

Contemporary Issues on Usage of Humour and Drama Advertising Appeals in Television Advertising in Nigeria: A Conceptual Review

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Abstract: Humour and drama appeals have become one of the most widely employed communication tactics in advertising; yet, our understanding of this advertising genre's challenges still needs to be updated, as most of the literature on the subject, particularly drama, needs to be updated. In the meantime, concerns about their effectiveness continue to arise. Concepts, methods, models, types, and elements of humour and drama were examined through conceptual review. Premised on the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion (ELM) theory, which explains how persuasion occurs and the strength of attitudes formed as a result of those processes, the paper concludes that while humour and drama are not a guarantee of better ads, their impact can be enhanced with careful consideration of the goals, audience, and situation. In addition, since this paper is only a conceptual review, it is anticipated that it will contribute to a further explanation of humour and drama and their mediating role in the relationship between advertising appeals and consumer intention. This may then be further investigated to yield empirical findings about the dynamic nature of these advertising genres.

Keywords: Humour Appeal, Drama Appeal, Television Commercial, Contemporary Issues

I. INTRODUCTION

Advertising has assumed an essential dimension in marketing, becoming one of the most important commercial activities. Most companies expend a massive part of their budget creating and running advertisements to promote their companies and products. Components of rational and emotional advertising appeals have become the go-to appeal to consumers' subconscious. According to Mazhar, Jalees, Asim, Alam and Zaman (2022), advertising impacts people's opinions, behaviours, and lifestyles. It is one of the most important means of communication between the product manufacturer and the end consumer. Ateke (2015) emphasizes that consumers are likelier to associate brands' advertisements with emotional values and messages. Positive emotional appeals provide a strong brand cue and stimulate category-based processing.

The four communicative powers of advertising are stopping power, locking power, feeling power, and moving power. Advertising stops when it is attention-grabbing; it locks purchase-oriented cues into memory to engender recall, stimulates positive emotions, and ultimately nudges prospects to the level of willingness. It is pertinent to note that choosing appropriate advertising content cues that grab consumers'

attention and persuade them has become more complex, leading to the adoption of advertising appeals such as humour and drama, among other advertising techniques (Riemer & Noel, 2021).

Sadeghi, Fakharyan, Dadkhah, Khodadadian, Vosta, and Jafari (2015) define advertising appeal as "a process whereby customers are communicated to understand how certain products prove to be beneficial to them" (p.61). Belch and Belch (2015) maintain that appeals in advertising refer to the approach used to draw the consumer's attention or influence their feelings for the product. Kalu and Daniel (2017) further explain that advertising appeal forms the theme of every marketing effort. To ensure that consumers/audiences grab the message that marketers pass across, those who carry out advertising functions must apply some ambitious effort to their activities, which can be referred to as appeal (Kalu & Daniel, 2017).

Advertising appeals (including humour and drama) are worthwhile investments. They bring quick memorability, recall, and recognition and direct consumers' connection with the audience (Ruchi, Nawal & Verma, 2015, Chukwu, Kanu & Ezeabogu, 2019). According to Chang and Bandyopadhyay (2014), humour in advertising strongly appeals, encouraging customers to focus more on the message. To Ivanov, Eisend, and Bayon (2019), advertisers believe that including humour in commercials will have two positive impacts: enhanced attention to the advertisement and favourable engineering sentiments toward the product. It is worth remembering that humour is one of the most often-used emotional appeals in advertising worldwide (Ivanov et al., 2015).

Although there is no consensus regarding the most appropriate appeal, prior literature on the impact of humour on advertising suggests humour as a generally acknowledged form of advertising appeal. In television, for example, it is estimated that some element of humour can be found in up to 20 per cent of all commercial spots (Cantor, 2006; Kelly & Solomon, 2013). Similarly, according to Adeyemi (2021), the percentage of global advertising featuring drama has risen in the last decade to over 17%.

However, all these appeals are not without faults and criticism, as Gulas and Weinberger (2016) suggest that broad generalisations about the persuasive effects of humour might

be inappropriate. Furthermore, graphic designer Kelly Schwarz in Kokemuller (2012) explained that a small amount of humour often aids advertising, but an excessive amount takes away from the brand or product message. He stressed that humour could lighten the tone of a message or make an advert more memorable, but it should not take away the emphasis on benefits or the value proposition for customers. Most times, the intention of advertisers to cause humour takes away the intended and original meaning of the message (Gregory, Crawford & Ngo, 2019). Bankole and Odji (2017), substantiating humour's potency, suggest asking when humour in advertising is practical rather than if humour is effective. While drama can generate positive emotions around the brand, according to Chukwu et al. (2019), it has been accused of diverting consumers' attention away from the proposition contained in advertisements.

In light of the preceding, this article examines relevant concepts and variables crucial to the usage of humour and drama advertising appeals in television commercials in Nigeria.

II. HUMOUR IN ADVERTISING

In recent times, humour has been one of the most frequently used communication strategies in advertising (Bankole & Odji, 2017; Manyiwa & Jin, 2020). According to Weinberger and Gulas (2019) and Eisend (2018), about 30% of radio advertisements, 27% of T.V. ads, and 5% of magazine advertisements are humorous. It is mainly used in television commercials (Joanne & Pat, 2009). Researchers and experts are convinced that humour can be an effective tool when creating awareness in advertising (Blanc & Brigaud, 2014, Riecken & Hensel, 2012). According to Spielmann (2014), it increases the recognition of a brand and includes all forms of smile- and laugh-inducing stimuli, such as puns, jokes, and parodies.

In more frequently referenced research by Stendhal and Craig (1973), as cited in Cheung and Furnham (2021), attention is drawn to different use of humour and its direction in communication goals. Weinberger and Gulas (2019) and Bankole and Odji (2017) identified two operating factors of humour advertisement - the humour mechanism and intentional relatedness. The most robust case of humour and persuasiveness are presented in the research of Bussiere (2009), which used a behaviour measure to determine primary factors which could influence the use of humour in advertising.

There has continued to be an enormous interest in the effects of using humour in advertising (Chan & Low, 2020; Hendriks & Sttick, 2020). Previous studies reveal that advertisements, which include a sense of humour, tend to draw more attention to the brand than regular advertisements (Palikhe, 2019; Barber, Kuo & Bishop, 2012). To them, humour makes customers focus more on the brand and encourages them to know more about it. However, if humour offends, is misused, or is overused, it can negatively affect the advert. Previous research by Koneska, Teofilovska & Dimitrieska (2017) has shown that companies that utilise humour relevant to the nature and function of their products are more successful.

Humorous Advertising Tactics

Advertisers utilise amusing advertising methods to attain their targeted brand communication goals in various advertising circumstances. Humorous strategies can be divided into four categories: affiliative humour, self-enhancement humour, self-deprecating humour, and combative humour are all types of comedy (Mathies et al., 2016).

1) **Affiliated humour:** This form of humour is intended in a good direction at others, and it can be found in everyday situations, such as when people share funny stories. In social situations, affiliative humour can aid in the reduction of unpleasant personal tensions, the improvement of group cohesion, and the facilitation of others' recognition. As a result, affiliative humour has a wide range of marketing applications, including improving interactions between service providers and consumers and encouraging the formation of good social bonds to deliver value to clients. At the same time, it benefits service providers since it increases their self-esteem, emotional stability, and concern for others, making them happy.

2) **self-enhancing humour** helps people cope with stressful situations and works as a mental defense system. As a result, it boosts customer confidence and well-being while also helping to prevent depression. It is also reputed for being a good way for service providers to avoid unfavourable workplace consequences. It is a good approach for dealing with stressful situations, making it a fantastic resource for enhancing the psychological well-being of service workers. The Airtel 4G-Blender commercial is an example of self-enhancing humour, in which the service provider continues its long-running series depicting "bad blood" between the mothers of a newlywed couple (Mama Rainbow and Ngozi Nwosu). While the husband's mother is old school and prefers to do her chores by hand, the wife's mother is more modern and knows how to save time by using household appliances. With a hefty dose of humour, Aitel advises its loyalists and new customers that 3G networks may work for them, but 4G is preferable.

3) **Self-deprecating humour:** This form of humour makes customers break down. It includes unpleasant jokes and frequently displays pessimism, thus may not fulfill the brand's well-intended goal for the consumers. As a result, it is described as blatantly derogatory. Leadway Assurance's Family Benefit Plan plus advertising exemplifies self-deprecating humour. This advertisement depicts a financially strapped middle-aged guy frantically trying to raise funds for his mother-in-funeral. Law's All of his family, whom he turns to for assistance, mock him and refuse to help him. When the man's father died a year later, he stunned his relatives by inviting them to the burial instead of pleading for help. Leadway Assurance Family Benefit Plus came to his rescue. However, the advertisement depicted the man in his underwear (singlet and boxers) was offensive since the intended amusement became unpleasant and openly insulting. According to an internet advertising evaluation, Nigerians have given the ad a lukewarm response, viewing it for shorter periods than previous humorous advertisements (Adwatch, 2019).

4) Aggressive humour: It makes a conscious effort to degrade customers. Offensively provocative, discriminating, and inappropriate or humiliating jokes are examples of humour contributing to brand failure. This particular humour style is uncommon in this part of the world due to its sensitive nature. No client in the Nigerian marketing terrain will be willing to stake its reputation and brand on aggressive humour that will fall flat on its face.

Types of humour in advertising

Humour, according to Bussiere (2009), is a "universal phenomenon that is easy to spot, enjoy, define and analyse" (p. 97). Humour, to her, most times, is seen as the quality of being amusing or comical, a mood or state of mind. Although there is no commonly agreed classification of humour kinds, it is essential to categorise humour into conceptual, theoretical, and practical categories. (Bussiere, 2009).

Catanescu and Tom (2001), as cited in Taecharungroj and Nueangjamnong (2015), give a categorisation of humour to assist define humour in various advertising mediums in a study on humour in advertising. To them, managers should evaluate the sorts of humour when deciding whether or not to use humour in their advertisements. Using Reick's practitioner-oriented classification system, Koneska, Teofilovska, and Dimitrieska (2017) list humour types: comparison, personification, exaggeration, pun, sarcasm, silliness, surprise, black humour, unexpected/situational humour, and blue humour.

1) Comparison-Creating a hilarious situation by combining two or more parts. On one page, for example, a print commercial for Airtel (a telecoms brand) portrays a joyful family (Lateef Adedimeji's) in a Christmas picture to be sent to his grandma (Mama Rainbow). Everything would be fantastic if the son (Adedimeji) did not dress like a "yahoo boy" with a leather jacket, chains, and a wild hairstyle. The identical picture appears on the second page of the same ad, but this time with a more formally dressed son with clean, short hair. The copy says that with Airtel's data plan, one has "freedom of choice" ADNEWS (2020)

2) Exaggeration - entails exaggerating and magnifying something out of context. In one of Wendy's commercials, two young men purchase "4 Biggie Fries and 4 Biggie Drinks" in a drive-through. As soon as they accept the request, the automobile tilts to one side.

3) Pun - Using language features to generate new meanings creates humour. When it comes to Absolut Vodka, the phrase "absolute masterpiece" takes on a whole new meaning

4) Personification - Giving the attributes of human characteristics to animals, plants, or objects. The Sunlight 2-in-1 Nigeria ad using the power of animation and fantasy depicting a soapy mascot as having the cleaning wand to make fabrics cleaner is an example of personification.

5) Sarcasm- According to Bhadury and Pope (2010), sarcasm is defined as caustic remarks or situations. On the other

hand, this study treats sarcasm as a separate category and includes overtly ironic replies or situations. Two women (Mama Gee, Patience Ozokwor, and Sola Sobawale) are shown in a quarrel in a Glo advertising. Mama Gee is considering printing "some cool sign" for her shop, sitting at her computer with her legs propped up. "How about 'For Rent,'" sarcastically says her next-door neighbour (Sola Sobawale).

6) Silliness - Silliness can take many forms, from making hilarious faces to bizarre situations, such as the one depicted in the "Suya" commercials, in which Saka (Afeez Oyetoro) played a dispatch rider who was supposed to carry "suya" to Mr. Macaroni (Debo Adedayo) and his family but instead began eating it on the way,

7) Surprise - All commercials in which humour originates from unexpected situations are included. The Airtel commercial, which features Dele Odule and Lateef Adedimeji in a gym, uses the element of surprise to produce a funny result. The advertisement begins with a man. Dele Odule, who accompanied his son-in-law (Lateef Adedimeji) to the gym, after fooling around with all the gym equipment (treadmill, weight etcetera.), ended up using a bowl of "fufu" and vegetable as his dumb-bell (Brand Online, 2022)

8) Black humour- This is what happens by cancelling out the severe side of socially taboo subjects like death, illness, morality, or sex and approaching them playfully. However, the advertiser needs a light touch and sensitivity, or the humour could backfire. There is also a reasonable possibility of the audience feeling offended. The classical "Gold circle" condom "Who gets this raincoat?" wittingly played around the issue of sex and family in a society where the mention of sex is almost taboo.

9) Unexpected and Situation Humour: They are not the result of the author's imagination but instead of a person writing in a typical everyday circumstance.

10) Blue Humour: This is when sexuality and body processes come into play. According to Catanescu and Tom's (2001) research, comedy is used more in television than in print ads. They believe that television is a more effective medium for using humour. In publications, sarcasm is the most popular style of humour, while on television, silly reigns supreme. They say that comedy relaxes the audience, breaks the ice, and establishes a connection between the communicator and the listener.

Drama Appeal in advertising

Drama is defined by Barbara Stern (1994), as cited by Ekeanyanwu (2012), as "a composition designed to reflect life or character or to convey a tale usually incorporating conflicts and emotions through action and dialogue" (p. 13). In marketing, advertising, and consumer research, the presence of drama has been recognised and researched in various ways. Adeyemi (2019) first explored television ads as a sort of drama by establishing that they exhibit basic drama features such as authority figures, allegorical characters, and a concentration on character and imagery.

According to Bloom and Liljenberg (2018), the study of drama in a television advertisement is based on narrative theory, which attempts to explain why stories are so important in our lives. This research aims to continue the practical examination of the utility of narrative theory in understanding, describing, explaining, and forecasting consumer behaviour. Although past research has focused on dramatic form, most advertising research has recognised drama due to the three dramatic factors of narration, character, and plot. The three-point "dramatisation scale" was first established by Deighton, Romer, and McQueen (2009) to contrast argument and drama, claiming that argument is plotless, characterless, and narrated. As a result, the drama was limited to a commercial with character and plot but no narration.

Babu and Latha (2014) explained that advertisers had realised the need to communicate with their audiences through the use of drama in their television advertising due to its potential to influence change in people by bringing reality on screen; it has been observed that drama is employed to increase awareness in television advertising. A screenplay writer must construct a television commercial after the idea/theme has been formed, and casting depends on the director, whose role is to realise the script artistically. The television commercial may or may not have words; it may simply be a dancing expression based on the director's mental image as he collaborates with other production crew members. According to Babu and Latha (2014), Bertolt Brecht, the renowned philosopher, was the first to emphasise the need for the theatre to be "quotable" and to transmit the message through easily remembered and repeated phrases, gestures, and images. His concept of condensing the essence of each scene into an immediately reproducible electronic system with sound, image, and gestures has found ideal realisation in the dramaturgy of television advertising (Babu & Latha, 2014).

According to Akgun, Keski, Ayar, and Erdogan (2015), a drama immerses the audience in action it depicts. When a successful drama, the audience becomes "lost" in the plot and experiences the characters' problems and feelings. For example, statements that advertising can imbue drama to consumer products by showing a sequence of expectancy, tension, and resolution in product use are valid. To them, this is evidenced in "the plan, aim, and shoot the sequence in using a camera." (p.11) Akgun et al. (2015) opine that it is not hard to find a plot in advertisements that feature products rather than people. "The actions when a detergent fights a stain or when one diaper competes with another to retain water enact a plot. As a result, the term "demonstration" is used to describe a commercial having a plot but no human characters" (p. 12).

Although narration can clarify the significance of an event and explain how it relates to a claim, it comes at a cost because the appeal is typically appraised with the goal of persuasion in mind. However, events do not appear to be as clearly chosen and ordered in a play: they appear to happen. Dakoumi and Abdelwaheed (2014) assert that without a narrator to prove what the presented events are worth to the advertiser's claim,

advertising must rely on verisimilitude. According to them, if it succeeds, this form of advertisement creates an emotional relationship between the audience and the characters' worries. If it fails, it is viewed as contrived or gimmicky, and empathy is replaced with a more critical assessment.

Finally, television commercials achieved their goal due to their association with dramatic communication. To support this claim, Dakoumi and Abdelwaheed (2014) think that television commercials should not only be considered a type of drama but also very similar to the origins of theatre.

Types of Drama adopted for Advertising.

According to Adeyemi (2019), different types of drama have existed throughout history, from classical Greek theatre to the present day. However, to understand the various types of drama, it is imperative to understand that they are defined by their delivery forms, including tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, and melodrama.

Tragedy

Quesenberry and Coolsen (2014) submit that Aristotle first defined tragedy in his Poetics around 330 BC. He defined tragedy as "the imitation of an action that is serious and also as having magnitude, complete in itself," in the medium of poetic language and in the manner of dramatic rather than narrative presentation, involving "incidents arousing pity and fear wherewith to accomplish the catharsis of such emotion." Aristotle says the tragic hero will evoke pity and fear if he is neither thoroughly good nor bad. However, a mixture of both is "better than we are because he is of higher than ordinary moral worth.

Tragicomedy

Pollard (2015) defines tragicomedy as "an interpretation of emotional reaction where tragedy and comedy are both present, yet one does not merely follow upon the other but arises from it." (p.11). Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice and The Winter Tale are popular tragicomic romances. Friedrich Durrenmatt (1921-1990), as cited in Pollard (2015), is one of the first dramatists to explain tragicomedy as a uniquely modern world view, believed that the twentieth century was a period marked by two wars and the Holocaust and that the spirit of exaltation could no longer be sustained.

Melodrama

To Dewar-Watson (2005), melodrama is a kind of drama in which everything is hyperbolised. Typically, themes depicted in melodramas are simple and without any unpredictable plot twists. According to him, there are lots of stereotypes in such dramas. However, the main point of a melodrama is not to tell a story but to awaken feelings in the audience. They were initially used to describe musical plays, such as opera. Flat kinds are the protagonists. Similarly, Stern and Escalas (2003) explain that melodrama pretends to deal with serious themes. However, this is only a ruse.

Comedy

According to Adeyemi (2019), comedy is concerned with pleasure and enjoyment. The audience is given to believe that no significant calamity will occur, and the action usually ends well for all involved. Derision, incongruity, and automatism are three comedy strategies by Allardyce Nicoll that generate comic detachment (i.e., we laugh at the hardships of comic characters because the playwright puts them at a psychological removal). Incongruity makes people laugh by creating absurd contrasts in environment, character, or speech, whereas automatism depicts individuals doing without thinking.

The following categories of humour are frequently recognised within the broad comedy spectrum: Festive comedies, Farce, Comedy of Manners, Sentimental Comedy, and Tendency comedy.

Classical Drama Model

Initially written in 335 BC, the Poetics of Aristotle is regarded as the earliest surviving work of dramatic theory — the foundation of literary criticism. According to Quesenberry and Coolson (2014), Aristotle thought the story to be more important than the character in theatre. He defined a plot as having a beginning, middle, and conclusion with events that must be causally related in Poetics. They believe that the plot is what has the potential to elicit emotion and deliver drama. The devices of character and narrative are utilised to advance the plot of a novel (Quesenberry & Coolson, 2014)

Quesenberry and Coolson (2014) used Freytag Gustav's theory of dramatic structure to study the relationship between storyline and consumer favorability in television ads. This idea is based on Gustav's study of five-act theatrical structure, which was first published in 1863 as *Die Technik des Dramas* and is sometimes referred to as "Freytag's pyramid." Based on a storyline split by a beginning, middle, and end, Aristotle's dramatic theory was pushed by Freytag to a more specific five-act structure first developed by Renaissance dramatists like William Shakespeare. A drama is divided into five acts, according to Freytag, and these acts combine to form the dramatic arc: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement.

Exposition sets the scene by introducing characters and environment, followed by a series of events that build up the story to a climax where the story (plot) takes a turn for the better comedy; or for the worst drama (Trbic, 2010).

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The paper is underpinned by the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion (ELM). Developed by Richard Petty and John Cacioppo in 1983 and refined in 1986, the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion (ELM) is a broad theory of attitude change (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983, 1986a). The premise of this idea is rooted in social and psychological studies. ELM has been used to explain brand attitudes and advertising performance (Akashoro, 2014, Kim et al., 2009;

Klaus & Bailey, 2008; Tan & Chia, 2007). The ELM is a hypothesis that explains how persuasion occurs and the strength of attitudes formed due to those processes (Lien, 2010).

Routes of Persuasion

The ELM's primary idea is that different persuasion strategies may be effectively applied based on whether the communication scenario has a high or low possibility of elaboration. According to Petty and Cacioppo (1983), cited in O'Keefe (2008), there are two courses to take depending on whether the elaboration probability is high or low. The customer's ability and motivation influence whether or not they will elaborate.

The two methods of persuasion, the central route and the peripheral route, are at the heart of the ELM debate. The core channel, located on the left side of the model, is defined by motivation and the ability to process advertising messages and the determinants of pleasant and unfavourable ideas (Choi & Salmon, 2003; Lien, 2000; Petty et al., 1983). The peripheral route, located on the model's right side, is characterised by a lower level of information processing. The source qualities stimulate people on the periphery route (Choi & Salmon, 2003; Lien, 2000; Petty et al., 1983).

In other words, in a high-involvement condition, consumers tend to process information diligently and decide upon the relevance of the arguments presented in the ad (Akashoro, 2014; Petty & Cacioppo, 1979; Petty et al., 1983). Conversely, a consumer is likely to follow the peripheral route when his/her level of involvement in the advertised object is low. Peripheral cues like cartoon characters, music, humour, and drama can assist low-motivated audiences who like the messages more.

Akashoro (2014) explained that the peripheral route mirrors the reliance of the recipient on a set of heterogeneous cues such as elements of the message itself (e.g., number and or ordinal position of arguments) as well as elements related to the source of the message (e.g., likability, aspirational similarity with the recipient). In a low-involvement situation, consumers are likely to develop and change their attitudes based on peripheral elements rather than the arguments' quality. Allison, Davis, Webb and Short (2017) suggest that through the peripheral route, individuals engage in a less cognitively rigorous process and form evaluations simply by relying on peripheral cues, which constitute the remaining elements of the message.

The role of humour and drama advertising appeals in low participation settings is a consequence of the Elaboration Likelihood Theory of Persuasion's (ELM) proposal or prediction that a less involved person is less likely to pay attention to product-relevant information or message arguments but is more likely to pay attention to the advertisement's emotive components or peripheral cues (low involvement). This implies that humour and drama in advertising a low-involvement or low-cost product will be a significant consideration.

Critical Discourse on Humour and Drama Use in Television Advertising in Nigeria”.

When the apex advertising regulatory body in Nigeria, the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON), announced the ban on using foreign models and Voice-over artists in the nation's advertising space to enhance the development of local talents and engender inclusive growth of the sector; industry experts applauded this decision. This is given the vast sums of naira that go into the production of advertisements that contain celebrities, drama and humour, amongst others, especially when the monies are ferried out of the country to benefit other economies.

Putting in context the massive investment in this genre of advertising in Nigeria; a recent PwC research report on the outlook of Entertainment and Media in Nigeria recorded total advertising spend of about \$483 million (N193 billion) in 2020 (NairaMetrics, 2021). This cost did not include investments in the production of television commercials.

Against the foregoing, advertisers must develop unique and unconventional strategies to cut through the advertising clutter and draw customers; hence, most advertisers and marketers have had to decide between using emotional or rational appeals to persuade customers to make a purchase. Existing research does, however, support the fact that many customers acknowledged changing their attitudes for the better due to the hilarious and dramatic pleas made in television advertising.

According to Ruchi, Nawal, and Verma (2015), consumers are more likely to connect with brand advertising that conveys sentimental values and sentiments. In addition to providing a potent brand cue. However, there is a need for more pertinent local studies on the impact of both rational and emotional appeals (dramatic and hilarious appeals) on customer purchase decisions. Similarly, Cheung and Furnham (2021) submit that music, dancing, character, and humour are most effective at grabbing the consumer's attention. Dramatic commercials, according to them, were, therefore, funnier, more engaging, and more straightforward for consumers to understand. The widespread use of humour and drama as communication instruments proves their value to all cultures. Even though these genres are often used in domestic and international advertising, scholars frequently approach them as a matter of necessity without offering any overarching theories or frameworks for analyzing their employment (Cheung & Furnham, 2021)

From the iconic Chief Zebrudaya, who said in the early 1980s Elephant detergent commercial, "there you are," to the incomparable Icheoku, who in the Equatorial Trust Bank commercial walked to the bank with a sleeping mat and asked for the "tally number," Who can forget the Gold Circle condom "who get this raincoat?" or the "We no go gree, Bagco supper sack" advertisement? Or is it Saka's unforgettable "I don port's" MTN ad or Honeywell's *bam, bam la, la*, and Indomie Noodles, "Mama do good" (ADNews, 2018)? According to Doughudje

(2014), there is no denying that these old-school television commercials become unforgettable due to their memorability.

Fast forward to the present, MTN's drama surrounding value-added services, Glo's Berekete's expressive humour starring *Broda Shaggi* and *Sola Sobowale*, and Airtel's value-added services series featuring *Dele Odule*, *Mama Rainbow*, and *Lateef Adedimeji*. It is important to note that these commercials are low-involvement products that use humour and drama to position the brands in consumers' minds (BrandCrunch, 2022).

Over the past few decades, the Nigerian advertising sector has dramatically transformed due to technological advancement impacting the media of advertising, leading to better creativity and more consumer-drawing strategies (Chukwu, Kanu, & Ezeabogu, 2019; Sharma, 2012, p. 1). This has, however, caused difficulties in the creative application of commercial appeals like humour and drama. Why is there so little academic backing for using humour and drama in advertising?

Hussein (2017) hypothesized several potential causes for this disparity:

1. Some practitioners believe humour and dramatic appeals may have little effect, benefit (other than grabbing attention), or even adverse effects (due perhaps to distraction or accelerated wear-out).
2. It is possible that humour and drama do not work as well in experimental settings because they demand real-world situations, low-commitment products, especially fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), straightforward messages, and multiple exposures.
3. Drama and humour may only be compelling in specific platforms (television vs print), in certain industries (consumer vs business), with certain types of messages (image vs informational), with certain types of products (snack foods vs cosmetics), with certain types of brands (established vs new), or in certain market conditions (high brand-switching behaviour vs low).
4. Utilizing drama and humour manipulations that can be matched with simple controls could cause the absence of experimental support.

In the majority of Nigerian advertising, drama ads are frequently dramatic messages infused with information, whereas humour manipulations are frequently non-humorous messages that incorporate pieces of humour. Though both communication types include humour and drama, it is essential to identify what makes an advertisement successful (Akashoro, 2014).

According to Njogu (2019), what distinguishes dramatic commercials from other types of advertising is their attempt to engage viewers by having them identify with the characters. This gives the audience a fictitious experience of using the brand's benefits and rewards. It is crucial to understand how dramatic appeal affects viewers of television commercials (Njogu, 2019). Haider, Ahmad, and Ghani (2019) note that

humour and dramatic appeals are used in television advertising to grab viewers' attention and incorporate actual events into the advertisement. Since these appeals can transform the world and bring reality to the big screen, advertisers interact with their viewers through it (Haider et al., 2019).

Ekeanyawu et al. (2010), as cited by Olaoye, Taiwo and Onita (2022), claim that humorous and dramatic television advertising in Nigeria has grown to be such a powerful force that it can now run soap operas and develop characters, adding to the repetition and continuity of advertising. This explains the increasing usage of these themes in Nigerian brand advertisements.

Although humour makes us smile and the jingles make us sing along (a dramatic element), do these aspects motivate the consumer to act decisively? The study suggests a paradigm for a study that highlights the need to focus on cultural values rather than country differences, including cognitive and emotive models of advertising success, equivalence issues, a review of alternative research methods, and a careful analysis of measurement results.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this conceptual review explored intriguing themes surrounding humour and drama appeals in advertising by identifying the circumstances that enhance the effectiveness of humour and drama. Humour is not and never has been a magic wand that guarantees more successful advertising, and drama has its problems. Despite these perceived flaws, there has been a surge in the quantity of hilarious and dramatic advertisements, which may cause one to exaggerate the case for this type of advertising. As a result, this paper concludes that much more research is needed in the future to contextualize these arguments in their current context.

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