

Advertising and Gender Issues in Nigeria: Between Ethics and Socio-Cultural Sentiments

Steven Anu' Adesemoye¹, Ramson Oloche Acheme², Haruna Mohammed Salisu³

¹Department of Mass Communication, College of Applied Social Sciences (CASS), Lagos State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH)

²Department of Mass Communication, Caleb University, Imota, Lagos

³Indiana University, Bloomington, USA

Email: adesemoye.a@lasustech.edu.ng, ramson.acheme@calebuniversity.edu, harunababale@gmail.com

Abstract:

One of the roles advertising plays in society is mirroring the sociocultural values and norms of the people; it blends the target audience's cultural practice with the features of a product. This appeal is based on findings from sociologists that people held their culture dearly and would patronize any product which aligns with their cultural identity and norms. Modern-day Nigerian advertising scene has witnessed many advertisements which have explored our cultural norms to the pleasure of many, however, recent advertisement copies have attracted criticisms and backlash after featuring some cultural practices in the line of gender portrayal. The telecommunication advertisement of MTN titled 'Mama na Boy' was not only met with heavy criticism but was instantly ordered to be scrapped by the Advertising Practitioner Council of Nigeria. Following the backlash by local Women's rights activists, the advertisement became a topical and controversial issue in Nigeria. Scholars, observers, and human rights movements all debated the issue and its implications on our society. What many did not consider is if the advertisement violated our indigenous norms of gender roles and cultural practices. This study observed that public discourse largely influences ethical issues and takes precedence over professional considerations. In our contemporary society, where consumers/audiences have taken to more active role in media content, it has become an enormous task for ARCON to professionally regulate the content of advertising copies since public criticisms are often done out of sentiment. The concern of this study is asking if ARCON will be allowed to do its job without being affected by public sentiment. The public rhetorics may sound fair and ideal but they often fail to see facts as they were. The recent Olympic games in Asia have revealed that gender inequality is not a man-made issue but a biological phenomenon. A male athlete at the 2019 Olympic games who overran the female racer on the track has also sparked criticism by the general public, but this time it wasn't an advert portrayal but a real-life scenario. This study engages in critical discourse upon this background, using the Benevolent Sexism and Perception theories as a backdrop.

Keywords:

Backlash, culture, criticism, regulations, sentiment, activism

I. Introduction

One of the roles advertising plays in society is mirroring the sociocultural values and norms of the people, it blends the target audience's cultural practice with features of a product. This appeal is based on findings from sociologists of what people dearly held as their culture and would patronize any product which aligns with their cultural identity and norms. The modern-day Nigerian advertising scene has witnessed many advertisements which have explored our cultural norms to the pleasure of many, however, recent advertisement copies have attracted criticisms and backlash after featuring some cultural practices in the line of gender portrayal. The

telecommunication advertisement of MTN titled 'Mama na Boy' was not only met with heavy criticism but was instantly ordered to be scrapped by the Advertising Practitioner Council of Nigeria. Following the backlash by local Women's rights activists, the advertisement became a topical and controversial issue in Nigeria. Scholars, observers, and human rights movements all debated the issue and its implications on our society. What many did not consider is whether the advertisement violated our indigenous norms of gender roles and cultural practices. This study observed that public discourse largely influences ethical issues and take precedence over professional considerations.

In our contemporary society, where consumers/audiences have taken to more active role in media content, it has become a massive task for APCON (now renamed Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria- ARCON) to professionally regulate the content of advertising copies since public criticisms are often done out of sentiment. With this trend of castigating advertisements even without examining the cultural background of the storyline, will APCON be allowed to do its job without being affected by public sentiment? The public rhetorics may sound fair and ideal but they often fail to see facts as they were (Kendall, 2024; Vanhuele, 2024). Are public outcry always right, and are issues argued against in the public platform always right from the masses' viewpoint? Would the general public seek informed opinions from authorities on matters before taking to mass protest? Through logical reasoning and research, Couture and Owen (2025) observed and proved that mass sentiment could be propelled by a few opinion leaders or influencers who have personal opinions about public affairs (for example, step-flow theory, Baran 2012: 355) and such personal opinion may be from a biased or extreme point of view.

That a group of people protest or cry foul does not mean they are right; facts discovered by experts may prove the protesters are wrong in their cause. For example, the recent Olympic games in Asia have revealed that gender inequality is not a man-made issue but a biological phenomenon. A male athlete at the 2019 Olympic games who overran the female racer on the track has also sparked criticism by the general public, but this time it wasn't an advert portrayal but a real-life scenario (Sanchez, 2019; Nelson, 2024; Whisenant, Pedersen & Obenour, 2002;). Upon this background this study engages in critical discourse to examine the sociocultural practice in our society, as against advertising ethical practice.

II. Review of Literatures

Advertising may have faced a barrage of criticism from both scholars and practitioners, but one important element they cannot deny is the fact that products and services that embark on advertisement are more successful in the market. This is because advertising creates a lot of awareness and grabs attention (Parameswaran, 2025; Callihan, 2022). Bardi (2011:71) wrote that advertising is pervasive and encourages consumers to patronize a product while telling them the reason why they should do so. Reuben-Oke (2013:96) believes that advertising concerns all the ideas, processes, methods or ways someone can make known to somebody the presence of a product or service which has a sales value. He added that advertising touches on society as an instrument of social marketing and social interaction. It is the view of Martin, Schwarz and Turner (2024) that, being an offshoot of social, economic and commercial development of society, advertising followed the expansion in population and the industrial revolution which led to urban societies. Mass production and mass consumption in urban societies were only made easy through advertising. Though advertising in crude forms was practised thousands of years ago in different civilizations, advertising was a major industry that emerged in the 20th century,

shortly after the Industrial Revolution. Today, the industry employs hundreds of thousands of people and influences billions of people's behaviour and buying habits (Robbs, 2009).

Advertising is so pervasive in our modern world (especially in urban cities) that an average person may encounter five hundred to one thousand advertisements in a single day (Arens, 2013). Advertisements are widely used to promote products, services, causes, parties, ideologies, ideals etc., through media like television, radio, newspaper magazines, billboards, posters, souvenirs, the internet, and transit media. Through, television (terrestrial and cable TV), movies, video games, cinemas and the Internet, advertising cut through distance barriers and has increasingly become an international industry. Roberts (2016) explains that advertising has transcended into a multi-billion naira industry contributing to governments' revenues worldwide. Aside from being a money-spinning, advertising has an important effect on a country's economy, as well as on the social, cultural, and political systems (Vitalis et al., 2022). It positively impacts the economy because it stimulates demand for products and services, strengthening the economy by promoting the sale of services and goods. It has been revealed that the increase in sales volume enables companies to produce individual units at lower costs and sell them at lower prices (Yadav, 2020).

Scholars believe that advertising has a significant social impact by helping sustain mass communications media and making them relatively inexpensive, if not free, to the public (Iwasaki, Kudo, Tremblay & Tremblay, 2008; Robbs, 2009; Madpenguine, 2025). Though Nigerian media houses may not want to disclose what they earn from political institutions (parties, candidates, electoral commissions), it is glaring that they make massive profits from the industry and that advertising is a major component of the political process. Huge campaign budgets are being made by politicians in the course of their electioneering process to reach their target audiences (the electorates/constituents members). There is no doubt that political advertising enables candidates to convey their positions on important issues and to acquaint voters with their accomplishments and personalities (Kamisar, 2024; Vandewalker, Petry, Glavin & Buckley, 2025; Bustilo, 2023; Wright, 2023). Today, many advertising overrides cultural differences and contribute to positive thinking.

However, scholars and concerned groups have expressed worry that advertising can have a harmful influence on culture and cultural values. Considering the economic harm that can be done to developing nations by advertising that fosters consumerism and destructive patterns of consumption. The ripple effect is also causing harm or cultural injury to these nations and their peoples by advertising content and methods, reflecting those prevalent in the first world, are at war with sound traditional values in indigenous cultures (Maikaba & Msughter, 2019; Retailing.Education, 2024; Torres, 2020; Stafford & Pounders, 2021). Today this kind of domination and manipulation via media rightly is a concern of developing nations in relation to developed ones. The indirect but powerful influence exerted by advertising upon the media of social communications that depend on revenues from this source points to another sort of cultural concern (Kurfi et al., 2023). In the competition to attract ever larger audiences and deliver them to advertisers, communicators can find themselves tempted, in fact, pressured, subtly or not so subtly, to set aside high artistic and moral standards and lapse into superficiality, flamboyance and moral squalor (Hasan, 2013 165).

Communicators also can find themselves tempted to ignore the educational and social needs of specific segments of the audience, like young people, old people, the poor etc., who do not match the demographic patterns (age, education, income, habits of buying and consuming, etc.) of the kinds of audiences advertisers want to reach (Stafford & Pounders, 2021). In this

way, the tone and, indeed, the level of moral responsibility of the communications media in general are lowered. All too often, advertising contributes to the unfair stereotyping of particular groups that places them at a disadvantage in relation to others. This often is true of the way advertising treats women; and the exploitation of women, both in and by advertising, is a frequent, deplorable abuse. How often are they treated not as persons with inviolable dignity but as objects whose purpose is to satisfy others' appetite for pleasure or for power? How often is the woman's role as wife and mother undervalued or even ridiculed (Foley & Pastore, as cited by Hasan, 2013 :)?

III. Results and Discussion

3.1 Are Ethical Issues in Advertising about Truth or Motivated by Sentiment?

Victoria Bailey (2018) stated in her article that Truth in advertising can sometimes seem like an oxymoron. Companies want to convince consumers to buy their products, which naturally makes them reluctant to reveal any negative aspects of their brands. The Federal Trade Commission (the United States FTC) requires that all advertising be truthful and not misleading. Yet, companies have unethically skirted around the truth in the past with many products such as tobacco products, alcohol and over-the-counter drugs. While companies follow the letter of the law in most cases, some brands still use questionable ethics and skip major issues by emphasizing specific facts about their products while downplaying others. Although marketing to a select niche can be helpful for companies, sometimes marketing communication can come across as stereotypical and even offensive. Examples of this range from sexism to racism and can often trigger a backlash from a company's target market. Sexual advertising is often seen as distasteful to women and demeaning to young women's self-esteem (Hoey, 2018; Gender. study, 2024). Stereotyping in marketing can leave people feeling insecure about themselves or a specific classification or minority group with which they are labelled.

Ahmed (2018) wrote that Ethical advertising focuses on the truth. The FTC (the United States Federal Trade Commission) enforces truth-in-advertising laws, which dictate that advertisements must be truthful and not misleading, and cannot be unfair. Our own APCON also promotes this concept of truth as it relates to our business world. This applies to any advertisement regardless of where it appears, be it television, radio, print, online, billboard or other locations. But then, how do we conclude on matters of truth? As we learn from philosophy, truth is relative, and it is a concept with variant interpretations (Philodive, 2023; Raatikainen, 2021; Msughter et al., 2021). We have seen over the years how people and groups argue over what is true about a particular idea, principle, and action. Though popular views may become dominant in some spheres or among some circles, it doesn't mean it should be the same for everyone. For example, there have been two schools of thought on marketing and profit-making – the ethicists and the egoists. These two sides are neither right nor wrong, it depends on the viewpoint of people on a particular matter.

‘Ethicists’ (are the scholars arguing that better moral outcomes can be reached via ‘the embodiment of the maxims of moral philosophy within management theory’.)

Versus

‘Egoists’ (those who profess Adam Smith’s view that the pursuit of different forms of ‘self-interest’ will eventually lean towards the best, or least worst, of moral consequences in economic situations.)

These schools of thought cited above are neither wrong nor right, from an ethical point of view, the effect is what matters. When Nigerian women's rights activists took to the streets to protest against the MTN 2003 advertisement popularly known as 'mama na boy', it wasn't about the false presentation of fact but clearly a sentiment-motivated reaction. When viewed critically, the narrative of the advertisement in question did not make a direct comparison with any gender, it celebrated a child with regard to most cultural practices in southeast, south-south and other parts of Nigeria. Sentiment is often triggered and fueled by emotion. When critically considered, emotion has a cultural element. A common definition given from a professional point of view reads that; emotion is a state of arousal involving facial and bodily changes, brain activation, cognitive appraisals, subjective feelings, and tendencies toward action, all shaped by cultural rules (Wade & Tarvris, 2006: 286). It is glaring that our cultural norms and values have given way to foreign cultures. These symptoms of cultural imperialism are blindly and wrongly copied by our self-styled feminists. They turned against our practices and judged our ways with Western values. The advertisement, which attracted backlash from our own people, has in no way violated the apcon ethical guidelines, but the critics hide under Western-style feminism without fully grasping the message of the advert.



Figure 1. The criticized MTN commercial 'Mama na boy', was it ethically or culturally wrong?

Even in 2019 some Nigerians still took to online media to argue the sensitivity of the advertisement. The argument online is somewhat balanced, compared to the one-sided fierce argument made by the right activists. After a critical review of the ad, some have come to face the fact that the narrative wasn't exactly the way right activists portrayed it. Emotional reactions cluttered the facts from people. The demonstration of subjective feelings by the critics focused people's attention on irrelevant things, they overlooked the ethical codes (which were not violated in the advert) by directing people's minds to mundane arguments. However, some individuals disapprove of the popular notion that advertisers rely on stereotypes because it's easier for them. A social influencer and columnist Angela Epstein sees stereotype issues as people becoming overly sensitive. She believes that people's attention should be channelled on more critical issues like domestic violence. Sexual harassment and other burning issues. Some

significant questions we must find answers to include; will the critics of advertising always have their way? Are they always right in the first place?

3.2 Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is hinged on two theories: Benevolent Sexism and Perception. These two sociological paradigms attempt to explain how people perceive and respond to women's issues in society. We hereby examine them in relation to our discourse.

a. Benevolent Sexism

Though Benevolent Sexism is not a recognised theory in the field of mass communication, the theory directs us to the root cause of how sexism operates. Benevolent sexism theory is a sociological paradigm and has explanatory power, as we shall see here. Joseph Healey (2006:99), in his attempt to relate prejudice with sexism, examined the two concepts from a scholarly point of view. Healey identified two kinds of sexism, Hostile Sexism (HS) and Benevolent Sexism (BS). He explained that Hostile Sexism is more like anti-minority group prejudice and incorporates negative attitudes and emotions about women. The implication of this is that a person who ranks high on HS maintains negative stereotypes (i.e. women might be seen as incompetent, inferior, or “flighty”) and negative emotions (contempt and disdain, for example).

On the other hand, Healey explains that Benevolent Sexism (BS) is in contrast to HS – as it might be expressed as an apparently positive attitude of protection and affection. It is given that a person who ranks high on BS might see women as “wonderful”, and “pure creatures” who are to be placed on pedestals and protected (Glick et al, 2000 as cited by Healey, 2006:99). Healey concluded that like racial and prejudice, both HS and BS promote stereotypical views of women and serve to justify and rationalize their lower status. What can be deduced from this submission is that the Nigerian groups who publicly criticized the MTN infamous advertisement ‘Mama na boy’ and the critics of the recent Olympics athletes are as well sexists as the group they criticized. Sexism/gender equality proponents are sexist but would not admit or fail to realise it because they are too emotional to consider every side of the argument.

b. Perception Theory

This theory was propounded by B. Berelson and G.A Steine in 1964. They state that perception is the complex process by which people select, organize and interpret sensory stimulation into a meaningful and coherent world picture. It involves updating, perspective and interacting with the observed. Hasan (2013:166) explains that perception also implies the tendencies of media audience members to perceive and misinterpret persuasive messages in accordance with their predispositions. In her effort to explain the cognitive theories of selective perception and selective retention, she cited Joseph Klapper, who clarified that retention occurs when a person who has been exposed to a communication a few minutes before, presents a distorted or incomplete report of its contents. One fact deduced from the protesters against the unpopular MTN advert is that most of them only concluded from the advert narrative, they deduced from their past experiences that the storyline regarded the female child as less important. Whereas in the narrative or storyline, nothing of such was directly or indirectly, suggested, neither does it insinuate anything like that. The advertisement explored the cultural appeal of the people, as we shall see from the analysis hereunder.

3.3 Gender Issues; Natural or Man-Made?

While the debate for women's equality is gaining ground in all spheres of life, humanity seems to be losing touch with reality. At the mention of women as being weaker sex or playing a subordinate role to their male counterparts, liberalists flair up and cry male chauvinism and sexism! It is no longer safe to utter comments about a woman is unable to do something like her male counterpart (Stoeffel, 2014; Herre, 2024; Lederer, 2025; Ullen, 2024). Movies, programmes and advertisements are heavily criticized and forced to be banned whenever words or gestures imply a physical or mental weakness of a woman. People could boycott a product whenever women-related issues come up in media advertising. In recent times, we have seen bans on adverts, which some people consider harmful gender stereotypes. These adverts may be offensive and may cause serious widespread offences in society. Things get intense on the advertising scene to the point the United Kingdom regulatory body, Advertising Standard Authority (ASA) made new rules sometime this year (June 2019) to review gender stereotyping in adverts (www.bbc.com, 2019). The ASA believes that some advert portrayals could play a part in limiting people's potential. According to the chief executive of the body, Guy Parker, evidence shows how harmful gender stereotypes in ads can contribute to inequality in society.

One could not but worry why some of these issues are being overly blown up. Over the years, we have seen advertisements that portray men and women in different habits, professions, rules, and dressings, and they are all considered normal. The advertising practitioners and agencies are also humans who live with the larger society (Mosopefoluwa et al., 2024). They carefully researched their product and target audience before planning ad messages and campaigns. Most campaign messages were drawn from findings about their target audience for instance, it was discovered that children could compel or influence their parents to buy certain products, so some adverts are designed and targeted at children by appealing to their senses. While this is not bad, critics have raised concerns. Gender issues in advertising are more debated than other concerns especially when it involves women's physical or mental qualities. This will take us to reviewing sex and gender issues and how they affect advertising.

3.4 Gender and Sex; A Biological Phenomenon Viewed Socially

While gender and sex are two different concepts, people often treat both carelessly. This lack of insight into the two concepts is a significant contribution to social issues. Gender and sex issues have always been blown out of proportion whenever there is an event pertaining to a woman. It is quite true that women have suffered discrimination of all kinds and people are joining forces to change the wrong perception about them. But the struggle and fight for women's equality often take a one-sided, unreasonable, or extreme view. Such misconceptions are embedded in peoples' inability to properly examine issues before reacting. Social issues which are often taken at face value, frequently end in unhealthy and fierce arguments which cause damage to some sides. Psychologists and sociologists have clearly proven that gender and sex are two misunderstood concepts, but people are not paying attention (Newman, 2023; Pichardo, 2023; Clements, 2023).

Advertising, being a profession which applies principles and findings of social science courses like sociology and psychology, engages in field study before and during creating ad copies. Professionals painstakingly took time and spent resources to research a product's DNA and find out the qualities of the target groups in order to create effective messages that would appeal to them. The appeal used in advertising copies is generated from the attribute of the people the message is targeted at. If a message depicts a woman doing home chores, it means women in that region regularly engage in home chores, it's not what the advertiser felt but what they observed about the sociocultural practices of the target audience. The media reinforcement

theory made it clear that the mass media only reinforces what the people have seen and know (Msughter et al., 2023). The reinforcement theory's key assertion is that the primary influence of media is to reinforce (not change) existing attitudes and behaviours (Baran and Davis, 2012: 192-193).

From a close view of the gender debate, it is clear these are all human constructs misunderstood and wrongly applied by many people. The laymen often use terms and words carelessly, not minding the implications of what they say or do. Wrongly applied terminologies will always result in serious issues among people in society. Gender and sex are two terms which have often triggered arguments and caused damage. According to scholars, these terms mean different things. Macionis (2005:223) wrote that differences in the body set females and males apart. Right from birth, the two sexes have different primary sex characteristics, namely, the genitals, and organs used for reproduction. Science has proved that the human gene (gene- the functional unit of heredity; they are composed of DNA and specify the structure of proteins, Wade & Tavis 2006:70), makes up human traits. Rathus (1998: 70) assert that the father's genetic contribution, not the mother's, determines the sex of the offspring. Sex is purely a biological process, and no amount of protest will change this natural phenomenon.

Since people cannot dispute biological phenomena like this, they probe gender to make issues out of it. Macionis (2005:223) describes gender as a dimension of culture that refers to the personal traits and patterns of behaviour (including social opportunities and privileges) that a culture attaches to being female or male. In an attempt to distinguish the two, Macionis wrote that sex is a biological distinction that develops prior to birth and that gender is the meaning that society attaches to being female or male. Both psychologists and sociologists agree that there are some physical and cognitive differences between males and females. There are areas the women outperform their male counterparts and vice versa. The physical and mental qualities of both sexes are mutually exclusive, they complement each other. There are situations where men and women have exhibited selfish and evil acts. If our local feminist groups are still worried about their place in society, it shows they lack touch with reality because things have reasonably changed for women. In today's world, women perform professional jobs like men, they are acquiring more education than men and are having the upper hand. Taking gender issues from an uninformed point of view is causing more harm and pulling us back in society. People in our society must try to control their emotions, especially about gender issues. Psychologists have proved that emotion could have disorganized and disruptive influences on human behaviour (Wade & Tarvris, 2006:286). Finding details about things in any issue could save us from disruptive influences.

IV. Conclusion

One thing certain in this profession is that it is very unlikely for advertisers to contravene the ethical guidelines of the field. This is due to the fact that the regulatory body Advertising Practitioner Council of Nigeria, APCON (Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria, ARCON) are always on the vanguard to ensure strict compliance with the dictates of the profession. Besides, most professionals in the field know about the job or have a fair understanding of what the job demands. Our concern now is on the part of the general public, who have little knowledge about things in the society. Many will cry foul and criticize advertisements because they feel offended even when the ad has not violated the law nor broken ethical principles, which must be checked.

Should we abandon our way of life now because people, especially outsiders, feel it's not right? That is a question we must try to answer. When can we safely look into our cultural

practice and design ad message in that line and not face a backlash? If we continue to be criticized and condemned for using a cultural appeal because it appears offensive to some minority but influential groups, are we not losing original creative ideas in the local industry? In order to check undue criticism and foil fake concerns, we would like to submit that APCON and other concerned bodies create a public forum to debate and enlighten the public whenever burning issues in advertisement arise, this public forum will not act as a legal body nor make decision on such matters but present an avenue for both sides to present their case before the public forum. With the way criticism is going in our society, there is a dire need for the creation of a public enlightenment forum, especially in this digital age where sentiment flies like wildfire. It doesn't always have to be a case of allowing the protesting masses to have their way without a proper understanding of the real issue. In the case of the infamous 'Mama na boy' commercial, the undecided public ought to know what the advert says and what it never said. In a public enlightenment forum, people will have a critical understanding of that message as it never insulted any gender neither was there any insinuation to the girl child. What the advertiser did was a reinforcement of tradition, they weren't the originator of the tradition.

Today online forums like pulse.ng and Nairaland share people's opinions on the advert six years later. There were balanced and objective views on the issue of gender preference. Some of the contributors, including women, agreed that the 2003 MTN ad wasn't a flawed concept (www.nairaland.com, 2019). Such forums, if supported by apcon to give views and experts' analysis, will solve many hasty criticisms.

Another point to make the public understand is that not every concept or idea debated is necessarily wrong because people are passionate about it. Protesters and complainers may be doing the wrong thing and yet appear right. Take, for example, the popular 'minority' concept always attracts sympathy and blind support, but sociologists have proven that minority groups are not necessarily in a disadvantaged position. There are cases of minority groups being the powerful and controlling group, for example, in South Africa, the white minority group are the powerful who control the economy and influence the system (Healey, 2006). In similitude, people must be made to understand that sex and gender issues are not to be adjudged in haste to conclude or conclude on matters. Gender issues are to be critically examined by experts before the public. Public forum discussion where authorities and experienced people take critical views on matters is important to save our profession form blind sentiment.

References

- Ahmed, A. (2018). *What Are the Ethics of Advertising?* Available at: <https://bizfluent.com/info-7759721ethics-advertising.html>. Accessed on 18/11/2019
- Arens, W.F. (2013). *Contemporary advertising and Integrated marketing communication*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Bailey, V. (2018). *What Are the Different Types of Ethical Issues in Advertising?* Available at: <https://bizfluent.com/info-12073292-different-types-ethical-issues-advertising.html>. Accessed on: 18/11/2019
- Baran S.J & Davis D.K (2012). *Mass Communication Theory; Foundations, Ferment, and Future*. 6th ed. Canada: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Baran, S.J. (2012). *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture*. 7th ed. New York. McGraw-Hill. USA.
- Bardi, J. N. (2011). The Role of Advertising in National Development in *Benin Mediacom Journal*. Benin City. No. 1-4.

- Bustilo, X. (2023). It takes lots of money to win elections. Here's what you need to know. Available at:<https://www.npr.org/2023/11/01/1205728664/campaign-finance-donations-election-fec-fundraising-ad-spending>
- Callihan, D. (2022). Let's talk advertisements: How brand awareness pays off in the long-term. Available at:<https://www.rogerwest.com/branding/brand-advertising/>
- Change. 4th ed. CA. Pine forge press, a sage publication company.
- Clements, K.C. (2023, May 22). What's the difference between sex and gender? Available at:<https://www.healthline.com/health/sex-vs-gender>
- Couture, C. & Owen, A.L. (2025). Political advertising and consumer sentiment: Evidence from U.S. presidential elections. In *European Journal of Political Economy*. Volume 86,
- Gender.study, (2024, May 14). Gender Stereotypes in Advertising: How Men and Women Are Portrayed. Available at:<https://gender.study/gender-sensitization/gender-stereotypes-advertising-men-women-portrayal/>
- Hasan, S. (2013). *Mass communication: Principles and concepts*. 2nd ed. CBS Publishers & Distributors Pvt Ltd. New Delhi. India.
- Healey, J.F. (2006). *Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class: the Sociology of Group Conflict and*
- Herre, B. (2024). Women have made major advances in politics — but the world is still far from equal. Available at:<https://ourworldindata.org/women-political-advances>
- Hile, M. M., Msughte, A. E., & Aliyu, M. A. (2023). Secularism and Ethical Issues in Media Practice as a Bane for National Development. *SIASAT*, 8(3), 166-177.
- Hoey, C. (2018). Representation of women in advertising. Available at:<https://www.sydneyfeminists.org/representation-of-women-in-advertis>
- Iwasaki, N., Kudo, Y. Tremblay, C.H. & Tremblay, V.J. (2008). The Advertising–price Relationship: Theory and Evidence. In *International Journal of the Economics of Business*. Vol. 15(2), pp. 149–167
- Kamisar, B. (2024). The final price tag on 2024 political advertising: Almost \$11 billion. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2024-election/final-price-tag-2024-political-advertising-almost-11-billion-rcna179341>
- Kendall, M. (2024). The role of sentiment analysis in marketing. Available at:<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/sentiment-analysis-marketing/>
- Kurfi, M. Y., Msughte, A. E., & Maradun, L. U. (2023). Media Ethics and Power in Multicultural Nigeria.
- Lederer, E.M. (2025). Women's rights are under attack 30 years after leaders adopted a blueprint for equality, UN says. Available at:<https://apnews.com/article/un-women-girls-equality-beijing-conference-rights-b009715ff605ccf47f1b72865c7a27e7>
- Macionis, J.J. (2005). *Sociology*. 10th ed. New Jersey. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Madpenguine, (2025). Is advertising a period or product cost? Available at:<https://www.madpenguin.org/is-advertising-a-period-or-product-cost/>
- Maikaba, B., & Msughte, A. E. (2019). Digital Media and Cultural Globalisation: The Fate of African Value System. *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 12(1), 214-220.
- Martin, R.L, Schwarz, J. & Turner, M. (2024). The right way to build your brand. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2024/01/the-right-way-to-build-your-brand>
- Mosopefoluwa, T., Jaiyesimi, B. J., & Aondover, E. M. (2024). Product placement in namaste wahala in the global film industry and brand recall in Nigeria. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Linguistics, Marketing and Communication (IJLMC)*, 11(2), 96-110.
- Msughte, A. E., Kuchi, M. G., & Abba, A. A. (2023). Critical Discourse Analysis of Traditional Medicine Outdoor Advertising and Public Health Issues in Northern Nigeria. *Indigenous Language for Social Change Communication in the Global South*, 39.
- Msughte, A. E., Maradun, L. U., & Namadi, H. M. (2021). *Media Law and Ethics in Nigeria: Issues, Principles and Practices*. Ahmadu Bello University Press Limited.

- Nairaland (2019). Mtn Tv Commercial 'mama Na Boy' Is Gender Sensitive. Available at: <https://www.nairaland.com/226644/mtn-tv-commercial-mama-na>
- Newman, T. (2023, March 31). Sex and gender: What is the difference? Available at: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/232363>
- Parameswaran, M. (2025). The complete advertising process: From strategy to execution. Available at: <https://www.thediaant.com/blog/complete-advertising-process/>
- Philodive, (2023, June 6). Understanding the philosophical notion of truth. Available at: <https://philodive.com/blog/understanding-the-philosophical-notion-of-truth>
- Pichardo, G. (2023, September 13). What's the difference between sex and gender? Available at: <https://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/difference-between-sex-and-gender>
- Raatikainen, P. (2021). Truth and theories of truth. *The Cambridge Handbook of the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Retailing.Education, (2024, January 11). The Societal Impact of Advertising: Pros and Cons. Available at: <https://retailing.education/business-organization/societal-impact-of-advertising-pros-cons/>
- Roberts, J. (2016). *Writing for strategic communication industries*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.
- Sanchez, R.R. (2019). Sex-based discrimination: an interview with British Olympic swimmer Sharron Davies. Available at: <https://womansplaceuk.org/2019/12/03/sex-based-discrimination-an-interview-with-british-olympic-swimmer-sharron-davies/>
- Stafford, R.M. & Pounders, K. (20). The power of advertising in society: does advertising help or hinder consumer well-being? In *International Journal of Advertising*. Vol. 40(4), p.487-490
- Stoeffel, K. (2014, December 11). Politically correct' means not ignoring women. Available at: <https://www.thecut.com/2014/12/means-not-ignoring-women.html>
- Torres, N. (2020). Advertising makes us unhappy. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2020/01/advertising-makes-us-unhappy>
- Ullen, M. (2024). The feminist origins of 'political correctness': PC terms in JSTOR. In *Sage Journal of Feminism Theory*. Vol. 26(1).
- Vandewalker, I., Petry, E., Glavin, B. & Buckley, O. (2024). Online Political Spending in 2024. available at: <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/online-political-spending-2024>
- Vanhuele, M. (2024). How Advertising Influences How We Think About Brands, Step by Step. Available at: <https://impact.hec.edu/en/how-advertising-influences-how-we-think-about-brands-step-step>
- Vitalis, P. O., Onyejelem, T. E., & Okuneye, A. P. (2023). Understanding advertising in the era of social media. *Information System and Smart City*, 3(1), 502-502.
- Wade, C. & Tavris, C. (2006). *Psychology*. 8th ed. New Jersey. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Whisenant, W.A., Pedersen, P.M. & Obenour, B.L. (2002). Success and Gender: Determining the Rate of Advancement for Intercollegiate Athletic Directors. *Sex Roles* 47, 485–491 <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021656628604>
- Wright, D. (2023). Political ad spending for 2024 election cycle projected to top \$10 billion, breaking records. Available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/09/12/politics/ad-spending-record-2024-cycle/index.html>
- Yadav, K. (2020). The role of advertising in society: A sociological analysis. In *International Journal of Advanced Research in Commerce, Management & Social Science (IJARCMSS)*. Vol. 3(4), pp 253-256.