain the right to perform the activities of men in our societies (Yang, 2010). Since then, there have been changes not only in workplace and at home but also in the attitudes of people on the issue of gender roles especially with regards to their community or society. Although, study such as Cameron (1992) has proven that women were inferior to men. Feminists study have been mostly interested in gender differences, and they believe that

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through linguistic behavior, the nature and status of women can be revealed (Cameron, 1992). The issue of gender with regards to language used had earlier been visited and worked upon. For example, Lakoff's (1975) study on Language and woman's place revealed that differences exist in the way women and men use language. Women are taught to behave properly and to talk like ladies. There is the language of women which men are reluctant to use. Yang (2010) argued that Lakoff's result about language and gender in some cases was found incorrect; however, her work gave necessary shape to later research. Due to women's insecure social position, they are more sensitive to linguistic norms than men (Yang, 2010). Coates (1993) believed that women and men have different standard on communication competence. Although, there are many approaches with regards to the relationship between gender and language use, some scholars focus on gender differences in conversational practice. (Graddol and Swann, 1989; Tannen, 1991; Yang, 2010). According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) who studied the language of Yanyuwa within aboriginal Australia, they found out that there are distinctive dialects for females and males even within a particular culture. The relationship between advertising and gender has attracted a lot of attention because advertising has become a part of our everyday life (Yang, 2010) and according to Golzadeh et al. (2012), gender is one of the main and probably the most important discussion in advertising.

Furthermore, Yang (2010) affirmed with examples that it is not unusual to observe a beautiful and attractive woman appearing in an advert for male customers or a seemingly perfect woman in an advert for a female product. In addition, studies on gender and advertising are divided into two directions – mold and mirror (Yang, 2010): either gender differences in reality lead to those portrayed in advertising, or adverts in a way shaping people's minds about gender. The media is part of our gender-role socialization; research on television commercials have indicated that both men and women are portrayed in a sex-stereotyped way (Burn, 1996, p. 14). In another research conducted by Williams and Best (1990) in 25 countries, participants were asked to associate 300 adjectives with either males or females. The result of the study revealed that men are widely considered to be active, determined, ambitious, courageous, dominant, independent, strong, unemotional, and rational, while women are seen as affectionate, attractive, dependent, fearful, sentimental, sexy, sensitive, and emotional.

The media such as magazines and newspapers, among others, often divide the public into female readership and male readership. Also, some media deem it fit to divide their readers according to their age group as some specializes on providing goods and services for teenage boys and teenage girls separately, and such con-

tent and language from such media are often gender stereotypic (Willemsen, 1998). This was why Golzadeh et al. (2012) stated that gender is one of the main criteria to dividing any market, therefore, there is a need to arrange combined marketing elements, such as advertising, regarding the existing differences between men and women for each part of the market. The study of Asemah, Edegoh and Ojih (2013) clearly affirmed that women are traditionally portrayed in advertising in stereotypical roles or in ways that do not necessarily match reality which often form negative representations of women in advertising and affect young women. Women, traditionally have been over-represented in the homes and under-represented outdoors and in business settings and there is evidence that advertising presents a traditionally stereotyped portrayal of women and that attitudes have changed dramatically over the past decade (Asemah, Edegoh and Ojih, 2013).

Furthermore, Asemah, Edegoh and Ojih (2013) state that advertisers are culpable for the heightened body dissatisfaction amongst women, because they constantly use sexy unrealistic images of ultra thin models, the depiction of women as sex objects and the frequent use of sex, to sell products. Since the late 1960s, there have been concerns regarding the portrayal of women in the media. Bardwick and Schumann (1967) analysed the portrayal of women in commercials and concluded that to an amazing extent, women are portrayed as sex objects. Visual adverts are bombarded with images and slogans portraying women in an unrealistic manner. Also, Whipple and Courtney's (1985) study found out that advertising presents a traditionally stereotyped portrayal of women. Although advertisers aim to reach all segments of the consuming public, their portrayal of society is not necessarily an accurate reflection of how society is composed; most of such adverts are skewed. In most adverts, women are generally portrayed as subordinate to men or merely as a decorative item (Asemah, Edegoh and Ojih, 2013).

Furthermore, Mladenović, Vujović and Cigrovski (2010) in their study divided the language of advertising into: figuratives, repetition, personification, alliteration, rhetorical questions, imperative, lexis, and other stylistic devices. Among them, only the use of lexis and imperatives is used differently among media. This implied that there could be some level of similarities and differences in the use of advertising language during adverts. In addition, advertising language incorporates gender in a gender-neutral, gender-specific, or gender-biased manner (Artz, Munger and Purdy, 1999). Every utterance or piece of text can be categorized this way. Gender-neutral language either has no reference to gender (e.g., 'someone') or it simultaneously refers to both genders (e.g., 'women and men', 'his or her', or 'she/he'). Gender-specific language refers to either male or female in a non-biased way. For example a male spokesper-

son could be referred to as 'he'. Gender-bias can take a variety of forms in language and may include language that excludes one gender (e.g., 'the average man' when used to refer to 'people'), convey unsupported or biased connotations (e.g., 'doctors spend little time with their wives' rather than spouses), or imply or contain irrelevant evaluation of gender (e.g., 'the little woman').

Of importance to this study is gender images used in advertisements. Studies conducted by Harrison, Juric and Cornwell (2001), Kuntjara (2001) and Lim and Ting (2011) have affirmed that images in adverts have the power to shape the perception of a society as far as the way they look at the world. Women in particular, are often portrayed as sexual objects in advertising through their images (Berger, 1999; Ford, LaTour and Lundstrom,

1991; Stankiewicz and Rosselli, 2008). Relationally, the conventional beauty is typically women's main attribute of attraction (Ingham, 1995; Johnston and Taylor, 2008; Ong and Seah, 2001). However, the images of women portrayed in most adverts are frequently observed as a creation of artificiality that establishes an impossible standard of physical perfection for women (Kuntjara, 2001; Workman and Johnson, 1991). Bardwick and Schumann (1967) analysed male and female role portrayals in television commercials and concluded that women are portrayed primarily as homebound or as housewives. Putting into consideration the African culture, what are the various languages of advertising used and how are gender (male and female) images displayed on Media Platform in Nigeria? These are major gaps this present study seeks to fill.

2. Theoretical underpinning

The theories deployed in this study are the feminist and constructivist theory and the queer theory of Khan and Ali (2012). The social construction of gender asserted that in a society, gender is thought to be bred into our genes. It is hard to believe that it is created out of human interactions, social life and is a structure of that society. In a society, every gender has its significance. For example, Butler (1990) has also shown that the exploitation of women and social domination of men has social functions and a social history, it is not the result of sex, philosophy, structure or hormones. It is created by identifiable social processes. Thus, Butler called this phenomenon gender trouble. In addition, Butler (1990, p. 278) said that *'Gender reality is performative which means, quite simply, that it is real only to the extent that it is performed.'*

Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1995) have stated in Constructing meaning and constructing selves, that people use language as a basic tool to construct themselves and others as "kinds" of people so that characteristics, attributes, duties and participation in social practice such as advertising can be regularized. Constructivist paradigm believes that these categories and characterizations are social and human productions and creations: the images attached with them are not ready-made and pre-formed; rather they are constructed, created, maintained and transmitted by social procedures such as in the advertising.

These frameworks will be used to examine advertising for evidence of gender stereotyping. They offer the possibility of identifying overt evidence of stereotyping and more subtle stereotypical portrayals and of illuminating the processes by which gendered messages might be communicated in the marketing of products and services in advertisement. Thus, the resultant framework used to this end was the Analysis of gender equality issues in the

marketing and design of goods by Valiulis, O'Driscoll and Redmond (2007). The framework is presented in Figure 1.
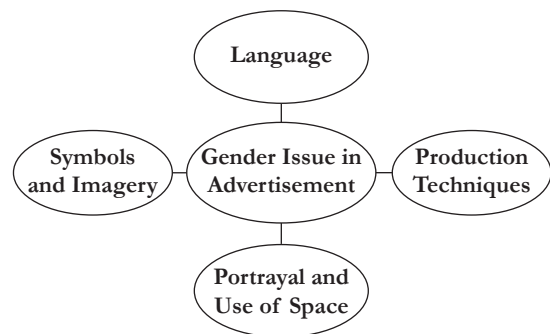

Figure 1: Gender equality framework for marketing and design of goods, adopted from Valiulis, O'Driscoll and Redmond (2007)
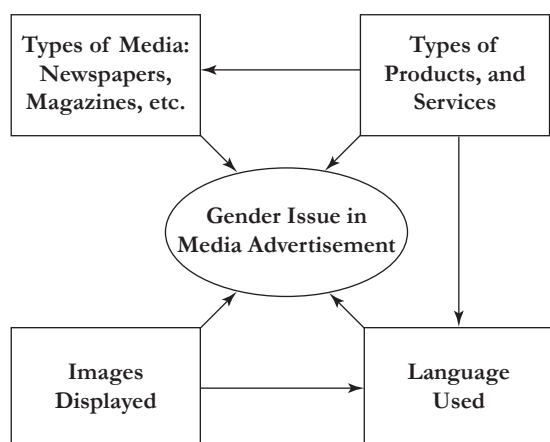

Figure 2: Gender issues – media advertisement model

According to Valiulis, O'Driscoll and Redmond (2007), the examination of gender equality issues in the mar-

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keting and advertising of products and services needs to encompass a series of related dimensions if it is to assess adequately the extent to which gender stereotyping is present in these strategies. Thus, the resultant model derived for this present study is presented in Figure 2.

From the Figure 2, it could be observed that language used, types of products and services, types of media and images displayed could individually play major roles respectively on gender issues in advertisements. In addition, types of products and services could affect the language used; images displayed may also influence language used; while type of media can also influence type of products and services. The main argument of this study is hinged and conceptualized on the fact that there is an appropriate gender role in the advertisement of goods and services; and advertisers should put into cognizance the type of media, products and services, images to display and language to be used to be able to attract their potential customers and increase their competitive advantage – as these factors may put off some potential customers, especially in Nigeria with a culture that does not welcome negative use of sex images and languages that may be offensive and gender biased.

3. Research methods

The study takes a content analysis form, and the population of interest in this study includes adverts placed on the media such as newspapers and magazines in Nigeria. It also includes all products and services. A convenient sampling was deployed to select three indigenous newspapers and two magazines in Nigeria. The three newspapers used for this study are the Tribune, Guardian and the Nation; the two magazines used are Ovation and City people. The newspapers adverts covered the period of one week from Monday August 25th to Sunday August 31st, 2014 and the magazine adverts covered the period of two weeks between Monday August 25th and Sunday September 7th, 2014. This wide gap was chosen for the magazines because issues were produced and published once in a week, while the newspaper is an everyday affair. In addition, 81 adverts were sampled purposively from the three newspapers and two magazines.

Variables of importance in this study are body exposures such as chest, thigh, buttocks, crotch, arms and legs; advert type such as whether the advert is a product which include home items or sanitary wares; or a service base or a corporate one; portrayal in the advert such as whether the advert portrayed the model as sex object or the model is portrayed as a house or homebound, or as a decorative item; gender which captures whether it is male model and how is he been used or a female and how is she been used, among others. Information and data obtained were analysed thematically through a content analysis with respect to the themes in the research questions. This involved the use of careful observation on the selected adverts in the newspapers and magazines used for this study. In addition, the observations obtained were subjected to and analysed qualitatively using frequency and percentage description.

4. Results and findings

The Table 1 summarises the determined distribution of gender used in advertisements in media. The results from Table 1 reveal that gender bias in advertisement occurs in media as over 53 % of the adverts placed on the newspaper and magazines are gender biased. In addition, gender bias in advertisement is more common in the newspaper (58.7 %) than in the magazines (45.7 %). This implies that gender bias in advertisement is more of an issue to recon with in newspaper than in the magazines. The kind of products and services featured with regards to gender difference in Nigeria media is presented in Figure 3.

Table 1: Gender bias in advertisement

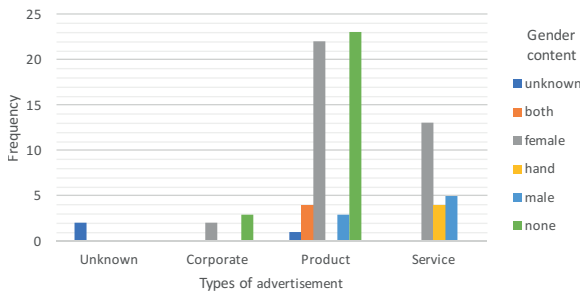| Gender bias | Place | | | | Total | |
| | Magazine | | Newspaper | | | |
	Frequency	Share (%)	Frequency	Share (%)	Frequency	Share (%)
Unknown	2	5.7	–	–	2	2.5
No	16	45.7	18	39.1	34	42.0
None	1	0.9	1	2.2	2	2.5
Yes	16	45.7	27	58.7	43	53.1
Total	35	100.0	46	100.0	81	100.0

Figure 3: Gender differences in advertisement type

The resulst in Figure 3 reveal that advertisements with female images were more observed in product and service oriented adverts while the males only participate in adverts that are service oriented. This implies that females partake more in both products and services oriented advertisement than the males.

The distribution of gender in advertisement and focus of advert is presented in Table 2. From Table 2, it can be observed that women were used in adverts related to both businesses and homes while males were used in adverts that are only related to businesses. This implies that women are more deployed in businesses and home related adverts than the men.

The categories of body images reveal by gender is presented in Table 3. The results in Table 3 show that body images of females in advertisement were more exposed than those of male. Female body parts revealed the most are their arms, thigh and chest, while for the males only their arms and legs were revealed.

The results in Table 4 document that the females were mostly used as sex object in the advertisement of home

Table 2: Gender in advertisement and focus of advert

| Focus | Gender content (frequency and percentage) | | | | | | Total |
	unknown	both	female	hand	male	none	
Unknown	2	–	–	–	–	–	2
	66.7 %	–	–	–	–	–	2.5 %
Business	1	4	26	4	8	25	68
	33.3 %	100.0 %	70.3 %	100.0 %	100. %	100.0 %	84.0 %
Home	–	–	11	–	–	–	11
	–	–	29.7 %	–	–	–	13.6 %
Total	3	4	37	4	8	25	81
	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %

Table 3: Categories of body images reveal with respect to gender

| Body images revealed | Image category (frequency and percentage) | | | | | | Total |
	unknown	both	female	hand	male	none	
Unknown	2	–	–	–	–	1	3
	66.7 %	–	–	–	–	4.0 %	3.7 %
Arms	–	–	8	–	–	–	8
	–	–	21.6 %	–	–	–	9.9 %
Arms, chest, leg	–	–	1	–	–	–	1
	–	–	2.7 %	–	–	–	1.2 %
Arms, legs	3	–	2	–	2	–	4
	100.0 %	–	5.4 %	–	25.0 %	–	4.9 %
Arms, thigh, legs	–	–	1	–	–	–	1
	–	–	2.7 %	–	–	–	1.2 %
Buttocks, back	–	–	1	–	–	–	1
	–	–	2.7 %	–	–	–	1.2 %
Chest	–	1	1	–	–	5	7
	–	25.0 %	2.7 %	–	–	20.0 %	8.6 %

Body images revealed	Image category (frequency and percentage)						Total
	unknown	both	female	hand	male	none	
Chest, arms	–	–	4	–	–	–	4
	–	–	10.8 %	–	–	–	4.9 %
Leg	–	–	4	–	1	2	7
	–	–	10.8 %	–	12.5 %	8.0 %	8.6 %
Stomach	–	–	1	–	–	–	1
	–	–	2.7 %	–	–	–	1.2 %
None	1	3	14	4	5	17	44
	33.3 %	75.0 %	37.8 %	100.0 %	62.5 %	68.0 %	54.3 %
Total	3	4	37	4	8	25	81
	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %

Table 4: Gender and how they are portraye

			Image category (frequency and percentage)						Total
			missing values	both	female	hand	male	none	
Corporate	Portrayal	None	–	–	2	–	–	3	5
			–	–	100.0 %	–	–	100.0 %	100.0 %
	Total		–	–	2	–	–	3	5
			–	–	100.0 %	–	–	100.0 %	100.0 %
Product	Portrayal	Unknown	–	–	–	–	–	4	4
			–	–	–	–	–	18.2 %	7.8 %
		Decorative	–	–	–	–	1	–	1
			–	–	–	–	33.3 %	–	2.0 %
		Homebound	–	–	11	–	1	–	12
			–	–	52.4 %	–	33.3 %	–	22.6 %
		Sex object	–	–	2	–	–	1	3
			–	–	9.6 %	–	–	4.5 %	5.9 %
		None	1	4	8	–	1	17	31
			100.0 %	100.0 %	38.1 %	–	33.3 %	77.3 %	60.8 %
	Total		1	4	21	–	3	22	51
			100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	–	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %
Service	Portrayal	Unknown	–	–	1	–	–	–	1
			–	–	7.1 %	–	–	–	4.3 %
		Decorative	–	–	3	–	–	–	3
			–	–	21.4 %	–	–	–	13.0 %
		General	–	–	1	–	–	–	1
			–	–	7.1 %	–	–	–	4.3 %
		Homebound	–	–	5	–	–	–	5
			–	–	35.7 %	–	–	–	21.7 %
		None	–	–	4	4	5	–	13
			–	–	28.6 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	–	56.5 %
	Total		–	–	14	4	5	–	23
			–	–	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	–	100.0 %

bound products (9.6 %); however, none was used as sex object in the advertisement for the corporate and service. This implies that home bound product advert deploy women as sex object in their advertisements.

The distribution of language used in advertisement is presented in Table 5. Based on the results in Table 5, language employed for advertisement were gender specific in 42 cases, which means that majority of the advertisement language (51,9 %) are gender specific to a particular gender type. Few were gender biased, and few adverts also used language that is gender equal. This implies that majority of the advertisement done in newspaper and magazines is addressing a particular and specific gender type, thus neglecting the other gender type. This could make the other gender frown at such advert because such neglected

gender may think that such advert wasn't meant for him or her. This can also reduce the potentials of such advert to attract potential customers which they are meant for.

Table 5: Language employed in the adverts

Language	Frequency	Share (%)
Missing values	26	32.1
Biased	2	2.5
Equality	3	3.7
Neutral	6	7.4
None	2	2.5
Specific	42	51.9
Total	81	100.0

5. Discussions of findings

The findings of this study revealed that gender bias in advertisement occurs in Nigeria media. In addition, gender bias in advertisement is more common in the newspapers than in the magazines. This supports the study of Yang (201, p. 9) that many media divide the public into female and male audience. Also, advertisements with female images were more observed in product and service oriented adverts while the males only participated in adverts that are service oriented. This implies that females partake more in both products and services oriented advertisement than the males. These could be because as stated by Mladenović, Vujović and Cigrovski (2010), almost every advertising agency employs both psychologists and sociologists who try to construct images and messages which the readers are more likely to accept. Results also revealed that women were used in adverts related to both businesses and homes while males were used in adverts that are only related to businesses. This implies that women are more deployed in businesses and home related adverts than the men.

Results from this study have shown that bodies or parts of the bodies of females in advertisement were more exposed than those of male. Female body parts revealed the most are their arms, thigh and chest, while for the males only their arms and legs were revealed. This bolsters the study of Iijima Hall and Crum (1994) that women are used as images of sex objects and decoration and that when women appear in these adverts, their body exposure are greater: women are portrayed in these commercials through shots of the chest, leg, buttock and crotch, whereas the men were always dressed in work clothes. The result of this study supports the findings of Asemah, Edegoh and Ojih (2013) that advertisers are culpable for the heightened body dissatisfaction amongst women, because they con-

stantly use sexy unrealistic images of ultra thin models, the depiction of women as sex objects and the frequent use of sex, to sell products. Furthermore, the study reinforced the works of Berger (1999), Ford, LaTour and Lundstrom (1991), and Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008) that women in particular, are often portrayed as sexual objects in advertising through their images.

According to findings of this study, the majority of language employed for advertisement are gender specific to a particular gender type. Few were gender biased, and few adverts also used language that respect gender equality. This implies that majority of the advertisement done in newspapers and magazines, being gender specific, addressing a particular and specific gender type thus neglecting the other gender type, with all the possible consequences discussed above.

Bringing into fore play the definition of advertising by Yang (2010) as a double stand with two major functions: to persuade potential customers, and to provide information to the potential customers, it shows that gender specific adverts may fail to perform these two functions. This bolstered the findings of Valiulis, O'Driscoll and Redmond (2007) that meaning produced through language is critical to developing an understanding of how language can be used to reinforce gender stereotypes. This also buttressed the work of Willemsen (1998) that the content and language of most advertisers and advert are often gender stereotypic. This could be because as stated by Smith (1985), Tannen (1991) and Coates (1993), women and men differ in the use of language.

The result of this study also buttressed the findings of Golzadeh et al. (2012) that gender is one of the main criteria to dividing any market, therefore, there is a need

to arrange combined marketing elements, such as advertising, regarding the existing differences between men and women for each part of the market. In addition, the findings of this study supports the work of Asemah, Edegoh and Ojih (2013) that although advertisers aimed at reaching all segments of the consuming public, their portrayal is not necessarily an accurate reflection of how society is composed, most of such adverts are skewed to one category of people such as gender, among others which forfeits the purpose of such advertisement.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

In conclusion, it is worth to highlight that:
- Gender bias occurs in media advertisement in Nigeria and it is more pronounced in newspaper than in the magazines.
- Females are more involved in both products and services oriented advertisement than the males.
- Women are used in advertisement related to both businesses and homes and are also used more as sex objects in specific advertisement while the males are mostly used in advertisements that are only related to businesses.
- Body images of females in advertisement were more exposed that those of male and the most revealed female body parts were the arms, thigh and chest, while for the males only their arms and legs were revealed.
- The majority of advertisement done in newspaper and magazines are gender specific, that is, they address particular and specific gender type thus neglecting the other gender type.

The study recommends that:
- Portrayal of a particular gender as sex object in advertisement should be addressed by the stakeholders of advertisement with respect to the culture of the area to which it is meant to cover.

- Advertising agencies should endeavor to make advertisements to be gender neutral; however, it is also important to put into cognizance the particular gender for which products are advertised for.
- In addition, advertising agencies should consider the society so that the exposure of body especially by women is curtail to maintain the society and cultural image and norms especially in the Nigerian culture.
- Furthermore, it is also important for the federal and states government of the nation to put in place policy (ies) to guide the use of media for advertisement in Nigeria.
- Also, it is important that organizations with products and services advertised seek professional advice before deploying and using any advertising agency and any media to advertise their product so that the advertisement can reach a wide range and elastic categories of people both home and abroad so that the intent of advertising such products and/or service would not be abated and relinquished.
- Organizations with products and services advertised and the advertising agencies should be aware and understand their potential customers so as not to put forth advertisement that may scare the potential users from making decision to buy the products or use the services advertised.

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