

**FEMALE MODELS IN ADVERTISING MESSAGES:
ASSESSMENT OF AUDIENCE PERCEPTIONS AND
RESPONSES AMONG SELECTED UNIVERSITY
UNDERGRADUATES IN SOUTHWEST ZONE OF NIGERIA.**

OJO, Titiloye Oyeyinka, Ph.D

Department of Mass Communication,
KolaDaisi University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

ADEKUNLE, R. Adekola Ph.D

Department of Business Administration,
Bells University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria.

ISHOLA, Aransiola James Ph.D,

Department of Business Administration,
KolaDaisi University, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Abstract

Nigerian youths are perhaps vulnerable victims of advertising messages. The manner in which the advertising agencies represent the image of female models in different advertising messages has called for criticisms from various quarters of human endeavours. The study investigated the perception of selected university undergraduates' on the activities of female models in advertising messages in Nigeria. The youths from the Southwest geographical zone of Nigeria formed the population for the study. The authors anchored the study on the Perception and Entertainment- education theories. The survey method, indepth-interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) designs were adopted in the data gathering process. One Hundred and fifty undergraduates participated in the study. Test of hypothesis was

conducted with the use of Pearson Moment Product Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. Findings suggest that female models in advertising messages are only carrying out their professional activities for self-gains and in so doing, promote gender identity. However, the qualitative data indicate that most undergraduates have negative perceptions about female models activities. The study concludes that female models' activities in advertising messages promote purchasing behaviours and influence product sales. The study recommends that there should be an extensive media literacy to change narrative on how advertising may misrepresent women.

Keywords: *Female Models, Advertising Messages, University Undergraduates, perceptions and responses, Assessment.*

INTRODUCTIONS

The key role of advertising is to impress and persuade consumers of products and services to buy or seek services in a bid to satisfy their needs. Advertising is a large industry that has become the leading communication platform that gives meaning to modern marketing (Baran, 2014). This is why most commercial organizations spend most of their annual marketing and promotion communication budgets on advertising (Nwosu, 2016). Today, consumers are experiencing advertisement clusters, thereby providing information and ideas to target audience(s) and consumers.

According to Negm and Tantawi (2015), this communication medium is a tool which many companies exercise to inform their prospective customers about their offerings, it is utilized to encourage, persuade or manipulate individuals. The world of advertising presents a world of fun and adventure where we triumph over everyday ups and downs. Through the use of imagery, the display of life-styles, advertising creates a pervasive and persuasive communication

environment that pursues to attract attention, inspire desires and impress consumers to act or response to the marketing communication messages that facilitating consumers' choices as well as educating people about the available products in the market (Koksal, 2013).

Advertising in every medium (radio except radio which has no visual feature), relies fairly on female models visual activities as well as their physique compartments used in presenting advertised products. Female models appearance naturally plays a significant role to allow attractiveness, trigger human interactions, affect consumers' perceptions and mindsets. Their postures and gesticulations dominate viewers affective and cognitive response to the communicated messages (Dominick & Rauch, 2014).

Courteney and Lockeretz (2011), admit that advertising efforts work best when members of the audience relate with people in advertisements such as celebrities, politicians, actors, athletes and others. The scholars noted that these models are used in different forms of advertisement especially as kitchen and bathroom product influencers thereby help in promoting personal hygiene and medical products. Thus, advertisements involving women could be seen from the forgoing as not subservience to African cultural values.

Female models in advertisements are often interpreted by members of the audience in various perspectives based on the perceptions of the audience (Rahila, 2013). A number of studies have examined these perceptions of how female models are portrayed in advertisements (Capenter & Edison, 2014; Adesina, 2018; Plakoyianaki & Zotos, 2009; Peck & Locker, 2014) respectively.

Since Nigeria is another developing nation where advertising is highly pervasive and is growing on fast speed currently, the need arises, however, to examine nature of audience perceptions on, and responses to female models in advertising messages. The study focuses on selected university undergraduates from the Southwest zone of Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do university undergraduate students perceive female models in advertising messages?
2. What kind of effect does the use of female models have on purchasing behaviour of university undergraduate students?
3. To what extent do female models influence product sales among university undergraduate students?

Research hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant relationship between female models' representation in advertisements and the purchasing behaviour of university undergraduate students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Advertising and the portrayal of female models

Advertising is one of the most important forms of modern social communication, though advertising is closely linked to its ideological economic functions which through the years become more important to manipulate social values and attitudes much more than to inform about products and services (Whipple & Courteney, 2015). Despite the fact that advertising sell images, values, goals, shape our attitudes and these attitudes shape our behaviours, Feminists, researchers and scholars have expressed concern about the roles portrayed by women in advertising.

Ewen (2018), states that women today are considerably more than flawless decorative object with great illusions created by make-up artists, photographers and photo retouches. Sandikci (1998), argues that women as a result of their age, social status and academic qualifications would be more critical and sensitive to gender advertising though their performances is usually based on their social-cultural differences. Female models affect consumer choices, cognitive appraisal and impact their perceptions.

Nowadays, there is a growing recognition in research that the female models are key marketing elements in triggering human interests and interactions. This is so because their messages and appearances are product magnet while educating audience(s) about the available materials in the market (Boddewyn, 2011). Advertising impacts consumers' views, stimulate product features and becomes so much more multifaceted in its efforts to use female models to attract attention and persuade consumers (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2012).

Despite numerous criticisms of female models' sex appeal roles in advertising messages (Goldman & Smith, 2011, Gould, 2014, Flick, 2018, Whittle & Courteney, 2015), scholars argue that advertisements showcase actors cutting across gender and demographic characteristics. Women, men and children are portrayed in different lights. Most importantly, appeal to the audience and subsequently persuade audience(s) to patronize a product or service. Female models have always been in the eyes of the storm as audience often see them as being used as sexual magnets (Rahila, 2013).

Kemp (2017) cited in Rahila (2013), observed that there are six popular portrayal of women in advertising messages, these include portrayal as domestic, obsessive, selfless nurturer, sex object, unattainable goddess, the fraught juggler and the bit part. Female models are used in advertising messages because of their ability to attract sexual interests of the audience though the attraction may be to a person looks, physical or other traits such as movements, voice, hair styles, erratic imagery, clothing, person adornments and many others are all utilized to draw audience attention to a particular product for the purpose of sales (Popoola, 2018). Shimp (2014), argues that when appropriately utilized, sexual content is capable of drawing attention, aiding recall and establishing comfortable relationship with the advertised product offers.

Belch and Belch (2017), observe that female models created a persuasive communication environment that enhances strong purchasing behaviours and improves sales of products through the use

of imagery, display of life-styles and messages. The female models natural endowment coupled with comportment and skills usually create an image that find a place to live in people's minds. Advertising is about gender while gender is part of its social structure that needs to do with consumers purchasing attitudes. Advertisers play on several tactics to get people interested in their products but the most popular and effective is using female models because of their role in playing upon the biological needs of every single human being.

Ethical Issues and the Female Models in Advertising Messages

Ethics could be defined as the branch of philosophy that deals with the moral component of human life (Day,1991). Odunewu (2000), sees ethics as the study of standards of conduct and moral judgement, the system or code of morals of a particular profession, of a group, religion and others. Stoner (2002), observes that ethics is the study of people rights and duties, the moral rules that people apply in making decisions and the nature of the relationships among people. It involves the evaluation and application of those moral values that a society or professional group has accepted as norms. Ethics is derived from the Greek word "Ethos" meaning character which holds society or a profession together or provides stability and security essential to professional cohesion (Barney, 1999).

Ethics includes three different related kinds; Meta ethics, normative ethics and Applied ethics. Meta ethics examines characteristics such as good, right, justice and fairness. It is also strive to identify those values that constitute proper moral values and making moral judgements. It is perhaps the vital link between theory and practice. Normative ethics is concerned with development of general theories, principles and rules of moral conduct. These are the signposts to bring moral order out of comatose and provide basis for ethical decision making. Applied ethics is tagged as the problem solving facet of moral philosophy because it derives it insights from meta ethics and normative ethics in addressing certain ethical issues.

Advertising has been charged with a number of ethical breaches, most of which focused on its apparent lack of societal cultural responsibilities. Touchman (2017) avers that advertising has serious consequences due to its pervasiveness stereotypical portrayals, manipulative and persuasive nature preoccupation with materialism. Frequent use of sex appeals and lack of beneficial information. Since 1970s till date, critics of female models in advertising have spoken out against the representations or portrayals of women in advertising. Profound issues cited most are the failure to reflect the changing roles of women, representation of professional women, women interacting on realistic basis only in relation to men and their families. Finally, depiction of women as sex workers in public sexual advertisements for a pool of products negatively portrayed women solely as stereotypically sex object.

Amidst the arrays of criticism, Nigerian Code of Advertising Practice (2015) issued a guideline on how female models shall be portrayed in advertisements; using female as models shall amongst others depict the females decently clothed in the minimum degree of clothing acceptable to all cultural sectors of the society, not ridicule females as sex object and be conscious of societal expectations of the sanctity of marriage as well as family standards and values. Wolf (2012), contends that women as sex appeals in advertising often is not appealing to viewers and may produce sexual obsessions and dissatisfaction. Other critics allege that female models in advertising induces people to buy products they do not need and leads them to a preoccupation with materialism.

The utilization of female models has significant ethical practice implications. The stereotypical representation of female models in advertisements could have negative effect on the self-confidence of women, thus, limit their future aspirations and expectations for equity in compensation (Plakoyiannaki & Zotos, 2018). According to the scholars, the use of females as decorative sexual objects reduces their liberty in society and contribute to their

depersonalization. Kilbourne (1999), observed that advertising has afflicted women with a range of problems including low self-esteem, binge drinking and domestic violence which arise from an attempt of women to adapt false self.

Critics further alleged that children incessant exposure to television advertisements can have strong influence on their sex role facilitated through attitude formation, cognitive development and socialization. Popoola (2018), argues that advertisers through their usage of sexual image and visuals tend to degrade one sex as against another and often portray women as brainless sex objects particularly in circumstances that warrants the use of imagery where not relevant to the subject of advertisement. Culturally, advertisements appeals that are not used in accordance with the audience type of culture often ineffective while those that are in congruent are more effective. Therefore, subculture representation usually determine meanings created from a specific advertisement appeals may systematically vary across groups of audience.

Boddewyn (2011) as cited in Veloutsou and Ahmed (2015), submit that in a culturally diverse world as this, the use of sex appeal may be of significant concern. For instance, Islamic countries disapprove all kinds of nudity or body display, including direct or indirect sexual references in advertisements while in Europe, France and United States of America, the use of female models or sex appeal is widely used and accepted. In line with the foregoing, what is appropriate in terms of sex appeal varies across countries, hence, what is acceptable in one country may not be in another cultures, religions and value systems. As some muslim nations are strictly forbidden nudity or reference to sexual display, also some Christian countries such as Spain, Ireland, Mexico, South Africa, Philippines and others have similar standards.

In addition, in some Middle Eastern countries, female models, sex and gender issues are abomination while sexually related products are difficult to advertise. By contrast, in other countries, standards on

sexually-oriented advertising are quite liberal but sometimes confusing. For instance, in France, advertisers can feature completely nude models in advertisements because their constitutions do not see sex as silly, thus, viewed as healthy and natural (Boddewyn, 2011). In a nutshell, advertising generally has fallen under more public scrutiny and sometimes public condemnation for what is generally considered as unethical practices. In spite of various regulations and restraints, there is still a need for a moral advertising, serving moral purposes and being worked by moral people. In order to fight the characteristics weaknesses of unethical practices and correct public condemnation, advertising industry must committedly develop the capabilities for positive moral and ethical objectives as well as prohibit any conduct that supports immorality, insensitivity and indignity. This is where ethics become imperative and necessary (Kayode,2007).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was anchored on the Perception Theory and the Entertainment-Education Theory.

The Perception Theory

The Perception Theory was propounded by B. Berelson and G. A. Steiner in 1964. The theory assumed that Mass Communicators want audiences to pay attention to their messages, learn and understand the message contents. Sometimes make appropriate changes in attitudes and beliefs or produce the desired behavioural responses. The theory informs us that the process of interpreting messages is complex and that these goals may be difficult to achieve. Perception is a complex process by which people select, organize and interpret sensory stimulation into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world, it involves learning, updating perspectives and interacting with the observed (Berelson & Steiner, 1964).

According to Lahiry (1991), research has identified two types of influences on our perception structural influences which come from

the physical aspects of the stimuli to which we are being exposed while functional influences are the psychological factors that influence perception and, therefore, introduce some subjectivity into the process. The process of perception works differently in different individuals, this could be as a result of different cultural backgrounds, different socializing environments, biological differences, different education levels and religious backgrounds.

All these factors can be collapse to one single factor which is experience, which means two people cannot perceive the world exactly the same way because of different experiences. Severin and Tankard (2001), state that selected perception is the approach applied to the tendency for people's perception to be influenced by wants, needs, attitudes and other psychological factors. This indicates that different people can react to the same message in very different ways and no communicator can assume that a message will have intended meaning for all receivers.

The Entertainment-Education Theory

The Entertainment-education theory was propounded by Fischer and Melnik in 1979. The propositions of the theory is that Mass media messages or programmes must either be entertaining educational in nature. The principle is that the process of the media message towards entertainment and education is to increase audience members' knowledge about social and education issues by creating favourable attitudes and change overt behaviours toward media messages.

The entertainment-education Theory can as well as serve as a social mobilizer, an advocate or influencer for social change or interests. The theory assumed that audience members determines what information will be noticed and processed to help individuals organize or evaluate media messages that fit into the audience(s) established perceptions. It also helps audience to solve their messages problems, go beyond the immediate information, and even fill in missing

messages. Traber (1984), notes that the people are overwhelmed by too much messages, so the theory serves as processing mechanism to help them pull out the messages they want to relate with.

METHOD

The research is an audience perception study hinged on both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This study utilized survey method with questionnaire as instrument, structure in-depth interview with interview guide as instrument and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Focus Group Discussion guide as instrument, respectively. Survey is a quantitative method that measures opinions, positions, preferences or practices of a specified public by the use of tables, percentages, charts, histogram and other relevant tools. Responses of the public are tabulated to a standardized series of questions to assess the public's actions and opinions (Rauf, 2006). It is a quantitative method that is based on measurement especially it offers a very high degree of predictability, as it is easier to generalize from results of the study to make predictions about larger population from which the sample was drawn.

Interview is one of the most common data-gathering techniques for qualitative research and is valuable because they enable researchers to obtain information that cannot be gathered through observation. It helps to access experiential or subjective realities (Lindlof, 1995). Meanwhile, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) methodology involves an in-depth discussion with a carefully selected group of people in a relaxed atmosphere about a topic of interest to the researcher in order to gain an insight into the issue under discussion. It utilizes a trained moderator who uses open-ended, follow –up and probing questions to gather information from a small group of participants' attitudes, opinions and behaviours to understand motivations, feelings and reactions (McCombs, 2000). The adoption of these methods are in congruent with the study's intention of assessing audience perceptions and responses.

Respondents were selected using simple random sampling approach to select university undergraduates from the selected universities- university of Ibadan (Public) and KolaDaisi University (Private)- situated in Ibadan respectively. The sample size of 150 was drawn from the population of 26, 956 undergraduates from the selected universities. According to the students record available to the researchers from the selected universities registries, University of Ibadan has 26,684 students while KolaDaisi University has 272 students totaling 26, 956. 100 students across all levels were selected from the University of Ibadan using Simple random sampling technique which gives equal chance of selection to each student while 50 students were also selected from KolaDaisi University utilizing same sampling method. Purposive sampling technique was also adopted to select the two selected universities. Data collection was carried out through the administration, Questionnaire, Interview guide and Focus Group Discussion guide. Interviews were conducted on a face-to-face interactions while the FGDs were conducted on a sample of 10 discussants selected from each campus on their respective campuses.

In this study, the data collected was analyzed using the mixed method approaches. Descriptive Statistics was adopted to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire while responses obtained from the interview and FGD were transcribed from the recorded tape and the qualitative analysis carried out in line with the research questions. Also, responses obtained from the questionnaire were coded using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21 software. Data was presented in tables, percentages, values and frequencies. Test of hypothesis was carried out using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and the level of significance for the hypothesis was set at 0.05 Level.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND PRESENTATION

This data presented in this section are those related to the demographic characteristics of the respondents involved in the survey and those that need to do with the research questions and the test of hypothesis.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents on how the selected university undergraduates perceived female models in advertising messages.

Table value	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Demonstration of professional callings for personal gains	1	60	46.2%
Promotion of gender identity	2	32	25.0%
Potentially debilitating portrayals	3	18	14.0%
Negative profiling	4	20	15.3%
		130	100%

Source: Field survey, 2020

The table above indicates that 60 respondents with 46.% ticked strongly agreed that the female models are demonstrating their professional callings for personal gains anytime they are featured in advertising messages, 32 respondents with 25.0% noted that the female models are only promoting gender identity each time they appear in advertising messages, 18 respondents with 14.0% collectively concurred to fact that the female models enjoy potentially debilitating portrayals from the audience when they appear in

advertising messages while 20 respondents with 15.3% unanimously condemned the female models actions as negative respectively.

Table 6: Do the female models have any effect on the selected university undergraduates purchasing behaviours?

Table value	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	1	98	75.3%
No	2	30	23.1%
Others (Specify)		2	2.0%
		130	100%

Source: Field survey, 2020

The above table shows 98 respondents with 75.3% were strongly agreed that the female models have strong effects on the selected university undergraduates purchasing behaviours, 30 respondents with 23.1% said “NO” to the statement, 2 respondents fell into the others specified respectively.

Table 7: Perceived reasons for female models in advertising

Table value	Value	Frequency	Percentage
They are endowed with natural persuasive attributes	1	39	30.0%
They are appealing, intuitive and emotional in nature	2	35	27.0%
Their comportments and spoken intonations are amazing	3	27	21.0%
Beautiful appearances	4	29	22.3%
		130	100%

Source: Field survey, 2020

The table 7 indicates that 39 respondents with 30.0% were strongly agreed that the female models are endowed with natural persuasive attributes, 35 respondents with 27.0% described them as being appealing, intuitive and emotional in nature, 27 respondents with 21.0% stated that the female models comportments and spoken intonation are usually amazing while 29 respondents were strongly established that their appearances in terms of clothing are always beautiful.

Table 8: To what extent has the female models influenced product sales among the selected university undergraduates?

Table value	Value	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	1	66	50.8%
High	2	32	25.0%
Average	3	27	20.8%
Neutral	4	5	4.0%
		130	100%

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 8 shows that 66 respondents with 50.8% were strongly agreed with “Very high” that the female models influenced product sales among the selected university undergraduates, 32 respondents with 25.0% ticked “High” that the female models encourage product sales, 27 respondents with 20.8% selected “Average” while 5 respondents with 4.0% stood neutral with the motion respectively.

Test of hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between female models in advertising messages and the purchasing behaviours of the selected university undergraduates.

Table 9 Pearson’s Correlations for the significant Relationship between Female models in advertising messages and Purchasing behaviours of the selected University undergraduates

		Female models in advertising messages	Purchasing behaviours of the selected University undergraduates
Female models in advertising messages	Pearson’s correlation	1	0.48
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.22
	N	130	130
	Pearson Correlation	0.48	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.22	
	N	130	130

Source: Field survey, 2020

The result of the correlation test presented in the table 9 shows that the first null hypothesis is hereby rejected. This is because the probability value is less than the present value of significance [$r=0.48, p=0.022 < 0.05$]. This implies that the hypothesis is negated to mean that there is a significant relationship between the female models in advertising messages and the purchasing behaviours of the selected university undergraduates. The relationship is an indication of a very high influence of female models on the purchasing activities of the selected university undergraduates.

Pearson Correlation (r) showing the relationship between female models in advertising messages and the purchasing behaviours

of the selected university undergraduates. From the above table, Pearson correlation (r) is 0.982 which indicate a strong positive relationship and influence between the female models in advertising messages and the purchasing behaviours of the selected university undergraduates. The correlation is only significant at 0.05 or 5% level of Significance.

From the above table our P-value is 0.01 while the alpha value is 0.05 the p-value ($0.001 < \alpha$ value [0.05]). We, therefore, fail to accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is relative significant between female models in advertising messages and the purchasing behaviours of the selected university undergraduates. Having examined the research hypothesis using the Pearson Moment Product Correlation, the results of hypothesis one indicated that there is relative significant between female models in advertising messages and the purchasing behaviours of the selected university undergraduates. This is evident also from the responses of the respondents to the survey instrument.

Data from Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The selected university undergraduates were gathered for the Focus Group Discussion as earlier planned in this study. The discussion was tailored towards the research questions raised in the study. Responses obtained from this exercise were **transcribed** from the recorded tape organized into **themes** relevant to the research questions. Below are findings arising from the qualitative aspect of this study;

Research Question One: How do university undergraduate students perceive female models in advertising messages?

As a professional

Findings arising from the FGD showed that the youths unanimously agreed that female models are demonstrating their

professional callings each time they are found in the advertisements. They said that their activities in the advertising messages do not depict their natural self in the real sense of it.

Stereotypical Portrayal

Findings from the discussion revealed that female models are often tainted by stereotypical portrayals by audience who are majorly from religion sects and those that are culturally inclined and sensitive. According to them, these people had no changing view about the activities of the female models in advertising messages and did not investigate the true situations concerning the true picture of the female model activities in advertising messages.

Research Question Two: What kind of effect does the use of female models have on purchasing behaviour of university undergraduate students?

Positive persuasive attributes

The discussion participants generally agreed that female models activities in advertising messages are tend to be positive because of their persuasive attributes such as luring looking, enticing physique, good spoken accents, amazing compartments and elegance appearances. All these attributes encourage and enhance purchasing behaviours of the selected youths.

Negativity

Minority of the discussants stated that female models to a large extent encourage societal immorality, a rape of cultural antecedents and embodiment of bad influence to the upcomings. They claimed that their activities in the advertising messages reflected their true situation of their real natural self. This indicate that the minority of the participants perceived female models negatively as a result of their mode of dressing(Nude dressing) and other immoral actions.

Question Three: To what extent do female models influence product sales among university undergraduate students?

The discussants generally had the view that the influence of the female models in the advertising messages was very high and they observed that the female models activities in the advertising messages usually have predominant positive influence on product sales due to their female outlook. They cited fascinating appearances, structured physique, polish language intonations amongst others. The participants also agreed unanimously that the female models usually focused on audience persuasion while displaying chosen professionalism.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the research question one on how university undergraduates perceive female models in advertising messages, the survey showed that majority of the respondents strongly agree that female models were demonstrating their professional roles each time they engaged themselves in advertising messages [Table 1]. However, a few other believe that the activities of the female models was to only promote gender identity. This outcome was corroborated by the the FGD and interview data which suggest the demonstration of professionalism and promotion of gender identity as the roles of female models in advertising.

For research question two, findings showed that majority see the female models' activities in the advertising messages as having positive effects on university undergraduate students' purchasing behaviour. Some of the factors that the respondents indicated that influence purchasing behaviour include: (a) female models were endowed with natural persuasive attributes, (b) female models were blessed with appealing, intuitive and emotional attributes. These outcomes conform with the interview and FGD data.

In respect to research question three, majority strongly agreed that the influence of female models' activities in advertising messages

in product sales is very high. However, the data from the FGD and interview suggest otherwise.

CONCLUSION

In today's digital and aggressive marketing of Nigerian business terrain, advertising seems to be tailored for specific marketing communication techniques that symbolizes significant means by which business world keep in touch with their existing and prospective customers. It is the current force with relevant media technology to lure customers especially with the advent of internet. Serious minded establishments have confirmed that effective dissemination of information about their products and services is an enormous success factor, advertising has proven to be a vibrant weapon for the spread of such needed information. Nigerian audience usually perceive and interpret the images or representations of female models in advertising messages differently, some perceive them in positive manner while others are not. It is on this premise that this study investigated the activities of female models in advertising messages with an assessment of audience(s) perceptions and responses.

The study revealed that female models in advertising messages are only carrying out their professional callings for personal gains, and even in the process promote gender identity. The study also found out that some spoonful number of the respondents described their activities as being negative and against the tenet of morality and cultural nuances. Yet, the study confirmed from the majority of the respondents, interviewees and Focus Group discussants that their activities encourage purchasing behaviours and influence product sales.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above and in line with the research findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government through her various advertising industry's regulators should step up actions in the moderation of advertising messages which complement or reinforce pictorial elements of advertisements
2. Advertising providers must ensure quality, moderate and effective service delivery in forms of messages or actions capable of satisfying audience(s) moral and social judgments.
3. There should be an extensive media literacy to change the discourse and culture that are likely to denigrate women into audience negative portrayals in advertising messages.

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