

Research Article

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Children's reactions to 'Taste is the difference' indomie instant noodles television commercial in Nigeria: Anambra State in focus

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Abstract: This study evaluated children's responses to the 'Taste is the difference' Indomie Instant noodles television commercial in Anambra State, Nigeria. It is premised on the background that children who live and interact with other members of society cultivate different behaviours after exposure to media content. There is a need to control the spread of unethical media content for children's safety, cultivating acceptable socio-cultural behaviours and positive development. The study hinged on Cultivation and Social Learning Theories and adopted the Focus Group Discussion research method with structured questions as a data collection instrument. Multi-stage sampling techniques were used to select 364

primary six pupils as respondents from three schools in the three senatorial districts of Anambra State, Nigeria, on consent from relevant authorities. Findings show that respondents were significantly exposed to the select commercial; there was a high recall of message elements. The respondents were also found to be favourably disposed to the message elements and perceived some elements as imperfect because they eroded aspects of their culture. The study concludes that the select respondents responded positively to the entertainment aspect and negatively to the cultural implication of the commercial. The study recommended amendments to message elements in the commercial that eroded some aspects of Nigerian culture.

Keywords – Anambra State, Commercial, Education, Indomie Instant Noodles, Television

1. INTRODUCTION

Children's responses to television commercials remain essential for their safety and positive life development. McLeod (2017) agrees that every human interacts to satisfy their psychological and belonging needs. Just like normal humans, children live and interact among themselves and other members of society. Investigating children's responses to television commercials dates back to the early 1960s when Britain's National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) adopted guidelines for toy advertising to children. Bellis (2017) affirms that the introduction of 'Mr. Potato Head' television advert by a toy manufacturing company, Hasbro, in Britain in 1952 triggered the study of children's responses to a television advertisement. Hasbro Company then provided collections of plastic face pieces as a gift in a box of cereal for children to use and make a face. Children responded to the company's idea of

inserting small, prolonged body and face parts into fruits and vegetables to create a 'funny face man'. Bellis (2017) reveals every child exposed to that 'Mr. Potato Head's advert was desperate to have the toy. Children's responses were controversial in many ways: some children were wasting food because parents must provide real fruits and vegetables where the toy's prolonged parts will be inserted. They played with rotten fruits and vegetables because the 'funny face man' created were kept for play. They were also cutting themselves with the sharp pieces, which must pierce natural vegetables and fruits to form the 'funny face man'. Again, little children were choking on the small pieces (ears, mouth, eyes, noses, eyelashes and others) provided by Hasbro company (Bellis, 2017).

The British children's negative response to 'Mr. Potato Head' television advertisement triggered research into children's general responses to television commercials directed to children. Gbadeyan (2009), for instance, narrates that while Brumbaugh (1954) investigated children's recall of television advertising, Guest (1955) investigated children's buying habits. Munn (1958) also investigated advert influence on parental purchases and others. Based on the outcome of these early investigations, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) in Britain adopted new toy child safety regulations and guidelines. The safety regulations forced Hasbro Company to make the parts less sharp to avoid children cutting themselves. Hasbro Company produced plastic potato bodies to replace real ones and made the parts bigger to avoid children swallowing the parts (Bellis, 2017). On the contrary, children's responses benefited the development of Hasbro's toy company. Bellis (2017) posits that 'Mr. Potato Head' advert increased the company's gross sales to more than \$4 million in its first year of television advertising. Hasbro Company increased the frequency of their toy advertisement to make more sales and profit.

In Nigeria, observation shows that children tend to act out in advertisements in real-life scenes after exposure. Many companies in Britain and other countries producing other products such as drugs, foods and beverages started advertising to children to boost sales. These companies prepared the ground from which Nigerian advertising grew. Different companies extended their advertising practices to Nigeria as a fertile ground for product and service advertising. Some of these companies include Royal Niger Company which later metamorphosed into United African Companies (UAC), United Trading Companies Stores (UTC) and Unilever PLC. Cadbury, International Bank for West Africa (Afribank), Standard Bank, which later became First Bank, Barclay's Bank, which later metamorphosed into Union Bank (UB), and United Bank for Africa (UBA) were among other companies (Gbadeyan, 2009).

DUFIL Prima Foods Plc, one of the foreign companies that settled in Nigeria at number 44, Eric Moore Road, Surulere, Lagos, Nigeria, is the producer of Indomie Instant Noodles. To promote Indomie Instant Noodles and persuade consumers to make positive buying decisions, Dufil Prima PLC 2017 produced a "Taste is the difference" television commercial. It aims to position Indomie Instant Noodles in children's minds and prevent them from requesting other brands of noodles in Nigeria. "Taste is the difference" television commercial is the media focus of this research work. Its' advert slogan is "Indomie like no other", meaning no other noodles can satisfy your noodles' needs positively the way Indomie does. It was produced in 2017 and sponsored by DUFIL Prima Foods Plc. 44, Eric Moore Road, Surulere, Lagos State, Nigeria. The advert runs on different television stations in Nigeria. Using a melodious background song, "I love my extraordinary Indomie..... the advert begins with three children (two boys and a girl) approaching their mum while she talks with a friend. The children obtained permission from their mum to go and buy Indomie noodles from the Mallam's kiosk. At the "Mallam's kiosk, they requested the Indomie super pack. The Mallam gave them another type of noodles, which displeased the kids. They became unhappy with the Mallam and told him, "Indomie noodle is not the same as other noodles, and the difference is in the taste." The man was surprised, so he immediately collected the other noodles and gave them the original Indomie noodles. The children were excited. They went home. Next, the family was seen eating, talking and laughing at the dining table (Nwabueze, 2018).

Muyinwa (2017) and Nwabueze (2017) posit that some portrayals in "Taste is the difference" television commercial erode some aspects of Nigerian culture. They revealed that the advertiser was trying to hit the children's emotions and used some appeals to show how Indomie noodles can satisfy their hunger and taste for

noodles. For instant, Muyinwa (2017) posits that the Indomie advert is impactful and memorable but fails the social responsibility test. In trying too hard to hit the competition, the producer forgot that the vendor was not the competition but a valuable partner in the supply chain. The author notes, "the man selling noodles by the roadside shouldn't be at the receiving end of the children's flak. He doesn't need a cheeky little girl poking her nose at him. It is disrespectful for those older than us; it is an important part of our cultural value." Nwabueze (2017) questioned what happened to "table manners" in the same television commercial. She observes children talking and laughing while eating with their parents without their parents cautioning them to respect the table culture. She added, "When those children approached their mum and took permission to go and buy noodles, one will expect the mother to stretch forth her hand and give the eldest child money, but she didn't. Nwabueze (2017) believes that the scene should be created for children to know that it's not natural for kids to have money with them, except the money was given to them". However, all these are individual perceptions, not empirical.

According to APCON (2005), children are between birth and puberty. Based on the above definition, the primary six pupils between the ages of 9 and 12 in primary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria, are the referred children studied in this research. Their responses to "Taste is the difference" television commercial constitute significant challenges to the researchers, knowing that children, who live and interact with other members of the society, cultivate different behaviours after exposure to media content. The researchers are concerned with how these children responded to the message elements in the commercial. It was against this background that the researchers empirically evaluated children's responses to the "Taste is the difference" television commercial in Anambra State, Nigeria.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES/QUESTIONS

The study's main objective was to investigate how the children responded to the message elements in the "Taste is the difference" television commercial in Nigeria. The following research questions were formulated to help the researchers achieve the study's objective.

RQ1: Are the respondents exposed to the "Taste is the difference" television commercial?

RQ2: What specific message elements in the commercial can the respondents recall after exposure?

RQ3: What is the respondents' disposition towards the message elements in the commercial?

RQ4: How did the respondents perceive the message elements in the commercial after exposure?

3. LITERATURE SURVEY

3.1. "Taste is the difference" Television commercial: A conceptual discussion

In April 2017, Dufil Prima Foods PLC produced a television advert titled "Indomie Cash for Scholarship Promo" with the slogan "*Noodles like no other*". As part of Dufil Prima Foods PLC's efforts towards rewarding their customers who have been loyal to their brand of noodles, consumers are to win money for their kids' scholarships. They gave out other consolation prizes once they can assemble the eighteen (18) letters that made up the advert slogan "Indomie Like no Other". The eighteen (18) letters are to be presented in any designated redemption centres for a reward of a premium brand bicycle, one fifty thousand Naira (N150 000) worth of scholarships to support their children's education. The promo lasted till April 2017. At the end of April 2017, Dufil Prima PLC edited out the promo aspect of this commercial and retained other advert messages titled "Taste is the difference" television commercial (Dufil Prima, 2019).

Many advert reviewers reacted to the message elements of the "Taste is the difference" television commercial. Akolisa (2017), in her online blog, posits that the producer of this advert smartly presented children as brand advocates. Anyone who has seen the "Taste is the difference" television commercial (TVC) from Dufil Prima Foods, makers of Indomie Instant Noodles, would appreciate the performances of the intelligent Kids. "How they, without constraint, delivered a strong message to those who have been undermining the brand equity of their favourite brand, including retailers and parents, by selling or buying other brands in the name of Indomie. Apart from being

inconsistent with the brand's lifelong campaign theme, "Noodles like no other", the advert is entertaining and engaging. Gentrification occurs here because of market dominance, convenience and familiarity (Akolisa, 2017).

On the contrary, another advert reviewer, Muyinwa (2017), in his print advert review, criticized the "Taste is the Difference" Television Commercial" (TVC). He posits that the Indomie advert is impactful and memorable but fails the social responsibility test. In trying too hard to hit the competition, the producer forgot that the vendor is not the competition but a valuable partner in the supply chain. He observes, "the man selling noodles by the roadside should not be at the receiving end of the children's flak. He does not need a cheeky little girl poking her nose at him. It is disrespectful for older people; it is an important part of our cultural values" (Muyinwa, 2017).

Nwabueze (2017) joined another reviewer and questioned what happened to "table manners" in the same Indomie commercial. She observed children talking and laughing while eating with their parents without their parents cautioning them to respect the table manners. She added, "When those children approached their mum, took permission to go and purchase noodles, one would have expected the mother to stretch forth her hand and give the eldest child money, but she didn't. Nwabueze (2017) is of the opinion that the scene should be created for children to know that it is not natural for kids to have money with them, except the money was given to them". Standing on the above criticisms; the researchers evaluated empirically, children's responses to these criticized portrayals in the "Taste is the difference" television commercial.

3.2. Message elements in television commercials

Message elements are the forms, actions, songs, characters, words, illustrations and advertising appeals in television commercials. The advertiser intends to position a product or service high in viewers' minds to evoke desired actions. Advertising messages can be delivered using different forms such as animation, cartooning and life actions depicting eating, running, collecting, dancing, singing, jumping, talking and laughing. Some messages can come from aesthetics such as colour or lighting. Researchers (Gbadamosi, 2012; Olusola & Kehinde, 2014; Ajayi, 2014) found various message-elements in commercials.

In product presentation, the advertiser can present an eating situation and let the story revolves around it, while some carry the audience along through playing with toys or live footage. It is essential to state the rationale for sending the commercial message, whether for enjoyment, product superiority, promotion, product association, or personal advancement. Another critical message element in a television commercial is characterization. It is the process of assigning roles to individuals in a literary work. Advertisers use direct characterization by picking children, teenagers and adults to act out these roles. That is why minors, children, teenagers and adults are used in delivering commercial messages. When delivering a television commercial, an advertiser can form a storyline or do it in an unrealistic storyline.

Another reflective aspect of a television commercial is the advertising appeal. Advertisers always project one or more of these appeals as strategies for drawing consumers' attention and making them take a favourable buying decision. Such decisions affect brand perceptions, leading to acceptance (Duru & Morah, 2017). Researchers (Gbadeyan, 2009; Moon, 2010; Bakir et al., 2015; Khanna, 2016) identified different emotional and rational appeals such as sex, scarcity, musical, masculine versus feminine, brand, snob and adventure. The list of advertising appeals also includes less than perfect, romance, youth, endorsement, play on words, statistics, plain, bandwagon, humour, guilt, and fear appeal, among others. After constructing these social realities, the advertisers then deliberately use various media, especially television, that aid easy recall to reach their target audiences. The researchers investigated the presence of any of these message elements in the commercial and how Anambra State, Nigerian children responded to each message element in the commercial.

3.3. Empirical review

The empirical review looked at various works of different authors and researchers on creating awareness and exposing children to television commercials and their responses in various regions of the world, especially in

Nigeria, to fill any knowledge gap. Exposure, recall, disposition, imitation, preference, knowledge and perception were the main elements of this review. Ayantunji (2009), in 'Advertising to Children in Nigeria: Improving the Status Quo for Enhanced Ethical Marketing Practices,' used a comprehensive review of the literature to examine the ethical issues in advertising to children in Nigeria. He posits that advertisement is complex yet crucial to the life of children because it informs, educates, and offers social benefits. He also contrasts this importance to the unethical advertisement's negative effect due to irregularities in how some marketers adopt it. The findings reveal that Nigeria has regulations for children's advertisements, and some advertisers/marketers are not complying with them. The study recommended amendment of the affected advert contents for children's safety and development, which will benefit all stakeholders, including the international community. The gap in knowledge in this research which the present study filled was in the methodology. They need to relate with children to get their responses to a specific television commercial.

Gbadeyan (2009), in 'Children's Perception of Television Commercial in Lagos State, Nigeria', used a survey research method to sample the opinion of 1500 children drawn from a population of 55800 children in ten out of the twenty Local Government Areas in Lagos State using a stratified sampling technique. A questionnaire was used as a data-collecting instrument. Data collected were analyzed using the Kruskal Wallis test. Findings revealed that Fun/happiness, taste and product performance were some important promotional themes used to persuade the commercial audience. Other promotional themes are appearance (14%), product in-social context (11.5%) and action/power/Speed (8.2%), personal gain (4.9%) and texture (3.1%). There was a significant relationship between children's age and reaction to television advertising. The general deduction was that the older the children, the more they positively react to television advertising.

Regarding adverse reactions, children under four years have the most negative reactions to television advertising. The researcher recommended considering the age at which the children should be exposed to a television advertisement. Parents should watch out for Television adverts that mislead children. Adults should be shown to supervise children when products or activities could involve safety/risk. The gap in knowledge in this study that the present study addressed was the methodology and sampling procedure. The researchers used the Focus Group Discussion research method to sample the responses of primary six pupils in Anambra State, Nigeria, in place of children from one state (Lagos State Nigeria).

In India, Mohsen (2010), in "Toy Designs: Whose Choice Matters - Children's or Parents," used a survey research method to sample the opinions of 28 parents and 40 children who lived at the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati Residential Campus. The experiment was carried out in the pre-primary school and followed up at various residencies. Using the probability sampling technique, a sample of 14 toys was chosen from 30 toys. The 14 final toy samples were chosen by consensus and discussions by three professional designers based on the toys' education value, gender representation index and emotional expression. Toys that mimicked vehicles (auto-rickshaw and computers) were included to test the proposition that children prefer toy replicas of real-world products like cars and digital products to other products. Data collecting instruments were Interviews and questionnaires. Children's responses to the use of toys were recorded on a videotape. Data was collected from a sample of 28 parents and 40 children and analyzed at an elementary level to understand the respondents' toy preferences. Findings reveal similarities between the parent's choice and the children's choice, though both were made without influencing each other. The participants were more favourably disposed toward using the toy than their safety, learning value and life. Emotion generating cues were given more importance when compared to similar sets of toys or toys of a well-defined category. For the sample surveyed, the ability of a toy to evoke emotions was used more as a comparative criterion than an impulsive buying criterion. The attribute of costs has been rated higher, which is not surprising given the Indian scenario. It implies that toys that rely solely on evoking emotional ability without paying equal attention to educational value and safety stand a lesser chance of being chosen. Emotion generating cues, when in conflict with the overall features, are likely to increase curiosity initially but may be a cause for rejecting a toy when it becomes too difficult for the child to resolve the conflict in the

process of making meaning of the toy as a whole. The researcher recommends that advertisers use many complex, interrelated variables to choose a toy before designing. The gap in knowledge in this study which the present study filled was that only selected results for a few questions had been statistically compiled from the data collected.

3.4. Cultivation theory

George Gerbner propounded cultivation theory in 1969 as a response to the introduction of media effect theory. Professor George Gerbner 1978 expanded the Cultivation theory, identifying its narrow and broadened aspects. The narrow aspect focuses only on television, and the broadened aspect focuses on the macroscopic question about the media's role in society. It is concerned with the extent media portrayal of specific issues can influence audience members. The cultivation theory holds that the more television a person watches, the harsher the perception he or she will have of the real world. The central proposition of the cultivation or enculturation approach is that repeated exposures to consistent media message elements influence the audience's perceptions of the message elements in the direction of the media portrayals (Gerbner *et al.*, 1978). It holds that over time, heavy viewers of television programmes develop views of the world similar to what they see on television.

In relating this theory to the present research, the Cultivation theory should help the researchers compare the outcome of respondents' level of television advert viewership and a set of questions that distinguished portrayals of behaviours in "Taste is the difference" television commercial from the real world. It also guided the researcher in answering sets of questions as to how and why children in the study area cultivated different behaviours after exposure to the "Taste is the difference" television commercial.

3.5. Social learning theory

Psychologist Albert Bandura propounded the social learning theory in 1977. He was born on 4 December 1925 in Mundare, Northern Alberta, Canada. Through a series of experiments called "Bobo Dolls", Bandura (1961) watched children as they observed adults attacking 'Bobo Dolls'. As the dolls were hit, they fell and bounced back again. The children, after exposure, cultivated the aggressive behaviour of the adults. However, when the children observed that adults who acted aggressively were punished, the children refused to imitate the aggressive behaviour. It was from this research work that Bandura propounded the social learning theory in 1977. This theory asserts that learning occurs by observing other people's behaviour. When the media portrays certain behaviours to the audience, the audience is likely to learn such behaviour if it interests them or based on frequent exposure to such behaviours. Bandura (1977) listed four basic principles of social learning to include: Paying attention and perceiving the relevant aspect of the behaviour, remembering the behaviour, either through words or through mental images, converting the remembered observation into actions and being motivated to adopt the behaviour (Bandura, 1977).

Relating this theory to the present research, the primary six pupils in Anambra State, Nigeria, were exposed to the "Taste is the difference" television commercial. The social learning theory helped reveal portrayals in the commercial that children may likely learn and imitate after exposure.

4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

"Taste is the difference" television commercial failed the social responsibility test by eroding some aspects of Nigerian culture (Muyinwa, 2017; Nwabueze, 2017). The idea of "Taste is the difference" television commercial eroding some aspects of Nigerian culture is adults' perception from two advert reviewers, expressing doubt and fear that children in Nigeria may imitate these portrayed behaviours that infringed on their safety and development. Doubt arises as to whether children from Anambra state, Nigeria, will or will not frown and talk hard to their parents when they refuse their purchase request or give them different fast food other than Indomie noodles. Again, it is not clear whether children will or not copy and imitate the act of talking and laughing while eating as portrayed in the Indomie advert. These responses are not empirically evaluated. There is no research to

evaluate children's responses to the "Taste is the difference" television commercial in Anambra state, Nigeria. At the time of this study, there was a knowledge gap in ascertaining empirically how children in Anambra State, Nigeria, responded to the message elements in the commercial which motivated the researchers into the evaluation of children's responses to "Taste is the difference" television commercial in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Population analysis

| Selected schools | Total population |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Practising Primary School Agulu | 174 |
| Okwuani central school Nnewi | 366 |
| Central school Awka-Etiti | 258 |
| Total | 798 |

Source: ASUBEB 2022

Table 2: Sample frame

| School | Population | Sample Frame |
|---------------------------------|------------|--|
| Practising Primary School Agulu | 174 | $s = \frac{174}{798} \times 364 = 79$ |
| Okwuani central school Nnewi | 366 | $s = \frac{366}{798} \times 364 = 167$ |
| Central school Awka-etiti | 258 | $s = \frac{258}{798} \times 364 = 118$ |
| Total | 798 | 364 |

Source: computed by the authors

Table 3: Dummy Table for Different Sessions of Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

| | |
|--|---|
| Date | 16th, 17th and 18th February 2022 for Anambra |
| Time | 10.30 am to 11. 15 am |
| Venue | Practising School Agulu, Okwuani Central School Nnewi and Central School Awka-Etiti. |
| Issue | Evaluation of children's responses to message elements in "Taste is the difference" television commercial. |
| The number of participants. | Eight (8) in each session. |
| Problem identification | Children's responses to message elements in "Taste is the difference" television commercial (ethical issues). |
| Consensus on action for children's responses to the ethical issues in the Television commercial | Amendment of all the message elements in the "Taste is the difference" television commercial erodes some aspects of Nigerian culture. |
| Persons or organizations to follow the action | Dufil Prima Plc and APCON |
| The time frame for evaluation decided | One year |

| | |
|--|---|
| Mode established for evaluation | Replication of research using the same tools previously used by the researcher. |
| Follow up on defaulter. | Legal actions include the imposition of levies and an outright ban of the television commercial by APCON. |
| Challenges and constraints | Bad terrain, time constraints, funds, and respondents' attitudes. |

Source: Compiled by the authors

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researchers used the Focus Group Discussion research method because the study requires first-hand information. The researchers chose to participate in each group discussion to have a good knowledge and understanding of Anambra State, and Nigerian children's responses to the "Taste is the difference" television commercial. The study covered Anambra state in southeast Nigeria, a geopolitical zone that is Igbo and practised predominately Igbo culture. The environment of this study is the three senatorial districts of Anambra state in southeast Nigeria. They are Anambra North, Anambra South and Anambra central. Primary schools in Agulu, Nnewi and Awka-Etiti were selected using multi-stage sampling techniques. Practising School Agulu represented Anambra North, Okwuan Central School Nnewi represented Anambra South, and Central School Awka-Etiti represented Anambra Central. The researchers selected primary six pupils based on the literature because the principle of social learning and cultivation of behaviour recognized children as change agents. Again the selection of schools from Anambra state, Nigeria, is the researchers' choice. It may be because the researchers were from this geopolitical area. The decision to sample respondents from Agulu, Nnewi and Awka-Etiti is because the towns share the same cultural homogeneity and sociological variables. Therefore, the respondents' views resulted in the study's findings that were generalized to all the primary schools in Anambra State.

The population of the study was 798 upper primary pupils in selected schools in Anambra State, Nigeria (ASUBEB 2022). According to Anambra State Universal Basic Education Board (ASUBEB 2022), the population of pupils in the primary schools is not steady because each academic section witnesses both increase and decrease in the number of pupils' enrolled in various classes. Given the above reason, the researchers used collated population from second term 2021/2022 class attendant registers for selected schools. See the population analysis table above.

The sample size for this study was 364. The population of this study is finite and known. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for determining the sample size of a finite population was used in obtaining this sample size of 364. The sample frames for the selected schools were determined using a simply proportionate formula. After obtaining the sample size, the researcher used the proportionate allocation method to select an appropriate number of pupils from each of the selected schools. It conformed to Owuamalam (2012), who posits that proportionate allocation helps a researcher select sample from a given population documented in an orderly list. Using proportionate formula

$$s = \frac{n}{N} \times S$$

Where;

s = sample size grouping

S = sample size

N = Population

n = number of group

5.1. Sampling frame/technique for focus group discussion

The researchers purposively selected eight pupils from each school for the focus group discussion. The sample frames are Practising School Agulu 8, Central School Okwuani Nnewi 8 and Central School Awka-Etiti 8 in place of the questionnaire because of the pupil's age. The researchers used multi stage-sampling techniques to select respondents for the research to ensure proper representation since the population is large and complex. Specifically, Cluster sampling was used to cluster Anambra State into her senatorial districts. Anambra state was clustered into Anambra South, Anambra North and Central Senatorial Districts. Random sampling was used to select one Local Government Area from each selected senatorial district (Aniocha LGA, Nnewi North LGA and Idemili South LGA. The purposive sampling technique was used to select one school from each selected Local Government Area irrespective of the school category (mission, private or public). The selected schools are Practising School Agulu, Okwuani Central School Nnewi and Central School Awka-Etiti. A systematic sampling technique was used to select the first stream of every primary six class in each selected school. The purposive sampling technique was used to select eight pupils (four boys and four boys) from each first stream of every selected school. The eight pupils from each selected school formed the participants for the three different sessions of the Focus Group Discussion.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study's objectives were used as a guideline in analyzing data collected during the research. The raw data generated for this study were analyzed using a simple dummy table and explanation building report.

RQ1: Are the respondents exposed to "Taste Is The Difference" television commercial?

The researchers used question number I in the question guide to answer this question. Question number I in the question guide: Apart from watching this television commercial, who among you has watched the "Taste is the difference" television commercial? The researchers used this question that boarded on exposure as a teaser to arouse the pupils' interests. When the researchers asked this question, all the participants were excited. The researchers observed that all participants raised their hands to indicate viewership. The researchers received these three similar responses expressed with different language structures from participants:

- *Aunty me*
- *Aunty I,*
- *Aunty "munwaa" (Igbo word for me)*

The above expressions showed that all the participants were exposed to the "Taste is the difference" television commercial. It conforms to the previous work of Emond *et al.* (2016), who confirmed that children are exposed to television commercials. This television commercial conformed to what social learning theory and cultivation theory referred to as stimulus of exposure and learning. The implication here is that Nigerian children are exposed to television commercials that their contents may be ethical or unethical, hence the need to investigate responses.

RQ2: What specific message-elements in the commercial can the respondents recall after exposure?

To answer this research question, the researchers used responses for question number 2 (Name one thing you remembered in this television commercial after exposure?) in the question guide. The researchers used this question to ascertain the message elements in the "Taste is the difference" television commercial that the participants can recall after exposure. Every participant took part in this discussion. The researchers noticed variations in pupils' ability to recall and narrate, some were bold while some were shy, but most importantly, all participated. The majority of the respondents recalled these four message elements in the television commercial with the following expressions:

- *I remembered the song; I love my extraordinary Indomie.....,*
- *I remembered the children buying Indomie from Aborki. The Aborki gave them noodles that were not Indomie, the children were now vexed, and the boy said no, if it is not Indomie, please don't call it Indomie.*
- *I remembered the children enjoying their Indomie with their parents. Hmmm! The girl now said the difference is in the taste, nothing tastes like my Indomie, and everybody now started laughing.*
- *I remember children begging their mother to allow them to go and buy Indomie, and their mother said go.*

From the above discussion, the researchers concluded that the participants have a high recall of message elements.

Question number 3 in the question guide was also used to answer the research question 2: How many times do you need to watch this television commercial before you can remember more things that happened in it? The researchers used this question to investigate the relationship between participants' recall of message elements and frequency of exposure. The majority of the participants said they needed to watch the television commercial many times before they could recall more things in the advert accurately. In all the focus group sessions, only two participants said once. One of the two participants said:

- *"Once I watch something, I will remember everything that happened. That is why my teacher is calling me a genius. This proud assertion from this male participant earned him the following mockery phrases from other participants amid laughter. A na m anu! (Igbo version of I can hear you). I too, know! Nwoke m "sits" down (My man, sit down).*

The above discussion revealed a significant relationship between children's recall of message elements and frequency of exposure to the "Taste is difference" television commercial. The more the participants are exposed to the commercial, the more they accurately recall the message elements in the commercial. The findings conform to the previous works of Emond *et al.* (2015). They posit that the more children are exposed to sugary cereal television advertisements, the more they remember the advert content and consume the product. It also conformed to two of the propositions of Albert Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, that media audiences remember particular behaviour after exposure to media content through words or mental images. In this research, the participants remembered the message elements through the words in the focus group discussion. Social learning theory also revealed that when the media portrays certain behaviours to the audience members, the audience members are likely to learn such behaviour based on frequent exposure to such behaviours. This high recall implies that the sing-along is the most effective among the different message elements adopted by Dufil Prima PLC (2017) to position Indomie instant noodles in children's minds.

RQ3: What is the respondents' disposition towards the message-elements in the commercial?

The researcher used question number four (4) in the question guide to answer this question: How do you feel about this television commercial? The researchers used question number four (4) in the question guide to ascertain the likeability and dislike of message elements in the commercial. The researcher identified words, phrases and sentences that signify participants' preferences in the discussion. Participants expressed their feeling toward the message elements using the following:

- *I like that boy and girl who told the Mallam, but this is not my Indomie. If it is not Indomie, sir, please don't call it Indomie. I love them because they are sharp children, not "Mumu" that takes anything.*
- *Aunty, to me too! I like how the children eat at the dining table because it shows that everybody in that family is enjoying themselves. I like eating Indomie, and if you play that advert on this your laptop again, my eye will be ready for that enjoyment at the dining table.*
- *I like the Indomie song: I love my extraordinary Indomie.....because it is sweet. (Sang it to entertain the house and everybody clapped).*

- *I loved how the mother waved at the children to go and buy Indomie; some mothers will not allow their children to go and buy Indomie, see how this mother allowed their children and made them happy.*

From the above discussion, the researchers observed that any message element any participant liked, he/she gave a reason for preferring it. The researcher concluded that the participant had a favourable disposition towards the message elements in the advert and their positive dispositions influenced their message-element preferences. It coordinated with the previous work of Gbadamosi *et al.* (2012), who posits that children liked television adverts concerning their entertainment features. The reason for this favourable disposition can be explained using DeFleur's (1970) social category theory, that people like and retain messages from an exposure.

7. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Based on the children's negative responses to cultural implications of some message elements in the "Taste is the difference" television commercial, unethical message-elements in commercials related to children can make children to cultivate unacceptable socio-cultural behaviours that are not good for children's safety and development.

8. CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The research provided empirical evidences that can assist policy formulators in handling works related to ethical issues in television advertisement related to children. The research contributed to updating existing literature on children's responses to television advertisement and offered recommendations on ways of ensuring children's positive responses with particular emphasis on cultivation of acceptable socio-cultural behaviours. The study provided provoking thoughts for future researchers, especially, on areas of the same field where the researchers were unable to cover.

9. CONCLUSION

When the message elements in the "Taste is the difference" television commercial was presented in an entertaining form with a song, the participants responded positively. However, when the cultural implications of the message elements were evaluated, the participants responded negatively. The significant relationship between the respondents' message-elements recall and frequency of exposure revealed increased unsafe media content for children on exposure. This is because the more the participants are exposed to the advert, the more they recall the message elements that erode their culture. Sequel to the above findings, the researcher concluded that the children's response to the "Taste is the difference" television commercial was socially positive and culturally negative. Based on the children's negative responses to cultural implications of the message elements in the "Taste is the difference" television commercial, the researchers' recommendations include:

1. To avoid children's negative responses, the need to amend the message elements in "Taste is the difference" television commercials that do not conform to the study area's culture.
2. APCON and other regulatory bodies in Nigeria should improve on screening exercises and approval of commercials, especially singer-ability commercials.
3. Generally, advertising stakeholders should consider their clients' existing culture while developing advert content for communication to avoid advert messages conflicting with clients' culture.
4. Media literacy and cultural-compliance awareness should be included in the pupils' curriculum for positive media responses, and the cultivation of safe social-cultural behaviours since message elements in television commercials provide practical strategies for gaining and maintaining attention.

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