

# Portrayal of Women in Advertising on Facebook and Instagram

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**ABSTRACT:** The growth in the use of social media in the developing world has encouraged most people and businesses to take the advert of their products or services to the social media. This study sought to find out how women are portrayed on social media adverts using the Goffman's category, which indicates cases of stereotype and subjugation of women in the society. This study was anchored on the framing theory. The researchers used content analysis research design. Using Wimmer and Dominick online calculator on a population of 1,523, the researchers arrived at a sample size of 431 and increased it by 71% to obtain approximately 600. Code sheet and coding guide served as the instrument for data collection. The inter-coder reliability was established using Holsti and Pearson's r formulas. Data analyses were done using the cluster approach. Using Goffman's categories, this study revealed that women are subliminally portrayed as sex objects in some selected online ads. This is made evident in the results from body display, relative size, functional ranking, and family categories, which revealed that from the angle of Facebook, 33.8% of the pictures-based advert revealed body display, while on the part of Instagram, 28.9% of the videos showed significant body display. Further analysis revealed that picture (35.2%) and video (25.7%) adverts on Instagram have more propensity to show feminine touches than Facebook, and that over 35% of the video content on social media has one form of ritualization of subordination or the other.

**KEYWORDS:** Social Media, Advertising, Facebook, Instagram, Portrayal, Women

## Introduction

In traditional African society, women are seen as the weaker sex whose role in society should not go beyond the home arena (Obioha 2009). This is why women are regarded as home keeper and wives. Culturally, women and men are perceived differently because of the difference in gender (Nwosu 2012). Since culture is manifested in our behaviour we begin to act in accordance with what we observe in our environment, especially when the media is at the forefront of piloting such difference in sex and gender. Luo and Hao (2007) notes that the media may not really be an agent of change, but may help reinforce the societal ideology that already exist. When this ideology has to do with gender, the media may go ahead to reinforce the gender differences.

In the recent past, women are seen as the weaker vessel. Women are thought to be emotional, homely, keepers; modest, prudent while men are thought to be strong, intelligent, and courageous (Nwosu 2012). This has really affected so many women as their growth and development seem to have been hindered. Today women subconsciously dress their children using these distinct colours. It is still in this note that women are thought to be beautiful while men are taught to be hardworking (Jilbrin 2017).

Society has unconsciously given gender roles. That is to say that the society has defined who a "perfect woman and man" is using the roles they play in the environment and when people do not play according to these roles they are not usually accepted by the society. It is these gender roles that are used by media users to share and advertise and sell their products. For advertising to be effective, the advertisers must know their target audience and make sure that their unique selling point must appease the consumers so as to induce sales. If the audience does not structure

the adverts accordingly the advert will not achieve its purpose (Zimmerman & Dalhiberg 2008; Ademola 2015). All these are out into consideration before a product is advertised by a medium be it print or broadcast media.

On conventional platforms, advertising is being censored to suit the taste of the society amidst various religious inclinations of many people. This is not really so on social media where many individuals create contents by themselves. Davis (2018) went ahead to note that social media give women the power to create any type of content especially the ones that will help shape their image. This implies that women can also create adverts that project them in positive lights. This view was also supported by Ashcraft (2015), who noted that social media give women the ability to create new social construct that will help alter the way society perceive them. If this argument is anything to fall back at, it means that women activists and advertisers of product can use the social media as an avenue to advance their campaign for a positive social perception by creating ideal adverts and encouraging other female social media users to do same. This will include those that sell or advertise their businesses and products on social media like Facebook pages or Instagram accounts.

However, this is not the case. Omotoso (2019) noted that the social media have made everything worse. She noted that the new media had the promise to better the lot of women when it was invented and put to mass use. As it stands today, the new media has made the case of women's image worse than the conventional media. Women are more sexualized and objectified "especially through the use and widespread dissemination of memes. They were also exploited through sexting, pornography, online dating, and matchmaking" (Omotoso 2019). Advert copies or videos on social media seem not to be left out in the sexual objectification of women.

Gender display continues to be a topic of discussion in various aspects. Scholars like Agujiobi (2018) explained that the portrayal of women as sex objects has affected the society in various ways especially as it has reduced the moral standards of men in the society. The exposure of women sexually has depraved the minds of men in the society and this can lead to various social vices like rape and premarital sex in the society. More so, men no longer value the privacy of women since they could see at the pages of a newspaper, magazine or in any social media accounts. Again using such pictures for adverts has also reduced the ethics of advertising (Agujiobi 2018; Cortese 2008). Some of these adverts in the bid to sell their products lie to their audience so they can get attention from the audience to check out the adverts which at the long run makes them to check out the products. Advertisers use women by exposing their sexuality to sell these products which could be considered as deceit since the picture has no connection to the product that is being sold.

One of the frameworks about gender display in the media was categorized by Goffman (1988) who explained various factors one can observe and identify such images as gender display. He listed these categories as feminine touch, ritualization of subordination, withdrawal gaze, body display, relative size, functional rank and family. When women are presented in any of these categories, their image, social (gender) construct and portrayal is generally weakened; that is, women feel stereotyped and made to be subordinate to men (Keng 1997; Goffman 1979 & 1988; Cortese 2008). In analysing social media portrayal of women in advertising, the Goffman's categories were used. Goffman explains each of these categories as; when taking a picture and the lady is touching her hair, face or any part of her body (feminine touch); if she is standing on one leg, sitting, crossing her leg (ritualization of subordination); looking absent minded or staring away from the camera (withdrawal gaze); adverts that deals with class and prestige (functional rank); adverts or pictures that deals with caring for the family or having strong bonding with the family members (family) (Goffman 1988). These categories enabled the researchers to examine and analyse the portrayal of women in advertising on social media, since it is a platform that gives freedom to create advert by oneself, individuals, emerging firms and businesses. Instagram and Facebook will be used to understand if social media can be a platform for changing the narrative of gender display in advertising.

The social media has become a platform at which companies or industries are able to advertise their products (Bogenhold & Naze 2016). By creating social media accounts like Instagram and Facebook companies use celebrities to create awareness about their products (Rassi, 2016). This study therefore sought to find out how advertisers portrayed women on Instagram and on Facebook during advertising. There have been various studies on self-portrayal and Instagram (Rassi, 2016); Liu an Suh (2017); Nicola, Anne and Sandra (2017). These scholars discussed how women portrayed themselves by themselves on Instagram. Opeyemi (2015) studies how women are portrayed in Nigerian national papers. However, very few studies have been carried out on how advertisers portray women on Instagram and Facebook during this advertising using Goffman's categories. To achieve this the researchers asked the following question;

1. What is the “feminine touch” in adverts on Facebook and Instagram?
2. What is the “ritualization of subordination” in adverts on Facebook and Instagram?
3. What is the “withdrawal gaze” in adverts on Facebook and Instagram?
4. What is the “body display” in adverts on Facebook and Instagram?
5. What is the “relative size” in adverts on Facebook and Instagram?
6. What is the “functional rank” in adverts on Facebook and Instagram?
7. What is the “family” present in adverts on Facebook and Instagram?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the framing theory. The framing theory was first propounded by Goffman and it is very similar to Agenda Setting theory. This theory is a step above the agenda setting theory which explains that the media tells the audience what to think about, but the framing theory goes a step further in the way events, occurrence are being represented by the media. Simply put framing is the way the media source creates any information given to the receiver (Arowolo 2017). Zhou (2012) explained the importance of framing in social media. Framing manipulates how audience understands political, social, economic or religious concerns. When their thoughts are being manipulated the way users react to such information are also been manipulated based on the way their thoughts are influenced/manipulated by such information.

In relation to this study, online adverts like Instagram and Facebook seem to frame women as sexual objects, weak, and are housekeepers/cleaners. This has influenced how people perceive women. This has also influenced the way men react when a woman climbs to a certain ladder of success. It is assumed that she either slept her way through, or she is not domesticated thereby making her unmarried. Online adverts have framed women as weak, dependent and sexy. These adverts have presented to the society their expectation of perfect woman. The society has accepted such presentation. People seem to react favourably to this presentation thereby making anything short it unacceptable.

### **Methodology**

This study used quantitative content analysis research design because it enabled the researchers to analyse the manifest contents and determined how gender display is used by advertisers on Facebook and Instagram (Paveen & Showkat, 2017). This method is very appropriate as it helped the researchers analyse gender display using Goffman's categories. The researchers studied the period of 8 months which is from June 2019 to January 2020. The researchers selected Instagram handles and Facebook pages of 20 Nigerian celebrities. These handles and Facebook pages includes bimboademoye, nancyisime\_official, tokemokinwa, kimoprah, official\_mercyeke, alex\_unusual, ogeokye, chidinmmaekile, tontlet, simply\_tacha, ceec\_offical, mercyjhonsonokojie, realomosexy, princesshyngle, rechaelokonkwo, omonioboli, Tiwasavage, omawonder and k8henshaw. The researchers' screenshot all adverts seen on the Instagram and Facebook pages of these celebrities. These adverts amounted to 1,523 pictures and videos. Using Wimmer and Dominick online calculator

on a population of 1,523 the researchers arrived at a sample size of 431. In order to increase the sample size and create more room for reliability of results the researcher increased the sample size by 71%. This gave an increased sample size of 600. The researchers used the non-proportionate and purposive sampling to select 300 posts each from Instagram and Facebook. This sampling method gave the researchers the liberty to choose the number of posts needed by the researchers in each category (Morrow, Rosen, Vargas & Christensen 2007)

The units of analysis of the study were the picture and videos collected from the two social media platforms of Facebook and Instagram. Pictures and videos in this case involve contents that tend to advertise a particular product. As for the content categories, the researchers used the Goffman's (1988) categories of gender display. The content categories for this study, therefore, includes: a) taking a picture and the lady is touching her hair, face or any part of her body (feminine touch); b) standing on one leg, sitting, crossing her leg (ritualization of subordination); c) looking absent minded, or staring away from the camera (withdrawal gaze); d) adverts that deals with class and prestige (functional rank); e) adverts and pictures of women smaller than men in height and weight (relative size); f) physical appearance in terms of beauty, slim, sweet and no odor (body display); g) adverts and pictures that deals with caring for the family or having strong bonding with the family members (family).

The instrument of data collection was code sheet and coding guide. The code sheet contained the seven content categories and their corresponding indicators for coding. The researchers familiarized themselves with the code sheet and the coding guide and reviewed it several times to ensure that the indicators were mutually exclusive. This was done to validate the instrument. As for the inter coder reliability of the instrument, sixty (60) of the contents were coded by two coders; one master coder and one trained coder. They conducted mock coding to understand the coding properly before coding for the inter coder reliability. The 60 contents constituted 10% of the total sample studied. The 60 contents that were coded were 15 videos and 15 pictures from Instagram and Facebook respectively. Two formulas were used to calculate the reliability of the data collected, and they were the Holsti formula and Pearson's r formula. The Holsti formula was used to check the level of agreements and differences in the coded contents, and the results were slightly different from that of Pearson's r. The inter coder reliability was done based on each content categories (Wimmer and Dominick, 2014). The results presented here are that got using Pearson's r formula, and they are; feminine touch (CR= 0.8), ritualization of subordination (CR= 0.8), withdrawal gaze (CR = 0.8), functional rank ( CR = 0.7), relative size ( CR= 0.8), body display ( CR= 0.7), and family (CR = 0.8).

The analysis of data was done using clustered analysis (Guenther, Ruhrmann & Bischoff, 2020). This means that data were presented in one table using numbers and percentages. The analyses of the data followed afterword.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

This study analysed 600 videos and pictures got from Facebook and Instagram. The aim was to ascertain the portrayal of women in advertising on social media using the Goffman' (1988) categories. These categories have also been used in the analysis of gender portrayal on print media by Cortese (2008).

### **Women Portrayal in advertising from the lens of Goffman's Categories**

As earlier indicated, Goffman proposed seven clues from which to analyse gender display or portrayal in the media. These categories were applied on conventional media, but the new media via social media channels are redefining the face of advertising and consumer targeting. Hence this study applied the Goffman's categories to the social media platforms of Facebook and Instagram. The presence of any of these categories indicates a negative portrayal of women in advertising, because

they tend to stereotype and weaken the image and social construct of women in the society (Goffman, 1988; Kang, 1997; and Cortese, 2008).

**Table 1. Analysing Gender Display according to Goffman's category**

Goffman's Category	Facebook		Instagram		Total	Percentage %
	Pictures	Videos	Pictures	Videos		
Feminine Touch	31 29.5%	10 9.5%	37 35.2%	27 25.7%	105	17.5%
Ritualization of Subordination	10 27.0%	13 35.1%	-	14 37.8%	37	6.2%
Withdrawal gaze	48 32%	32 21.3%	25 16.6%	45 30%	150	25%
Body Display	48 33.8%	21 14.8%	32 22.5%	41 28.9%	142	23.7%
Relative Size	9 42.8%	-	-	12 57.1%	21	3.5%
Functional Ranking	15 42.8%	-	7 20%	13 37.1%	35	5.8%
Family	30 27.3%	33 30%	12 10.9%	35 31.8%	110	18.3%
Total	191	109	113	187	600	100
Total	300		300		600	100

*Source: Field survey (2019)*

#### **a) Feminine Touch Category**

This category looked at the women in the picture and video adverts with the aim of finding out the way they were touching their bodies. This includes the touching of their hair, face or any other area of their body. Analysis of data revealed that 29.5% of the pictures on Facebook had the women touching different parts of their bodies. This is slightly lower than the 35.2% of pictures on Instagram with visible evidence of feminine touches. From the aspect of video adverts, analysis revealed that 25.7% of the adverts on Instagram showed feminine touches. This implies that there are more feminine touches on picture and video adverts on Instagram as against Facebook.

The key implication of these findings is that feminine touches still constitute part of the messages about women that is sold to the public, even with the invention of the new media. The social media have not changed the fact that advertisers still used feminine touches to attract customers and prospective customers. It was also revealed that videos and pictures on Instagram have more propensity to show feminine touches than the ones on Facebook.

#### **b) Ritualization of Subordination Category**

This aspect of the category looked at whether the women in the picture or video adverts were standing on one leg, lying or sitting down and/or crossing their legs. This helped to x-ray more of the gender portrayal in advertising. Analysis of data revealed that video adverts on Facebook (35.1%) and Instagram (37.8%) in the area of ritualization of subordination were more than picture adverts, even though Instagram has more video content than Facebook. More surprisingly is the fact that Instagram picture-based adverts has no ritualization of subordination content.

The implication of this finding is that video contents on social media have over 35% of its content on ritualization of subordination. There were video contents of women crossing their legs, lying down, sitting down, and standing with one leg. This shows the extent to which video adverts portray women as subordinate gender and weaker sex.

**c) Withdrawal Gaze Category**

This category is also known as licensed withdrawal. It has to do with women in advertising, either picture or video-based, staring away from the camera deliberately or looking absent minded. In the course of data analysis, result indicated that 32% of the pictures advert had withdrawal gaze or licensed withdrawal more than the video adverts (21.3%) on Facebook. This mean that women are more likely to engage in withdrawal gaze in picture-based adverts on Facebook more than the video adverts. However, this is not the case with Instagram which had 30% of its video advert on withdrawal gazing. This means that, on Instagram, withdrawal gazing is prominent on video-based adverts.

The implication of this finding is that the way withdrawal gazing plays out on Facebook is different from that of Instagram. On Facebook, women withdrawal gazing is prominent in pictures adverts, but on Instagram, it is common in video adverts.

**d) Body Display Category**

This is reflected in form of beauty, but it has to do with the presentation of sexy dress or nude appearance. It also has the appearance of provocative sexual content. Data analysis revealed the presence of sexual content or nude dressing and appearance. From the angle of Facebook, data analysis revealed that 33.8% of the pictures-based advert revealed body display. On the part of Instagram, 28.9% of the videos showed significant body display.

The implication of this finding is that nude pictures and sexualized dresses appeared on both platforms, meaning that advertising on social media still communicate gender stereotype against women and portray women as sex objects.

**e) Relative Size Category**

This is depicted in the form of having having adverts of women that at smaller in hight and weight than their male counterpart in the same advert. This creates obvious disparity between the male and the female gender. In this study, the analysis of data revealed that 42.8% of the picture adverts on Facebook showed relative body size, while 57.1% of the video adverts on Instagram showed relative size.

The implication of this finding is that the Instagram showed more propensity to accommodate and disseminate messages that can affect the portrayal of women in the society. The presentation of video-based adverts on Instagram were over 50%.

**f) Functional Rank Category**

This category is focused on the class and prestige in the picture or video of the woman in the advert. When women are used to advertise corporate organisations and banks, this shows class and prestige; but when they are used to advertise kitchen utensils and toilet cleaners, that is not class. Communicating result of data analysis, it was revealed that 42.8% of the picture-based adverts on Facebook showed functional rants where women are presented as homes keepers (food preparation and cleaners). This was also evident in the video-based adverts presented on Instagram as 37.1% indicated cases of functional rank against women.

The implication of this finding is that women are still being used to portray the conventional societal role for them in adverts. They, in most cases, play the role of cooks, house keepers and petty trade market sellers, instead of bankers and corporate executive officers.

**g) Family Category**

This category focused on how women are presented as caring for the family and/or having strong bonding with the family members. In the course of data analysis and presentation, it was revealed that 30% of the women in video adverts on Facebook and Instagram are presented as family people, thereby qualifying under family category. There are also picture-based adverts that qualify as family on both Instagram and Facebook, but that of Facebook was more prominent at 27.3%.

The implication of this finding is that, on the average, 25% of the adverts on Facebook and Instagram depict women as family people, and this tends to affect the way they are perceived in the society.

Summarily, the analysis of data indicated that the seven categories of Goffman's gender display analysis were present in the picture and video advertisements on social media. This further proves that advertising on social media cannot be exonerated from among the media genre that corrode the image of women in the society. Data analyses indicated that 25% and 23.7% of the picture and video adverts analysed had withdrawal gazing and body display respectively which showed women as absent minded and sexual object. Further analysis indicated that feminine touches (17.5%) and family (18.3%) which were present in the picture and video adverts portray women as subordinate to men in the society. Feminine touch, apart from being sexualized, also reveals low self-esteem, while family shows that the woman is better-off a mother or a house wife (Goffman, 1988). Relative size (3.5%), functional ranking (5.8%) and ritualization of subordination were the least among the seven categories analysed. This indicated that these three categories were not as predominant on social media adverts as the other four categories earlier mentioned.

### **Discussion of findings**

This study looked at social media portrayal of women in advertising from the lens of Goffman's categories of gender display (Goffman 1988). In the study of Kang (1997) and Cortese (2008), analyses were done on the conventional or traditional mass media using the same Goffman's categories. This study is unique because it applied Goffman's seven categories to adverts on social media to see if the social media adverts portray women as sexual objects and subordinate to men. This study used quantitative content analysis research design and randomly selected 600 Instagram and Facebook adverts, which comprises pictures and videos. From each of the platforms (Instagram and Facebook), 300 adverts of both pictures and videos were randomly selected. The seven categories that were used were feminine touch, ritualization of subordination, withdrawal gaze, functional ranking, relative size, body display and family. The instrument of data collection was code sheet and coding guide. Data analyses was done using clustered analysis (Guenther, Ruhrmann & Bischoff 2020).

Communicating result from data analysis revealed that picture (35.2%) and video (25.7%) advert on Instagram have more propensity to show feminine touches than Facebook. Considering the percentage involved in the number of picture and video adverts, it is evident that feminine touches still constitute part of the messages about women that is sold to the public on social media. This is exactly the argument of Omotoso (2019), who said that the social media have made things worse. Most of the ills that are prevalent in the conventional media about women seem to have been inflated by the social media. The position of Omotoso (2019) is further made clearer when one considers the findings from ritualization of subordination, which revealed that over 35% of the video content on social media has one form of ritualization of subordination or the other. The implication of this finding is that there were video contents of women crossing their legs, lying down, sitting down, and standing with one leg. These are all evidence of women being portrayed as subordinate gender and weaker sex. Studies have noted that the media portray women as weaker sex, subordinate to men or people to be seen but not heard, and sexual objects or an instrument of sales (Nwosu 2012; Agujiobi 2014 and Cortese 2008).

Using withdrawal gazing as a cases of analysis, analysis also revealed that the way women are portrayed from one form of advert type to another within platform, and from one social media platform to another may differ. This is more so because data analysis indicated that 32% of the pictures advert had withdrawal gaze or licensed withdrawal more than the video adverts (21.3%) on Facebook platform. This mean that women are more likely to engage in withdrawal gaze in picture-based adverts on Facebook more than the video adverts on Facebook, while Instagram has 30% of its video advert on withdrawal gazing. This means that, on Instagram, withdrawal

gazing is prominent on video-based adverts. The implication of this finding is that the way withdrawal gazing plays out on Facebook is different from that of Instagram. On Facebook, women withdrawal gazing is prominent in pictures adverts, but on Instagram, it is common in video adverts. This finding is connected to that of Cortese (2008) and Kang (1997) who changed media types in order to find out how gender display vary from one form of media type to another. They also discovered that there are slight changes as one moves from the study of newspapers to magazine.

Further analyses also revealed different way social media adverts stereotype women, sexualise them and subject them to be subordinate to men. This is made evident in the results from body display, relative size, functional ranking, and family categories. Data analysis revealed that from the angle of Facebook, 33.8% of the pictures-based advert revealed body display, while on the part of Instagram, 28.9% of the videos showed significant body display. The implication of this finding is that nude pictures and sexualized dresses appeared on both platforms, meaning that advertising on social media still communicate gender stereotype against women and portray women as sex objects. On the area of relative body size, the analysis of data revealed that 42.8% of the picture adverts on Facebook showed relative body size, while 57.1% of the video adverts on Instagram showed relative size. The results of data analyses in respect to functional ranking revealed that 42.8% of the picture-based adverts on Facebook showed functional ranks where women are presented as homes keepers (food preparation and cleaners), while the video-based adverts presented on Instagram showed that 37.1% of the contents indicated cases of functional ranking. The implication of this finding is that women are still being used to portray the conventional societal role for them in adverts. They, in most cases, play the role of cooks, house keepers and petty trade market sellers, instead of bankers and corporate executive officers. This is exactly what Luo and Hao (2007) revealed in their study when they found that women identity in the media is a reflection of societal norms and ideological changes where the case maybe. The findings in the family category is also not far from this position. Data analysis revealed that, on the average of 25%, the adverts on Facebook and Instagram depict women as family people, and this tend to affect the way they are perceived in the society.

Comprehensively, the analysis of data indicated that the seven categories of Goffman's gender display analysis were present in the picture and video advertisements on social media. This further proves that advertising on social media cannot be exonerated from among the media genre that corrode the image of women in the society. It is important to note that each of these categories are not prominent on the social media adverts on equal grounds. Some of these categories are more pronounced and appear often than the others. For instance, data analyses indicated that withdrawal gazing and body display are common used at 25% and 23.7% respectively; whereas, categories like relative size (3.5%), functional ranking (5.8) and ritualization of subordination (6.2%) were the least used. In the middle of the usage are categories such as feminine touches (17.5%) and family (18.3%), which portray women as subordinate to men in the society. Feminine touch, apart from being sexualized, also reveals low self-esteem, while family shows that the woman is better-off as a mother or a house wife (Goffman, 1988). Butkowski, Dixon, Weeks (2019) and David (2018) observe that social media users and advertisers or promoters use nude dressed ladies and other gender display categories of Goffman to attract attention to their Instagram and Facebook accounts. These researchers also noted that displaying the sexuality of women for social media content can also increase the level of feedback. The reason for every advert is to receive an active feedback of the product being purchased by the consumers.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it is safe to conclude that the social media content on advertising also portray women as subordinate to men and engage in sexual objectification of women in the society. This is more so as the seven category test of Goffman gender display revealed ample data



showing that women are stereotyped and degraded in some ways in social media based adverts. In a way, it appears that adverts on social media also mirror the society or probably reinforce what is already existing in the society. The society, in some places today, still sees women as subordinate to men and people to be seen and not heard. Advertisements are not exempted. Gender display is imbedded in the content of social media advertising (Instagram and Facebook).

Again, morality has been degraded in the society. The portrayal of women as sex objects is not new. It has been there before the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and unfortunately it is still here with us. The social media are so democratized that even women can create their own contents and rewrite their story. However, the advert contents on some female Facebook and Instagram handles also reflect the categories of feminine touches, body display, withdrawal gazing and family. Some women advert producers, advertisers and promoters on social media are not doing anything to re-write the narrative.

These advert producers, social media promoters and advertisers may not be doing what they are doing deliberately, but it does not negate the fact that they exist. Vance Packard (1957) titled his book “Hidden Persuaders” to note that some media contents do persuade the people in a given way or form without them knowing it. In the same vain, people are influence by advert contents in a given way without them knowing it. More critical to this analogy is the fact that even the advertisers may not know that they are inadvertently portraying women as sex objects because their focus may be to sell products or attract customers.

The portrayal of women as sex objects and subordinate to men tend to affect their self-worth. The idea that women has a lot to offer is no longer news as there are women that have been able to differentiate themselves from these stereotypes. All over the country, women have excelled in different areas of human endeavour. Most countries of the world where women are given equal treatment as men rank among the developed nations of the world and vice versa.

## Recommendations

The researchers recommended that:

1. It will be a praiseworthy effort for advertisers to limit gender display in Instagram and Facebook advertisement. Advertisers should bear in mind that there are women who are making candid efforts to achieve a lot irrespective of the thoughts of the society. These women should also be reflected in the functional values of Goffman’s category of gender display.
2. Given that the differences in media type do not affect the way gender is negatively displayed, advertisers on social media and social media promoters should be encouraged by the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) to be gender-knowledgeable and sensitive when using women for adverts.
3. Women should use the opportunity of the social media to become advert contents producers that will help advance the cause of women. They should use the liberal nature of the new media to create advert contents that will project women as achievers and co-builders of the society.

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