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DEVELOPMENT OF A SCALE FOR MEASURING TELEVISION COMMERCIAL EFFICACY

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Introduction

Mass selling makes widespread distribution of goods and services possible. Although marketers might prefer to use personal selling to communicate with customers, it can be expensive on a per-contact or per-sale basis. Advertising is a way round this problem. Although not as flexible as personal selling, it can often reach large numbers of potential customers at the same time. It can inform and persuade customers and enables a firm or organization to satisfy customers' needs.

Advertising, a very important function of marketing, is being increasingly accepted by organizations. This accelerated acceptance stems from the numerous benefits, which the advertising sub-function of marketing offers to organizations. The objectives of organizations determine the kinds of advertising needed by them. These objectives also go a long way to influence the way such organizations evaluate their marketing efforts.

By way of definition, advertising could be said to be a process of informing others of the existence and availability of a product or service. The advertising Practitioners council of Nigeria, APCON (1993), defines it as a "form of communication through media about products, service(s) or ideas paid for by an identifiable sponsor. Ehigie and Babalola (1995) define it as any form of presentation of ideas about goods and services, paid for by an identifiable sponsor, with predominant use of media of communication. Perreault and McCarthy (1996) define it as any paid form of non-personal presentation of ideas, goods, or services by an identified Sponsor. In competitive and non-competitive economies alike, advertising plays the very important role of creating awareness to consumers. It sustains organizations by modifying or changing attitudes or

behaviour of the recipient of the message it contains. As a sub-function of marketing, advertising largely determines which of two basic objectives-product or institutional – an organization should have. Product advertising tries to sell a product. It may be aimed at final users or channel members. Institutional advertising tries to promote an organization's image, reputation, or ideas-rather than a specific product. Its basic objective is to develop goodwill or improve an organization's relations with various groups – not only customers but also current and prospective channel members, suppliers, shareholders, employees, and the general public.

With its focus on attitude change and behaviour modification, advertising relies heavily on psychological techniques to achieve results. From determination of consumer buying motives, through the study of consumer attitudes and beliefs, to creative image information and attention holding, advertising has tremendously influenced the purchasing and consumption of many audiences.

Advertisers, the world over, spend so much on advertising and are accused of it. Notwithstanding the accusations, arguments have increasingly been made in support of advertising whole messages are disseminated via media.

With regard to use of media, advertisers consider a number of factors before arriving at a medium they want to use. Among the numerous considerations made before arriving at a choice of medium or media are the objective and message requirements that the advertiser has in mind. Others are time and location of buying decision, media circulation, target market and cost of media.

Like in other countries of the world, the television medium ranks among the most important media of advertising in Nigeria. Apart from its impactful nature, the television is one of the most frequently used media. Being about the newest and fastest growing of the media and also the most versatile, television makes its appeal through both the eye and the ear, thus making demonstration and explanation of products possible. The unique and creative abilities of the television are noticeable and widely explored by advertisers. But that is not to say it is a problem-free medium.

As it is the case with other media, one of the difficulties inherent in the use of television advertising medium is evaluation. Described by

Stanton (1987) as involving the assessing of the effectiveness of what has been done and what is planned for the future, evaluation is one important act that advertisers cannot afford to ignore. To start with, advertising is a highly criticized part of the marketing system. While it has been improved over the years much still remains to be done. Effectiveness and efficacy have to be better evaluated just as management needs to know not only which advertisements are better than others, but also why they are better.

Dwindling resources are bringing about competition and forcing management's to appraise expenditures (including those on advertising) carefully. This makes them seek for justification of the expenditures made on advertising. But getting to measure the efficacy of television adverts is not easy. There is the problem of identifying the results of any given advert or even an entire campaign.

But advertisers do attempt to measure efficacy simply because they must do some knowledge is better than none at all. Efficacy measure takes place before the advert is presented to the public, while it is being presented, or after it has completed its run. Regarding type of efficacy measures, there are direct and indirect tests or measures. Direct measures are economic-oriented and include "sales results" or volume. Their excessive adoption has been criticized on a number of grounds. Indirect measures (which are the most commonly used) are psychological or cognitive-oriented. They include "viewership," "recognition," "recall," "attitude," "intention," and "likeness," tests. The theory underlying these tests is this – the greater the number of people who see, read, intend to buy, have favourable attitude, like the product and recall the advertised product information, the greater will be the number who do as the advertisement urges them.

Due to cost and advertiser (individual) perception, consensus has never been reached on which of the efficacy measures are more result-oriented. But a fact seems emerging from among advertisers and experts that the use of multi-criteria is more workable than use of just one criteria (Stanton, 1987).

In this study, however, the development of television commercial efficacy measures was based on a combination of four criteria,

namely, recall, attitude, intention, and likeness. This combined measure is justified when viewed against the backdrop of Stanton's (1987) and Perreault and McCarthy's (1996) submissions that the basic goal of advertising is to sell something, to modify consumer attitudes or behaviour. And bearing this in mind, Stanton (1987) and Perreault and McCarthy (1996) advise that we should, among other cognitive considerations, be more concerned with measuring advertising's ability to influence attitudes and recall than about non-psychological considerations (such as sales volume and cost involved).

Recall as used in this study meant either a subject's ability to remember advertised product information or memory test words or both. It also referred to the remembered advertised product information itself. Justification for the test of subjects' recall of advertised product information was based on the fact that even in real life advertising and marketing practice, exposure to or viewing of adverts call for recall of the advertised product information on the part of the viewer or person exposed to the advert. This recall comes into play at the time of making a purchase of before it.

Attitude towards the advertisement (Aad) was used and defined based on Lutz's (1985) definition of Aad as a "predisposition to respond in favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion." Again with regard to real life advert practice, the emphasis placed on desired change in attitudes of consumers and advert viewers cannot be overstressed.

Intention to try represented a subject's willingness to have and try an advertised product, not really minding any probable or possible consequences for trying the product. It referred to the subjective probability that belief and attitudes will be acted upon. Intention is also viewed by the advertiser in real life advert practice as equally being instrumental to his audience's final purchase of the advertised product.

Likeness, though closely related to attitude, was in this study specifically used to mean a subject's conscious desire to want to have or be associated with the advertised product. Likeness is, like

attitudes, recall, and intention, a very important aspect of efficacy and needs to be evaluated by advertisers and researchers.

METHOD

Setting: The setting for the research was the laboratory. This gave room for control and manipulation of variables. Variables controlled for include subjects' prior knowledge of product, choice, price differences, brand variations, outside influence on brand, advert viewer's attitude towards and intention to buy the advertised product.

Design: Market place or field studies of advertising and marketing variables and phenomena are quite difficult. This is based on the problems inherent in exercising control, establishing cause and effect relationships and measurements of variables among other problems. The design of this study, employed to take care of the above stated difficulties associated with market place or field studies, was a $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3$ factorial design. It comprised of three factors, each appearing at two levels and a fourth factor, appearing at three levels. The three factors and the two levels they each appeared at were: repetition, at regular and irregular levels; meaningfulness, at meaningful and less meaningful level; and price, at high and low prices. Place of production, the fourth factor, was considered as Nigeria, Togo and England.

Video and colour televisions were used for the display of the 24 pieces of adverts/commercials, which were shown to the subjects. The pieces of adverts were written by the researchers, assessed and categorized by a team of postgraduate students and modified/ratified by a professional television advert scriptwriter. The adverts were same in product information content and background and differed only in the independent variable manipulation. A fictitious and presumably new insecticide, "Antisect", also appeared identically in all the 24 adverts. Each differed from the other only in the independent variable manipulation.

Subjects: Subjects were randomly selected undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education, University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria. They were 120 (60 males and 60 females). The mean age of the subjects was 22.2 years with a standard deviation of 4.6.

There were 81 Christians, 32 Muslims and 7 others. This class of subjects (undergraduates) was selected based on their higher tendency to adopt innovations.

Instruments

Advertised product information recall sub-scale: A ten (10)-item provide-the-answer questionnaire, developed by the researchers, was used for measuring subjects' recall of advertised product information. The advertised product information were on product's brand name, name of manufacturer, year of first production, place of production, product's major advantage, product's price, point of sale/purchase, in-can potency period, place for further enquiries and percentage discount. A fully recalled unit of advertised product information was scored "2". A semi-recall was assigned "0". Based on the ten units of the advertised product information and the maximum 2 scores accruable to a complete recall, the maximum total score for a subject was 20 and the least 0.

Subjects' Attitude toward using the advertised product sub-scale:

This was a modified form of Belch's (1981) Semantic Differential Scale which consisted of ten (10) set of opposite-in-meaning attitude factor adjectives developed by Osgood and Suci (1995). Four out of the ten adjectives were originally developed by Belch (1981) and by Shenge (1996). The other six were adapted from the value expressive and knowledge function sub-scales of McGuire's (1978) table and description of functional attitude scales.

With the positive adjectives lying at the low end or high end of the 1-7 continuum in the attitude measure, subjects were instructed to circle one of the seven numbers in each pair of the words. Overall attitude score was obtained. By adding the responses on all the items in the attitude measure (and reversing where the positive adjective was at the low end (that is scoring "7" as "1" and "6" as "2", etc, the reversal made the ordering of the scores to totally tally with those for likeness and recall.

Subjects' intention to try the advertised product sub-scale

This was a ten (10) set of opposite-in-meaning evaluative factor adjectives earlier used by Shenge (1996). It measured subjects'

intention to try the advertised product. With the positive adjective also lying either on the low or high end of the 1-7 continuum in intention measure, subjects were instructed to circle one of the seven numbers in each pair of the words. By adding the responses on all the items in the intention measure and reversing where the positive is at the low end (that is scoring "7" as "1" and "6" as "2" etc.), the overall subject's intention evaluation was made. Like in attitudes, the reversal of intention scores made their ordering to tally with those for likeness and recall.

Likeness for advertised product Sub-Scale:

This consisted of ten (10) items each with five Likert-type response options from which subjects were asked to make one option per item. The scale, also used by Shenge (1996) was scored 5-1. The five Likert-type response options for each of the ten product likeness items from which subjects were asked to choose one were scored 5-1. The units of the advertised product information/attributes the degree of likeness-hatred for which subjects were requested to indicate were ten (10). Based on the 5-1 scoring format, therefore, a subject' options for the ten items and the aggregate weight (number) they amounted to represented his/her degree of likeness for the advertised product.

Overall advert/commercial efficacy:

This was arrived at by summing up a subject's total scores on attitudes, intention, recall and likeness. This meant that attitudes, intention, recall and likeness were the criteria on which adverts efficacy was based.

Advertised Product:

A computer colour designed and printed label of "Antisect", a supposedly new insecticide, made and neatly cut to size was pasted on the label portion of an existing (real) brand of insecticide. The pasted label covered the label portion of the real insecticide and blended with it, thus making it look like a new product on the screen.

Movie:

A foreign (unfamiliar) movie (24 minutes in length), extracted from a sixty-minute master piece (of the movie) and entitled "Conquerors" was shown on video to subjects in each of the experimental groupings. The movie contained either the six slots, 4 minute interspaced commercials or the three slots, 8 minute interspaced commercials depending on whether the advert in question belonged to the regular or irregular advert presentation category. It was ascertained through an initial pre-selection screening that the movie had not been watched by any of the subjects. The use of the non-familiar movie was to control for the effects of familiarity of stimulus on subjects' recall attitude, intention, and likeness.

Stopwatch:

The Heuer Trackmaster brand of stopwatch was used for the study. It was a 60-second calibration with 15-minutes mini-calibration superimposed on it. The Stopwatch was used for time regulation during different stages or phases of the research.

Procedure:

The presentation/showing of the 24 adverts to subjects in the 24 experimental groupings took place in one day. This took place successively. Subjects viewed a common 45 second advertisement (commercial) but with different independent variable manipulations. Shortly before each of the experiments, subjects were given a ten word memory/recall test. This was done by successively flashing and pronouncing each of the words three times on the television screen and requesting them (subjects) to, at the end of the flashing and pronouncing, write down the words they could remember, together with their earlier assigned code numbers, on a sheet of paper and submit. Just after that, subjects viewed a 24-minute movie, which contained the adverts and were given a provide-the-answer type questionnaire without options to furnish the advertised product information thereon and submit. Their attitude towards using the advertised product, intention to try the advertised product, and their likeness for the advertised product were also indicated on the relevant information sheets. Equally furnished by subjects were subjects' demographic information such as age, sex and religion.

**PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF INSTRUMENTS
DETAILED FACTOR ANALYSIS RESULTS USING
PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS**

ATTITUDE			INTENTION				LIKENESS	
COMPONENT			COMPONENT				COMPONENT	
	1	2		1	2	3		1
Att 3	.754	4.509E-02	Intent 10	.644	- .364	-.197	Like 2	.745
Att 10	.653	.348	Intent 6	.628	- .136	1.882E-02	Like 5	.669
Att 4	.631	.140	Intent 1	.608	- .392	.379	Like 10	.664
Att 7	.574	.145	Intent 3	.585	.308	-.234	Like 6	.365
Att 2	.539	.470	Intent 2	.584	.235	-.478	Like 4	.628
Att 9	.464	.375	Intent 5	.579	- .141	-.440	Like 3	.619
Att 5	.150	.901	Intent 4	.499	.152	.438	Like 8	.579
Att 8	.360	.606	Intent 9	.475	- .385	.193	Like 1	.576
Att 1	.415	.522	Intent 7	.459	.280	.335	Like 9	.508
Att 6	.292	.496	Intent 8	.489	.615	.188	Like 7	.505

VALIDITY

	Attitude	Intention	Likeness
	<u>Sub-Scale</u>	<u>Sub-Scale</u>	<u>Sub-Scale</u>
-Item-total correlation	Least .36,	Least .33,	Least .40.
	Highest .61.	Highest .48,	Highest .63.

All ten corrected total correlations for each of the three sub-scales were significant at .05.

-Inter-item correlations: An average of 8 significant inter-item correlations per item for attitude, 7 for intention and 9 for likeness.

-Factor loading using Principal Component Analysis.

Attitude-Two factors emerged. Factor 11 had 6 items with correlations ranging from .46 to .75 while factor 2 had 4 items ranging from .50 to .90. All were significant at .05.

Intention - three factors emerged. One had correlations ranging from .46 to .64. All were significant at .05.

Likeness - One factor emerged. It had correlations ranging from .51 to .75. All were significant at .05.

RELIABILITY:

	<u>ATTITUDE</u>	<u>INTENTION</u>	<u>LIKENESS</u>
	<u>S/SCALE</u>	<u>S/SCALE</u>	<u>S/SCALE</u>
-Standardized coefficient alpha	.81	.75	.82
-Coefficient alpha for part 1			
Split-half (with 5 items)	.65	.61	.72
-			
Coefficient alpha for part 2			

Split-half (also with 5 items)	.68	.57	.63
-Split-half	.74	.62	.72
-Overall reliability (Spearman-Brown)		.85	.77
.84			

All were significant at least at .05 and indicated strong reliability.

DISCUSSION

The high validity and reliability coefficients of the efficacy criteria in this study point to the fact that the efficacy criteria, namely, intention, recall, attitude, and likeness are dependable measures of advert efficacy.

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