

# Female Gender Portrayal in Nigerian Television Advertisement and Information Services

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**Abstract:** *This study discussed the female gender portrayal in Nigeria television advertisement and information services. It examines the perception of the audience on gender roles in television adverts and information services generally. The primary objective of advertising is to change consumer behavior in response to information services and promotional offer. However, consumers frequently develop opinions about the advertised brand and how the characters are portrayed after seeing multiple services and advertisements. The objective of the study is to ascertain the extent to which women are negatively portrayed in television advertisements and information services in terms of their physical appearance and roles. The survey method was used by the researcher as instruments were administered to the respondents to gather information relevant to this study. The researcher discovered that while 42% strongly agreed that the portrayal of women in Television advert and information services is stereotypical, 12% strongly agreed that it is empowering. The 42% makes up for the opinion of larger percentage of the respondents on the portrayal of the female gender in Television advertisements and information services in Nigeria. Conclusively, the research findings underscore the need for improvements in the portrayal of women in Nigeria television advertisements and information services. Hence, it is recommended that instead of provocative and objectifying representations, advertisers should focus on presenting women in empowering and respectful ways that reflect their diverse roles, abilities, and achievements.*

**Keywords:** female gender, portrayal, Nigerian television advertisement, information services

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Traditional stereotypes continue to perpetuate the unequal status of women. This means that women have fewer job opportunities and less influence in society. The main cause of women's deprivation and inferior status in almost all societies is sex discrimination. This discrimination is enforced by laws and social customs that limit women's economic opportunities and define their roles in the family and society. Despite efforts by governments and women's organizations to create equal opportunities for sexes, the media and information services still portrays women as sex objects and housekeepers, reinforcing the current system and the traditional roles of women. The portrayal of women in the media and information services has been heavily criticized by feminist movements worldwide. Through education and legal strategies, these movements aim to challenge and change this portrayal. Feminist scholars have exposed how the media and information services presents women's roles as less important and less permanent, leading to denigration and under-representation of women in key societal roles. Research has shown that many advertisements sexualize both men and women, but women are more frequently objectified in television and information commercials.

Bolland and Gupta (2020) emphasize the importance of advertisements in marketing, as they help advertisers communicate their ideology and influence consumer behavior. Television adverts are particularly effective due to their ability to present audio, visuals, and graphical illustrations simultaneously. However, the portrayal of women is a sensitive area, often involving sexual images and objectifying women. This stereotype reinforces the perception that women are dependent on men and is considered sex objects. Research has shown that television adverts often use negative stereotypes of men and women, undermining the fight for gender equality. In Nigeria, advertisements often portray women in an unrealistic and unbalanced light, presenting them as easily drawn to or influenced by the user. Critics argue that advertisers and their agencies should be held accountable for the portrayal of women in television adverts. The study's significance lies in its exploration of gender stereotypes in advertising and their implications for societal perception and gender equality. By investigating women's representation, the research aims to shed light on the cultural attitudes towards gender and their impact on women's roles in society. Additionally, the study will contribute to the ongoing discussion on the role of advertising in shaping public opinion and norms surrounding gender roles.

It is against this backdrop that this study aims to evaluate the portrayal of gender in Nigerian television advertisements and information services.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Research has shown that media representations of women often perpetuate harmful stereotypes, portraying them as submissive, dependent, or sexualized. Such representations can contribute to societal discrimination and objectification. As multiple studies indicate a troubling trend of reinforcing traditional gender roles, it becomes crucial to evaluate contemporary advertisements and information services and their impact on public perception of women. This study aims to investigate the current portrayal of women in television advertisements and information services and its reception by the audience.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study aims to:

1. Assess the extent of negative portrayals of women in television advertisements and information services.
2. Evaluate women's satisfaction with their representation regarding physical appearance and roles.
3. Determine whether depictions are stereotypical or empowering.
4. Analyze the effectiveness of these advertisements in meeting societal needs.

### **Research Questions**

The research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of negative portrayals of women in television advertisements?
2. How satisfied are women with their portrayal regarding physical appearance and roles?
3. Are women depicted in a stereotypical or empowering manner in advertisements?
4. How effective are these advertisements in addressing societal needs?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Concept of Advertising**

According to Asemah, (2019), advertising is any communication that is paid for, identified by a sponsor, directed at a target audience, through the various media like radio, television, billboards, newspaper and magazine, with the goal of creating awareness about goods and services. Advertising is the art of announcing that a commodity or service is for sale while trying to persuade customers to buy such product or service. (Ivanovic A. & Collin P H, 2003). Asemah 2019 added that ' Advertising is a controlled, identifiable and persuasive communication that is presented via the mass media and designed to trigger product demand and to create a company's image. One can go a step further to describe advertising as a form of communication which attempts to explain the qualities of products, services and ideas in terms of consumer's needs and wants. The standard definition of advertising according to Frolova (2014) includes six main elements which are:

1. Paid form of communication.
2. Availability of an identified sponsor.
3. Distribution through the media.
4. Lack of personalization of distributed information.
5. Aimed action.

This means that advertising is typically a non-personalized form of communication that is funded by an identified sponsor, carried out in a specific manner through the media and other legal channels, and designed to familiarize consumers with certain products and encourage them to purchase them in the future.

Advertising is regarded as a persuasion-based communication tactic that aims to win over a specific target audience to the advertised goods and services. As a result, corporate entities view it as one of the best methods for promoting their brands. An organization can quickly and effectively reach a larger audience by using advertising. Advertising is crucial because it can significantly increase the consumption of a specific good or service while also raising consumer awareness of the brand. The aforementioned suggests that advertising is a marketing strategy that involves buying space to advertise a good, service, or cause.

### **Women in Advertisement**

One of the major media that affects the daily life of humans consciously and unconsciously is the advertising media, particularly on the visual platforms like television, billboards and other electronic displays. Advertising plays a major role in shaping the society in a much broader perspective and this is because of advert messages and visuals are packaged to persuade or influence its audience.

Advertising agencies use different strategies to influence how customers view their products and influence sales. Some of these strategies include the storylines, taglines, and the representation of women are a few of the tools used to appeal to particular emotions and give customers the impression that they are missing out by not using the products.

According to Nwabuisi & Ihechu (2021), there is a striking contrast between the portrayal of males and females in advertisements. This portrayal according to them is as a result of how our culture has defined feminine and masculine. The woman in advertisements plays decorative role, recreational role and family roles. They are usually found in advertisements of baby items, home products, food items, and cosmetics.

Nagi (2014) in his own view opines that advertising is an important promotional tool that enables businesses communicate directly with the customers. Hence, it requires that the advert is crafted in a way that elicit the desired response which are mainly to get the attention of the t viewers and

encourage them to make a purchase. As a result, women are portrayed in advertisements while the viewers are left to consider their preferred style of portrayal. Generally, the women are portrayed stereotypically in advertising entertainment, cosmetics, and clothes. In several cases for decades now, the media has been charged with portraying women as 'sex objects' that arrests the attention and seize the interest of viewers.

In similar perspective, 'objectifying women' is another means by which women were often stereotyped in advertisements. They are usually depicted as subordinate to men which is also known as 'retro sexism' in social terms. This according to Lindner (2004) is the dissemination of feminine characteristics that are approved by culture, such as dependence, attractiveness, and adherence to domestic duties.

Kang (2002) made it clear that the images of women are always attractive and its always desirable for advertisements, not considering the relevance of the woman to the advertisements. This is why female models and celebrities are mostly used in advertisements of products that are sometimes not related to them.

In his own view, Perse (2001) states that men, women and children do not appreciate advertisements that exposes the body of the model, male or female. Depicting sexuality in advertisements is harmful for the female gender as it promotes the objectification of their body, discrimination against them and encourages a society that accepts violence against women. However, Nagi (2004) states that in Nigeria, advertising is not fulfilling its duty towards the society. There is need to abandon the style of advertising in which women are being treated as sex objects to sell to an advert that highlight real issues of women lives and their upliftment. Advertising should be done to create awareness about the rights of women, for empowerments and other non-degrading purposes.

### **Gender Stereotyping in Advertising**

Nwabuisi & Ihechu (2021) opined that gender stereotyping in advertising is the practice of portraying individuals based on their traditional gender roles and stereotypes to promote products and services. This often means presenting women in passive, submissive, or sexualized roles, while men are portrayed as dominant, assertive, and powerful.

Examples of gender stereotyping in advertising can include depicting women as homemakers or caregivers, while men are shown as breadwinners or career-oriented. Advertisements may also use language, imagery, or scenarios that reinforce these gender stereotypes, such as showing women as emotional or irrational, and men as rational and logical. Gender stereotyping in advertising can have negative impacts on both individuals and society as a whole. It can limit people's perceptions of what they are capable of achieving and can reinforce harmful social norms and beliefs about gender. Talking about gender roles in the society, Brukette & Warhol

(2009) state that men are expected to be public and outdoor people who are always active and capable while the women are supposed to be private and indoor people who are passive and helpless.

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Women are considered to be caring, which is a positive trait. However, when this expected of all women, any woman who is not caring as expected is therefore seen in a negative light. In similar case, a man is expected to possess physical strength. So, those men who may not be as strong as other men are underrated or given poor regard.

According to Nagi, (2014), it gives interesting results when gender stereotyping and advertising are combined. Women are generally considered the central figure in television advertisements when portrayed as younger users of domestic products or playing dependent roles at home. So, while the majority of men are portrayed as being strong, independent, and macho, women are typically limited to domestic duties, parental care, and roles in which their life revolves around the household, These representations are largely influenced by the gender roles that are accepted and prevalent in our society.

So, it is crucial for advertisers to keep away of gender stereotyping in their messaging and to reflect a variety of identities and experiences in their advertisements in order to promote gender equality and diversity. Advertisers should make an effort to accurately and positively depict people of all genders while avoiding harmful stereotypes.

### **Empirical Review**

Pal and Gupta (2020) evaluated the *'portrayal of women in advertising'* in the International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science. The study did an analysis of selected advertisements aired on the mainstream media in India. It was noted that the media plays a big role in helping people understand the imagery of a woman's role in the society. The study suggests that the adverts portray women as objects and this means that there is a misrepresentation of the roles of women in advertisements that needs to be altered. The researchers concluded that the portrayal of women role in the advertisements aired on the mainstream media is in three broad areas which are responsive, decorative and independent roles. Even so, the decorative role predominated over the other roles that women played, (Das, 2010) and the rare depiction of an independent woman was always diminished to either a responsive role or a decorative role, and occasionally even to both.

However, the study emphasized that there is dominance of women objectification as weaker sex, submissive, and a gender that generally needs help. Gulati (2014) .Moorthi et al (2014) in their study about *'The Changing Roles Portrayed by Women in Advertisements'* states that there is much difference in the projection of women in the Nigerian television advert compared to other

nations. They opined in their study that the common stereotypical portrayals of women are more dominant in Nigerian advertisements. They adopt dressings and appearances which portrays the women in provocative ways, more like a sex object. This is why Schaeffer (2006) earlier stated that gender stereotyping and sexism is ever prevalent in the advertising industry because the images of women displayed in television advertisements are always having a touch of traditional home maker or sexual object. Hence, they are portrayed as a gender been created only for a man's comfort.

In a study by Ukweze (2008) on the portrayal of women in 2 Nigeria television advertisements (AIT and NTA Awka). He discovered that women were often used to advertise domestic products like milo, butter, golden morn, etc. more than other domestic products like engineering, cars, banking etc which the men were used for. He stated that after carefully monitoring the adverts, he realized that women were shown to be deriving pleasure from the happiness and achievement of men and children.

In another related study carried out by Adesida (2009) on the '*portrayal of women in Nigeria television commercials*' he examined six television commercials and discovered the uniformity in the character of women and their portrayal in the role they played in the advertisements.

He stated that the way women were portrayed in these advertisements mirrored the stereotypical view of women as either sex objects or domesticated people. These were obvious from the number of women as against men in the presentation, story line, setting, costumes, character and roles portrayal. He observed that none of the women were depicted as holding any managerial positions in a formal setting. Meanwhile, men were portrayed as being powerful, ambitious, and working parents.

### **Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework is a collection of concepts, ideas, and suppositions that guide the development of research studies. It provides a conceptual basis for analyzing research topic, channeling the research process, and helping in the organization and interpretation of the findings gathered. The most appropriate theory for this study is 'Objectivism theory'

### **Objectivism Theory**

The objectification theory, first proposed by Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Robert in 1997, suggests that cultural practices of sexually objectifying women are prevalent in Westernized societies. This theory posits that objectification is rooted in societal norms that prioritize men's desires and perspectives, downplaying women's experiences and needs. It suggests that challenging these norms and promoting more egalitarian attitudes towards women can reduce the harmful effects of objectification and promote women's well-being. The theory is particularly relevant in media, particularly television advertisements, where women's bodies are often

highlighted and normalized, leading to sexual harassment and violence against women. The use of female models in Nigerian television advertisements further reinforces negative gender stereotypes and the notion that a woman's value is determined by her physical appearance.

The reason for applying this theory to this research is because the theory is a valuable framework for examining gender stereotyping and the use of female images in television advertisements. It allows the researcher to explore how the objectification of women in television advertisements reinforces traditional gender roles and expectations. It explains the extent to which female characters or models are reduced to their physical appearance, treated as objects of desire, and influences viewers' attitudes and beliefs about gender.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology for this study involves a survey research design, which involves collecting data from a predetermined group of respondents using standardized questions. The population of study is female students from the department of mass communication and Library and Information Science at Uniben, with a sample size of 310 students. The sampling technique used is stratified sampling, dividing the population into subgroups based on characteristics like gender. A random sample of females will be selected from each stratum. A questionnaire will be used as the research instrument to collect data. The study's validity and reliability will be ensured by ensuring that the questionnaire accurately represents the research objectives and ensuring the accuracy of the measuring instrument. The reliability of the study will be based on pre-testing. The data will be analyzed using tables of frequencies, percentages, and numbers. The study aims to provide valuable insights into the subject matter.

## **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

This chapter presents data in respect of the questionnaires served to respondents. A total of 310 questionnaires were served to respondents while a total of 271 was retrieved.

**Table 1: Gender**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	67	25%
Female	204	75%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

In Table 1, the data represents the gender distribution of the participants in the study. A total of 271 individuals were included. Among them, 67 were male, accounting for 25% of the total sample, while 204 were female, representing 75% of the total sample.

**Table 2: Age Bracket**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
18-25	123	45.39%
26-32	95	35.06%
32-39	49	18.08%
40 and above	4	1.47%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 provides information about the age distribution of the participants. The data is categorized into different age brackets. Among the participants, 123 individuals fell within the age range of 18-25, accounting for 45.39% of the total sample. The age bracket of 26-32 had 95 participants, representing 35.06% of the total sample. The 32-39 age bracket consisted of 49 participants, which was 18.08% of the total sample. Finally, only 4 individuals, or 1.47% of the total sample, were 40 years old or above.

**Table 3: Educational Qualification**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>percentage</b>
SSCE	79	29.15%
HND/BSc	192	70.85%
Masters	-	-
Others	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 presents the distribution of participants based on their educational qualifications. Out of the total sample size of 271 participants, 79 individuals (29.15%) had completed their Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE). The majority of participants, 192 individuals (70.85%), held Higher National Diploma (HND) or Bachelor's degrees (BSc). No participants in this study reported having a Master's degree or other educational qualifications.

**Table 4: Marital Status**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
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Single	160	59%
Married	121	41%
Divorced	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 presents the distribution of participants based on their marital status. Out of the total sample size of 271 participants, 160 individuals (59%) reported being single, while 121 individuals (41%) reported being married. No participants in this study reported being divorced.

**Table 5: How often do you watch television advertisements and use information resources?**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Frequently	103	38%
Sometimes	35	35%
Occasionally	43	16%
Rarely	30	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 provides insights into the frequency at which participants watch television advertisements and use information resources. Among the 271 participants, 103 individuals (38%) reported watching television advertisements and use information resources frequently. 35 individuals (13%) mentioned watching and using them sometimes, while 43 individuals (16%) stated watching advertisements and use information resources occasionally. Additionally, 30 participants (11%) claimed to watch television advertisements and use the resources rarely.

**Table 6: How often do you see women been portrayed negatively in television advertisements and information services?**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Frequently	43	16%
Sometimes	103	38%
Occasionally	38	14%
Rarely	87	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6 provides insights into the frequency at which participants perceive negative portrayals of women in television advertisements and information services. The data indicates that 16% of participants reported frequently observing negative portrayals of women, while 38% mentioned seeing such portrayals sometimes. Additionally, 14% reported occasional negative portrayals, while 32% stated rarely encountering such portrayals in television advertisements. The data suggests that negative portrayals of women in television advertisements and information services are perceived by a considerable portion of the participants. The high percentage of participants

reporting frequent or occasional negative portrayals emphasizes the need for advertisers and marketers to be mindful of the messages conveyed and the potential effects on viewers.

**Table 7: Have you ever made a purchase based on a television advertisement that featured a woman?**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	144	53%
No	103	38%
May be	24	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 7 presents data on participants' purchasing behavior in response to television advertisements featuring women. The results indicate that 53% of participants reported making a purchase based on such advertisements, while 38% stated that they have not made a purchase. Additionally, 9% of participants responded with "Maybe" regarding their purchase behavior. The data suggests that a significant proportion of participants have been influenced by television advertisements featuring women and have made purchases as a result. This finding highlights the impact and persuasive power of advertising in shaping consumer behavior.

**Table 8: How satisfied are you with the way women are portrayed in television advertisements and information services in terms of their roles and responsibilities?**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very satisfied	38	14%
Satisfied	51	19%
Neutral	108	40%
Dissatisfied	68	25%
Very dissatisfied	6	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 8 presents participants' satisfaction levels with the portrayal of women in television advertisements and information services concerning their roles and responsibilities. The data indicates that 14% of participants were very satisfied, while 19% reported being satisfied. Additionally, 40% of participants expressed a neutral stance, 25% were dissatisfied, and 2% were very dissatisfied.

**Table 9: How satisfied are you with the way women are portrayed in television advertisements and information services in terms of their physical appearance?**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very satisfied	30	11%
Satisfied	51	19%
Neutral	111	41%
Dissatisfied	41	15%
Very dissatisfied	38	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 9 presents participants' satisfaction levels with the portrayal of women in television advertisements and information services concerning their physical appearance. The data shows that 11% of participants were very satisfied, while 19% reported being satisfied. Additionally, 41% of participants expressed a neutral stance, 15% were dissatisfied, and 14% were very dissatisfied. These findings suggest that there is a need to critically assess and improve the portrayal of women's physical appearance in television advertisements. It highlights the importance of promoting body positivity, diversity, and realistic representations of women.

**Table 10: To what extent do you think television advertisements and information services have influence on your purchasing decisions?**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
To a great extent	35	13%
Somewhat extent	103	38%
Very little extent	114	42%
Not at all	19	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 10 presents participants' perceptions regarding the extent to which television advertisements influence their purchasing decisions. The data shows that 13% of participants believe television advertisements have a great extent of influence, while 38% believe they have a somewhat extent of influence. Additionally, 42% of participants believe television advertisements have very little extent of influence, and 7% believe they have no influence at all

on their purchasing decisions. The data suggests that participants' perceptions regarding the influence of television advertisements on their purchasing decisions vary. While a small percentage acknowledges a significant influence, a substantial portion believes the influence is either limited or non-existent.

**Table 11: Women are portrayed in provocative ways and more likely as sex objects in Nigerian television adverts and information services**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly disagree	83	31%
Disagree	32	12%
Neutral	11	4%
Agree	65	24%
Strongly agree	80	29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 11 presents participants' perceptions regarding the portrayal of women in Nigerian television advertisements and information services as provocative and more likely as sex objects. The data shows that 31% of participants strongly disagree with this portrayal, while 12% disagree. Additionally, 4% expressed a neutral stance, 24% agree with the portrayal, and 29% strongly agree.

The findings from Table 11 indicate a range of perceptions regarding the portrayal of women in Nigerian television advertisements and information services. While a significant proportion of participants disagree or strongly disagree with the portrayal of women as provocative or sex objects, a substantial number agree or strongly agree with this perception.

**Table 12: Would you be more likely to purchase a product or service if it was advertised without negative portrayals of women**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly disagree	14	5%
Disagree	51	19%
Neutral	24	9%
Agree	60	22%
Strongly agree	122	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 12 presents participants' attitudes towards purchasing a product or service if it was advertised without negative portrayals of women. The data shows that 5% of participants strongly disagree with being more likely to make a purchase, while 19% disagree. Additionally, 9% expressed a neutral stance, 22% agree with the statement, and 45% strongly agree.

The findings from Table 12 reveal a significant proportion of participants who strongly agree or agree that they would be more likely to purchase a product or service if it was advertised without negative portrayals of women. This suggests that the absence of negative portrayals has a positive impact on consumer behavior. Meaning that they will still purchase a product without negative portrayal of a gender in the advertisement.

**Table 13: Negative portrayals of women in television advertisements and information services affect the way society views women**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly disagree	32	12%
Disagree	24	9%
Neutral	5	2%
Agree	111	41%
Strongly agree	99	36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 13 presents participants' beliefs regarding the impact of negative portrayals of women in television advertisements and information services on how society views women. The data shows that 12% of participants strongly disagree with the statement, while 9% disagree. Additionally, 2% expressed a neutral stance, 41% agree with the statement, and 36% strongly agree.

The findings indicate that a significant proportion of participants agree or strongly agree that negative portrayals of women in television advertisements and information services have an impact on how society views women. This suggests are cognition of the influence that media can have on shaping societal perceptions and attitudes. These results underscore the responsibility of advertisers to portray women in a positive, respectful, and empowering manner

**Table 14: Sexism and gender stereotyping are still prevalent in the advertising industry**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly disagree	38	14%
Disagree	16	6%
Neutral	24	9%

Agree	154	57%
Strongly agree	39	14%
Total	271	100

Table 14 presents participants' perceptions regarding the prevalence of sexism and gender stereotyping in the advertising industry. The data shows that 14% of participants strongly disagree with the statement, while 6% disagree. Additionally, 9% expressed a neutral stance, 57% agree with the statement, and 14% strongly agree.

The findings indicate that a significant proportion of participants agree or strongly agree that sexism and gender stereotyping are still prevalent in the advertising industry. This suggests a recognition of persistent challenges and the need for improvement in the portrayal of gender in advertisements. These results emphasize the importance of raising awareness and addressing gender biases in the advertising industry.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Findings revealed the negative portrayal of women in television advertisements, with 16% of respondents stating it is frequently, 38% sometimes, 14% occasionally, and 32% rarely. This portrayal can perpetuate harmful stereotypes, objectify women, and reinforce gender biases. Botta (2000) suggests advertisers should critically evaluate their creative choices for more positive representations. Okunna (2002) expresses concerns about the media's "symbolic annihilation" of women, leading to pessimism about the potential for significant change in media representation of women in Nigeria.

The study reveals that women are generally satisfied with the portrayal of women in television advertisements, with 14% satisfied, 19% satisfied, 40% neutral, 25% dissatisfied, and 12% very dissatisfied. This suggests that there is room for improvement in the portrayal of women in terms of their roles, responsibilities, and physical appearance. The high percentages of women expressing dissatisfaction or neutrality suggest that aspects of portrayal may not align with their expectations or preferences. Advertisers should strive for more diverse and empowering portrayals of women that celebrate their abilities, achievements, and unique qualities. The findings also highlight the need for advertisers to challenge stereotypes and promote narratives that celebrate women's strength, accomplishments, and agency. By doing so, advertisers can contribute to promoting gender equality, empowering women, and fostering a more inclusive media environment. Worell and Danner (2011) provide insights into the stereotypes and empowerment aspects present in advertisements, emphasizing the importance of empowering representations in television advertising.

The study underscores the need for a more diverse portrayal of women in television advertisements, urging advertisers to challenge stereotypes and present a broader range of roles, aspirations, and characteristics. The study reveals that 14% of participants in Nigeria strongly disagree with television advertisements, while 40% express a neutral stance. This suggests that advertisements are not effectively fulfilling their duty towards society. To improve the effectiveness and social relevance of advertisements, advertisers should conduct thorough audience research and understand the diverse needs, values, and aspirations of their target audience.

### **Summary of Findings**

The study on Nigerian television advertisements revealed that a significant number of respondents perceive women as being negatively portrayed. The majority felt that the portrayal was stereotypical, with 42% strongly agreeing. However, 12% felt it was empowering. The findings suggest a need for improved representations that challenge stereotypes and promote diversity. Advertisers should conduct audience research to understand their target audience's needs and preferences.

### **CONCLUSION**

The research findings on the portrayal of the female gender in Nigeria television advertisements and information services provide valuable insights into the current state of representation and perceptions in the advertising industry. The study reveals a significant concern regarding the negative portrayal of women, as a substantial proportion of participants perceived women to be depicted negatively in television advertisements and information services.

From the findings, it can be deduced that a mixed level of satisfaction with the portrayal of women in terms of their physical appearance and roles. While some participants expressed satisfaction, there were also significant percentages of respondents who expressed dissatisfaction, emphasizing the need for improvement and more diverse representations.

The research also shed light on the presence of both stereotypical and empowering portrayals of women in television advertisements. While a considerable percentage of participants perceived the portrayal to be stereotypical, there were also those who believed that women were portrayed in an empowering manner. This highlights the importance of promoting positive and diverse representations that challenge stereotypes and empower women.

The research findings underscore the need for improvements in the portrayal of women in Nigeria television advertisements. Advertisers and industry stakeholders should take these findings into consideration and work towards creating more inclusive, empowering, and socially

relevant advertisements. By challenging stereotypes, promoting diversity, and aligning with the needs and aspirations of the target audience, the advertising industry can contribute to a more equitable and positive representation of women in the media landscape. Further research and collaborative efforts are necessary to address these issues and drive positive change in the portrayal of women in television advertisements while the recommendations below need to be taken into consideration.

### **Recommendations**

1. Advertisers should strive to challenge and move away from the use of provocative or objectifying representations of women. Instead, they should focus on presenting women in empowering and respectful ways that reflect their diverse roles, abilities, and achievements. They should also ensure equal opportunities for both men and women to be featured in advertisements, providing diverse and inclusive portrayals of gender.
2. Ultimately, advertisers should strive to create compelling and persuasive television advertisements that not only capture viewers' attention but also provide valuable information, address consumer needs, and establish emotional connections. By aligning advertisements with consumer preferences and values, advertisers can increase their influence and drive positive purchasing behavior.
3. Advertisers should strive to create advertisements that showcase women in roles of strength, agency, and autonomy. By doing so, they can challenge gender norms and inspire positive self-perception and empowerment among women and viewers.
4. Advertisers should strive to break away from stereotypical portrayals and present a broader range of roles, aspirations, and characteristics for women. By challenging gender stereotypes, advertisers can contribute to promoting gender equality and empowering women in society.

### **Declarations**

#### **\*Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate**

- Not applicable

#### **\*Consent for Publication**

- Not applicable

#### **\*Funding**

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**This declaration is “not applicable**

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